



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Agape's Ryan Barber drives for a layup past Westland Huron Valley Lutheran's John Sharrow during Thursday night's Michigan Independent Athletic Conference game played at Canton's Discovery Middle School. The Wolverines won, 56-37, over the Hawks.

Seniors' night Canton hoop trio subdues Plymouth

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Canton's senior basketball players shared the spotlight with their parents prior to Friday night's Senior Night game against Plymouth. About an hour later, three of the Chiefs seniors stole the spotlight from the Wildcats.

In the first varsity meeting between the two P-CEP neighbors, Canton triumphed, 55-44, but not before Plymouth gave the Chiefs a serious third-quarter scare. The victory improved Canton's record to 9-6 overall and 5-4 in the Western Lakes Activities Association. Plymouth slipped to 8-7 and 4-5.

As part of the Senior Night activities that marked five Canton players' final regular-season home game, one by one, the team's seniors met their parents at mid-court, where they were greeted with hugs and handshakes.

Fittingly, when the game got tight late in the third quarter, it was seniors Andy Cortellini, Kevin Thornton and David Cahille who put the squeeze on the Wildcats' bid for a huge road victory. Cortellini and Cahille both scored nine points in the decisive fourth quarter and Thornton yanked down five big final-quarter rebounds to help lock up the win.

"Our seniors really stepped up in the fourth quarter," said Canton coach Charlie Payne. "Cortellini and Cahille both played very well in transition and Kevin Thornton got some big rebounds. I have to give Plymouth a lot of credit. We came out lax in the third quarter and they came out ready to play."

Following a tight first quarter that ended with a 9-9 tie, the Chiefs seized the contest's momentum by outscor-

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Sidelings

Salem clinic

The annual Salem Baseball Clinic will be held Saturday, March 26, and Saturday, April 16, in the Salem High School gymnasium. Participants will receive three hours of baseball instruction with the Salem varsity baseball team's players and coaches, a T-shirt, snack and drink.

The fee for the clinic, which is for players between the ages of 7 and 15, is \$25. To reserve a place in either session or for further information, contact Ron Myers at (734) 459-4026.

Jaskot excels

Former Salem basketball player Kelly Jaskot led the University of Detroit-Mercy women's cagers with nine points Thursday night in the Lady Titans' 59-46 loss at Butler. Jaskot achieved her team-high point total in just 17 minutes of action. The former Rock standout connected on three three-point shots in addition to pulling down a pair of rebounds.

Whalers rated

The National Hockey League's Central Scouting Service's mid-term rankings showed two Plymouth Whalers rated to be selected in the first round of the 2005 National Hockey League Entry Draft and another in the fourth round.

Center James Neal and right wing Dan Collins are rated 20th and 23rd by Central Scouting and defenseman Ryan McGinnis is ranked 110th overall. All three players are 17 years old and in their second year with Plymouth.

The 2005 NHL Entry Draft is tentatively scheduled for June 25-26 at the Corel Centre in Ottawa, Ont.

"I'm happy for all three of them," said Plymouth president general manager and head coach Michael Vellucci. "They've worked very hard to progress this far."

SC hosts acrosport

Aerokhanas will perform their acrosport gymnastics performance at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 12, at the Schoolcraft College main gymnasium, located off Haggerty (south parking lot) between Six and Seven Mile roads.

The Aeros, who have performed during NBA halftimes, collegiate and high school game events is a Hawaiian name, meaning "The Kings of the Air."

It is a combination of breath-taking stunts of acrobatics and gymnastics.

The Aeros will also be conducting a workout clinic for ages 9 and over at 10 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 13, at the Metropolitan Adventist Junior Academy Gym on Haggerty Road, just one mile south of Schoolcraft College just north of Five Mile Road. The cost is \$10 (includes a pancake breakfast).

For more information, call (734) 420-4044.

Agape cagers race past Hawks

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Canton Agape Christian wanted Thursday night's basketball game against visiting Westland Huron Valley Lutheran to have a NASCAR-like pace — fast and furious.

The Hawks preferred a tempo more like a tractor pull — slow and deliberate. NASCAR won.

The Wolverines flew past the Hawks 56-37, to improve their record to 9-5 overall and 6-0 in the Michigan Independent Athletic Conference Red Division. Huron Valley dropped to 4-11

overall and 1-6 in the league. "We knew they liked to push the ball up the court, so we wanted to slow things down," said Hawks coach Jim Ott. "We did a good job at the beginning of the game, but we had way too many turnovers in the second half and it got away from us. We rushed things too much instead of slowing the ball down and setting up our offense like we worked on in practice."

The Wolverines were led by sophomore guard Jack Anleitner, who poured in a game-high 18 points. Bryan Horning contributed 10 points while Derek Leathers and Matt Molnar had eight a piece.

