

Shamrocks rout Panthers in district

**BY BRAD EMONS
STAFF WRITER**

After two tough district tests earlier in the week, host Redford Catholic Central welcomed a breather in Friday's Class A basketball final.

Coach Bernie Holowicki earned his 14th district title as his Shamrocks routed Redford Union, 79-43. It came after a pair of five-point victories over formidable foes Detroit Henry Ford and Southfield.

"I didn't think we could win it, but I was hoping we could, even though it was a big task," said Holowicki, now in his 21st season as CC coach. "We play hard and that's why we're in every game."

CC, now 15-8 overall, advances to Wednesday's 7:30 p.m. regional

semifinal at Southfield High. The Shamrocks will take on the winners of Saturday's district final between Dearborn and Dearborn Fordson.

"It's a very satisfying," Holowicki said. "We started out the season 2-7, but coaching these guys has been fun. They work, they play defense, and they root for one another."

RU, sporting only a 3-16 record, was a surprise finalist, too, after bouncing Detroit Redford on Wednesday, 60-59.

The Panthers kept it close for a quarter, trailing by only four, 15-11.

"We knew we'd be a little flat after two tough games," Holowicki said. "We had scouted them (RU) and we knew they'd

play hard and raise their level up a notch. We expected it."

The Shamrocks then exploded for 23 points to RU's eight in the second period to take a commanding 40-19 advantage at intermission.

"They forced us into errors," RU coach Tip Smathers said. "And when they had their scoring spurts they didn't make any mistakes."

Brian Paluk, a 6-foot-4 senior forward, scored six of his game-high 23 points during the surge. Andy Stankster, a junior guard, tallied all seven of his points during the run, including a three-pointer just before the buzzer, to end the half.

The Shamrocks continued their assault in the third quarter,

outscoring RU 23-11.

Both coaches then emptied their benches to start the final quarter.

"Catholic Central capitalized on our errors," said Smathers, whose team committed 21 turnovers and shot only 29 percent from the floor (15 of 44). "We had hoped our full-court press would take away their advantage on the boards. For a quarter we stayed pretty even."

Sophomore guard Damien Baskerville added 10 points for the winners, while 5-7 junior Joe Daly contributed nine.

"We've been trying to get him (Daly) more involved offensively," Holowicki said. "And he's getting better. If we work between now and next year, he can be a player."

Heady provides key plays to help CC top Brighton

**BY STEVE KOWALEKI
STAFF WRITER**

Redford Catholic Central junior forward Jon Heady spent four minutes in the penalty box during the third period of Friday's Class A semifinal playoff game at the Flint IMA.

But Heady got out in time to score a goal and assist on another in the last 2:54 as CC advanced to the final with a 5-2 victory over Brighton.

With CC holding on to a 3-2 lead, Heady went into the penalty box for elbowing at 1:59 of the third period and for cross checking at 10:06. Heady came out for good at 12:06 of the third period and 15 seconds later scored an end-to-end goal that gave the Shamrocks a 4-2 lead.

"That (Heady's goal) was like the nail (in the coffin)," Brighton coach Rick Bourbonais said. "It's hard to say what was more impressive: Heady's deke at the blue line to get around a Brighton defenseman or the fake and backhand shot he used to score past goalie Damon Whitten."

"I picked up the puck in the corner in our end, our defenseman (Brian Ronayne) played their guy and I went end-to-end with it," Heady said. "I pretty much counted the game over (at that point)."

Heady also was instrumental in the Shamrocks' fifth goal scored by now linemate Pate Davis at 13:42. After taking a pass from Kevin Pedersen, Brighton players at the blue line. Davis picked up the puck and fired it past Whitten for a 5-2 lead.

Davis was playing for Chris Gonzalez, who injured a shoulder in Wednesday's 3-2 quarterfinal win over Port Huron.

But even without Gonzalez, the Shamrocks had too much depth for Brighton, a 2-1 upset winner over No. 1 ranked Trenon in Wednesday's quarterfinal round. CC was able to rotate

three lines compared to Brighton's two.

CC, which never scouted Brighton (21-5-1 overall), got strong play from defenseman Brian Ronayne, Pedersen, Mark Holdridge and Mike Kasper, according to CC coach Jack Gumbleton.

There were 17 minor penalties called, 10 against CC.

"We just had to play our game, forecheck, backcheck and skate harder than heck," Gumbleton said. "I'm not a physical (style) coach but we knew they were playing two lines and we said 'Let's flatten them out a bit.'"

Junior forward Frank Novock scored two goals for the Shamrocks, including the eventual game-winner at 10:50 of the second period. Bourbonais said Brighton was caught in a line change when Novock scored on a rebound off a slap shot from the point by Holdridge for a 3-2 lead.

"CC played a good, physical game, was quick and in our face," Bourbonais said. "We're not accustomed to that style. We knew going in that Novock and Heady had wheels. They like to take the puck from right to left and as the game went on we didn't lay a shoulder to them like we could have or should have."

Winning goalie Jamie Ronayne had 14 saves, including a key one on a slap shot from the faceoff circle with about five minutes remaining in the third period. The rebound squirted loose behind Ronayne in the goal crease and the junior goalie was able to stop it before Brighton got to it.

