

Raiders stun Canton, 1-0

soccer

Scratch Plymouth Canton from your list of contenders for the Western Lakes Soccer League title.

That's what North Farmington did Monday with a jarring 1-0 victory. "I can't really call this an upset," said North coach Cathy Cole. "We played hard. I think we caught Plymouth Canton sleeping."

It was an inopportune time for the Chiefs to go to sleep.

Canton, with a 6-3-1 league record, trails undefeated league-leader Stevenson by seven points with five league matches remaining.

The first time Canton played North it fired 48 shots on goalie Dennis McCarthy and only scored twice. Fitting then, that with only eight shots Monday the Chiefs were unable to beat the talented McCarthy.

"Our defense was very strong," Cole said. "We kept the ball out of midfield which is their strength."

With 10 minutes left in the game, Jorge Lopez knocked home a throw-in pass from Karsten Fetto for the lone goal of the match.

For North, 4-4-1 in the Western Lakes, it was an encouraging way to kick off a four-game-in-four-day stretch.

"We'll play them one at a time," Cole said. "We'll eat, drink and sleep soccer."

PRE-REGIONAL MATCHES

PLYMOUTH CANTON 2, DEARBORN 0: Brad Neville and Steve Morrell teamed up on both goals Tuesday to advance Canton to the pre-regional draw. The Chiefs will be the winner of the Northville-Ypsilanti qualifier next Tuesday.

Neville scored the first goal on an assist from Morrell in the first half. In the second half, Neville assisted Morrell.

S'craft kickers dump region rival

Schoolcraft College unleashed an offensive monster Saturday against visiting Delta Community College.

The Ocelots men's soccer squad did anything and everything it pleased against outmanned Delta — everything, that is, except score an abundance of goals. Still, a 3-0 shutout was good enough to keep Schoolcraft atop the Region XII standings with a perfect 4-0 record halfway through the league season. The Ocelots are 6-1 overall.

"We played a lot better (than against Cuyahoga Metro CC earlier last week)," said Delta coach Van Dimitriou. "We dominated this team, and they're the next best team in the conference behind Macomb and us. The score could have been 10-0."

It certainly could have been better than 3-0, had the Ocelots not missed a penalty kick in the first half and two clean breakaways in the second. Matt Pace failed on the penalty kick and John Gelmi (from Livonia Stevenson) and Rick Hamers missed on the breakaways.

BUT IT DIDN'T matter because Delta (2-2 in the region) uncorked just one shot in the opening half to 17 for Schoolcraft. The Ocelots added 13 more shots on goal in the second half.

Livonia Stevenson graduate Joe Novak took a Hamers pass and turned it into Schoolcraft's first

goal, 11 minutes into the game. The rest of the scoring belonged to Hamers, a native of Leek, Netherlands. The midfielder converted a Mark Konopatzki pass to make it 2-0 with three minutes left in the opening half. Hamers got the Ocelots final score with four minutes left to play Gelmi assisting.

Dimitriou praised the play of Hamers, Gelmi, Novak, Konopatzki (Garden City) and defender Scott Steiner (Plymouth Salem). Jeff Vrakratas (Livonia Clarenceville) earned the shoutout.

"There's no question this team is much more talented than last year's," said Dimitriou when asked to compare his present squad with last season's Region XII champion. "I'd just like to see it on the scoreboard more."

The Ocelots host Macomb CC in a pivotal conference battle at 2 p.m. Saturday. Macomb is 3-1 in league play, its only loss coming against Schoolcraft by a 5-3 margin.

LADY OCELOTS STUMBLE

Schoolcraft's women's soccer team fell victim to injuries, illness and tough competition over the weekend, losing 4-2 to Monroe (N.Y.) Community College Saturday and tying Miami (Ohio) University 1-1 Sunday. Both games were played at Schoolcraft.

Christian tallies 3, OU tops Spring Arbor

Could this be the conjuring of a witch? Or possibly the results of a dark deal cast with the devil?

Who would blame Oakland University men's soccer coach Gary Parsons if any of these thoughts crossed his mind at halftime of Saturday's game at Spring Arbor College?

OU coach Parsons said the game had been played all season by shots bouncing off crossbars and missed opportunities, and now the Pioneers were tied 2-2 with a team that had won just two of its seven previous games.

Whatever force was at work departed early in the second half. The

Pioneers' Mark Christian delivered a clear message that it was too early for Halloween, scoring twice in the second half and three times in all to lift OU to a 3-2 triumph at Spring Arbor.

