

Sports

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Falcons test Rocks but succumb in 4th

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Anybody looking only at the score of Plymouth Salem's 71-56 victory over Farmington would think the Rocks were easy winners in boys basketball Friday night.

Salem did dominate the last 6 1/2 minutes of the game, during which time it created the eventual 15-point difference.

But the rest of the game was anything but a one-sided contest. In fact, it was a dead-even affair — 52-41 early in the fourth quarter — before the Rocks pulled away.

"I thought my kids gave a good effort," Farmington coach Denny Mikel said. "We knew we didn't have a chance to make the playoffs. I told the kids 'No one expects you to win tonight. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose. Just go out and play well.'"

The Falcons did as they jumped in front 11-3 early in the game, held the lead until late in the second quarter and refused to let heavily-favored Salem get away until the final period.

"IT SEEMS A lot of teams rise to the occasion against us," Salem coach Bob Brodie said. "Farmington is not a bad ballclub. They're patient and they do a good job running their offense. I was happy we decided to take control in the second half."

The Rocks clinched a share of the Lakes Division championship in the Western Lakes Activities Association with the victory. Salem, Westland John Glenn and Walled Lake Central finished 4-1.

basketball

North shy of upset, 3B

Salem, 8-3 in the WLA and 11-5 overall, is seeded fourth in the league tournament and plays host to Glenn on Friday night. Farmington, 1-10 and 3-13, has a makeup game at home Wednesday with Birmingham Groves and plays at Livonia Churchill on Thursday.

"We're not going to be one of the teams picked to win the championship," Brodie said, "but now that our kids have tasted a share of the division title, maybe they'll be hungry to go back and defend their (league) crown."

Sophomore James Head was the key player for Salem in the second half when he scored 21 of his game-high 41 points. He made nine of 14 free throws as the Rocks gained their decisive margin at the line. Salem was 22-of-34, Farmington 6-of-12.

Senior center Mike Abraham scored 14 of his 17 points in the second quarter, helping the Rocks recover from a poor start and getting Salem into contention. His six field goals in that quarter were scored on rebounds or hard-earned layups.

"WE DECIDED we wanted to get the ball inside," Brodie said. "(Abraham) has the ability to make some good moves inside. He's one of the

take-charge guys when the team is struggling and he took charge tonight."

Mike Stone added 14 points (including three triples) for the Rocks. Farmington had more balanced scoring, with Brian Farr's 14 points being high total. Steve Gallagher and Matt Fitzpatrick finished with nine each, and four players — Jay Jensen, Brian Afflerbaugh, John Rudolph and Jason Tucker — chipped in six apiece.

The Falcons took charge at the start, shooting 6-of-13 in the first quarter, taking the ball inside for good shots against the taller Rocks and leading 15-10 at the end.

"We made some mental mistakes early in the game," Brodie said. "Our defensive rotation was not right. They were penetrating a lot against our defense, and we didn't have people rotating in the right spots. When that happens, they're going to get easy shots and it took its toll."

Abraham gave Salem its first lead (22-21) with 3 1/2 minutes left in the half. Baskets by Gallagher and Fitzpatrick put the Falcons in front 25-22 before the Rocks scored the last nine points of the half.

THOUGH SALEM made several attempts to put distance between itself and the Falcons, Farmington kept coming back.

The Falcons outscored Salem 11-3 to start the second half, tying the game (34-34) with Fitzpatrick's triple and taking the lead with a rebound bucket by Afflerbaugh.

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DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Regional results

Nicole Gable of Farmington Hills Mercy Valley, Gable finished third and qualified for slalom race in regional competition at Alpine

Valley. Gable finished third and qualified for slalom race in regional competition at Alpine

Novi sidelines Farmington wrestlers in district

Farmington High's dual-meet wrestling season ended sooner than expected Wednesday night as the Falcons lost 28-26 in the finals of the district tournament.

The Falcons, champions of the Western Lakes Activities Association, ended with a 15-2-1 record. Farmington crushed Farmington Hills Harrison 33-12 and Northville 46-21 in preliminary matches Wednesday.

"We knew they would be tough and (Novi coach) Don Fritz would have them ready for us," Farmington coach Al Beyer said. "He did a great job preparing them. I'll give him full credit."

The Wildcats stayed close throughout the match but never led until the end after Joe Young, who had moved up from 189 pounds, pinned Matt Siskosky at 1:51 of the heavy-weight bout.

