



**HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCENE**  
KEEPING KIDS IN THE NEWS

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### PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Hello sports fans, it's another great day here at High School Sports Scene Magazine.

With a definite chill in the air, it must mean we must be getting into high school football playoff season!!!

The football playoffs kick off this week and the first round features some outstanding matchups.

One of the biggest games on the schedule takes place in Montrose where the Rams host defending Division 7 state champion New Lothrop. Both of these teams are among the best in the state in Division 7 and are long-time rivals.

Traditional powers Ithaca and Pewamo-Westphalia clash at Pewamo-Westphalia. The host Pirates have looked invincible at times this season with a punishing defense and potent offense. P-W is also bringing plenty of momentum into the game after a big week nine win against Division 9 powerhouse Lansing Catholic.

The Cougars look to rebound from that loss when they host Durand with a meeting against a 9-0 Millington team looming in the district finals.

Undefeated Rockford, led by standout quarterback Zak Ahern, is ranked among the best in Division 1 and begins its drive for a state title at home against a Grand Ledge team that will be looking to pull the upset.

In Division 2, Bay City Western and Midland Dow played one of the most exciting games of the season. The Saginaw Valley League squads have a rematch in store for week one of the playoffs that has the potential for more thrills.

Mt. Pleasant turned in a perfect regular season and the Oilers begin the playoffs at home against Marquette. A win by the Oilers could set up what would be a very interesting district final with defending Division 3 state champion DeWitt.

In Division 5, Frankenmuth is gearing up for another run at Ford Field. To get there, however, the Eagles face a tough road that could include a semifinal matchup against Grand Rapids Catholic Central in what would be a rematch of last year's state title game. Don't overlook Portland in Division 5. The Raiders have already defeated defending Division 3 state champs DeWitt this season and has a team built for a run at Ford Field.

With so many exciting games coming up, grab some warm clothes, bundle up and head down to the football field for some great high school football action!!!

See you at the games!



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## Seniors Lead The Way As Alma Panthers Close Out Season With Winning Record

### Butch Harmon Sports Scene

With a determined group of seniors leading the way, the Alma football team played some of the best football of the season down the stretch. Winning three of the final four regular-season games, Alma capped the regular season with a 5-4 record.

Alma's late-season run began in week five when the Panthers dropped a tough 29-28 battle to Swan Valley. The next week the Panthers came up on the positive side of another close game with a 28-27 win against Essexville-Garber. After a tough 22-7 loss to unbeaten Frankenmuth, the Panthers closed out the regular season with wins against Bridgeport and Big Rapids.

"We've been playing pretty well towards the end of the season," said Alma coach Dan Falor. "We played well against Swan Valley and then played a good game against a solid Garber team. That was our homecoming game. They jumped out early on us but we came back in the fourth quarter. That was a big win for us."

Senior leadership and strong defense provided the momentum for the late-season surge.

"Our defense has played well at times," Falor said. "We have also been getting good senior leadership from our seniors."

Linebacker Jacob Munger and safety Harrison Seeley have been defensive leaders for the Panthers along with defensive lineman JB

Couch.

"Jacob is a senior linebacker who is doing a nice job for us," Falor said. "He is the leader of our defense. Harrison is doing an excellent job at safety. He's done a good job on both sides of the ball. JB has also been our most consistent defensive lineman."

On offense, the Panthers are led by junior quarterback Sam Rosales who was one of three quarterbacks vying for the starting job when fall practice began.

"Sam has done a really nice job of stepping into the starting role," Falor said. "He throws the ball well and makes pretty good decisions. He has done a really good job of learning the offense and not trying to do too much. Sometimes a



Alma junior quarterback Sam Rosales has stepped up to provide the Panthers with solid play this season.

young quarterback tries to do too much but Sam is not like that."

Senior wide receiver Landon Bethka has been a key target in

the passing game while Couch has been the leader of a senior-laden offensive line. A versatile lineman, Couch has played tackle and center and has even seen time at guard.