Before OU could escape with the victory, it had to endure some pretty scary stuff. Not that Spring Arbor mounted a vicious offensive attack — it managed just three shots in the game — but the goals scored against OU goalkeeper Paul Larkin were mystifying.

Gray Haisel put the Pioneers ahead 1-0 at the 8:11 mark, finishing a play started by forward Meally Freeman. Freeman

stole the ball at midfield and passed it to Christian, who sent it back to Haisel.

THE FUNNY STUFF started when Spring Arbor's Dave Saxe scored five minutes later, beating Larkin one-on-one. Saxe appeared to be clearly offside but the goal stood up.

Christian got his first goal at 33:49 on a neat pass-and-run feed from Haisel, who took a pass from defender Chan-Ho Allen.

Spring Arbor tied it six minutes later without a shot. Saxe's corner kick bounced to OU's Marty Hagen, who tried to clear



Harrison's Mike Young (on ground) takes a spill and is about to take Farmington's Dave Fraunhelm down with him. Symbolic photo: Both teams were dumped from the state tournament Tuesday.

Harrison lost a Western Lakes match to Livonia Churchill Monday, 2-1.

ANN ARBOR PIONEER 2, FARMINGTON 1: After a convincing 7-0 pounding of Royal Oak Dondoro Monday, the Falcons came up a bit flat Tuesday.

"We just didn't play up to our potential," said Harrison coach Chris Hackman, who scored three

goals Monday, brought Farmington even with Pioneer halfway through the second half. But, with 1:50 left, Pioneer scored the game winner.

Farmington, 5-6-1 overall, got two goals from Jerry Potter on Monday.

Other pre-regional qualifying games: Livonia Franklin 4, Garden City 3; Livonia Stevenson 11, Walled Lake Central 1; Livonia Churchill 4, Dearborn Edsel Ford 1.

Sub-par officials hurting soccer

PETE SCERRI is absolutely correct. Mike Morgan is correct. Ken Johnson, Paul Sceluna, Ed Barrtram, John Nef, Cathy Cole — they are all 100 percent, on-the-nose, correct.

The level of officiating in high school soccer in the Observerland area stinks.

The coaches have been saying this all year. They've been complaining in the newspapers, and they've been complaining to their respective athletic directors.

Their beef is simple: The level of officiating is far below the level of soccer talent in this area. And the officials are ruining the game.

The athletic directors, for the most part, have not been sympathetic with their coaches. The standard reaction from ADs is to reprimand coaches for blasting officials in the newspapers, on the field, or wherever.

I'VE WITNESSED four soccer matches this season. Colleague Brad Emons another four. In virtually every match, the officials lost control of game situations.

The worst was Monday night, Plymouth Salem and Livonia Stevenson battled in a key Western Lakes match. The players were hustling up and down the field, but the officials could not keep up the pace. They were out of position most of the night. Free kicks and indirect kicks were mysteriously, seemingly arbitrarily, awarded — especially late in the match.

Both teams were confused and angry. It got to the point where every official's ruling was challenged either by a player or a coach.

The result was a dramatic 2-1 win for Stevenson and the 195th win for coach Pete Scerri. But afterward, before congratulating his players, he berated the officials.

"Why don't you referee Little League before you come referee here?" he raged at one official. "You are doing an injustice here."

The referee's feeble reply: "Why don't you referee them?"



Chris McCosky

I'M NOT going to list officials' names in this story because I don't feel these men are the villains. They don't referee poorly on purpose. They are simply unqualified to officiate at such a high level of play.

The villains in this case is the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA).

All you have to do to become a high school soccer official is fill out an application with the MHSAA. There is no formal test required. No previous experience is needed, and, as far as the state is concerned, no knowledge of the game is required.

The MSHAA requires its basketball and football officials to take a test. Baseball umpires have their own governing association. But anyone who wants to, and can sign their name, can referee soccer.

This, to me and to all the coaches in the area, is an outrage. Players devote a large part of their young lives to developing their soccer skills. Why should their talent be upstaged, diluted in some cases, by shabby officiating?

THE MICHIGAN High School Soccer Coaches Association needs to go before the MHSAA and fight tooth and nail to improve the state of officiating in their sport.

And athletic directors, instead of chastising the coaches for their criticism of the officials, should stop hiring officials that draw the complaints.

The coaches are not crybabies. And they are not poor sports. They are concerned that the poor quality of officiating is ruining their game.



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