

Sports

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Hawks, North ride emotional seesaw

Harrison robbed, but victorious at N'ville

By Brad Emons
staff writer

They tried a remake of "Against All Odds" at the Northville High School gym Friday night, but Farmington Harrison's basketball team ruined the script, scoring a 71-64 victory.

The win all but assured unbeaten Harrison (14-0) of a Western Division title and a spot in the Western Lakes Activities Association (WLA) championship game on Feb. 28. The Hawks have now opened up a three-game lead on second place Northville with only four league games remaining on the schedule.

"We can't relax," warned Harrison coach Mike Teachman, whose team travels Tuesday to Livonia Churchill and Friday to Plymouth Canton. "We've got a target on our back — somebody wants to be the first one to beat us. And we don't want it."

Harrison overcame an assortment of obstacles in gaining the victory at the new Northville facility.

THE HOST MUSTANGS, taking advantage of some questionable calls, got into the bonus situation early, making seven of eight free throws to take a 17-12 first quarter lead.

Harrison, however, got the lead back, 27-25, on a Ken George shot with 2:30 left in the half. The Hawks ran off 10 straight points during the surge before Northville could answer.

The Hawks went into the lockerroom leading 32-29, but found they had lost their valuables, discovering the place had been ransacked by thieves.

"I told them at the half that they could steal our possessions, but they can't steal our pride," Teachman said. "Then we talked about stopping (Don) Norton."

Norton, the long-range gunner for the Mustangs, had 12 first-half points, but was held to only one in the second half.

Teachman said much of the credit goes to defenders Scott Bissell, Jon Weisberg and Jeff Hoskow.

"WEISBERG was super off the bench," said the Harrison coach. "We had quality off the bench all night."

Salem hits high-water team score

How good is Observerland gymnastics this season? Three teams have reached the magical team-score plateau of 130 this season, that's how good.

Plymouth Salem joined North Farmington and Farmington Harrison at the high water mark after defeating Ypsilanti Thursday, 131.15-101.65.

The 131.15 is the highest team score earned in the area to date and the highest team score earned in Salem's history.

"The judging might have been a little lenient in a couple areas but we really came through," said Salem coach Kathi Kinsella. "I knew we'd hit 130 before too long."

Both Ruffall, the talented senior, led the way with a 34.2 all-around performance. She won on vault with an 8.55, placed second on uneven parallel bars with an 8.05, tied for first with teammate Jackie Huff on balance beam each with an 8.7 and won floor exercise with an 8.5.

Huff scored her highest all-around of the season, 33.8. Besides her 8.7 on beam, she placed second on vault (8.45), third on bars (7.85) and tied for second with teammate Becky Talbot on floor (8.8).

Talbot had her best meet of the season so far, tallying 32.7. She placed third on vault (8.15), first on bars (8.1) and third on beam (7.85) in addition to her 8.8 on floor.

"The thing that put us over the top, though, was our backup people," Kinsella said. "They really came through for us. That's what I'm counting on." Sue Lally, Dana Holda and Amy Fatori were singled out by the coach. Holda, a freshman, placed fourth on both vault (7.9) and bars (7.65). Lally placed fourth on floor (7.8) and Sharon Way placed fourth on beam (7.35). Fatori scored season-high in all four events.

"Every one of our scores that count-

basketball

"Bissell started slow, but he made some big shots in the second half. And Hoskow is our spiritual leader. He kicked some tall at the half and hit two big free throws for us (at the end.)"

Although Northville pulled even on two different occasions late in the third quarter, Harrison was able to earn the victory by dominating the boards.

Center Will Lund was most instrumental, grabbing 15 rebounds to go along with 18 points. Bissell also scored 18 points, while George and Rod Sarcevic contributed 10 and eight, respectively. All told, nine different Harrison players scored.

After the Hawks built a 12-point lead midway through the fourth quarter, Northville came charging back one last time, pulling within five with just under a minute left.

HARRISON, HOWEVER, withstood the challenge, making eight straight free throws in the final 52 seconds.

"This was our biggest ballgame of the year to date," Teachman said. "We overcame a lot of things. The kids lost a lot of sentimental things."

Northville coach Omar Harrison gave credit to the Hawks.