Novi, which lost a dual 32-15 to the Fal-

cons last month, tied the score twice and was within a point on two other occasions.

FARMINGTON'S FABIO CERV (103) defeated Munish Bazar 5-3, and Novi's Tim O'Sullivan (112) won 5-1 over John Economy, leaving the score tied 3-3.

Rob Sutton (119) pinned Ron Kane in 1:40 to give the Falcons the lead, but Joe Wildcats tied again when Farmington's Jon Duff (125) had a 5-5 draw with Alex Lee and Novi's Steve Cini (130) upset Matt Smith with a 1:49 pin to make it 11-11.

The teams exchanged wins in the next four bouts, with the Falcons holding a 20-19 edge.

Farmington's Steve Lemieux (135) pinned Steve Page in 1:33, Novi's Shane Joyce gained a 19-2, technical fall over Mark Mason, Farmington's Jason Holliday (145) defeated Josh Riggs 4-1 and Novi's Mike

Borashko (152) edged Dave Menge as a penalty point accounted for the only scoring.

The Falcons led 26-19 after Mike Pallo (160) defeated Tony Scappaticci 8-7 and Ryan Adams (171) defeated Stu Myers 9-4. Pallo reversed his opponent in the last five seconds to win. Novi got back within four (26-23) when Steve Tapley (189) outscored Rob Cavagnoli 6-4.

"(The loss) can't take away from the great season we did have, and we'll remember all the good points," Beyer said. "Novi had me worried. It wasn't that we were taking them lightly. They certainly earned the victory."

Borashko and Scappaticci, the Kensington Valley Conference champ at 145, moved up one weight class each for the Farmington match.

BLUFF HAD beaten his opponent 2-0 in the earlier dual, but he had been sick and the

Falcons were lucky to have him in the line-up at all, Beyer said.

A key turnaround occurred at 130 where the Smith had pinned a different Novi opponent. Farmington was missing Mike Prough because of illness at 140, causing Mason, a freshman, to wrestle a senior.

Adams hadn't practiced because he had been sick, the 189 pound could have gone either way and the pin by Young, who moved up a weight class, was a surprise, Beyer added.

The Falcons trailed Northville 13-21 midway through that match.

Holliday (145) pinned Ryan Baber in 1:18, Derek Paquette (152) won by void, Pallo (160) defeated Jason Holman 9-1, Cavagnoli (171) pinned Eric Hübner in 1:33, Dave Burgess (189) pinned Mike Held in 1:01 and Siskosky pinned Adam Davis in 3:12.

The Falcons voided the 103 and 130 weights, and Northville had a pin and a decision to lead by eight points. Farmington's John Lane (119) defeated Jalro Kameoka 11-8, Rob Sutton (125) won by void and Lemieux (135) whipped Corey Kiernan 14-0.

Farmington winners against Harrison were Cervi, 12-4 over Brian Atkinson; Darnell, 1-43 over Matt Whitten; Sutton, 4-57 over Andy Dzyngel; Smith, 6-4 over Darnell Priemer; Lemieux, 14-2 over Doug Whitten; Holliday, 0-56 over Dan Passerman; Paquette, 1-39 over Mark Reblay; Pallo, 0-33 over Jason Blumberg; Cavagnoli, 0-45 over Adam Breiback; and Siskosky, by forfeit.

Harrison's Derrick Jaeger (125) pinned Lane at 3:47, Tom James (140) defeated Mason 10-5 and Dave Gloetner (171) defeated Burgess 6-4.

Hawks secure victory

Farmington Hills Harrison took its first victory in boys swimming Thursday with a 96-88 victory over visiting Livonia Franklin.

Todd Farabee and Mike Wright were double winners in individual events for the Hawks.

Farabee was first in the 200-yard freestyle (1:59.01) and 500 freestyle (5:29.26). Wright the 50 freestyle (2:17.59) and 100 freestyle (5:02.22).

Both helped Harrison post victories in the freestyle relays, also. Farabee, Wright, Mark Springer and Craig Dixon swam the 200 race in 1:42.76, and the same foursome posted a time of 3:46.85 in the 400 event.

Franklin's Randy Cobb won the individual medley (2:13.32) and breaststroke (1:04.08) and also helped the Patriots win the medley relay. Brian O'Rourke, Dan Banjo and Andy Hockett were the relay teammates, with the Franklin time being 1:53.13.

