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(P.18)



Brad Emons

## Stats don't lie, but can stretch

SOME SAY THAT statistics are for losers. But in modern-day sports, statistics have become big business.

The difference between a .299 and a .300 batting average can mean thousands of dollars when a pro baseball player negotiates a contract.

Look in any major newspaper today. Daily sports sections usually devote one page to statistics — box scores, lineups, schedules, etc. The Observer also runs a page of various statistics every Thursday.

As a sports writer and editor, I deal with high school statistics on a daily basis.

A lot of times what I'm fed is hard to digest. I've often gone by the motto: "You have to see to believe."

MY COLLEAGUES and I here at the newspaper could write a book. Some of the stories rival "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea."

Here is a sample of what I'm talking about. Of course, it's my word against theirs, but you've got to believe me. (The names and faces will protect the guilty.)

During one football game this fall I walked the sidelines, charting every play from beginning to end. It was interesting to learn that a running back I charted as having gained 73 yards racked up 123, according to the school's statisticians. It was especially hard to believe because his team ran only two offensive plays during the entire fourth quarter.

One of my colleagues relates another tale: "I covered a basketball game one night where the statisticians had their center down for 21 rebounds. The whole team couldn't have had 21 rebounds — no way. The other team only missed 31 shots."

OFTEN, THIS sports department is left between a rock and a hard place.

One coach will call in one set of statistics, while the opposing coach will call 20 minutes later with a completely different account of what happened. This happens frequently.

Most high school coaches have enough problems coaching their teams, let alone worrying about statistics. It's also tough finding good help these days.

That's why I had reason to doubt the recent assist totals racked up by Livonia Churchill guard Mickey Katschur, who had 12 in one game and 14 Tuesday against Livonia Franklin.

In fact, I went as far as to have somebody crosscheck Katschur to see if these numbers were, indeed, true.

I had reason to be skeptical. How could Mickey Katschur get 14 assists in a 32-minute high school game, when Isaiah Thomas of the Pistons averages only 12 in a 46-minute pro game?

I replayed my suspicion Thursday to Churchill coach Don Albertson, who offered to show me a videotape of the game.

I should have known better. Albertson, a math teacher, is meticulous when it comes to stats. He uses a computer to size up his opponents.

I TOOK Albertson up on his offer and headed over Friday afternoon to Churchill with Morris Moorawnick, the Pistons' chief statistician for more than 25 years.

Moorawnick, who I've worked with periodically on scoring crews at the Silverdome, is a human rulebook. If Sports Illustrated ever decides to do its first piece on a statistician, Moorawnick has got to be the guy.

Because of my experience of working on college and pro scoring crews, I had a pretty good idea of what an assist meant. The reason for bringing Morry along was to bring insight and clarification.

"The important ingredient is immediate reaction (by the shooter) from the pass," said Moorawnick, defining an assist. "The rule says it must be a directed pass — not accidental. You don't give an assist to a man throwing to a blind spot."

AS I KEPT track myself, it became evident that Albertson's statistician, Ann-Nora Hiram, was paying attention and doing a good job.

She obviously wasn't talking or giggling with her friends on the bench like most high school statisticians I see.

"I've worked with her for three years now, and we've taught her what to look for," Albertson said. "She's a senior and understands the game."

Maybe I'll be slightly less incredulous from now on. The first rule will be to consider the source.

"Statistics don't lie, but statisticians often do," said Moorawnick, who has seen it all in the NBA.

"John Mengoli, my all-time favorite Piston player, used to ask me to give him a couple more (assists) at home because they always shorted him on the radio. I refused to do it."

The LA Lakers' scoring crew used to give "team rebounds" to Walt Chamberlain because they didn't know there was a category for "team rebounds." They just figured if the ball went out of bounds, changing possession without anybody touching it, then it should go to Walt because he was their leading rebounder."

IN THE WORLD of high school sports, statistics often are the determining factor when it comes to All-State, All-Observer and All-League picks. Maybe that's why some schools "pad" their figures.

But I've learned one thing for sure, Churchill's stats are for winners.

## Anderson burst lifts North

Junior Rick Anderson broke loose for 38 points and 9 rebounds Friday night, leading North Farmington to a 61-52 Northwest Suburban League (NSL) basketball win over visiting Westland John Glenn.

The Raiders and Glenn are now tied for second place in the NSL at 4-2 each. First place Garden City stayed one game up in the league chase with a 78-63 win at Redford Thurston.

After a 26-all halftime deadlock, North took control with a 16-6 scoring advantage in the third period.

"We didn't play well in the first half," said North coach Tom Negoshian, whose team is 10-3 overall. "But in the second half we got our running game going and that helped offensively."

Anderson, a 6-foot-5 forward, got help from teammates Bob Chwalk (8 points) and Rick Pennala (8 assists).

Senior guard Mike Baydarian scored 22 in a losing cause for Glenn, now 6-7 overall.

