

Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/953-2139 night line: 591-2304

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Monday, October 14, 1991 O&E

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Big first half carries North past Falcons

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Coach Jim O'Leary had reason to be anxious as his North Farmington football team prepared to play Saturday afternoon at Farmington.

The Raiders had a recent history of sluggish first halves against their crosstown rival, and that was compounded by the fact Farmington would send its best team in several years against North.

O'Leary didn't need the MaLox, however, as the Raiders built a 27-0 halftime lead and eventually won 36-14.

"In the last few games we've played against Farmington, we've done lousy in the first half," O'Leary said, "so we concentrated on being real intense right away."

"We did not take Farmington lightly. It's not like we in the past. I think they're pretty good football team — and still do."

NORTH WON Its fifth consecutive game and clinched the Lakes Division title in the Western Lakes Activities Association. The Raiders are 4-0 in the division and 5-1 overall, Farmington 2-2 and 3-3.

It wasn't just another intra-city game, either. North was second and the Falcons fourth in the same Class A playoff region, and a victory would have maintained Farmington's hope of gaining a share of the Lakes title.

"They should be excited, and the John Glenn score had to encourage them," O'Leary said. "They had to think 'Hey, we can beat these two teams and win it!'"

Westland Glenn, the next opponent for the Falcons, managed only a 10-0 win Friday over winless Walled



Chris Martling rushed for 88 yards on 14 carries for the Falcons.

Lake Central, 21-0.

"We're not at the point in our program where we're ready for a pressure game like this," Farmington coach Bernie Call said. "There was a lot riding on that game. Even though we didn't say anything to the kids, they knew."

"They should be excited, and the John Glenn score had to encourage them," O'Leary said. "They had to think 'Hey, we can beat these two teams and win it!'"

North capitalized on field position and an early turnover to jump in front 14-0 in the first quarter, and

Temple completed seven of nine passes for 110 yards, and Lee caught three passes for 70 yards.

"They brought eight guys up after we started running the ball," O'Leary said, "so we decided to go with play-action passes and we got two TDs out of it."

The Falcons moved the ball late in the half, but John Lee intercepted a pass in the end zone to put Farmington off the scoreboard. Call said the Falcons made uncharacteristic mental mistakes and were not focused enough.

"They're a good football team, but we're not as bad as we looked in the first half," he said. "We're not confident in ourselves yet that we can let it all hang loose in a game like that, and that's what we had to do today."

FARMINGTON MADE an effort to get back in the game in the second half. Dave Link recovered a fumble on the kickoff and then passed 13 yards to Dave Monge for a TD early in the third quarter.

The Falcons stopped North's next possession on downs at the North 29. But a penalty for roughing the punter allowed the Raiders to keep the ball and drive to the Farmington 5, where Adam Chalmers booted a 21-yard field goal for a 30-6 score.

"We could have made it interesting," Call said.

The Falcons got within 30-14 when Link, who was 9-of-21 passing for 114 yards with two interceptions, connected with Ted Ballinger for a 28-yard TD pass. Link passed to Chris Martling for the two points. Martling had seven receptions for 51.

North added another TD when reserve quarterback Jason Danielewicz passed 37 yards to Adam Kammer with two minutes remaining.



Todd Anderson gained 148 yards (24 carries) on the ground and scored a touchdown for North.

Mercy cagers topple rival Marian, 45-43

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

The real Farmington Hills Mercy basketball team was on the floor Thursday night, coach Larry Baker declared, but the Marlins claimed the biggest win of the season.

It was neither the team that suffered an embarrassing loss two days earlier nor a collection of pretenders, he said after the Marlins toppled rival Birmingham Marian 45-43.

Laure DeMattia's basket with seven seconds left gave host Mercy the victory and a share of the Central Division lead in the Catholic League. Mercy, Marian and Harper Woods Regina are tied for first place at 3-1.

It was a remarkable comeback-for-seventh-ranked Mercy, which had lost 71-42 on Tuesday to Regina, which had previously been beaten by No. 5 Marian.

"It certainly goes into Mercy lore," Baker said. "Unfortunately, the tall-kicking we got at Regina is part of the story."

THE STRONG showing was more typical of a Mercy performance. In other games, the Marlins rallied to beat Western Lakes Activities Association powers Canton and Salem and nearly toppled No. 2 Saginaw.

"If you saw us earlier in close games, you know this was the mark of our team," Baker said. "This team finishes games real hard."

"Sure, this was the Marlin game; it was

big-and-we-got-the-monkey-off-our-backs. But it was certainly representative of this team's season and not some kind of fluke or Cinderella thing."

The renewal of the Mercy-Marian rivalry had a more positive beginning than any meeting last season when the Marlins lost all four games.

"The nightmare of last year's games is that we became cautious and played not to lose," Baker said. "We certainly were not cautious tonight. I loved the way we finished the game."

Mercy (8-3) led from the middle of the first quarter until Stephanie Steren, who had a game-high 18 points, gave the Mustangs a

41-39 lead with a baseline-jumper-midway in the last period.

Kathleen Bergin converted a Marian (9-2) turnover to tie. After an exchange of baskets, the Marlins missed a free throw and the ensuing putback with 1:10 remaining.

THE MUSTANGS had planned to take the last shot, but Mercy got the ball again on a turnover with 20 left. Marian guard Jennifer Jalaiba tried to thread a pass through the lane to Storen, but Marshelle Brooks deflected it and Katie Heffernan scooped it up.

DeMattia, a senior center who led Mercy with 16 points, pivoted into the lane and dropped in a scooping left-handed layup.

"It's something we work on real hard in

practice and she executed it," Baker said. "We were there at all positions (for other options), and I believe if we had missed, Mary Bleniewicz was open and would have scored."

The game ended with a short-lived controversy after Jalaiba made a layup against a rebounded Marian defense, but the officials ruled the horn had already sounded in the noisy gym.

"I couldn't hear the buzzer," Marian coach Mary Lillis-Cicerone said. "You try for everything you can get. But we didn't do the job at that (defensive) end of the floor. I thought DeMattia traveled."

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Hawks 2-peat as champs in Western Lakes tennis

By Brad Emmons
staff writer

Julie Heist was runner-up at No. 2 singles, helping Harrison repeat as WLAA tennis champion.

Strength is in numbers, just ask coach Bernie Goldstein and his Farmington Harrison girls tennis team.

The Hawks, who reached at least the semifinal round in all seven flights, repeated Wednesday as Western Lakes Activities Association champs by edging host Livonia Stevenson by one point, 19-18. North Farmington and Walled Lake Central were constant third with 11 points each in the two-day tournament, which start Tuesday. See statistical summary.

"Eight of our 10 girls are back from last year and I think we're getting a little better every year," said Goldstein, whose team won the coveted title for the fourth time since the 12-team league was formed. "Depth was a factor all the way across and it was just a matter of the luck of the draw, too."

It was no accident that Harrison won the crown.

The Hawks went through the WLAA dual meet season with an 11-0 record.

"Harrison has only two seniors and we have seven so we had hoped this would be our year," said Stevenson coach George Croll, whose team went 10-1 in the WLAA, losing 5-2 in a dual against Harrison. "Harrison is very good and there's no question they're the champs. My hat's off to them."

BECAUSE THE dual meet season and league meet are weighed equally (50-50) in the overall final standings, Stevenson had to win last

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