

Sports

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Air-Harrison routs Farmington

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Farmington's first mistake happened Friday, the day prior to its showdown football game with rival Farmington Harrison.

A Falcon football player announced over the school's public address system that he and the rest of the squad would be after the head of Harrison's all-state receiver Brian Smolinski.

The remark got back to Harrison. "Yeah, I heard that," Smolinski said. "But I didn't think they'd be able to do it. It fired me up a little — a lot."

Smolinski stuck his head out there Saturday for all the Falcons to see, but none could get close enough to lay claim to it.

In the Hawks' 42-7 pasting of the Falcons, Smolinski caught eight passes (one shy of the Hawk record) for 128 yards.

"Pass defense, it's just killed us the last two weeks," said Farmington coach Don Kulck. "Smolinski was just outstanding. We knew he would be. He's never played a bad game that I've seen. And their quarterback, Mike Mack, he did a nice job for them."

MACK COMPLETED 13 of 20 passes for 175 yards. He threw touchdown passes of 10 and 14 yards to tight end Rod Sarcevic and he ran for a pair of touchdowns — runs of six and seven yards.

But as impressive as the Harrison victory was, there was little celebrating among the Hawks afterward.

Mark Mecklenborg, Harrison's talented senior half back, defensive back and kicker, will be lost for the season with a knee injury. The injury was sustained after Mecklenborg kicked his fourth extra point of the day in the third quarter. With his leg still raised, a Falcon player collided with him. The knee, according to Harrison's medical staff, was torn both inside and outside.

"This was a great win for us, but it's tough when you lose someone like that," Harrison coach John Herrington said. "He was a senior, he played behind John Miller for two years and was finally getting his chance. It's tough."

THE HAWKS took advantage of some Falcon mistakes early on, then proceeded to systematically dismantle their intra-city rivals.

Harrison, aided by a Farmington pass interference penalty, drove 78 yards in 10 plays on first possession, scoring on Mack's six-yard scamper.

On possession No. 2, the Hawks drove 77 yards in 14 plays, scoring on John Leone's one-yard dive. The big play was a leaping catch by Smolinski at the one-yard line.

Farmington's lone scoring drive was keyed by Eric Green's 35-yard run, a 13-yard pass from Joe Bob Wenson to Chris Boyce. Jim Laird scored the TD on a six-yard run.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Mark Mecklenborg, Harrison's senior halfback, defensive back and kicker, is likely to be lost for the season after sustaining a knee injury in the Hawks 42-7 win Saturday.

Green gained 85 yards rushing and caught a pass for 20 yards. He accounted for 73 of Farmington's 88 yards total offense in the second half. On the day, Farmington gained 217 total yards, 133 on the ground.

"Our defense wasn't that great, but it wasn't that bad either," Herrington said. "I thought (tackle) Don Swiney

played a good game."

Hawk defenders picked off two Wenson passes, one each by Jim Haefer and Sean Norton.

Harrison's second offensive unit looked as impressive as its first. Quarterback Mark Murray completed three of three passes for 46 yards, including a 19-yard TD strike to Gary Schwedt.

HARRISON 42, FARMINGTON 7

First quarter

Harrison — Mike Mack, 6-yard run. (Mark Mecklenborg kick).
Harrison — John Leone, 1-yard run. (Mecklenborg kick).

Second quarter

Farmington — Jim Laird, 6-yard run. (Bruce Kraft kick).
Harrison — Rob Sarcevic, 10-yard pass from

Mike Mack. (Geoff Witte ran in 2-point conversion).

Third quarter

Harrison — Mike Mack, 7-yard run. (Mecklenborg kick).
Harrison — Rod Sarcevic, 14-yard pass from Mack. (Mecklenborg kick).

Fourth quarter

Harrison — Gary Schwedt, 19-yard pass from Mark Murray. (Kick failed).

football

No joke: Western upsets Raiders

Walled Lake Western 20, North Farmington 0 — It's not a misprint.

One of the area's vaunted football programs took it squarely on the chin from a team considered to be a weak sister in the Western Lakes this season Friday night.

"No, I'm not shocked at all," said North coach Jim O'Leary. "I've seen this coming for weeks. We've told these kids over and over that talent does not win football games."

"We have not had one good practice in five weeks. I keep harping that you can't play good football on Friday or Saturday if you don't play good in practice. They think they can just turn it on and off whenever they feel like it."

WESTERN, A team that lost badly in its season opener against Novi, turned it on Friday.

Mike Hall, a sophomore tailback, scored three touchdowns and gained 141 yards in 19 carries. He also completed a 39-yard pass on a halfback option and caught a pass for 15 yards.

Hall's TD were on runs of one, 19 and 35 yards.

Raider mistakes put Western in scoring position. Western drove the North two in its first possession, but the Raider defense grounded the drive at that point. But a Raider fumble gave the Warriors the ball right back and they scored.