"It was Rick's best effort of the year," said Negoshian. "For awhile it was he and Baydarian going back-and-forth — two fine players."

This week North faces two crucial tests, travelling Tuesday to Pontiac Central and Friday to Garden City.

## basketball

HARRISON 53, FARMINGTON 39: Farmington Harrison started slowly, but came on strong in the second and third quarters Friday to put away host Farmington in a Western Lakes struggle.

The Hawks, who trailed 16-6 after one quarter, opened things up with a 23-8 outburst in the second period followed by a 14-7 margin in the third stanza.

Vince Enright led Harrison with 17. Mike Dempsey and Ken George added 12 each for the Western Division leaders, now 9-3 overall and 7-2 in conference play.

"Harrison played a nice defensive game," said Farmington coach Rich Roy. "They killed us on the boards and shut off our inside game."

Bill Robinson scored 10 for the Falcons, now 7-6 overall and 5-2 in the Lakes Division. The Falcons also played without starting 6-7 center Matt Lundy, who left the team earlier in the week.

## Armstrong guides Rice to rout of CC

By C.J. Rieak  
staff writer

Finally, they found an arena large enough for the biggest regular season Catholic League basketball game of the year — University of Detroit's Calihan Hall.

So what happens? What else — the showdowns flare. Birmingham Brother Rice blew Redford Catholic Central off the U-D court 75-52 Friday, a victory that moved the Warriors one step closer to the coveted Catholic League Central Division title.

The game was billed as perhaps the final shootout between two of the best guards in the state: CC's John McIntyre and Rice's B.J. Armstrong.

But the confrontation never developed. Armstrong was superb as he drilled in 11 of his 18 floor attempts and 9 of 10 free throws to finish with a game-high 31 points.

McIntyre, conversely, shot as poorly as he probably felt all week. The normally hot-shooting guard managed to hit just 4 of 29 field goal attempts. He led CC with 12 points.

was responsible for moving the game to U-D after years of taking turns cramming huge crowds into each other's crackerbox gyms. CC hosted Rice at Schoolcraft College earlier this season, which was an improvement, but not enough of one. Schoolcraft's 2,200-seat gym was filled an hour before game-time.

Calihan Hall did not overflow, but the crowd was sizable enough to put smiles of anticipation on the collective faces of the U-D athletic staff in attendance. After all, they own the rights to one of the reasons for the large turnout (estimated at better than 3,000). McIntyre, who has signed to play for the Titans.

Of course, U-D coach Don Slicko certainly hopes whatever was ailing McIntyre — he had been ill and missed practice the entire week — is out of his system by September.

AT THE ONSET of Friday's game it was Rice that looked ill. The Warriors were coming off their first league setback, suffered Tuesday at Warren DeLaSalle.

BROTHER RICE, the home team,

Please turn to Page 3

## U-M or MSU?

John Miller, Farmington Harrison's two-time All-American football player, is expected to announce today where he plans to attend college. Most people close to Miller, including Harrison coach John Herrington, feel Miller has narrowed the vast field down to the University of Michigan and Michigan State. He also visited Ohio State and Penn State. MSU head coach George Perles made his final visit with Miller on Wednesday. Bo Schembechler, head man at U-M, paid his last visit Thursday. Miller said he would make his decision over the weekend.



## Falcons 'bests' not enough

When you compete against a swim team as deep and powerful as Livonia Stevenson, the final score isn't really important. Not to Farmington, anyway.

All right, for the record, Stevenson beat Farmington Thursday 111-80.

The important thing, for the Falcons, is that they swam their best.

Chris Loch swam his best, by far. The sophomore touched at 5:07.7 in the 500-yard freestyle, some 6 seconds better than his previous best. Also, he still finished second to Stevenson's Jeff Albert (5:06.7).

Chris Tellerico swam well also, winning the 100 breaststroke in 1:07.5.

The Falcons also placed 1-2 in the 50 freestyle, with Eric Davis (23.8) and Jay Weaver (24.2).

The Falcons, No. 2 in Observerland, fall to 5-3. Stevenson, No. 1 in the area along with North Farmington, is now 6-1-1.

SPEAKING OF NORTH Farmington, the Raiders rolled by hapless Redford Union Thursday, 130-41.