CC jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first period after a goal by Holdridge, assisted by Heady at 3:27 and Novock's unassisted goal at 12:34. Brighton tied the game in the second period on a power play goal by Gordie Moggach at 3:14 and Gordie Brown's unassisted goal at 5:26.

Borgess demolishes OLSM in final

**BY CHRIS MCCOSKY
STAFF WRITER**

The last thing the Redford Bishop Borgess basketball team says when it breaks its pre-game huddle is defense. And then the Spartans slap you around with it for four quarters.

"It's pretty effective," said coach Dennis Butcher after his young Orchard Lake St. Mary's team was chewed up and spit out by the Borgess defense Friday, 84-67, in the Class C District 75 championship game at OLSM. It was the first district title for Borgess since 1985.

Effective? More like devastating.

The Spartans' oppressive, full-court, man-to-man pressure works on a basketball team the way cancer works on a human being. You may not notice it at first, you may knock down a few sheets early. But it's there and it keeps grinding at you. Borgess coach Glen Donahue substitutes like a hockey coach, so the pressure comes at you in waves, each one just as fresh, just as tenacious.

You may beat one man, but there's another. You beat him, and there are two more Spartans waiting for you. You pass the ball to the other side of the court and boom, the cat-quick Spartans are there waiting.

Before you know it, the pressure has taken your wind away, made your legs rubbery and your

mind weary. The perimeter shots that you made in the first quarter are now clanging off the front of the rim. Your rhythm is gone, you want to rush everything. You're frazzled and frustrated.

And there are the Spartans, cutting, slashing, dunking, draining 3-pointers, laughing, high-fiving — really having great fun at your expense.

Effective? More like demoralizing.

"We just get it into our minds to stay focused and be one together," said Borgess junior Rakzar Wiley, whose fiery temperament keeps the pressure supercharged. "And we just press hard all the time, we never let up. It bugs people."

Of course, Butcher knows all about the force of a Donahue-coached defense. He played for the man for four years at St. Mary's College and was his assistant for a year.

"They are just so terribly talented," said Butcher, a first-year head coach whose team finished 7-16. "Coach Donahue has been in this game a long time and he knows how to use all that talent. But I am proud of my team. I thought they really hung in there, especially in the first half."

But sooner or later, the pressure will get to you. Like this: The Eagles hit six of their first eight shots and built a 15-11 lead. Then they missed 20 shots in a row, went 20 possessions without a

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field goal and found themselves behind 31-18 late in the second quarter.

Eventually, Borgess would build the lead to 30 points, 64-34, before calling off the dogs in the final quarter.

For the second straight game, the Spartans' offensive catalyst was junior Charles Smith. He came off the bench to score 23 points against Clarenceville on Wednesday and he scored 22 points off the bench against OLSM.

Call him Sudden Impact. Upon entering Friday, Smith scored six straight points; so much for St. Mary's one and only lead.

"I've always liked to bring in one of my top players off the bench," Donahue said. "It's good for Charles to watch the game for a couple of minutes and get a feel for what is going on. He's more comfortable."

Junior Perry Robinson also had a huge game for Borgess. The 6-5 forward scored 23 points and pulled down 12 rebounds. Senior Randy Whitfield contributed 13 points, five rebounds and three blocked shots.

As good as Borgess was, though, Donahue afterwards challenged his team to get better.

"Hey, are you going to be satisfied with this?" he asked his

I was patient and the kids really came along. We improved as the season went on (winning four of the final five).

**Dennis Butcher
Orchard Lake St. Mary's coach**

team. "If you are, we'll celebrate it all now and pack it up. Or, we can go back to work and try to take it to the next level at the regional."

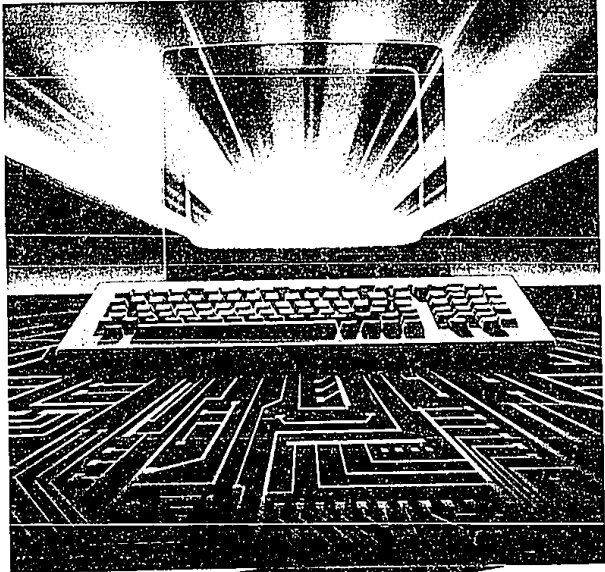
Borgess (14-8) will play the winner of Saturday's game between Sand Creek and Blissfield in the regional semifinal at 7 p.m. Wednesday at Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher.

As for the Eagles, keep an eye on them next year. They threw a very promising trio of sophomores at Borgess. David Ewens scored 18 points and grabbed 12 rebounds. Darryl Adams scored 16 points and had seven rebounds. Diallo Johnson contributed 12 points.

"Everyone told me to be patient, that we were young," Butcher said. "I was patient and the kids really came along. We improved as the season went on (winning four of the final five). All I asked of them tonight was to come in and compete to the maximum. They did that and I was proud of them."

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