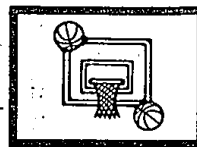


Sports

Chris McCooky, Brad Emons editors/591-2312



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(F10)

basketball Rocks crush Falcons

The Plymouth Salem basketball team is a lot like the movie character Rocky. If you either of them pound away inside your defense, you will get hurt badly.

Ask Farmington.
Tuesday night, Salem pounded the ball inside, repeated in the early going at Farmington. The result was a 21-7 first quarter lead and eventually a runaway 65-52 Salem win.

Rick Taylor, 6-8 center, and Mike Hale, 6-5 forward, did most of the body punching for the Rocks. Taylor finished with 17 points and Hale had 16. Hale scored 12 in the first quarter, Taylor seven.

Bryan Kears, the man responsible for getting the ball inside to the big men, found time to score 15 points.

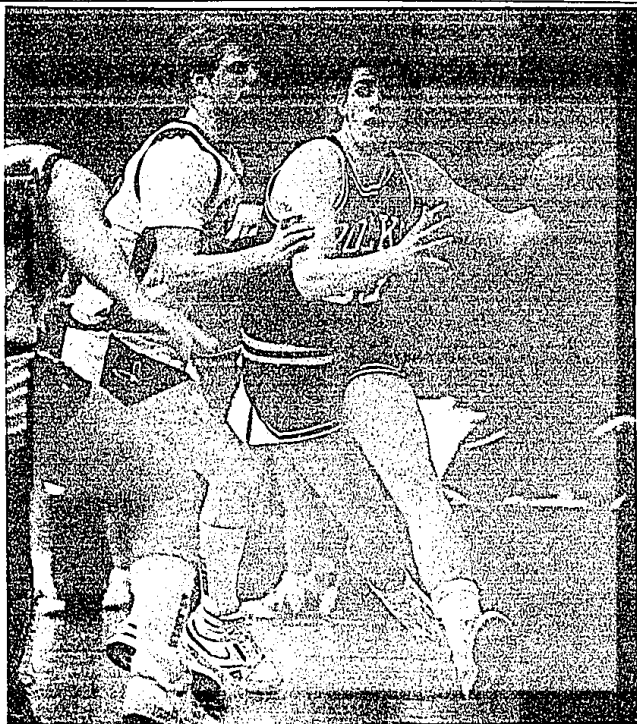
Farmington (1-12 in the Western Lakes, 1-15 overall) had only one counter-puncher, Senior Ron Jones scored 19 points, 11 of 15 from the free throw line.

The Rocks (12-1 in the league and 14-2 overall) are gearing up for a return bout with Lakes Division leader Westland John Glenn. The unspoken Rockets who rolled Livonia Stevenson 58-38 Tuesday, will host Salem a week from Friday.

CANTON 75, FRANKLIN 57: Western Lakes Western Division co-leader Plymouth Canton bounced back strong after a tough defeat at Churchill Friday.

Roger Trice pumped in 21 points, Brad Carey (12) and Jeff Anulewicz (10) combined for 22 to keep the Chiefs in step with Farmington Harrison, a 73-55 winner against Churchill Tuesday.

Canton will travel to Harrison Friday to break the tie atop the



HANDY BORST/staff photographer

Salem's Rick Taylor (dark jersey) drives past Farmington's Andrew Boden Tuesday night. Taylor pumped in 17 points to lead the Rocks to victory.

Western Division. Both are 8-5 in the league.

"Psychologically, this gave us a big lift," said Canton coach Tom Niemi. "We played real well."

Mike McCool scored 14 and Chris

Parent 12 to lead Livonia Franklin (1-12 in the league, 1-14 overall).

The Chiefs are 9-7 on the season. **PLYMOUTH CHRISTIAN 61, MANOGIAN 32:** Kyle Mavin scored 15 points and grabbed 10 re-

bounds to pace Plymouth Christian Tuesday afternoon. Mike Warmbler added 13 points.

The Eagles are 14-1 on the season, 10-1 in the Michigan Independent Athletic Conference.

