

Monday, March 29, 1982

Miracle shot sinks Southfield



MINDY SAUNDERS/Staff photographer

Southfield's Ralph Walker, his feet on the floor and his fingers in the net, faces facts: His Blue Jays have just been beaten on a miracle shot in the state Class A semifinals.

By Tom Baer
staff writer

Flint Central's Mark Harris works miracles. Last Friday, Southfield's basketball players and fans were reduced to tears by one of them.

A 6-foot guard for Central, Harris has hands for a roundball. And when the sphere leaves those hands in the direction of the hoop, the chances are excellent it'll find its mark.

Harris let fly with a desperation 38-foot jumper — a real Hall Mary — with just four seconds to play and his Indians trailing Southfield by a point in the state Class A semifinal in Michigan State University's Jonsson Fieldhouses.

And the shot went down. As 9,678 fans screamed — some in agony, some with delight — the ball went swish.

And that's how Central, the defending Class A champion, put away a stubborn Southfield squad, 48-47.

"I just wanted to shoot it straight," said a composed Harris, who killed the Blue Jays with a game-high 26 points, after the game.

"Usually, if it's straight, it's going in. I wanted to get closer but they (South-

field defenders) cut me off."

The heart-breaking loss sent Southfield home with a 25-2 record, the best in the school's history. Central survived to play Detroit Southwest in the Class A final last Saturday.

COACH GREG Sliwka's Jays, who fought back for three quarters after being outplayed by Harris early on, took the late lead on Jerome Walker's tip with eight seconds left.

In desperation, a Central player lobbed the ball to Harris just over the mid-court line, and he put it up. It was his only bucket of the quarter.

"No way did I think that ball was going down," said a dejected Sliwka. "Actually, I was happy to see him receive the pass at that spot. There were four seconds left and I think he could have gotten closer."

Harris, who can bomb away successfully from 18-20 feet or fake out the opposition on drives to the hoop, tossed in 12 first-quarter points as the Indians raced to a 18-8 lead.

But Southfield, which outscored Flint in every quarter but the first, never quit. The Jays cut the margin to seven

(26-19) at halftime and to five (36-31) after three quarters.

Meanwhile, Harris wasn't getting the ball as often. He scored six in the second and six in the third and then none until the game winner.

"He had to pass it off," said Sliwka, "and when he did, he seldom got it back."

SOUTHFIELD CUT the spread to three a couple of times and then took its first lead (41-40) on Mike Priest's 18-foot jumper with 5:05 left to play. Priest, a 5-9 guard who didn't score during the first three quarters, keyed the comeback with six points in the final quarter.

There were eight lead changes in those last hectic eight minutes. Darryl Johnson canned an 18-footer with 29 seconds left to put Central up, 46-45. After a Southfield time out, Jerome Walker's tip put the Jays back on top.

Harris was the only Indian to score in double figures. Marty Embry, FC's 6-8 center, was watched closely by Southfield's Ralph Walker and finished with eight points.

Jerome Walker led the Jays with 12

points. Darwin Cornell had nine, and Mike McCaskill and Ralph Walker contributed eight apiece.

The Indians didn't shoot a free throw until midway through the fourth quarter and then they made the four they attempted. Southfield was five of eight from the line.

Southfield outrebounced Central, 30-27. Ralph Walker grabbed 10 for the Jays, and Embry snagged 13 for the winners.

In the other Class A semifinal at Jonsson Friday, Southwestern topped Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher, 49-48.

CENTRAL 48 — SOUTHFIELD 47

FLINT Central — Mark Harris 13, 0-0, 26; Chris Williams 3, 0-0, 6; Marty Embry 3, 2-2, 8; Darryl Johnson 1, 2-2, 4; Marvin Wells 1, 0-0, 2; Chris Levels 1, 0-0, 2. TOTALS: 22, 4-4, 48.

SOUTHFIELD (47) — Mike Priest 3, 0-0, 6; Mike McCaskill 4, 0-2, 8; Jerome Walker, 5, 2-2, 12; Darwin Cornell 3, 3-4, 9; Ralph Walker 4, 0-0, 8; DeVoe Cornell 2, 0-0, 4. TOTALS: 21, 5-8, 47.

TOTAL FOULS — Southfield 9, Flint Central 9.

FOULED OUT: None.

CENTRAL	16	10	12	— 48
SOUTHFIELD	8	11	16	— 47

Win Class C final

Eaglets capture state title

By Marty Budner
staff writer

All season long the fans bellowed, "O. L. S. M. No. 1 in Michigan!" Saturday night it became official.

Orchard Lake St. Mary's waltzed to the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) state Class C basketball championship before a screaming throng of followers with a convincing 76-48 victory over Reed City.

It was the Eaglets' first state title since they won the Class D crown in 1970 over Detroit St. Martin dePorres. It was their third state basketball championship in the school's history, the first one coming in 1933 against Boyne City.

"I DON'T THINK there was another school in all the other (three) classes that had as tough a road to the championship as we did," said St. Mary's coach Bob Shoemaker. "And we beat them all."

"We've been looking at this game all year long, and this (state title) is just as meaningful as all the others," he said.

St. Mary's, which finished the season with a 25-3 overall record, won the game on defense. The Eaglets held

Reed City, which had averaged 68 points in seven previous playoff games, to just 24 points in the first half.