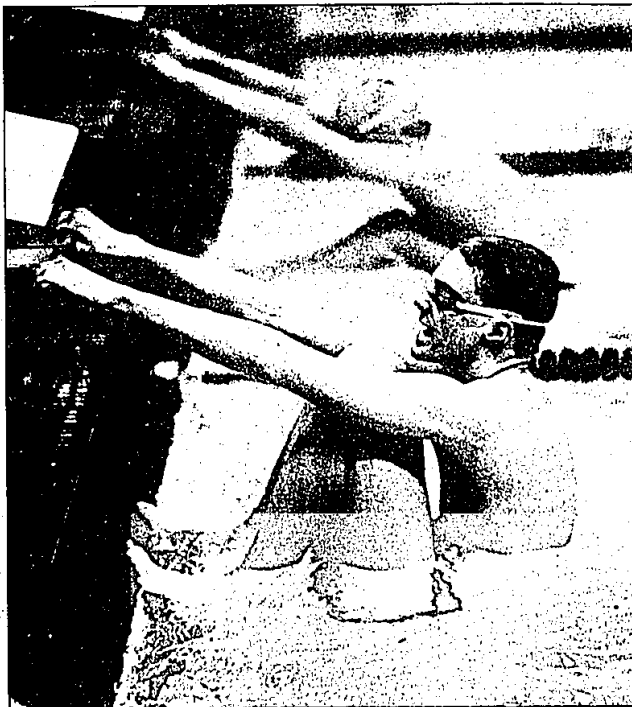
Banjo also won the butterfly (1:53.75) and O'Rourke the backstroke (1:01.27).

The Patriots received all the diving points since Harrison had to forfeit in that event because the deep end of its pool was two feet too shallow for competition.

Harrison ends the dual-meet season at 4 p.m. Thursday when it travels to Walled Lake Western.

FARMINGTON WAS an easy winner over host Westland John Glenn with a 128-51 victory Thursday.

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JIM JACQUELLO/staff photographer

Chris Danbeck of North Farmington gets ready for the start of the 200-yard medley relay

Thursday. The Raiders lost the meet to Livonia Stevenson.

Top-ranked Rice rallies to top CC

By Steve Kowalski
staff writer

Birmingham Brother Rice scored three unanswered goals Wednesday night to defeat Redford Catholic Central, 3-2, in a Michigan Metro Hockey League game played at Oak Park Arena.

Rice, which also rallied to win the earlier meeting last month against CC, improved to 12-2 overall and 11-2 in the Metro. The Warriors are tied for first place in the league with Trenton (10-1-2) with 22 points.

Rice, No. 1-ranked in Class A, trailed 2-0 after one period before tying the score with a pair of second-period goals.

Sophomore defenseman Matt Riker scored on a slap shot from the point at 6:27 of the third period to break a 2-2 tie and send CC home without a point. CC goalie Mike Brusseau, who stopped 26 Rice shots, didn't have a chance as he was screened by a crowd of players in front of the net.

Two other defensemen, Matt Fleury and Matt Allen, scored for Rice coach Mike Brown, who gave the defense and goalie Derek Mills most of the credit.

"Derek came up big, that's the reason he's (an) all-state (candidate) and has lost only four games in two years," Brown said. "Every time we play CC we play them on emotion and we tend to get behind. I knew if we kept the pressure up, eventually we'd get them (goals) in."

The loss dropped the Shamrocks further back in the Metro at 7-4, 12-4 overall. CC coach Jack Gumbleton believes the turning point came in the second period when Rice outshot CC, 15-3, and scored once on a power play and once with each

hockey

team short a man. For the game, Rice outshot CC, 29-16.

"The second period is the one that killed us, we couldn't stay out of the box," Gumbleton said. "They have more talent, they're a much better team than us. Our goalie kept us in the game."

CC's leading scorer, Pat Casey, finished the night with a goal and an assist. The senior forward helped get the Shamrocks get on the board first with a pass to teammate Brian Ronayne at 1:15 of the first period. Ronayne's shot from the point didn't have much on it, but it was enough to get through a crowd of players and past Bills.

Casey gave the Shamrocks a 2-0 lead at 12:20 of the first period, scoring his 18th goal of the year unassisted off a face-off to the right of Rice's net.

The Warriors cut the deficit to 2-1 at 7:38 of the second period on a power-play goal by Fleury, assisted by teammates Mitch Murlick and Allen. Rice tied the score, 2-2, when Green scored, on assists from Murlick and Riker with both teams short-handed.

Fleury also delivered the game's most-impressive hit, upending CC's junior center Bill Baski near the Shamrocks' blue line in the second period.