"Their people know their roles and they do the things have to do to win," he said. "Our strength is our outside shooting. That makes us or breaks us. We had some decent shots and they just didn't fall."

"And another thing was that box-and-one (defense) on Norton. He had only one (point) in the second half."

Mike Hillinger, Matt Hinds and Kirk Morrison each scored 14 points in a losing cause. The loss dropped the Mustangs to 10-4 overall and 9-3 in the WLA.

"It's pretty much settled," said Northville coach, "but if they (Harrison) win our division, I hope they win it all."



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Scott Bissell (No. 40) has the ball stripped from him by Northville's Don Norton during the Hawks' 71-64 victory Friday night.

North puts Rockets down but never out

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

You've heard coaches talk of the killer instinct. It's the ability to put an opponent away once you've got them down.

North Farmington will be spending the next few days pondering the sudden disappearance of its killer instinct in Friday night's gut-wrenching 60-58 loss to rival Westland John Glenn.

It's the first time in recent memory that Glenn won a basketball game in the North gym.

If the Raiders want to see what a killer instinct looks like, all they have to do is replay the game film and keep all eyes on Glenn's Steve Hawley.

North Farmington did everything it could to badger Hawley. The fiery junior was shackled in the first half. He was goaded into traveling violations. He forced shots. He scored only six points in the half.

In the second half he won the game for Glenn.

He fired in 19 of his game-high 25 points in the final half, 11 in the fourth quarter.

HE SCORED the last six points of the game for the Rockets, including a dramatic pull-up jumper from just beyond the free throw line with four seconds left to snap the 58-58 tie.

"Yes, we wanted Steve to take that last shot," said Glenn coach Gordie Davis. "He's our best shooter, and if he gets fouled he's tough at the line. He's got so much confidence, he thinks he can score from anywhere, and usually he does."

To fully appreciate Hawley and the Rockets' win, you have to view it in total perspective.

North Farmington was poised to blow the Rockets away. The Raiders jumped out to a 6-0 lead and didn't trail until a Hawley basket with 2:09 left in the game put Glenn on top.

North led by eight at halftime. It led by 10 late in the third quarter. It led by five points with four minutes left in the game.

"It just makes you so proud of these guys the way they played defense and scrapped," said Davis. "It was one of the more emotional games we've had — just the way they wouldn't give up."

The guys were just so determined."

GLENN BEGAN to pick up momentum early in the final quarter. Down 48-39, junior Andy Graziulis hit a long jump shot and two free throws.

Hawley then made things real interesting hitting a driving layup and a foul shot — three-point play. With 6:14 left, North's lead was 50-46.

It looked as if North would survive the flurry after Jim Ragland knifed through the Rocket defense for two to put the Raiders back up by five with four minutes left.

But North would not score another field goal the rest of the way.

Baskets by Graziulis and Gerry Diets-Spitt pulled Glenn to within one, 55-54, with 2:39 left.

North missed two layups in successive possessions.

Hawley answered with a 12-foot jumper and a pair of free throws to put Glenn ahead 58-55 with 40 seconds left.

North's Rick Anderson, who was held in check by a box-and-one defensive alignment, made one of two free throws with 30 seconds left.

RAGLAND AND Paul Wahrman forced a Glenn turnover with 16 seconds to play. Ragland was fouled on the steal. He calmly sank two free throws to tie the game.

After a North timeout, Glenn worked the ball around the perimeter to Hawley. He got the ball with nine seconds left and counting. He dribbled to the left of the free throw circle and pulled up hard — shaking Wahrman, who was defending on him.

With four seconds left, the shot swished through. North never got off a final shot.

Glenn has a heckuva team," said a quipped, but not too distraught Raider coach Tom Negoshian. "It just came down to them hitting the shot and we didn't. It wasn't a case where we beat ourselves. We played very hard."

"I think this is the type of game where the kids will go home and feel real bad for a while. But after they think about it, they'll feel good because they really played well. I hope this is the type of game we can build from. If

Please turn to Page 2

Boles to U-M, Nash goes west

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Tony Boles confirmed Thursday what everybody pretty much knew all along.

The All-State running back from Westland John Glenn verbally committed Thursday to the University of Michigan. He will sign a national letter-of-intent Wednesday with the Fiesta Bowl champions.