Senior forward Chris Howze, who had fouled out of Friday's semifinal victory over Grand Rapids South Christian, did a remarkable job covering Reed City's high-scoring forward Layne Brower. Brower, who scored 23 points in the Coyotes' semifinal victory over Cassopolis, was the only Reed City player in double figures with 17.

"Our shot selection was tremendous, and our pressure defense was the key to the game," said Shoemaker, whose team started its drive toward the state title with a hard-earned victory over No. 2 ranked Redford St. Mary's in its first district game three weeks ago.

"Howze guarded their all-starter (Brower) and did a super job on him all night," he said. "We just played a great defensive game."

AS WAS THEIR custom throughout the tourney, St. Mary's shooters came out smoking in the first half (67 percent from the field) and built up a 40-24 halftime advantage. That sparkling first half included two back-to-back slam dunks by Howze and Hiram Harris in a span of 10 seconds.

The Eaglets outscored Reed City 36-24 in the second half.

Howze was the game's leading scorer with 27 points, and he added 12 rebounds. Harris had 23 points and nine rebounds, while John Kozicki scored 13 points. Lance Davis added a game-high eight assists.

ST. MARY'S 66
SOUTH CHRISTIAN 63

St. Mary's kept its composure and held on for a victory over Grand Rapids South Christian in Friday's semifinal game.

The Eaglets, who never trailed in the game, amassed a 15-point lead at one point in the second quarter. St. Mary's, which shot a sizzling 62 percent (18-29) from the floor in the first half, owned a 35-23 halftime lead.

The Sailors rallied in the second half, though, and actually pulled to within three points with eight seconds remaining. St. Mary's Lance Davis then hit two free throws to ensure his team's

first state championship appearance since 1978 when it beat Detroit St. Martin de Porres.

"I always worry about a big lead at halftime," said Eaglet coach Bob Shoemaker. "I think you have a little bit of a letdown in the second half."

"But we knew they (South Christian) were a good team. They've been to the finals three of the last four years. They have a lot of experience, and they just didn't quit."

South Christian stormed back when St. Mary's all-league forward Chris Howze fouled out of the game with seven minutes remaining in the fourth quarter. At that point, the Sailors, led by Craig Scholten (6-foot-8), Brian Boone (6-3) and Kurt Wassink (6-3), took control of the boards.

Davis, who made a key steal late in the game, scored St. Mary's final four points of the game and finished with eight points and 10 assists.

Howze led the Eaglets with 21 points, and Hiram Harris added 18. Chris Sarr and John Kozicki each had eight points.

All-Area spikers enhance volleyball



Chris Looser
Farmington



Diana Reinlein
Southfield-Lathrup



Pam Brietzke
Southfield-Lathrup

By Tom Baer
staff writer

Don't be had-munching high school girls' volleyball around guys like Hob Hurdle, Lionel Blagg and Ed Manderfield. Hurdle, Blagg and Manderfield, coaches all, don't leave the sport and donate large chunks of their lives to it. And they're all rather peeved at its seemingly "minor league" status as evidenced by the scanty daily newspaper coverage given to the recent state tournament.

"Volleyball is the fastest growing sport in the United States — and it's been that way for the last four years," declared Bloomfield Hills Andover's Hurdle last week during a meeting to select the Observer & Eccentric's 1982 All-Area volleyball team.

He was joined on the selection panel by Southfield-Lathrup's Blagg and Troy Athens' Manderfield.

Seven talented seniors comprise the first team. They are Patty Thompson and Patty Barrett, both of Andover; Diana Reinlein and Pam Brietzke, both of Lathrup; Chris Looser of Farmington; Colleen McGovern of Birmingham Groves; and Dawn Winkler of Bloomfield Hills LaSear.

All but Thompson and Brietzke are " hitters" — front-row players who get the ball over the net, sometimes with a devastating spike.

Thompson and Brietzke are "setters," who play further back and set up the shots for the hitters.

North Farmington's Sandy Lubnienicki was named Coach of the Year.

LATHRUP'S REINLEIN, who started as a sophomore but missed her junior year due to a softball injury, was one reason why the Chargers compiled a 13-2 overall record and won the

Metro Suburban Activities Association crown with a 9-1 mark.

"She's definitely our best attacker and our best all-around player," Blagg said. "And she's the best spiker we've ever had."

"When we needed somebody to put the ball away for us, she was the one to do it."

Brietzke "set the ball very consistently for our middle and outside attackers," according to Blagg. "She's outstanding in all skill areas — serving, passing and defense."

Thompson, Andover's team leader and captain, handled more than 700 balls as the Barons' only setter.

"I believe she's one of the better setters in the state," said Hurdle, whose club pointed a 17-1 record and won the Greater Oakland Activities League championship.

"She was the one who stabilized our team," Hurdle continued. "She was our money player. In a team of 10 juniors and three seniors, she was the one who put us together."

Barrett, "a tremendous overall player" in Hurdle's words, shattered school records for passes and the number of balls hit.

"Her hitting efficiency was over 92 percent," said Hurdle, "and defensively she was nothing short of outstanding."

ASK FARMINGTON coach Ron Short to name his best player, and he'll answer without the slightest hesitation: Chris Looser.

"She's the best I've ever had," the coach said. "She was most effective in the front row, although she'd be good anywhere. She had total control of the ball once it was set to her. She was good at placing it (the ball), keeping it away from the other team and hitting it hard."

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Patty Barrett
Andover



Patty Thompson
Andover



Dawn Winkler
LaSear

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