

Top-ranked Harrison presents major challenge for Seaholm

BY MARTY BUDNER
STAFF WRITER

Birmingham Seaholm's football team completed the first phase of the playoff run it had hoped to achieve. Now the Maples face a major obstacle.

Couch Doug Fraser's Oakland Activities Association Division II champions defeated their first two playoff foes with relative ease. Seaholm captured its first regional title Friday with a 22-0 thumping of city rival Groves.

The two wins vaulted Seaholm into the Class A semifinals against No. 1-ranked Farmington Harrison Saturday at Rochester High School. The teams have met one time with Harrison winning 17-6 in the 1994 playoffs.

"We're happy to be here. We felt all along this is where we should be, considering the guys we have on our team," said Fraser, who is in his 11th and final season as Seaholm's head coach.

"The \$64-million question now is, what will happen from here on? We're certainly facing a team with considerably more size,

FOOTBALL

more speed and more experience than us. Our guys are excited for the challenge."

Seaholm's biggest triumph in school history occurred in the first round of the 1993 playoffs when it upset heavily-favored Birmingham Brother Rice for its first-ever playoff victory.

According to Fraser, this clash with Harrison presents the

biggest challenge of his career.

"As strong as (the Warriors) were, they had lost a couple of games, and you knew (a win) was possible," he said. "There was good reason for Brother Rice to look past us to the point which set the stage for the upset."

"I don't feel there are circumstances this time that would set the stage similarly. No one has touched these guys this year."

Indeed, Herrington's Hawks have been absolutely awesom.

Harrison averages 39 points and has scored 50 or more three times.

Despite all of Harrison's tradition and success, Fraser believes the Maples are not in awe of the Hawks.

"Normally, I feel like I would have to do something special, but these guys are unfazed about anything," Fraser said. "We're focused more on how they line up and the players they have."

Seaholm's strength is its

defense, which is led by smart, steady and hard-hitting linebackers Chris McCuiston and Chris Stefanec.

McCuiston missed the first two games of the season and did not play the final game of the year because of an ankle injury he suffered in the previous game against Rochester Adams.

It's no coincidence, in the games McCuiston missed, Seaholm's opponents scored 74 points. When he's in the lineup, the Maples have not allowed a rushing touchdown and only one passing touchdown all season. He has 83 tackles with six sacks.

Please see MAPLES, C5

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THE LINEUPS

SEAHOLM OFFENSE

- C: senior Mark Hempel (5-10, 215)
- Q: junior Ben Fisher (5-10, 230)
- G: senior Kevin Miller (6-2, 230)
- T: senior Mark Reynolds (6-2, 240)
- U: junior Luis Mayolo (6-1, 220)
- E: senior James Connolly (6-2, 230)
- E: junior Scott Ripmaster (6-4, 185)
- Q: junior Bill Schaarman (6-3, 196)
- U: junior Chris Stefanec (6-0, 198)
- T: junior Asa Shenwood (5-8, 165)
- S: sophomore Cory Vann (5-10, 160)

SEAHOLM DEFENSE

- T: junior Russ Dobson (5-11, 185)
- T: senior Mike Stefanec (6-1, 210)
- E: jun. Gabe Hemmingway (6-0, 180)
- E: senior Sean Cavanaugh (6-3, 185)
- L: senior Zack Lester (5-10, 175)
- L: senior Chris McCuiston (6-1, 210)
- L: junior Chris Stefanec (6-0, 198)
- C: senior Adam Ritter (5-9, 155)
- C: senior Ben Berry (6-0, 165)
- B: senior Trevor Cromer (5-10, 167)
- S: senior Todd Ritter (5-9, 160)

HARRISON OFFENSE

- C: senior Brian Lewis (6-1, 250)
- Q: junior Brett Foster (6-1, 205)
- Q: senior Matt Struble (6-2, 195)
- T: senior Mike Fisher (6-3, 255)
- T: senior Chris Gadjev (6-0, 240)
- E: junior Mike Head (6-1, 200)
- E: junior Ricky Bryant (6-1, 155)
- Q: senior Jared Hopkins (6-3, 200)
- U: senior Zack Cornwell (5-10, 180)
- T: senior Chris Ghannam (5-7, 175)
- S: senior Jason Sharp (5-11, 150)
- S: senior Tom Salley (5-8, 175)

HARRISON DEFENSE

- N: junior Bryan McGhee (6-1, 235)
- T: senior Mike Fisher (6-3, 255)
- T: senior Brian Lewis (6-1, 250)
- E: senior Matt Struble (6-2, 195)
- E: junior Brett Foster (6-1, 205)
- L: senior Matt Walker (6-2, 200)
- L: junior Mike Head (6-1, 200)
- C: senior Kareem Smartt (6-0, 165)
- B: senior Zack Cornwell (5-10, 180)
- H: senior Jason Sharp (5-11, 150)
- S: junior Ficky Bryant (6-1, 155)

THE SCORES

FARMINGTON HARRISON (11-0)
Harrison 28, Oxford 15.
Harrison 48, Walled Lake Central 28.
Harrison 51, Livonia Franklin 6.
Harrison 21, Walled Lake Western 7.
Harrison 41, Plymouth Canton 9.
Harrison 56, Livonia Churchill 7.
Harrison 35, Northville 0.
Harrison 27, Walled Lake Central 6.
Harrison 29, Detroit Country Day 6.
Harrison 56, Dearborn Edison Ford 21.
Harrison 38, Ypsilanti 0.
Harrison 43D points, opponents 96.

BIRMINGHAM SEAHOLM (20-1)
Seaholm 19, Rochester 13.
Seaholm 44, West Bloomfield 24.
Seaholm 35, Berkley 0.
Seaholm 27, Royal Oak Kimball 0.
Seaholm 37, Pontiac Central 0.
Seaholm 35, Waterford Kettering 0.
Seaholm 36, Pontiac Northern 6.
Rochester Adams 31, Seaholm 30.
Seaholm 34, Birmingham Groves 13.
Seaholm 30, Hazel Park 0.
Seaholm 22, Birmingham Groves 0.
Seaholm 34D points, opponents 87.

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