

Bortz leads Vikings past Rocks, into championship game

BY ED WRIGHT

STAFF WRITER

Walled Lake Central center Mark Bortz does not have the wingspan of a 747 jumbo jet.

It just seemed that way to every Plymouth Salem player who ventured into the lane Friday night in the Western Lakes Activities Association semifinal game played at Central.

The Vikings' 6-9 senior forward blocked eight Rock shots and altered several others while leading Central to a 59-46 triumph.

The victory propelled Central (18-1) into Wednesday night's WLAA championship game against Northville. Tip-off is set for 7:30 p.m. at Livonia Franklin.

Salem (8-11) will square off against Walled Lake Western in the consolation game, which tips off at 5:30 at Franklin.

"I thought we played good defensive basketball tonight," Central coach Bob Shoemaker said. "Mark Bortz did a good job

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of controlling the middle and our guards did a nice job pressuring their guards on our press."

Salem coach Bob Brodie thought his team had a chance of defeating the once-beaten Vikings -- but only if the Rocks turned in a near-flawless performance.

"You cannot turn the ball over like we did (22 turnovers) and shoot like we did (35 percent from the field) if you're going to beat a great team like Walled Lake Central," Brodie emphasized. "When their big guy wasn't blocking shots, he was making us change our shot. But we missed a lot of shots when we were open, too."

"On a positive note, I thought we played hard and we never quit. We were right in the game until a one-minute stretch in the fourth quarter when they turned our turnovers into easy baskets and stretched out their lead. I thought coach Shoemaker did a

good job of changing up their defenses on us."

Viking senior guard Steve Horn accomplished for Central's offense what Bortz did for its defense. The slender 6-3 lefty sharp-shooter shredded the Salem defense for 23 points, despite getting off to a rocky start.

"If I would have missed my first six shots like Steve did tonight, I would have said 'goodbye' and gone home," Shoemaker joked. "But like all great shooters, Steve kept shooting, and it paid off."

Horn tallied eight of his game-high total in the final eight minutes to snuff out any visions of a comeback Salem may have had.

Bortz chipped in with 18 points, two coming on a dazzling alley-oop feed from guard Chris Hart early in the second quarter.

Central forward John Auer also turned in a solid game, contributing 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Nick Techman and David Hoskins paced the Salem offense

with 14 points each. Jeff Abram added seven and Jeff Han had six.

The Vikings led 10-8 after the first quarter before outscoring Salem 9-2 over the final six minutes of the second quarter to secure a 26-17 halftime advantage.

Salem clawed back to get to within 38-34 with two minutes to go in the third quarter when Techman converted an offensive rebound. However, Central regained a double-digit lead moments later when Bortz completed a three-point play and Justin Spencer drilled a long three-pointer to make it 44-34.

Central iced the game with a 9-0 run that was sparked by Horn's three-point play with 5:41 to go.

Salem was in the (WLAA) championship game last year, so we knew they would be ready tonight," Shoemaker said. "Whenever you play a team coached by Bob Brodie, you know they're going to be prepared."

Central blastered the nets with

44 percent shooting (22-of-50) from the field. The Vikings were also proficient from the free-throw line, nailing nine-of-12 attempts (75 percent). Salem struggled from the stripe, connecting on just six-of-13 free shots.

Led by Bortz's 13 boards, Central outrebounded the visitors, 32-27. Techman was the Rocks' top rebounder, yanking down eight.

Central took better care of the ball than Salem as it turned the ball over 14 times compared to the Rocks' 22 miscues.

NORTHLAKE 59, WESTERN 57: Walled Lake Western's bid to reach the WLAA tournament final came up two points short Friday night.

The third-seeded Warriors enjoyed a home-court advantage against No. 7 Northville, but the red-hot Mustangs led the play of 6-foot-6 senior center David Gregor to a semifinal triumph.

Northville advanced to the tournament championship game against Walled Lake Central, led by eight points with 90 seconds left and a point with 90 seconds left and a point with

"We're proud of a gallant comeback and I'm very proud of the effort the kids gave," Western coach Rex Stanczak said. "They were definitely not bad, good a team they are. They forced us out of our press, and Gregor was just a man in the post."

Gregor led all scorers with 26 points, and teammate Aaron Redden chipped in 13 points.

Steve Sobek topped Western with 14 points. David Zettlin had 11 points and Bryan Verdin 10.

Northville turned to a 21-16 lead after the opening quarter, but Western regrouped and went off at halftime ahead 30-28. The Warriors still held a 40-38 advantage entering the fourth quarter, only to watch the Mustangs take control during the last minutes.

Western staged a late rally, closing within 57-54 on a Verdin three-pointer. Northville responded with a free throw for a four-point lead, but Zettlin answered with a triple to make it 58-57.

After another free throw gave the Mustangs a 59-57 advantage, the Warriors gained possession and missed a potential game-winning shot at the buzzer.

The Warriors return to action at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday to face Plymouth Salem in the WLAA consolation game.

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"They stepped up and made them when they had to. Farmington has a nice club and played very well."

