

Victory over ESPSS
would have done it

MSS' weird final week

by Garry Forbes

There are two simple words to describe the last week of the high school football season -- at least as far as Midland Secondary School is concerned. They are: weird and tragic.

As it turns out, the MSS Varsity Marauders had only to beat Ecole Secondaire Penetanguishene Secondary School in their season-ending matchup Tuesday to earn the second and last playoff berth in the Simcoe County North Division. They lost, 23-22.

Because of its weirdness, description of the situation in the final week should be approached from the front.

Going into the final week, MSS, Orillia's Park Street Collegiate and Orillia's Twin Lakes Secondary School were all tied for second behind unbeaten Collingwood Collegiate Institute. All had 3-2 records.

In the last games, MSS faced ESPSS -- whom they had beaten 47-0 earlier in the season -- and Park was to meet a weakened, demoralized and dissipated Twin Lakes team. If both the obvious favorites won, Park would get the playoff nod because of

an earlier win over MSS. If Park lost to Twin Lakes, MSS would be playoff-bound because of their season-opening win over Twin Lakes.

Midland's only hope rested on Park's losing. Fat chance. This depressing thought, aided by the injury Sunday of their quarterback Steve Friesen -- the team's offensive driving force -- caused Midland to lose their concentration Tuesday in Penetanguishene and, consequently, the game.

They had, alas, no way of knowing Park was going to blow it the next day.

Today, then, as Collingwood and Twin Lakes practice for Tuesday's Simcoe County semi-finals, MSS and Park -- which turned the ball over to Twin Lakes eight times in the 18-14 Wednesday upset -- are kicking themselves on the sidelines.

MSS, according to coach Randy Ritchie, "still should have won"

Tuesday's game over ESPSS, despite his allowance that Penetanguishene were keyed up to the facemask after their awful embarrassment earlier in the season.

Flanker John Friesen filled the quarterback position in his injured older brother's absence and led the MSS offence to 300 yards total offence.

Ritchie described it as "one of the best running games we've had all season," pointing in particular to fullback Gary Beausoleil's 169-yard one-touchdown performance.

The other MSS touchdowns came from fullback Mike Josland and quarterback Friesen the younger, who also passed for two two-point converts.

Unfortunately for the restructured -- and obviously effective -- MSS offense, their defensive counterparts were shocked at every turn by ESPSS quarterback Jerome Ladouceur and his spirit-of-vengeance teammates.

Ladouceur threw two touchdown passes, but James Morrow surprised the MSS defense with a high-risk flea-flicker play which resulted in a 40-yard touchdown toss to Paul



Endzone agony

Members of the Midland Secondary School Marauders look a little dejected after a touchdown by a Collingwood Collegiate Institute receiver in their recent matchup. But

it wasn't as hard to take as a 23-22 loss to ESPSS Ecole Secondaire Penetanguishene Secondary School Tuesday. The latter game ended Midland's playoff hopes.

Balabuck, and Dave Genier appeared in the end zone with two two-point conversions and kicked for another one-pointer.

ESPSS was never behind in the game, and in an effort to alter that fact -- and keep their playoff hopes alive -- Midland attempted what would be a game-winning two-point conversion after their last touchdown during

the final minutes of the game.

They missed. MSS coach Randy Ritchie looked at the whole weird affair philosophically.

"It was a good football game," said Ritchie. "Penetang improved quite a bit and was full of surprises. You can't take anything away from them."

Ritchie described the sum of his team's six-

game schedule as "a reasonably successful season. I'd say everybody had a pretty good time."

Those comments came, however, before Ritchie knew of Park's defeat. Today, undoubtedly, he'll have a lot of little things playing on his mind. Things like the missed convert Tuesday, Steve Friesen's injury Sun-

Friesen's knee may have been in working order in time for the playoffs Tuesday. day, and the late news -- too late to inspire a more spirited MSS push against PSS -- that

For these are the things which helped prevent the Marauders from continuing their good time for at least one more game.

OVA preliminaries

Midland ladies' teams qualify for top division

The ladies' section of the Midland Volleyball Club has gotten into the winning spirit this year with two teams qualifying for the A division in Ontario Volleyball Association league play.

In addition, some local players -- including Mary-Pat Quilty, Kelly Swales, Susan Lamers and Pattie Cox -- have been quietly taking a shot at the All-Ontario team.

The Midland Here's Lookin' Atcha squad, which competed in the OVA's B division last year, qualified for this year's A competition by winning five of six games in a qualifying tournament last Sunday in Toronto.

The Atcha's beat Toronto PPL 17-15, 15-11 in their opener, downed Orillia 15-1 and 15-10, and beat Cabbagetown 15-8 before losing the second game 15-5.

A second Midland ladies' team, the Midland Parlour Games, maintained their A-division status from last year despite losing five of six games in a separate qualifying

tourney in Toronto the same day.

The Parlour Games squad split their opening match against Toronto Kalev 15-10, 14-16, before dropping to the Toronto Satellites 9-15, 10-15, and the Don Valley Raiders 11-15, 9-15.

