

Bentley shocks Salem, 61-48

By DOUG FUNKE

Livonia Bentley hit 56 percent of its shots from the field Tuesday on the way to a 61-48 victory over Plymouth Salem in the Livonia Franklin Regional of the Class A state basketball tournament.

The Bulldogs now face the winner of yesterday's North Farmington-Ypsilanti contest for the regional championship at 7:30 p.m. tomorrow at Franklin.

Salem had beaten Bentley twice during the Suburban Eight League season, 69-57 in overtime and 79-57.

The Bulldogs, however, led from post to finish Tuesday.

Bentley made good on seven of 10 shots from the field and all three of its chances from the free-throw line during the first quarter.

The Rocks, meanwhile, hit only four from the floor the first eight minutes even though they were able to penetrate the Bulldogs' zone defense for close-range shots.

That was basically the story of the game — Bentley converted its scoring opportunities and Salem didn't.

In fact, the Rocks uncharacteristically made only two of 10 free throws during the first half.

"We had rimmers that just hung there. We got the ball there — it just

didn't go in," said Salem coach Fred Thomann. "We had them in the situation we wanted. The ball just didn't go into the hole. What can I say? We were there."

Each team experienced a scoring drought during the first half. The Rocks went more than 4½ minutes near the end of the first period without a point, while Bentley played 326 of the second quarter without scoring.

Salem failed to score the first 2½ minutes of the second half and the Bulldogs increased their lead to 31-18. Bentley, working with a zone defense all evening, made an excellent transition to the offensive end of the court.

Both teams had a flurry of baskets near the end of the third period and Bentley went into the final eight minutes with a 39-31 advantage.

Salem used a tenacious pressing defense throughout the fourth quarter and trimmed its deficit to 41-35 after only 2½ minutes had been played.

The Bulldogs, though, with Steve Booth leading the way, made 16 of 21 shots from the free-throw line during the final 6½ minutes to insure the victory.

Eric Thorderson, who found the range on 11 of 13 shots from the field, led Bentley with 24 points. Steve Booth added 16 points.

Rich Hewlett scored 24 points for Salem. Kevin Kellihur clipped in 14.

"I think the kids just decided they should have beaten them the first two

times we played," said Jim Komula, coach of the Bulldogs. "I didn't have to tell them. Five kids on the team are 4.0 students. The kids were determined to play."

"We used a 1-2-2 defense and changed our offense," Komula continued. "We wanted to post Thorderson inside with Hewlett." Thorderson is 6-6, Hewlett 6-1.

Salem finished the year with a 21-3 record and the Suburban Eight League championship.

LIVONIA BENTLEY — PLYMOUTH SALEM

LIVONIA BENTLEY (61) — Steve Booth 3, 10-12, 16; Eric Thorderson 11, 2-2, 24; Chris Bolla 5, 3-7, 7; Greg Sizer 3, 2-3, 3; Karl Thorderson 1, 0-0, 0; Craig Evans 2, 0-2, 0; Ed Bora 0, 0-0, 0; Steve Goble 0, 0-0, 0. TOTALS: 61, 21-30, 45.

PLYMOUTH SALEM (48) — Barry Owens 1, 0-0, 2; Kevin Kellihur 6, 5-5, 16; Howard Mook 1, 0-0, 2; Rob Neu 0, 0-0, 0; Rich Hewlett 7, 10-15, 24; Jim Anderson 1, 0-0, 2; Bill Thoms 1, 0-0, 2; Matt Thoms 1, 0-0, 2; Paul Dillow 0, 0-0, 0. TOTALS: 48, 12-21, 48.

TOTAL FOUls — Plymouth Salem 24, Livonia Bentley 19. FOULS OUT: Owens (5), Anderson (5), Bolla (5), Neu (5), Thoms (1), Dillow (0), Hewlett (0), Kellihur (0).

LIVONIA BENTLEY 17 10 12 22 — 61
PLYMOUTH SALEM 8 10 12 17 — 48

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Salem's Bill Thimm (40) has the ball slapped away by Steve Booth. (Staff photo by Bob Woodring)



Vitale to host radio talk show

Dick Vitale, head coach of the Detroit Pistons, will join WKVZ radio as weekend sports program host effective April 15, Robert F. Oakes, Operations Manager, announced recently.

Vitale will host the Sunday version of "WKVZ SportsTalk," 6-8 p.m. Listeners will be able to call in their sports question and exchange thoughts and ideas with the coach.

As with the regular weekday version of "SportsTalk," late-breaking sports stories will be updated, and Vitale will interview guests from the sporting world.

Vitale, a native of New Jersey, came to the University of Detroit from Rutgers University in 1973.

The fiery coach brought the University of Detroit back to national acclaim as he won 78 games and brought the school's annual attendance from 24,000 to 157,000.

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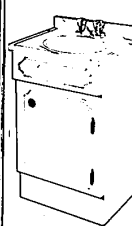


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