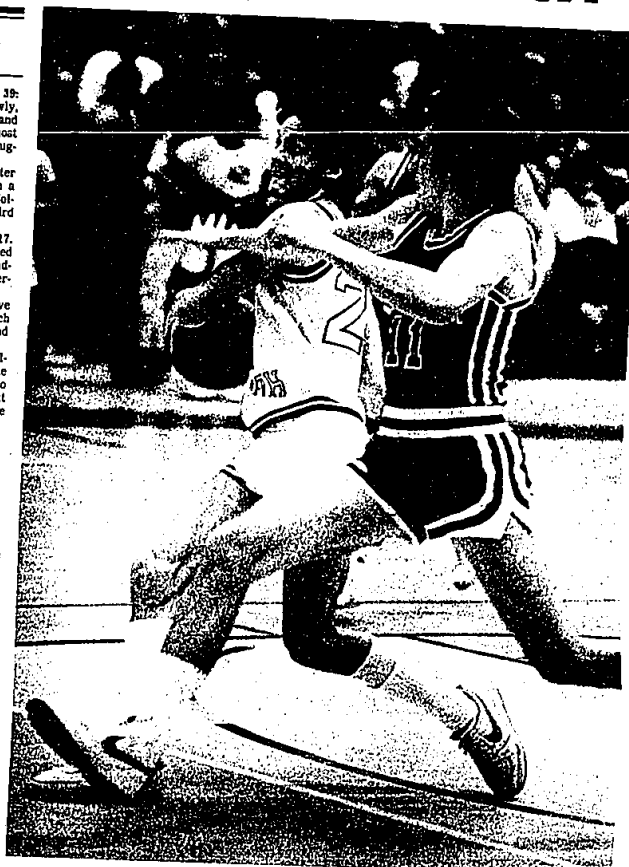
The Raiders were every swimming event (RU's lone first came in diving).

Mike Tunney led the way with victories in the 200 free (1:49.0) and the 500 free (4:54.0).

Other winners were: Craig Burland in the 200 individual medley (1:49.0), Mike Bualti in the 50 free (22.9), Bruce Goins in the 100 butterfly (1:04.5), Brian Collins in the 100 free (49.3), Dave Petterson in the 100 backstroke (1:04.2) and Chris Heintzman in the 100 breaststroke (1:07.4).

Petterson, Brian Goins, Heintzman and Dan Mannisto won the 200 medley relay in 1:49.8. Scott Began, Chris Weir, Scott Simon and Mannisto went 3:40.6 to win the 400 freestyle relay.

The Raiders, who defeated Livonia Churchill on Tuesday 103-89, are now 8-0-1 on the season.



North's Dean Temple drives past a Glenn defender in the Raiders' crucial North-

west Suburban League victory Friday night.

RANDY BORS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Raider strategy flattens Franklin

The statistics will tell you that Julie Pistole's perfect 11 for 11 from the service corner was her big contribution to North Farmington's crucial 15-12, 15-7 volleyball victory over Northwest Suburban League rival Livonia Franklin Wednesday.

But, Raider coach Sandy Lubienicki remembers another, much more subtle, contribution that may have had a bigger impact on the match.

"She went up and blocked Carolyn Smith's first hit," Lubienicki said. "That sort of set the tone."

Carolyn Smith, a Franklin senior, may be the hardest hitter in Observerland. The Raiders were very aware of her presence and took special precautions.

"We didn't want her to control the match so we made some defensive adjustments," Lubienicki said.

One of the adjustments was to have Suzette Greenberg more or less shadow Smith from the back row. That paid off as Greenberg made 8 sensational digs, most on Smith's spikes. Smith, in fact, only scored 4 ace spikes.

"Suzette was just outstanding," Lubienicki said. "It may have been her best match."

North trailed Franklin 12-6 in game one, but Patti Kosciak's thundering serve helped to quickly tie the game.

She served 6 straight points and North was never again hedged.

"Her serves weren't aces, but Franklin did all they could to return them. That allowed us to get our attack going," Lubienicki said.

Donna Konjarevich, a solid performer all season for North, led the attack. She was 9 for 10 at the net with 5 ace spikes. She, in Lubienicki's assessment, was by far the dominant net player in the match on either side.

Brooks Landback was also sharp at the net, nailing 12 of 14.

The win keeps North even with Garden City, both 5-0 in the NSL. Franklin falls back to 3-2. North is 19-5 overall. North travels to Dearborn tonight.

FARMINGTON HARRISON got back on the winning track Wednesday edging Walled Lake Central 15-13, 12-15, 15-6.

"We finally broke out of our slump," said Harrison coach Ron Shortt. "The kids really went after the ball. I'm happy."

Jennifer Hughes (100 percent spiking, 92 percent serving), Kim George (12 of 13 serving with 2 aces, 14 of 16 spiking), Kristi Rugh (10 of 11 serving) and Collette Cashin (13 for 13 serving) were the standouts for Harrison.

The Hawks, 3-3 in the Western Lakes and 9-7 overall, host Plymouth Canton Tuesday.

FARMINGTON dropped a match to Livonia Churchill Wednesday 15-7, 15-5.

"Struggling is not the word for it," said Falcons coach Kim O'Neill. "We just can't get back into the swing of it."

The Falcons are now 2-12 on the season and have dropped 9 straight matches.

"The problem is attitude, mostly. And, because we haven't won, the confidence level is way down," O'Neill said.

Jenny Wischneyer, Farmington's most consistent player this season, had another solid match both in the front row and back row. Pam Faulkner also played well.

Farmington will travel to Bentley (the last team it beat) on Wednesday.