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The Commodore Hotel Malibus took it on the chin in their second round-robin competition of the Simcoe County Laies' Volleyball League season Tuesday in Collingwood.

The Malibus dropped their first match 15-12,

12-15, 15-7 to Collingwood, then were beaten two straight, 15-13, 15-5, by Orillia's

First club. The games were the third and fourth losses in as many matches for

the Malibus. Next action for the Midland team is Nov. 18 at Base Borden.

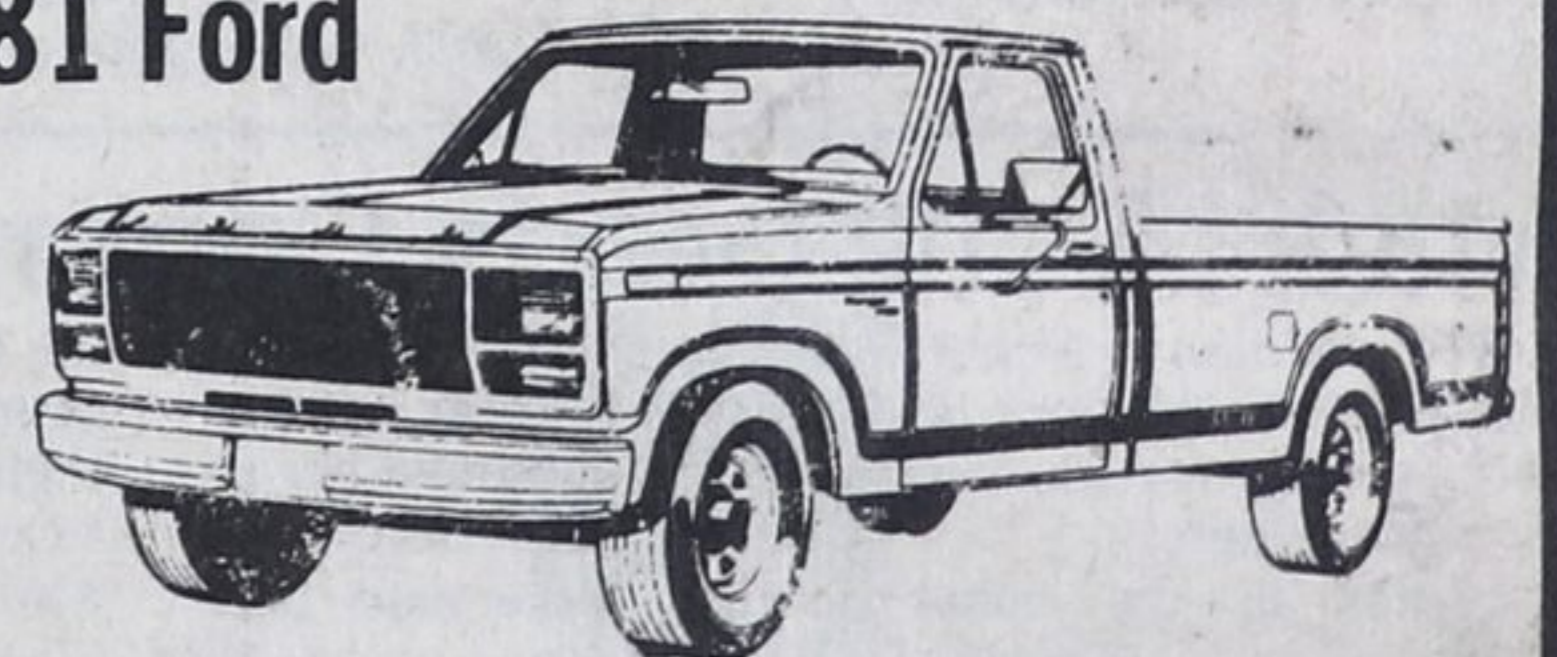
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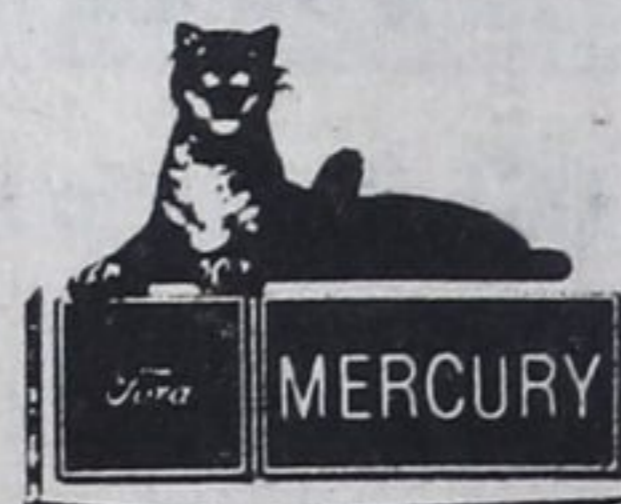


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