

Twisters edge Rage in close call, 34-31

The Michigan Twisters weakened, but did not die in Saturday's Lake Shore Football League Northern Division test against the Southwest Michigan Rage.

The Rage had a total of 81 offensive plays and amassed a total of 632 yards, but the Twisters came up with some key late defensive stops to pull out a 34-31 victory in a game played at Battle Creek Central High School.

The Twisters, who had only 254 total yards and ran just 47 plays, stopped a pair of Rage threats late in the game to preserve the win.

The Rage (3-1) stalled in the final quarter at the Twisters' 7-yard line when outside line-backer Kevin Smith (Canton) came up with a key interception.

Then, with 56 seconds left and the Rage threatening again, Twisters inside line-backer Kam Watson (Romulus) sealed the win when he

blounced on a Rage fumble on a hit caused by line-backer Aaron Brothers (Canton). The defensive corps of Chuck Lauber (Westland), Eric Thompson (Ypsilanti), Richardson Lacy (Livonia), Shaun Blackmon (Ypsilanti), Brothers and Smith combined for a total of 53 tackles.

Offensively, Jaquan Wright (Ypsilanti) led the Twisters with 119 yards on nine carries, including an electrifying 63-yard touchdown jaunt midway through the third period.

Jason Gibson added 55 yards on 10 carries, including a 29-yard TD run. Both Wright and Gibson are averaging better than 8 yards per carry.

In the second period, Charles Fountain (Westland) scored on an 82-yard kickoff return. Tight end Anthony Leighton (Pinckney) caught three passes, all going for first downs, for 38 yards. Donti Hamilton added a 13-yard TD grab in the third period.

The Twisters return to action 7 p.m. this Saturday at Willow Run's Devil Stadium to face the Lakeshore League champion Central Ohio Lions, sporting a 4-0 record. (Concessions and restrooms will be available.)

The Columbus-based team beat the Twisters in last year's league final, 22-19.

Both the Rage and the Twisters boast 60-plus player rosters of outstanding athletes. Twisters coach William Brown said, "These two teams have dominated the Northern Division of the LSFL for the past two seasons, but have yet to capture the league championship (held by the Lions)."

"But in my opinion, our Twisters, and/or this Rage team, should beat the high flying Lions."

Twisters general manager Glenn Brothers was also looking forward to the showdown. "This game, without question, has the makings of a bruising battle," he said.

EMONS

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but we never had an "in-your-face" cause to create the motivation and excitement to actually carry it through.

"We certainly had the tools to do it. Gary has umpired over 10 years in many cities, including Livonia and Farmington Hills. We both have played in city leagues for years."

Among the other umpires who gave up their time, doing anywhere from two to nine games, were Pat Crandall, Bob Tustanowski, Tim Dahman, Larry Williams, Jeff Lang, Mark Cirillo, Dick Austin, Doug Early, Jim Jenkins and Brock Goff.

The first tournament, staged in 1998, raised approximately \$19,000 to help a paralyzed woman who played in the Farmington Hills Friday Night Co-ed League.

Paralyzed from a December, 1997, car accident, the wheelchair-bound woman returned to see her team the next season where she met Gary Thomas.

"She was, and still is, a lovely, bubbly person and we wanted to support her," Laura Thomas said. "She expressed a desire to have upper body exercise equipment and we set to work organizing our first annual tournament so that her fellow teammates could play the game they loved in honor and support of her."

Another year, approximately \$9,000 went to a suddenly-deceased mother for the school-age children with no life insurance.

Yet another tournament raised \$6,000 to assist a husband whose wife died during her pregnancy. Also, \$5,000 went to an 8-year-old boy with a shunt in head, who required almost 30 surgeries by tournament time.

Meanwhile, Darlene Houdek was a fixture on the Mateo Tools team in the Livonia Parks and Recreation Wednesday Night Women's Slowpitch League.

She is survived by her husband, Tom, and three children, ages 13, 10, and 7, all of Canton. Other survivors include her parents and seven brothers and sisters. (Her father is L.E. Bowers of Bowers Chiropractic Clinic on Meridian Road.)

After the first recipient, Gary and Laura Thomas asked for suggestions on subsequent year's registration flyers.

Each year a legitimate need has been shared by one of the teams. "Obviously, the Mateo team felt compelled to offer Darlene and her family as a recipient because of the accumulated medical bills for experimental and normal treatment," Laura Thomas said. "Darlene's siblings organized several teams, as did her friends and neighbors."