It was that way all night as North's offense sputtered. The Raiders picked up two first downs rushing and four passing on the night. North gained 110 yards total offense.

"I told the kids after that this was a heckuva way to learn a lesson, but it was coming," O'Leary said. "It's a non-league loss, so really it doesn't mean anything. We can still win the league and division. But I told them, don't come back Monday if you're not ready to play."

— Chris McCosky

Mercy falls in final minute of 'Classic'

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Franthea Price held the ball at the top of the key as the final minute ticked away in Saturday night's championship game of the Mercy Hoops Classic.

Suddenly she dribbled twice between her legs, drove to the basket and dialed off sweetly to teammate Jessica McCrary, who scored what proved to be the winning basket.

It was near poetry — defending Class B state champion River Rouge 42, host Farmington Hills Mercy 41.

It was a typical performance for Price: 18 points and Most Valuable Player honors.

And it was a somewhat typical Mercy performance — intelligent game plan, rugged defense and a fourth-quarter press that left Mercy one basket shy of victory.

"I CAN'T be anything but encouraged with this game," said Mercy coach Larry Baker. "To lose by a point to the team that most consider the best in the state is certainly no disgrace."

After a 10-10 first quarter, turnovers and missed shots helped put the Marlins in a hole, 26-17 at the half and 32-25 after three quarters.

Mercy played the first three quarters in a zone defense to try and minimize Price's offensive skills.

basketball

The game plan almost worked. Mercy was able to stay close while keeping some people fresh for the fourth quarter.

THE MARLINS sprung their vaunted man-to-man press in that final quarter. With guards Jean Wassenberg and Yvette Maison doing a large share of the work, Mercy erased a seven-point deficit and eventually pulled ahead 37-36.

Rouge's Marketta Hightower (10 points) scored two baskets to put Rouge back on top.

After a Michelle Fryatt hoop, Price set up McKeever with 1:35 left to make it 42-39 Rouge.

Missy Duczynski made two clutch free throws with 13 seconds left to pull within one.

Mercy got the ball back with eight seconds left, but the final shot missed its mark.

"THAT LAST shot was symptomatic of the entire night for us," Baker said. "No, it was not the shot we wanted, but that was hardly the scapegoat on a night when we made excessive turnovers (25) and shot poorly."

Duczynski and Terri Nalodka led Mercy (3-1) with 14 points each. Terri Ford pulled down 14 rebounds.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Yvette Maison (No. 41) played a cool hand for Farmington Hills Mercy during the fifth annual Mercy Hoops Classic Thursday and Saturday.

4th quarter charge nets North a victory

North Farmington's first entry into Western Lakes girls basketball competition was successful Thursday night as the Raiders defeated Livonia Stevenson 48-34.

The game was deadlocked at 30 after three periods. Two things occurred which gave North the upper hand.

No. 1, Stevenson's Kelly Kowalski fouled out in the final seconds of the third quarter. She scored 15 points and was the Spartans' floor leader.

No. 2, North deployed a ferocious full court press that Stevenson never managed to adjust to.

The result: a 19-4 edge for North in the final quarter.

"The big thing for us was Kelly Kowalski coming off the floor," Raider coach Greg Grodzicki said. "They just aren't the same team without her. And our press made all the difference in the world. We got five baskets off the transition with the press and some free throws."

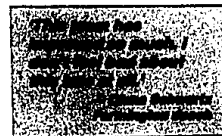
Mo Paradis provided the offensive spark in the final quarter, pumping in seven of her 10 points.

Heather McPhillips, though, was North's top weapon. She scored 17 points and grabbed 11 rebounds. Suzie Butcher contributed 10 rebounds to the cause.

North is 2-0 on the season. Stevenson falls to 1-2.

JOHN GLENN 51, FARMINGTON 37: Western's John Glenn won the first quarter 15-1 and thus the game Thursday night.

Farmington (0-3) played the Rockets even over the course of the final three



quarters (36-36), which to Falcon coach Diana Schwartz was a victory in itself.

"This team has improved so much," the first-year coach said. "I don't feel bad about this loss at all."

Stacy Swandorski had the hot hand for Farmington, pumping in 13 points, most on long-range jump shots.

"It's a good thing there wasn't a three-point shot rule," said Glenn coach George Sommerman. "The way she was shooting, we'd have been in trouble."

Mary Kay Orticco came off the bench to bolster Farmington's defense. She also chipped in nine points.

Jenny Olson led all scorers with 14 points for Glenn (3-0).

FRANKLIN 66, HARRISON 28: Tracy Leckia scored 22 and Gayle Chesdie 14 to pace Livonia Franklin (3-0) Thursday in another Western Lakes match.

Farmington Harrison (0-3) got a strong game from Jennifer Hughes, eight points.

The Hawks were defeated Tuesday by John Glenn, 56-14.