Playing catchup the whole night, the Raiders eventually lost that uphill battle as the Falcons pulled away in the fourth quarter.

Following a Marcus McComb layup early in the final period, Farmington scored 10 of the next 12 points to take a 62-46 lead with 2:50 remaining.

Matt Mikel and Mike Griffie scored 20 points apiece to lead the Falcons. Griffie had 15 and Mikel, who was 11-of-13 at the line, 13 in the first half.

Curtis Tillman scored all 12 of his points in the second half, including eight in the fourth quarter to salt away the victory. Layne Boddy added nine and Scott Cave six.

"I thought the kids responded to the challenge very well tonight," Mikel said. "I was glad to see them come back, because their chins were dragging on the

ground after a 71-56 loss to Northville in the WLAA playoffs Tuesday.

"Being an intra-city game added to the competitiveness, too. It makes for a natural rivalry."

Farmington scored the first

seven points of the game, but North had a 7-0 run of its own to even the score on Kenny Kasyuhanan's three-point play.

But Griffie scored on a put-back off a teammate's missed free throw, and Mikel sank three of four free throws after two technicals were called against North, giving Farmington a permanent lead.

Landing 16-14 after one period, the Falcons opened up a pair of 10-point leads in the second behind Mikel's 10 points and Griffie's seven.

"I don't think there was any

doubt they were in control of the game," Negosian said. "I think we were fighting all the time, trying to get back in it. There was a lot of energy spent trying

to get back in the game."

Besides Lench, who had nine third-quarter points, North had one other player in double figures -- Kasyuhanan with 15. Blair Weiss added seven and McComb five.

The Falcons made 21 of 45 field goals (47 percent), including three of 10 three-point attempts. The Raiders shot 29 percent from the floor (19-of-65) and were 4-of-19 shooting the three.

FRANKLIN 68, HARRISON 37: Livonia Franklin (7-12) pulled away in the final quarter to down visiting Harrison (5-14).

The Patriots, who led 32-23 at halftime and 48-33 after three quarters, put it away with an 18-4, fourth-quarter run.

Four Franklin players scored in double figures -- Mike Copeland (16), Joe Ruggiano (15), Ian Reid (12) and Mike Peets (10).

Chris Patterson contributed six assists and five rebounds.

Marvin Hicks and Dave Condren scored 12 and 10 points for Harrison, respectively.

Franklin was 10-of-15 from the free throw line, while Harrison was 7-of-12.

CLARENCEVILLE 55, LUTH. EAST 49: The Trojans held the Eagles scoreless in the overtime to win the Metro Conference tournament consolation bracket.

Visiting Livonia Clarenceville (7-11) trailed by six in the fourth quarter when Adam Carpenter hit a triple to halve the deficit with under two minutes to play.

Scott Wion muscled in a basket to make it a one-point game and Tim Shaw made the second of two free throw attempts to square the score at 49.

Shaw scored three points, Wion two and Carpenter one in the overtime for Clarenceville. The Trojans were 2-for-5 from the line in the extra period and 10-for-19 overall.

Kendrick Moseley led Harper Woods Luth. East (10-8) with 16 points.

Clarenceville switched to a box-and-one to slow Moseley down in the second half and turned the tide when it began using a half-court trap midway through the fourth quarter.

Clarenceville rebounded from a first-quarter deficit to take a 32-27 lead at the half.

Wion led the Trojans with 23 points and 11 rebounds. Shaw had a triple-double with 18 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists -- many of his feeds going to Wion in the post.

"I think we came out in the second half a little flat," said Rick Coratti. "We caught our second wind and got going. We didn't really do anything fancy at first time, we just shot better. We might have forced things a little more in the first half, but we got better looks in the second half."

Coleskey led all scorers with 23 points, while Jakacki had 18 and Coratti added seven. Moore led DePorres with 19 points, while Brandon Cotton added 14 and John Pittman had nine.

DePorres wound up shooting 29-for-71 from the floor and 9-of-18 from the line, while CC was 18-for-54 from the floor and 17-for-26 from the line.

As far as today goes, the Shamrocks won both meetings this season with the Pilots, who won their only league title in 1988. CC won the first meeting at home in January, 70-50, and the second meeting, 73-65, at DeLaSalle.

"It's going to be tough," said

Willoughby. "The first time, we beat them by 20 and they cut that a lot the second time. Every time we play them, they play us tougher and tougher."

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STATE OF MICHIGAN, PROBATE COURT, COUNTY OF OAKLAND, File No. 01-276,977-DE

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The decedent, Robert E. Dewar, who died on December 1, 2000, at 65, of natural causes, was buried in Lakewood Cemetery, Highland Hills, Michigan, on December 7, 2000.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all bills, claims and demands for payment, which have accrued prior to the date of death, have been paid or barred unless presented to Commerce Bank, named personal representatives or personal agents of the decedent, or to the probate court at 2300 N. Telegraph Road, Pontiac, and to the named executors, personal representatives and administrators after the date of publication of this notice.

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