"Jack did a nice job of taking the ball to the hole tonight," said Agape coach Keith Anleitner, who doubles as the high-scorer's dad. "In addition, I thought Bryan Horning gave us a lot of energy on the press and Derek Leathers did a good job of dominating inside. Overall, it was a good team victory for us."

The Hawks handled the Wolverines' pressure adequately in the first half and trailed just 26-23 one minute into the third quarter. However, Agape reeled off a momentum-grabbing 18-3 run to finish off the quarter and secure a 44-26 advantage. Anleitner spurred the big run.

PLEASE SEE AGAPE, B3

Canton's Powers headed to Ivy League

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Jake Powers wasn't fazed when a blizzard forced him to spend an extra day at Brown University last month during his official weekend football visit to the prestigious Ivy League college.

It turns out the storm gave the Canton gridiron standout an extra day to become accustomed to his future collegiate surroundings.

Powers, who was a powerful two-way performer for the Chiefs' successful football program the past three seasons, verbally committed to Brown on Jan. 26. The Division I-AA school located in Providence, R.I., won out over the

University of Pennsylvania, Michigan Tech and Ferris State University, who were also on Powers' short list of schools.

"I liked everything about the school," said Powers. "The campus is great and they have outstanding facilities for athletics. They don't give out athletic scholarships, but I can apply for academic scholarships."

Powers, who has compiled a stellar 3.7 grade-point average at Canton, said Brown's strong academic reputation had a lot to do with his decision to head east.

"I worked hard to get good grades in high school, so I definitely wanted to attend a college where I could put that to good use," he said.

Another appealing aspect of the

school's academic approach is that students are not required to take any general studies courses like at many universities, Powers said.

"Without any required classes, it's easier to double-major," explained Powers, who said he is leaning toward earning his bachelor's degree in business.

Ivy League athletes are not allowed to wear red shirts, so Powers could see playing time this coming season.

Brown head coach Phil Estes told the 6-2, 230-pound Powers that he would start out on the offensive side of the ball, but that a future switch to defense wasn't out of the question.

"They told me I will start out playing H-back, which is a combination fullback and tight end," said Powers, who dou-

bled as a tight end and linebacker for the Chiefs. "On most plays, the H-back lines up in front of the tailback, but then he goes in motion and either blocks or runs a pass pattern. It will give me a chance to catch some passes and the H-back usually runs the ball a couple of times every game."

"They said I could get moved over to defense in the future, depending on what the team's needs are."

Powers said he is unsure of whether he will pursue a collegiate baseball career at Brown.

"You're allowed to play two sports, so we'll have to wait and see what happens," he said.

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New challenges

Former Salem basketball star turns passion for game into career

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

The basketball rolled off the shooter's fingertips, rainbowed through the air and into the net more than 19 feet away with stunning regularity at a recent Central Connecticut State women's basketball team practice.

The shooter was helping the Blue Devils' coaching staff simulate a sharp-shooting opponent that was next on the team's schedule.

When the brief defensive drill was over, the shooter had drained at least 10 of the long-range shots, drawing awe-struck praise from the over-matched CCSU players who were trying to defend her.

"Coach D can shoot!" one of the players said to CCSU head coach Yvette Harris, referring to the person who had just put on a world-class

shooting exhibition. The shooter — who was also the top assistant coach on Harris' staff — was Dena Head, arguably the best female basketball player to ever wear a Plymouth Salem uniform.

Head, who led the Rocks to two Class A state semi-final appearances in 1986 and 1987 and was voted Michigan's "Miss Basketball" her senior season, is currently in the middle of her fourth year as the primary assistant coach at CCSU, a 13,000-student Division I college located in New Britain, Conn. She not only assists Harris with coaching responsibilities during practices and games, but she is also the program's recruiting coordinator, a role that has helped her accumulate more frequent-flyer miles than most commercial airline pilots.

DRIVEN TO SUCCEED

According to Harris, Head tackles all of these tasks with the same passion that made her an All-State player at Salem, an All-American at the University of Tennessee and a highly respected nine-year professional in the Women's National Basketball Association and in leagues overseas.

"Dena is probably one of the most intense people I know when she steps on the basketball court," said Harris, who took over the reins at CCSU three years ago. "She is ready to go every single day. The players in our program have a lot of respect for her because they know what she has accomplished. Dena is very humble, though. She doesn't go around saying, 'Do it this way so you can catch up to me'."

PLEASE SEE HEAD, B3



Former Plymouth Salem basketball star Dena Head now serves as the top assistant coach for the women's basketball team at Central Connecticut State University, a Division I school located in New Britain, Conn. Head, who graduated from Salem in 1988, had an outstanding pro and collegiate career as a player.