

Chiefs, North easy winners

Like a cold drink on a hot day, the Plymouth Canton girls basketball team is satisfying first-year coach Bob Blohm, most recently with a 76-30 blowout of Farmington at home Tuesday.

After taking a 39-13 lead at halftime, the Chiefs rolled over the Falcons in the third quarter, outscoring them 15-4.

"It was a good victory," Blohm said. "We played with good intensity, and we shot well from the line."

Canton, 14-0-16 shooting free throws, was led by senior center Susan Ferko's 22 points. Stacey Thompson added 19.

"Ferko's a solid player," Blohm said. "She does a lot of scoring for us inside."

The Chiefs improved to 7-2 overall. Farmington (2-7) was led by Mandy Cannon and Erika Hatcher with seven points apiece.

MERCY 53, MARYSVILLE 27: The Marlins (5-5) built a 27-18 lead at the half and outscored host Marysville 13-3 in the third quarter and 13-8 in the fourth Tuesday.

Senior center Lee Albrecht led Mercy with 13 points and nine rebounds. Junior guard Carrie Walton added eight. The Marlins made 17 of 22 free throws, the Vikings 11 of 19.

Sheila Legak scored nine points for Marysville, 4-6.

FRANKLIN 58, SALEM 23: In a switch from recent years when the Rocks (3-5) were the dominant team in the area, a surging Franklin team turned the tables on visiting Salem Tuesday.

The Patriots (7-1) were led by sophomore guard Dawn Warner, who had a game-high 24 points. She also had seven rebounds, four assists and seven steals.

Junior forward Jullana Stiesiak added 14 points and eight rebounds, and senior forward Cheryl Hintz contributed 12 points and six rebounds. Franklin converted nine of 11 free throws.

"The whole team executed real

girls basketball

well," Franklin coach Dan Freeman said. "It's a big win. It's the first time we've beaten Salem since I've been coaching."

"We were patient tonight. We read their (press) defense well, and everything fell together. I'm real pleased with what we did tonight."

Franklin held the Rocks to single-digit scoring in each quarter and led 29-12 halftime lead. The Patriots outscored Salem 29-11 in the second half.

Junior guard Sarah Ruete led the Rocks with three points.

N. FARMINGTON 65, HARRISON 35: Kim Gurecki's 22 points and Eve Clark's 20 helped boost North (7-1) over the Rocks (2-6) Tuesday at Harrison.

The first half proved to be the difference as North outscored the Hawks 38-11.

Sophomore guard Andrea Najarian led Harrison with 18 points. Her sister, sophomore forward Karen Najarian, added nine.

"They took it to us in the first quarter," Harrison coach Jim Neve said. "We were a little bit better in the second quarter and did well in the second half. It's coming."

North outscored Harrison 27-24 in the second half. Dana Botwick added 14 points for the Raiders.

PLY. CHRISTIAN 44, LIGHT AND LIFE 34: Tamara Tilly led the Eagles (8-2) with a game-high 19 points and five steals.

Christin Thomasson added 13 points and nine rebounds for Christian, which led 23-12 at halftime and 36-21 after three quarters.

Focus on 'D' in big games

By Dan O'Meara and Brad Emmons staff writers

grid predictions

FRIDAY'S GAMES
(All games 7:30 p.m.)

Defense, defense!

That's what the cheerleaders always shout, right? Well, there'll be a lot of that, which includes the real thing, this weekend in two of the biggest games involving Observersland teams this year.

On Friday night, the second of the annual three-part series to determine the Lakes Division champion in the Western Lakes Activities Association has once-beaten North Farmington at unbeaten Plymouth Salem, which will celebrate homecoming.

North's only loss was to Westland John Glenn, which plays Salem next week either under winner-take-all circumstances or with the Rocks able to force a possible three-way tie.

The Raiders and Salem are always noted for their defense. And this year, North has allowed two touchdowns, the Rocks three. Each team has three shutouts.

But the epitome of defense is that play by Redford Catholic Central, which has yet to be scored upon in five games.

That record will be put to the test in the other big game Sunday when the No. 4-rated Shamrocks face top-ranked Birmingham Brother Rice in 6-0 going into the showdown with Salem.

CC, never the offensive marvel, is averaging just under 17 points a game. But, oh, that defense!

The Warriors have been beaten five straight times by CC, including a 21-7 victory by the underdog Shamrocks a year ago. But Rice has a potent offense led by quarterback Bob Utter. Rice averages 26 points on offense and has the defense to match, giving up four a game.

In the on-going battle between friendly prognosticators, the up-to-date tally has Brad Emmons maintaining a one-game edge over Dan O'Meara. Both were 12-3 last week, putting Emmons at 55-16 for the season, O'Meara 54-17.

Both misfired on the Thurston-Melvindale and Northville-Churchill games. Clarenceville was O'Meara's downfall once again, while Emmons called for an upset of Catholic Central that didn't happen.

Now then, let's see what the boys predict for Week No. 6:

Redford Union at Garden City: Observersland's two representatives in the Northwest Suburban League go head-to-head Friday, so area pride will be at stake. A loss would mean a basement finish in the Northwest League (0-2, 0-5) or the host Cougars (0-2, 0-5). They're the only NSL teams without a league win. Pick: Emmons says Garden City actually won the coin toss, but O'Meara takes an educated guess and RU over such random means.

