

# Big plays give top-ranked CC a win over Rice

BY BRAD MONASTIERE  
STAFF WRITER

Redford Catholic Central's football team broke a century-long losing streak against arch-rival Birmingham Brother Rice Saturday night.

Granted, the century hasn't lasted too long, but the Shamrocks used big plays on offense and a playmaking defense to defeat the Warriors for the first time since 1999, 21-14 in front of almost 5,000 fans at Birmingham Groves High School.

CC, the state's top-ranked team in Division 1, improved to 4-0 on the season while Rice - which had been tops in Division 2 - fell to 3-1.

In the latest incarnation of one of the most storied gridiron rivalries in the state, CC gained a measure of revenge against a team that had won three-straight games in the series. The typically reserved Shamrocks coach Tom Mach said winning this game meant more than other regular season games.

"We have a great deal of respect for their program, and anytime you can beat a team like Brother Rice, it's a great win for your program," Mach said after the Catholic League Central Division opener. "I'm just so proud of our players and the way they executed our game plan tonight."

plan tonight."

CC has typically built its championship teams from the defense, and it was the defense that dominated this game, particularly in the first half. The Warriors came into the game with one of the most explosive offenses anywhere, averaging 35 points in their first three wins. However, the interception-happy Shamrock defense limited Brother Rice (0-1 Central) to seven points in the game's first 28 minutes.

"Our defensive coordinator Rick Coratti did a great job of mixing up our defensive calls and taking them out of their rhythm," Mach said. "They've got a great quarterback on their team, and they've scored a lot of points this season. But I'm very proud of the way we executed the things we had to do defensively."

Brother Rice coach AJ Fracassa said he was happy with his team's effort, but knew its five turnovers were too much to overcome against the defending Division 1 state champions.

"We got down 14-0, but we didn't quit and came back against them," Fracassa said. "We played hard, and had opportunities to score, but we just couldn't finish a couple down here."

CC's defense intercepted Rice QB Doug Pickens three times

and forced four turnovers in the game. On the offensive side, junior RB Derek Brooks was the difference maker.

Brooks played one of his best games of his young career, rushing for 199 yards on 23 carries and one highlight-film touchdown that gave the Shamrocks a 14-point lead early in the fourth quarter.

"Derek is a class young man and a great back," Mach said. "Rice has a very good defense, and Derek did a great job of breaking tackles and getting big runs. He's a very humble and hungry kid."

"Brooks is a slippery back," Fracassa added. "We had a tough time containing him."

Two of Brooks' runs took up 108 yards in the game, the first leading to a touchdown, the second the game-winning score. On the second long run, a 52-yard scamper, he shook off three tacklers near the line of scrimmage, made two sideways cuts and outran the defense to give CC a 21-7 lead with 10:55 left in the game.

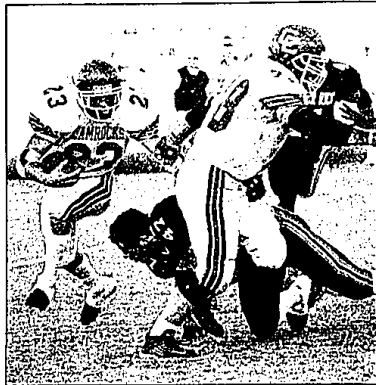
His 66-yard run in the first quarter led in the first scoring of the game. On one play, he took the Shamrocks from their own 14-yard line to the Brother Rice 30. Seven plays later, CC QB Dave Thomas lofted a scoring strike to junior WR Alex Wojcik to give the Shamrocks a 7-0 lead.

Rice junior Jeff Sander intercepted a pass while laying on his back on Catholic Central's next drive, giving the Warriors a golden opportunity to tie the game. But CC's Randall Means answered with an interception in the end zone to kill Rice's best scoring chance of the first half. Means answered the pass perfectly, getting in front of the receiver to make a leaping pick.

The Shamrocks scored a key touchdown in the waning moments of the first half, driving 57 yards in just 34 seconds to go up 14-0 at halftime. Thomas completed three straight passes on the drive before finding junior TE Kyle Smith down the right sidelines for a 29-yard touchdown pass.

The Warriors got on the scoring board with 16 seconds left in the third quarter when Pickens hit senior Anthony Jackson from five yards out, cutting CC's lead in half.

After Brooks' spectacular 52-yard TD run, Rice responded with a 76-yard drive that stalled on the Shamrock 16-yard line. Pickens caught a double-reverse pass from senior WR Brian Mahler, and was tackled hard out of bounds, knocking over the Brother Rice bench. CC was flagged for two late hit penalties in the ensuing tussle on the field, but the Warriors were unable to take advantage. Rice's Jason Horton plowed



JIM JACOBELLO/OBSERVER

CC running back Derek Brooks (23) gets around a block made by Greg Arrowsmith (78) in Saturday's game against Birmingham Brother Rice. Seniors AJ Gloutsos (47) dives to make the tackle despite losing his helmet. Brooks ran for 199 yards as the Shamrocks won a hard-fought battle, 21-14.