Hawks set for divisional clash

Bring on the Chiefs. Farmington Harrison's ready.

The Hawks blew past Livonia Churchill Tuesday night 73-55, setting up what could be the showdown for the Western Lakes Western Division basketball title Friday.

The Hawks and Plymouth Canton, both 8-5 in league play, will meet at Harrison Friday to sever the tie.

Scott Bissell and Brad Ridgeway led the assault Tuesday. Each had

18 points on nine field goals. Bissell hit 9-of-13 shots and Ridgeway 9-of-15. Ridgeway also had 11 rebounds and three blocks.

Harrison shot a blistering 30-for-53 from the floor. Churchill was considerably cooler, 19-for-46.

"Scott had silver dollars in his eyes," said Harrison coach Mike Teachman. "He really wanted the ball."

Chad Burgess chipped in 10 points for the winners and Mike Koroly got a triple-eight: eight

points, eight rebounds and eight assists.

Brad Wylie scored 12 and John Knittel 10 for the Chargers (9-7 in the league and 6-10 overall).

"Churchill tried everything defensively," Teachman said. "They tried traps and presses, we just kept hitting the open man."

The Hawks are 5-6 on the season. **W.L. CENTRAL 47, N. FARMINGTON 42:** You know times are bad at North Farmington when the

team scores a measly 42 points at home.

The Raiders fell behind 20-19 at half against Walled Lake Central Tuesday and could come only as close as three points.

Chuck Howard (17) and Rob Knapp (10) led North in scoring. Mark O'Hanlon and Kevin Harrelld each scored 12 for Central.

The Raiders are 5-8 in the Western Lakes and 6-9 overall. Central is 9-4 in the league, 9-6 overall.



C.J. Risak

St. Mary's still seeks answers to cage woes

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM at St. Mary's College?

Maybe that's it. Ask any number of people familiar with the school's athletic program and they'd probably answer, "Is there a problem?"

To me there is. And I can't quite put my finger on what it is. I admit I'm confused.

This much I know: St. Mary's is the same small (enrollment under 500) four-year college that used to be called Orchard Lake St. Mary's College. Early this year, athletic officials let it be known that from now on they were to be referred to as St. Mary's College. "Orchard Lake St. Mary's is the prep school," insisted Tim Domke.

Well, excuse me. The former name had always been good enough before, but now St. Mary's College is expanding its academic horizons. And as it has stretched those horizons, Domke has sought to enlarge its athletic program, too.

Particularly its basketball program. Domke, if you didn't know, is the basketball coach at St. Mary's. Or was. Or still is, sort of.

Let's just say his title is another part of the confusion.

Anyway, getting back to what is certain: St. Mary's does have a basketball team. And its record, after a 92-89 thumping at Wayne State Monday, was 11-16. Those are undeniable facts, or nearly so, since one of the Eagles' wins came after University of Michigan-Dearborn forfeited a victory over St. Mary's because of an ineligible player.

At any rate, it's more certain than last year's record, which was listed as 17-22 in the team's preseason fact sheet. Fact is, St. Mary's won fewer than eight of the games it played last season.

ANOTHER FACT: According to people who should know — meaning the guys who coach the team — St. Mary's is supposed to have its most talented team ever. Now. Currently, I've been covering sports a few years and something here doesn't add up. The Eagles have had good teams in the past. They were in the NAIA District 23 playoffs just a few years ago.

So how can this be their most talented team and be so unsuccessful?

There have been some toughies on the schedule — University of Detroit, Ball State, Eastern Michigan — but there have been some softies, too, like Aquinas, Grand Rapids Baptist, Flint Jordan and, yes, UM-D. St. Mary's has been beaten by them all.

A program searching for the ladder to the top is instead in a broken elevator, plummeting toward the basement.

The only answer I can offer is confusion. I'm not sure I understand what's going on, and I don't think the players do, either.

Let's start at the top: coaching. That's Domke. And Rich Zaleski. Zaleski used to be Domke's assistant. At one point, after last season, it seemed Domke was going to step aside and let Zaleski coach. Then there was a change of plans, or of minds, or whatever, and Domke decided to return.