Red. Thurston at Allen Park: Consider this: Taylor Truman gave Allen Park (4-1), usually the best team in the Tri-River League, its first loss last week, 21-20. And that came a week after the Eagles (2-3) beat Thurston 10-9. That's certainly food for thought as we ponder this game. Thurston hasn't been blown out in any game, and its last two defeats occurred in overtime. Pick: As much as we wish the Eagles well, they probably drew an angry Allen Park's number on the wrong weekend.

Westland Glenn at Liv. Stevenson: The Rockets (5-0) will be waiting eagerly to learn the results of the North-Salem game. Regardless of how important next week's clash with Salem will be, Glenn must take care of business against the Spartans (2-3). Pick: The Rockets will be 6-0 going into the showdown with Salem.

N. Farmington at Ply. Salem: It's usually a low-scoring game when these two good-minded ball clubs go at it. That's been the case the last two years, and North (4-1) has won both games — 10-0 two years ago and 13-7 overtime last fall. Defense will dominate again, but Salem's (5-0) skill and might on offense could mean a different winner. Pick: The unbeatable defense brings the Rocks good luck.

Ply. Canton at Northville: Canton (5-0) must avoid descending into an emotional valley Friday. The Chiefs touched a peak last week by beating Walled Lake Western and assuring themselves of their first winning season, and there's another peak coming next week when they meet Farmington Hills Harrison, the No. 1-rated team in Class B. If Canton hopes to play Harrison for the Western Division title, it will have to be sharp against upset-minded Northville (2-3). Pick: Canton's quickness is too much for the Mustangs.

W.L. Western vs. Farm. Harrison at Walled Lake Central: Franklin came in... best upset in the state to stop the Hawks, and that was in a 31-0 victory for Harrison. The Hawks (5-0) are still averaging 44 points a game, and the defense

has three shutouts and has given up an average of one TD per game. A young Western team (1-4) has its best days ahead of it, but Harrison is still king for now. Pick: The Hawks will have more 'hoolie' and 'holier' to do after winning No. 6.

SATURDAY'S GAMES
(All games at 1 p.m. unless noted)

Liv. Churchill at Liv. Franklin: The challenge for Franklin will be to stay up emotionally after playing with inspiration (on defense at least) in that 31-0 loss to Harrison. The Patriots (1-4) hold the Hawks 16 points under their per-game average and the usually-elusive Harrison quarterback Matt Coleman is 10 minus-10 yards rushing. Churchill (0-5) is mired in a season-long losing streak. Pick: O'Meara says Franklin musters enough offense to win. Emmons goes with Churchill.

W.L. Central at Farmington: Both teams are 0-3 in the Lakes Division and will be lighting to stay out of the cellar in this game. The Vikings (1-4) haven't won since beating Milford in the opener. Farmington got its first touchdown last week in a 42-7 loss to Westland John Glenn. Pick: Comparative scores tell us this one should be close, but Central, by virtue of its one victory, rates the edge.

Liv. Clarenceville at B.H. Cranbrook: The Trojans (4-1) had a storybook start, winning their first four games under new coach Vic Balaj, but Lutheran West cut short the honeymoon last Friday, winning 6-0. Clarenceville is no doubt eager to start another victory streak, but Cranbrook (2-3), which lost 16-13 to West, won't be an easy touch. Pick: Rule No. 194 in the prep prediction handbook says: Pick the Trojans to win if you think they might lose.

St. Hedwig at Lutheran Westland: The Warriors (3-2) did well against another Catholic League opponent, beating Mount Clemens Cardinal Mooney 8-6 in the opener. St. Hedwig, Mooney and St.

Florin are tied for second place in D-Bracket with 3-1 records. St. Hedwig and Mooney also are 3-2 overall. Pick: The law of averages come into play. Lutheran Westland comes up short this time.

St. Agatha at Waterford Our Lady: The Aggies (4-1) have been so successful coach John Goddard never gets a chance to shy out from all the victory daps. And guess what? This week the Aggies play Our Lady OF THE LAKES. This will be a tough game since the Lakers also are 4-1, but if St. Agatha is successful, Goddard will have his choice of water for the post-game ritual. Pick: In addition to Our Lady, Goddard better scout the Lakes too.

Bishop Borgess vs. Bishop Gallagher at Garden City Junior High: No. 4-ranked Catholic Central beat the Spartans 10-0 and Gallagher 24-0. Borgess (1-4), therefore, would appear to be the favorite here, right? Well, hold on. It's probably not that simple. Trueman team is in a class with CC, but the Lakers (2-3) still have some pretty good talent. Pick: Gallagher takes a victory back to the East Side.

Wayne Memorial at Dearborn Fordson, 1:30 p.m.: The Zebras (4-1) are having a fine year. Zebras are the Trojans, who lead the Wolverine A Conference at 4-0 and are 5-0 overall. Wayne will have its hands full trying to stop the Fordson rushing game, which features Yousef Salem. Pick: The Zebras suffer a temporary setback in what will be still a free season in the end.

SUNDAY'S GAME

Redford CC vs. Birm. Brother Rice, 1:30 p.m. at Pontiac Warner Stadium: Will CC's string of good luck in one of the state's biggest rivalries hold out? CC can tie the series (14-13-1) with a win. Can the Shamrocks hold the line against a quality Rice offense? The Warriors, with three shutouts, have a good defense, too. Notre Dame and DeLaSalle scored on the field last two weeks after the Warriors had begun to substitute. Pick: O'Meara thought Rice was due last year but it wasn't. The 13-0 win over Ann Arbor Pioneer is convincing proof. CC can do it again. Emmons counters with Rice.

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