## Ithaca Football Team Survives Rocky Start To Post Winning Record This Season

### David Cook Sports Scene

With a new coach and a large group of young players, the Ithaca football team entered the season knowing it would go through some growing pains. While the Yellowjackets went through some tough games in the early going, the team fashioned together a winning regular season.

After opening the season with losses against Hudson and Standish-Sterling, the Yellowjackets reeled off five straight wins before dropping a one-point decision to unbeaten and state-ranked Millington.

"I'm pleased with the growth the kids have made," said Ithaca coach

Jordan Hessbrook. "We came into the season with a new head coach and a lot of younger kids making their first varsity starts. We needed to improve every day and grow as a team and I'm proud of them for that."

Ithaca showed plenty of improvement in multiple areas this season.

"Our offensive line has improved quite a bit," Hessbrook said, "both in pass protection and the running game. Bronson Bupp has really improved at the quarterback spot especially in terms of understanding the position. He has the natural talent for the running and the passing but he has improved with the mental part of the position like understanding

checks and what we are trying to do with the offense. Our defense has also become more physical, especially against the run."

Bupp is turning in a big season in his first year as the starting quarterback. Through the first eight games of the season he has passed for 981 yards and 12 touchdowns while he has rushed for 1,184 yards and 19 touchdowns.

Bupp has a versatile group of receivers to throw to led by Ethan Hull who has caught 18 passes for 451 yards and five touchdowns. Chad Pratt has added 18 catches



Ithaca Football Team starts flow, finishes regular season winning six of last seven games to enter playoffs

for 240 yards and two touchdowns while Dalton Seaman has caught 11 passes for 118 yards and two scores.

Along with Bupp, the Ithaca ground game is led by Noah

Risner. Risner has rushed for 268 yards and four touchdowns.

"Noah is getting better each week," Hessbrook said. "He is doing some good things each week."



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# Mt. Pleasant Football Team Turns In Perfect Regular Season In A Rebuilding Year

## David Cook Sports Scene

After graduating a large group of seniors last year, Mt. Pleasant football coach Jason McIntyre was not sure what to expect this season. What McIntyre and Oiler fans found out this season was that this year's squad has plenty to offer.

Led by a solid defense and a balanced offense, Mt. Pleasant turned in a perfect 9-0 regular season and won a league championship.

"We lost a lot of players from last year's team," McIntyre said. "This season has been a pleasant surprise and I'm really proud of the effort the guys have given. Each week

we have become better and better. I'm really pleased with what we've accomplished so far and I'm really excited about the opportunities we have going forward."

The success of this year's squad starts on the defensive side of the football where the Oilers have held a number of high-powered offenses in check this season.

"We have a very strong defense led by a very talented linebacking corps," McIntyre said. "That has been the strength of our team and kept us in games this season. I think we've played well on both sides of the ball but I definitely think our defense has led us."

At the heart of the Oiler defense is

the three-man linebacking group of Kory Davis, Jesse Henrie and Max Humphrey.

"Kory is a returning, first-team, all-league linebacker," McIntyre said. "He is all over the field for us. Jesse is our middle linebacker. He was injured last year and he put a lot of time and effort getting ready for this year. These three guys are all explosive athletes who play on both sides of the ball for us."

The Oilers also have an active, strong group of defensive linemen along with a talented secondary that makes the defense tough from front to back.

"Defense is about every guy buying into their role," McIntyre said. "Our defensive linemen do a great job of eating up blocks and freeing up the linebackers to make tackles. Our defensive backs have quite a few interceptions. It's been a complete team effort on defense."

On offense, the Oilers have a balanced attack led by senior quarterback Ryan McIntyre. Davis



Led by a balanced offense and a strong defense, the Mt. Pleasant football team turned in a 9-0 regular season.

and Humphrey lead the way at running back.

"We have a lot of balance on offense that makes us hard to defend," McIntyre said. "Max and Kory lead us in rushing and Ryan is our third-

leading rusher. Ryan has thrown for over 800 yards and we have had seven different receivers catch passes. With our combination of a balanced offense and a strong defense we've had a pretty good recipe for success."