Boles expressed his desire to stay in the state and was leaning toward U-M as early as last fall.

Meanwhile, another area blue chipper, Redford Catholic Central tackle Dan Nash, rated the top lineman in the state, will attend Stanford in Palo Alto, Calif.

Nash, a 6-foot-4, 235-pound two-way tackle, made just one visit, Jan. 17-19, to Stanford and cancelled scheduled trips to Notre Dame and Michigan. He verbally committed to Cardinal coach Jack Elway on Jan. 24.

Boles, who helped Glenn reach the state playoffs, rushed for 1,528 yards and 17 touchdowns this year.

MICHIGAN STATE also made a strong pitch for the 6-2, 195-pound runner, but Boles chose coach Bo Schembechler and his staff.

"I'm glad the pressure made me choose U-M," Boles said. "Bo came out to the school to talk to me a couple of times. He's a nice guy to talk to. He motivates you, and he makes you like his school a lot."

"I'm glad the pressure (of recruiting) is over. It was getting on my nerves, especially State. They were really recruiting me hard — coming to school all the time and coming to my (basketball) games."

football

Michigan is stockpiling running backs. The Wolverines have also received commitments from Warren DeLaSalle's Allen Jefferson and an all-state running back from Ohio. Southfield's All-Stater Torin Dorn is also considering Michigan.

"When Tony was going through the recruiting process, he didn't care who was going where," Glenn coach Chuck Gordon said. "His whole decision was based on where he felt comfortable and that was at U-M. The fact that Lorenzo White (a junior All-American running back) was at MSU had no effect on his decision."

NASH, WHO HAS a 3.94 grade-point average at CC, said he chose Stanford because of its strong academic program. He plans to major in engineering.

"The toughest part was going away from home, but I thought a lot about it," Nash said. "The advantages outweighed the disadvantages."

"The first time I was on campus, the coaches and players had a positive attitude. They were a bunch of winners. I wanted to go there since last year."

Two of Nash's talented teammates at CC, Nick Varajan and Ken Wandzel, made commitments last month and will sign Wednesday with Toledo and Michigan State, respectively.

Other expected area signings include Farmington Harrison wide receiver Brian Smolinski (with MSU) and Glenn tackle Don Croft (with Ferris State).



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Debbie Ford chalks up before her bar routine. She earned a fourth on bars for Farmington

Thursday night against Hartland.

ed were state qualifying scores," Kinsella said.

The Rocks are 6-2 on the season.

PLYMOUTH CANTON dropped a heartbreaker to Westland John Glenn Thursday, 121.9-119.65.

Debbie Tomasko and Angie Tomelko led the way for the Rockets. Tomasko won both the vault (8.5) and floor (8.75), placed second on bars (7.6) and third on beam (7.7).

Tomelko won bars (8.1), placed third on vault (7.9), second on beam (7.9) and second on floor (8.45).

Sharon Moran garnered the lone first for the Chiefs. She won beam with an 8.1.

Darcy Gignac placed second on vault (8.25), fourth on bars (7.2) and sixth on beam (7.3) for the Chiefs.

Megan McGow earned a third for Canton on bars (7.45). Maureen McLean placed fourth on vault (7.85) and Carol Horvath earned a fourth on beam (7.65). Brenda Perry placed fourth on floor (7.65).

Mary Jo Charron placed fifth on bars (6.9) and fifth on beam (7.55). The Chiefs fall to 2-4. Glenn is 7-3.

CLARENCEVILLE earned its highest score of the season Wednesday beating Trenton 117.30-111.35. Julie Jacob won both beam (7.90) and floor (8.30) for the Trojans. Roberta

Stevens won vault (7.80) and Denise Ahnert won on bars (7.35).

Cville is 5-3 on the season.

FARMINGTON, too, posted its season's-best team score, accumulating 115.1 points Thursday. But the Falcons were hosting powerful Hartland, which tallied 127.8. The loss dropped Farmington to 3-6.

Jackie Daly was the team's lone bright spot. She was first in the vault (8.8) and balance beam (8.8), third in the uneven bars (7.7) and fourth in the floor exercise (8.1).

Farmington's only other top four finisher was Debbie Ford, who was fourth in the bars (7.3).