through the CC defense for a 2-yard touchdown with four minutes left in the game to make it a 21-14 score, but the Shamrocks went to their always-reliable running game to run out the clock. Brooks

and sophomore RB Eric Wojciksky ripped off consecutive runs of 16 and 15 yards on the final drive to wrap up the victory. bmonastiere@oehome.com.net (734) 953-2106

## O & E STAFF'S FOOTBALL PICKS

WEEK 5 FRIDAY	Jim Toth	Marty Budner	Tim Smith	Dan Stickrad	Ken Abramczyk	Dan O'Meara
Farmington Harrison at Troy Athens	Harrison	Harrison	Athens	Harrison	Harrison	Harrison
Royal Oak Kimball at Southfield	Kimball	Kimball	Kimball	Kimball	Kimball	Kimball
Southfield Lathrup at Birm. Seaholm	Seaholm	Seaholm	Seaholm	Seaholm	Seaholm	Seaholm
Pontiac Northern at West Bloomfield West Bloom.	West Bloom.	West Bloom.	West Bloom.	Northern	Northern	Northern
Waterford Mott at Rochester Adams	Adams	Adams	Adams	Adams	Adams	Adams
Troy at Clarkston	Troy	Troy	Clarkston	Clarkston	Clarkston	Troy
M.H. Lamphere at B.H. Andover	Andover	Andover	Andover	Andover	Andover	Andover
Rochester at Lake Orion	Lake Orion	Lake Orion	Lake Orion	Lake Orion	Lake Orion	Lake Orion
Stoney Creek vs. Pontiac Central	Central	Central	Central	Central	Central	Central
Birm. Groves at Waterford Kettering Groves	Groves	Groves	Groves	Groves	Groves	Groves
A.H. Avondale at Hazel Park	Avondale	Hazel Park	Avondale	Avondale	Avondale	Avondale
B.H. Lahser at Clawson	Lahser	Lahser	Lahser	Lahser	Lahser	Lahser
Ferndale at Farmington	Farmington	Farmington	Farmington	Farmington	Farmington	Farmington
Berkley at N. Farmington	N. Farmington	N. Farmington	N. Farmington	N. Farmington	N. Farmington	N. Farmington
Oxford at Lapeer West	Oxford	Oxford	Oxford	Oxford	Oxford	Oxford
Cranbrook at Macomb Lutheran N.	Cranbrook	Cranbrook	Cranbrook	Cranbrook	Cranbrook	Lutheran N.
SATURDAY						
U-D Jesuit at O.L. St. Mary's	St. Mary's	U-D Jesuit	St. Mary's	St. Mary's	St. Mary's	U-D Jesuit
Harper Woods at R.H. Lutheran NW	Harper Woods	Harper Woods	Harper Woods	Harper Woods	Harper Woods	Harper Woods
B. Brother Rice vs. W. De La Salle	Brother Rice	Brother Rice	Brother Rice	Brother Rice	Brother Rice	Brother Rice
Catholic Central at O. Country Day	CC	CC	CC	CC	CC	CC
LAST WEEK	11-7 (.611)	11-7 (.611)	10-8 (.556)	12-6 (.667)	13-5 (.722)	13-5 (.722)
SEASON TOTAL	50-18 (.735)	52-16 (.765)	46-22 (.676)	45-23 (.662)	51-17 (.750)	53-15 (.779)

## This Weekend!

Friday, September 27th  
vs.  
Barrie Colts at 7:30 p.m.  
*Family Value Night*

Saturday, September 28th  
vs.  
Guelph Storm  
*Family Value Night*

**Family Value Night** (advance purchases only):  
4 tickets, 4 Hot Dogs,  
4 Pepsi's and 2 game  
programs for only \$39!

Individual Tickets just  
\$9 and \$12

Call (734) 453-8400  
to charge tickets by phone

## You'll Pay Less For Your Home Improvement Just For Being You.

**Credit Union ONE**

Where You Matter.

89 Branch Locations Throughout Michigan. Call 1-800-441-1099

\* Annual Percentage Rate. The prime rate index is the rate announced in the latest published issue of the Wall Street Journal. Rate is for new lines of credit and is subject to change and qualification. This is a variable rate loan and is adjusted monthly.

## Hawks take fifth at Seaholm Invite

Chris Fitzgerald took medalist honors, but Farmington Hills Harrison could only muster a fifth-place finish at the Birmingham Seaholm Invitational on Saturday at Twin Beach Country Club.

### BOYS GOLF

Fitzgerald's 72 tied him with Birmingham Groves' Dan Gordon for top honors at the meet. David Koch added a 77 for the Hawks, while Eddie Bellamy had an 86 and Matt Kjolhede had a 93.

Novi won the meet with 303, while Groves had 309, Catholic Central shot 310, West Bloomfield had 327, Harrison had 328 and Birmingham Seaholm had 373.

On Tuesday, Brett Booth carded a 35 and Brandon Booth chipped in with a 36 to lead Birmingham Groves to a 148-160 victory over Harrison.

Dan Gordon's 37 and Pete Rosenberg's 40 rounded out the winning total for the Falcons, who improved to 2-1 in OAA Division I action and 5-2 overall.

Harrison (3-3, 3-3 OAA Division II) was led by Chris Fitzgerald's 38, David Koch and Paul Maganka, each shot 40, and Eddie Bellamy had 42.