

Drewitz Sends Unbeaten Tigers Into Semifinals

Thanks to the brilliance of Rick Drewitz, the spectacular All-Stater, and the finest performance of the season by his mates, Garden City West's unbeaten Tigers registered their 21st consecutive victory to oust Benton Harbor, 82-66 on the Jackson Parkside High court.

The triumph sent West into the semifinals of the state class 'A' basketball tournament where two more wins will give the Tigers the championship.

West thus became the first team from this section of Western Wayne County to gain a berth in the round of four. Observerland quintets have advanced as far as the quarterfinals in the past but none made it to the big cage classic in East Lansing.

BENTON HARBOR, which also has the nickname of Tigers, carried a 17-4 record into the battle against West after upsetting Battle Creek Central in the regional finals at Kalamazoo.

And for a time it appeared as if the speedy outfit from the western side of the state would defeat West's first defeat. But Drewitz and Company had a bit too much this time, checking Benton Harbor effectively in the second half as Drewitz broke loose time after time to score from close in.

All told Rick ended the evening with 30 points — 13 field goals and 13 of 14 free throws. Just to add a bit of irony to the Benton Harbor defeat, Guard Gary Nustad uncorked a long shot from past midcourt with one second on the clock and the ball skimmed through the hoop as the whistle sounded.

Neither team could put together a decisive lead in the first half until the final three minutes when West snapped a 31-31 deadlock with eight consecutive points for a 39-31 edge that was whittled to 39-35 at the intermission.

THE OPENING PERIOD was one that had the crowd alternately cheering and groaning as the lead changed hands seven times before Benton Harbor went ahead, 22-20. There was one point when the two teams took 10 shots and made every one.

Drewitz had eight points for Garden City and Al Williams, Don Hopkins and Gary Harris had no hands for Benton Harbor with six each.

The second quarter saw West knot the score, 22-22. Hopkins sent Benton Harbor ahead again, 23-22. Lesczynski connected from underneath, 23-23. Hopkins hit from the side, 25-24. Nustad from in front, 25-25. Harris tapped in a rebound and Benton Harbor was ahead again, 27-26. Drewitz dribbled in for two points.

Hockey Loses Longtime Fan To Prep Basketball

(Elly, cooking expert of the Observer Newspapers, was given the assignment of writing a story of the quarterfinals from the women's angle. It was her first trip to the state tourney and here is how she found the game).

The basketball tournament has done it! It may sound unfaithful, and fickle, but the Garden City West Tigers have replaced Gordie Howe and Frank Mahovlich in my affections.

Their poise and fine play in the game with the Benton Harbor Tigers confirmed it.

SO THERE you have it, the perfect script, the perfect plot. The superb star, Drewitz, performing just as he should; the lesser stars coming through with great performance, while the cheerleaders and officials maintain the action in their own inimitable ways.

There is no audience. The fans are a part of it all, anxiously and personally involved in every cue and mis-cue.

And if you're a Garden City Tigers fan, you're exhausted but exuberant. (Some claim to have had a "pressure" headache since the tourney began, as if it were a badge of honor.)

But you couldn't miss the next game.

IT WAS interesting to (over)hear that Rick Drewitz and Gary Nustad play a lot of tennis in the off-basketball-season. Some were attributing their, fine coordination to both sports. (When you become a real fan you gather, and cherish these little nuggets of information.)

Cheerleaders, both varsity and JV were a credit to their team and school.

And the officials—there was real dramatic action in every call—no lack-luster performance there.

THERE WERE some anxious moments.

THE FANS were all there, from babes in arms to senior citizens.

Rep. James Tierney, who had come down from Lansing, said after the game that it was one of the greatest things that ever happened for Garden City.

Major Tim Murphy was a beaming rooster.

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Others on the panel are: RU Assistant Coach Milo Karhu and Curtis Kinloch.

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OUR HERO -- That's what Coach Chris Babler is to the members of the unbeaten Garden City West squad. The starters grabbed Chris off the story over Benton Harbor and this is the way he was voted to the dressing room. (Observer photo by Harry Mauthe)

U-D Coach Headlines RU Clinic

Bob Miller, varsity baseball coach at the University of Detroit, will be the featured speaker at the second session of the baseball clinic at Redford Union High Monday at 7:30.

Will Robison Spectacular With His Last Prep Quintet

Two points for West. Rick Drewitz, Garden City's All-State center who had 39 points, shows how he shook off Benton Harbor defenders. His one hander split the cords and started his team to the 82-66 victory and a berth in the semifinals. (Observer photo by Craig Goffield)

Livonian Helps Win State Crown

Sparked by the play of Don Finn, 17685 Rexwood, Livonia, the Marquette Machinery sextet, who won the Michigan Bantam division hockey championship with a 4-0 victory over Sault Ste. Marie.

13 Is Lucky For Holmes Junior High

Just to prove that 13 isn't an unlucky number, the Livonia Holmes Junior High quintet won its 13th straight game and the Metropolitan Detroit championship at the same time.

Turf Tips, Quips

By Doc Minard

Will ALWAYS has wanted to coach in college

He applied for the job at the University of Detroit.

YOUR TICKET TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

SPRING TERM 1970. REGISTRATION AT BENTLEY HIGH SCHOOL. March 23-24 3:30 p.m.

Turf Tips, Quips

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It was a long time coming, no thanks to a State Racing Commissioner who believes winter racing is fine — just as long as it's across the river in Windsor — but Michigan's long racing season will open Monday at Hazel Park where the pacers and trotters take over.

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LOOKS LIKE another of these tight finishes for the new clubbing at Northville Downs

At last look the glass front has been installed in the new structure through the second and third levels. Workmen have been busy with the interior work since the close of the Jackson-Northville meeting in December.

There will come the race with the opening day when crews move in to install the seats, kitchen equipment and such.

It won't be a waste of time. You can inspect the building and also watch horses workout in the morning hours. There are some 30 quarters at the 'Downs and quite a few will not slip crosstown to Hazel Park.

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Advertisement for Ardmore Construction Company. Text: 'This Summer Add A CUSTOM BUILT GARAGE'. Includes phone number 353-6616 and address 28595 Greenfield, Southfield, Michigan 48075.

Advertisement for American Hardware & Supply Company. Text: 'HOMEOWNERS CORNER'. Includes phone number 476-6240 and address 31245 W. Eight Mile, Livonia, Michigan.

Advertisement for Livonia Public Schools. Text: 'YOUR TICKET TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY'. Includes phone number 324-1200 and address 4222-1200.