In honor of Darlene, participation at this year's tournament swelled from 12 to 22 teams. Some teams were formed just for the tourney, while others came out of the Livonia and Farmington Hills rec leagues.

Sunday's final was captured by Eternal Tattoos, which defeated Time Warner, 11-5. Each winning player was awarded a championship T-shirt.

In the semifinals, Eternal Tattoos defeated Ninth Hour, 12-8, while Time Warner advanced to the final with a 4-3 victory over Sponsardless.

In the consolation final, Sponsardless beat Ninth Hour, 13-1.

Following the championship game, Tom Houdek thanked all of those who participated and worked the tournament. Meanwhile, both Gary and

Laura Thomas plan to stage another summer weekend tournament in 2003.

And no tournament host will gain a greater satisfaction for their efforts. The Observer salutes their efforts.

Any new teams wishing to participate next year should contact either Gary or Laura at (248) 476-8163.

Brad Emons is the Livonia-Westland sports editor for the Observer and can be reached at (734) 953-2123 or by e-mail at bemonsoe@home.com.net.



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SPORTS ROUNDUP

SUNSET 5K AT DOMINO'S

The Sunset 5-kilometer run-walk event will be Saturday, Aug. 17, at Domino's Farms in Ann Arbor.

The free quarter-mile fun run for kids will be at 7 p.m. (sign a waiver) followed by the 5K run-walk at 7:30 p.m. The spectator-friendly course is flat and fast.

Live entertainment will be provided by Identity Crisis. Thirteen age groups will be offered with three-deep awards in each division, as well as overall and masters awards.

The event raises funds for the University of Michigan Transplant Center. To register online or obtain a printed entry, visit www.AthleticVentures.com (the fee increases Aug. 12). Mail-in registrations will be accepted.

For more information, call (734) 482-4368.

KENSINGTON CHALLENGE

The Ann Arbor Track Club will host the John Rogucki Memorial Kensington Challenge Saturday, Sept. 14, at Kensington Metropark.

Events include the 5-kilometer run, 15K run and mile run-walk (where everyone receives a

ribbon). Five-year age-group divisions include open and closed categories. If registered by Friday, Sept. 6, participants will receive a T-shirt. There will also be a post-run drawing.

To register online or print out a race application, visit www.natickclub.org.

STINGRAY REGISTRATION

The Farmington Family YMCA Stingray swim team will conduct registration for its short course season beginning Wednesday, Sept. 4.

There will be an informational meeting 7-9 p.m. Sept. 4 at the Farmington YMCA where registration forms will be available for new swimmers.

The competitive swim program runs from Sept. 9, when swimmer evaluations for group placement will begin, to early March.

Team participation is open to anyone between the ages of 6 and 18. Participants are required to be a YMCA member.

There are five groups levels and, depending on ability, participants will swim either at the YMCA or one of the local high school pools.

For more information visit the Web site at www.fyys.org

call Cathy Warnick at (248) 553-0276 between the hours of 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.

ADULT HOCKEY SIGNUP

The Farmington Hills Adult Hockey Association is conducting registration for the upcoming season, which starts Sept. 3 and runs through March at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena.

The FHAHA is registering teams for the over-18 division, teams and individuals for the over-30 and individuals for the over-40 and over-49.

There will be a player draft in divisions that have individual registration. Goals are needed. Teams in the over-30, over-40 and over-49 loops will play 42 games plus playoffs.

To sign up call the FHAHA at (248) 471-6004 and leave a message on voice mail.

Read Observer Sports

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NOVI HEAT 2003 Baseball Travel Team Tryouts
 With Novi Wildcats Heat Coach Rick Green

Age	Date/Time	Location
All Players 10-15	Saturday, August 24 9:30 AM	Novi High School
10	Sunday, August 25 9:30 AM	Power Park Field 1
11	Sunday, August 25 9:30 AM	Power Park Field 2
12	Sunday, September 8 9:30 AM	Community Sports Park Field 3
13	Sunday, August 25 9:30 AM	Community Sports Park Field 4
14	Sunday, August 25 9:30 AM	Community Sports Park Field 6

NHS Varsity Field - Taft Rd. south of 10 Mile. Power Park 10 Mile Rd. east of Taft Rd. Community Sports Park - 8 Mile and Napier Rds.

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