



HITTING THE BACKBOARD-FLOOR-BROKEN ARM - Thurston's Bill VanAlsten received a compound fracture on this play against North Farmington in Northwest Suburban basketball competition. He hit the backboard

with his right arm on an attempted block, flipped to the floor and landed on his left arm. (Observer photos by Tom Donoghue)

Injuries Take Toll

'Limping' Thurston Falls To North

By TOM DONOGHUE
Sports Editor

Hopes of a winning basketball season have been known to dwindle to nil, come the half-way point, for countless prep teams.

Thurston High School, by fate and not choice or lack of good basketball, has just about reached that point after only three games.

The '72-'73 cage season appeared good at Thurston, with Dan Bennett taking over the reins, and all signs were "go" toward a winning season and a shot at the Northwest Suburban title.

Before the season's first tip-off, Thurston ran into its first yield sign when junior stand-out Dave Harding, transferred to Catholic Central,

THE EAGLES and Coach Bennett knew they would miss Harding but they knew they could work around his loss. The Eagles opened with an overtime loss to an experienced Stevenson squad, 76-75, and fell to Churchill the next night, 74-72.

It looked like just a matter of time before Bennett and his Eagles would jell and take charge.

THE CHARGE was then halted, the jell melted and Thurston has all but run up its white flag.

North Farmington toppled Thurston in the Northwest Suburban opener, 63-53, but more important and more disheartening was the loss of two Thurston cagers to the disabled roster.

Thurston's leading scorer, Steve Hunter, sprained his ankle in the third quarter and with some luck will return to the lineup after the holidays.

The crushing blow came with one minute elapsed in the final quarter when North Farmington's Gasior broke for the basket. Thurston's John Roy and Bill VanAlsten dove in with Gasior. VanAlsten leaped high and hit his right arm against the backboard.

THE EAGLE forward then flipped and tumbled to the court with a compound

fracture in his left arm which cracked when he hit the floor.

Both Hunter and VanAlsten were taken to Botsford Hospital and VanAlsten later was moved to Oakwood in Dearborn to undergo surgery.

"It was a bad night all around," sighed Bennett. "It is really going to be rough now but we will show up and the kids will keep on scrambling. They are not going to quit."

"VanALSTEN was the team hustler, he made us click," added Bennett.

For North Farmington and Coach Ken Dean it was victory No. 2 and one step in the right direction of taking the Northwest title away from Franklin, which also won its opener against Garden City East.

"We stuck to our game plan and made Thurston shoot from the outside," said Dean. "They (Thurston) didn't fast-break as I expected and it was just a super defensive effort."

After one quarter, Thurston and the Raiders from North were deadlocked at 16-16.

North's defense went to work in the second quarter and Thurston was without a two pointer for 7:17.

Meanwhile the Raiders' Dave Ellsworth and Kim Parker

GC East Tourney Saturday

This weekend marks the 16th annual Garden City East Wrestling Invitational, with 16 schools in competition.

Preliminaries kick off Friday at 4 p.m., semi-finals are set for Saturday at 1 p.m. with finals Saturday at 7 p.m.

Schools competing for the title are: Annapolis, AA Huron, Belleville, Bentley, Crestwood, Edsel Ford, Franklin, GC East, GC West, John Glenn, Redford Union, Romulus, Stevenson, Thurston, Wayne and Melvindale.

NORTH FARMINGTON (63)

	FG	FT	TP
Parker	6	0-1	12
Gasior	3	7-9	13
Ellsworth	4	4-5	12
Doot	1	0-0	2
Fredericks	6	1-2	13
Bancroft	1	0-0	2
Foster	1	1-2	3
Daley	0	2-2	2
McCreary	0	1-2	1
Craigton	0	2-3	2
Knock	0	1-2	1
Totals	22	19-28	63

THURSTON (53)

	FG	FT	TP
Hunter	2	4-4	8
Van Alsten	3	0-0	6
Spain	1	1-2	3
Keenan	4	2-4	10
Falvo	5	0-0	10
Dowdy	2	2-2	6
Rubenstein	1	2-2	4
Doyle	1	0-0	2
Totals	21	11-18	53

N. FARMINGTON - 16 14 18 63
THURSTON - 16 9 9 19 53

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Basketball Tourney Card

NORTHWEST SUBURBAN TOURNAMENT
MONDAY, Dec. 18

Game No. 1 - N. Farmington vs Henry Ford at RU, 7 p.m.
Game No. 2 - Redford Union vs WL Western at RU, 8:30 p.m.
Game No. 3 - Bentley vs WL Central at Farmington, 7 p.m.
Game No. 4 - Farmington vs Detroit Redford at Farmington, 8:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, Dec. 19

Game No. 5 - Winner No. 1 vs Winner No. 2 at RU, 7 p.m.
Game No. 6 - Winner No. 3 vs Winner No. 4 at RU, 8:30 p.m.
Game No. 7 - Loser No. 1 vs Loser No. 2 at Farmington, 7 p.m.
Game No. 8 - Loser No. 3 vs Loser No. 4 at Farmington, 8:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 18

Game No. 9 - Loser No. 5 vs Loser No. 6 at RU, 7 p.m.
Game No. 10 - Winner No. 5 vs Winner No. 6 at RU, 8:30 p.m.
Game No. 11 - Loser No. 7 vs Loser No. 8 at Farmington, 7 p.m.
Game No. 12 - Winner No. 7 vs Winner No. 8 at Farmington, 8:30 p.m.

CHURCHILL HOLIDAY TOURNAMENT

TUESDAY, Dec. 19

Game No. 1 - Stevenson vs Thurston at Churchill, 7 p.m.
Game No. 2 - Churchill vs Plymouth at Churchill, 9 p.m.

THURSDAY, Dec. 21

Game No. 3 - Loser No. 1 vs Loser No. 2 at Churchill, 7 p.m.
Game No. 4 - Winner No. 1 vs Winner No. 2 at Churchill, 9 p.m.

BELLEVILLE HOLIDAY TOURNEY

TUESDAY, Dec. 19

Game No. 1 - John Glenn vs Cherry Hill at Belleville, 7 p.m.
Game No. 2 - Wayne vs Belleville at Belleville, 8:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, Dec. 21

Game No. 3 - Loser No. 1 vs Loser No. 2 at Belleville, 7 p.m.
Game No. 4 - Winner No. 1 vs Winner No. 2 at Belleville, 8:30 p.m.

and Thurston 21 of 61.

Two technicals followed, North was paced by a one by each side, and the balanced attack of Gasior and Raiders coasted to a 10 point Fredericks with 13 points each and Parker and Ellsworth. Each squad came up with a 33 per cent average from the Kevin Keenan and Mark Falvo netted to each.

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