Finally, it was settled: They'd both coach. Both sit on the bench. Both guide the team. Zaleski does the recruiting. When talking about recruits, both share a tendency toward the super-spectacular. For instance, all their recruits are "better than anyone we have now." Every year it's the same, which leads one to wonder how they ever won any games at all in previous seasons.

But that's not so unusual because coaches always talk like that. It's when the players start believing it that it becomes dangerous.

The current Eagles did believe the accolades, the raves. Which is why, after winning six of their first seven games, they have won just five of the last 20.

AGAINST WSU MONDAY, they seemed lost at times. They were capable of playing at the same level as the Tartans for a while, but then they got sidetracked and ended up — well, directionless.

Perhaps that's been the Eagles' biggest problem to date. They are capable of playing on the same level with any team on their schedule — from Ball State (which they narrowly lost to) to UM-D (a 3-28 team that trounced them).

The program does not appear to be on a solid foundation. More than half the roster (eight of 14) is transfer students, including seven from junior colleges. Most coaches believe junior college players can augment a program but can't build one.

Despite the praise for the players they've recruited, only 6-foot-5 forward Jon Bow seems truly capable of consistently solid play. Theodis Pearson is talented but inconsistent. The rest are an assortment of role players who don't seem to have a role yet — 27 games into the season.

EXAMPLE: AT the beginning of the season, the co-coaches had three "solid" point guards in Clarence Jones, Lance Davis and Greg Spragins. They had lots of talented shooting guard candidates in Bob Bringman, Tim Morton, James Lakes and Jim Butcher.

WHICH MAKES me wonder why.

Please turn to Page 4

Eastern and Hillsdale land Observerland football stars

By Brad Emons staff writer

College football coaches crossed their fingers yesterday, hoping verbal commitments would transform into signatures on the dotted line.

Yesterday (Feb. 11) was the first day colleges could offer binding national letters of intent.

Several area players, who made verbal commitments earlier this month, including Redford Bishop Borges, All-State Alex Marshall (University of Michigan) followed through with their John Hancock.

But for two All-Area players, Livonia Franklin linebacker Chris Parent and Plymouth Salem defensive end Joe Jouppi, it was a painful wait right up until the signing date.

Eastern Michigan pursued Parent, the Patriots leading hitter (28 solo tackles, 79 assists) last season, when another school in the Mid-American Conference withdrew its offer.

THE 6-FOOT-3, 215-POUND Parent, a three-year starter and two-time All-Western Lakes Conference pick who benches 325 pounds, is projected as an inside linebacker. Jouppi, a 6-2, 205 All-Western Lakes defensive end, is headed for

football

AREA FOOTBALL PLAYERS who have signed letters of intent to attend college are listed below.

Redford Bishop Borges, All-State, Eastern Michigan; **Alex Marshall**, All-State, University of Michigan; **Chris Parent**, All-State, Eastern Michigan; **Joe Jouppi**, All-State, Eastern Michigan.

Other players who have signed letters of intent: **John Hancock**, All-State, University of Michigan; **John Hancock**, All-State, University of Michigan; **John Hancock**, All-State, University of Michigan.

perennial NALA power Hillsdale. He is being projected at linebacker as well.

Eastern Michigan wanted Jouppi, but only as a walk-on.

"They didn't think I was big enough or strong enough," he said. "They wanted me to walk on and try to earn a scholarship."

"(Coach Jim Harkema) told me that three years ago they would have signed me — no problem."

Both Parent and Jouppi were caught in the numbers game.

With Division I schools forced to cut their scholarship allotment from 95 to 85 scholarships, some borderline Big 10 players wound up in the Mid-American Conference and some borderline MAC players were forced to play in the Division II Great Lakes Conference.

Two Redford Catholic Central players, 6-6, 230-pound defensive tackle Tom Victory and 6-1, 205-lb. linebacker Matt Fras, also made late commitments.

Victory signed with Miami of Ohio, while Fras is headed for Division I-AA power Holy Cross.

Others making late commitments include Redford Union offensive lineman Mike Thoms (to Northwood) and Farmington tackle Dave Kettler (to Grand Valley State).

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