# St. Louis Football Team Exceeds Expectations

## David Cook Sports Scene

Heading into the season with a young team that included several freshmen, St. Louis football coach Julian Paksi was not sure what he had in his young team. As the regular season winds down, what Paksi has is a winning football team with a bright future.

St. Louis opened the football season with three consecutive wins and won four out the first five games it played.

"Going into the season I was not really sure what to expect," Paksi said. "We have a very young team with seven seniors, a couple of juniors, a couple of sophomores and mainly freshmen. I was not sure what we had."

One thing the team has plenty of is

leadership and that leadership helped guide the team to a winning season.

"Our big strength is our senior leadership and overall leadership," Paksi said. "We also have a pretty good coaching staff with older and younger coaches. Our senior leaders helped the freshmen with everything from grades to the weight room along with on the field."

On the field, the Sharks have benefitted from a talented group of backs and receivers.

"Our running back, Ignatius Jackson, has 12 touchdowns and even threw for a couple touchdowns," Paksi said. "He's also ran for over 600 yards."

Senior Rafael Orta-Vasquez has played a key role on offense with his versatility. Orta-Vasquez has lined up

at running back, fullback, tight end and offensive tackle.

"Rafael is our Swiss Army Knife," Paksi said. "He is an overall good athlete who we can play anywhere on the field."

Seniors Ben Dousuah and Michael Baysah are a pair of big-play athletes who bring more versatility to the field.

"Michael is a tight end who catches the ball pretty well and has a couple of receiving touchdowns," Paksi said. "He also has seven sacks this year and is one of the leaders in the state in sacks."

Ben is one of the top tacklers in the state. He plays tight end, wide receiver and running back on offense. He is also the strongest kid on the team and has had some highlight-reel blocks."

Senior quarterback Reece Giles leads the St. Louis offense and is a strong leader.

On defense, sophomore Josh Dew is a team captain and is the

quarterback of the defense from his safety position.

Several of the freshmen have stepped up for the Sharks during the season led by Julian Orta-Vasquez who is a starting lineman on both offense and defense. Justin Rodriguez has developed into a two-way starter while Dillon Downs has stepped in as a starter at defensive tackle.

The development of the younger players has helped the Sharks win five of their first eight games this season including a big win over Saginaw Nouvel.

One of the highlights was beating Rockford to face the top-ranked Rams with the winner playing either Traverse City West or Grandville.

Playing together as one cohesive unit has been another key to success according to Paksi.

"It has been great seeing them



Ignatius Jackson (5) and the St. Louis football team have turned in a big season this fall posting a 5-4 record in the regular season.

play as one unit," Paksi said. "I'm proud of how well we have stayed together. The seniors and the juniors and sophomores have all taken the freshmen under their wings. It's been satisfying seeing how they have come together as one family."

# DIVISION 1, 2, 3 AND 4 MHSAA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PLAYOFF PREVIEW

## DIVISION 1

### ROCKFORD RAMS

**Record:** 9-0, 7-0 1<sup>st</sup> OK Red  
**Offense:** 40.0 ppg. Defense: 16.6 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 17-14 Caledonia (8-1), 44-30 Sterling Heights Stevenson (7-2).  
**Playoff history:** Making its 27<sup>th</sup> straight appearance in the playoffs.

**Playoff road:** Rockford hosts Grand Ledge in district semifinal. Winner plays winner of Traverse City West at Grandville.

**Skinny:** The Rams are led by one of the premier dual-threat quarterbacks in the state in Zak Ahern. The grandson of former Ithaca and Lansing Catholic coach Jim Ahern, Zak has passed for over 1,400 yards and rushed for over 1,000 yards while combining for 37 touchdowns.

### HOLT RAMS

**Record:** 7-2, 5-1 2<sup>nd</sup> CAAC Blue  
**Offense:** 37.3 ppg. Defense: 18.9 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 44-14 Mason (7-2), 26-21 East Lansing (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** In the playoffs for a third straight season.

**Playoff road:** Hold travels to 9-0 Grand Blanc for district semifinal. Winner plays winner of Howell and Hartland.

**Skinny:** The Rams are well prepared for the playoffs having faced playoff teams this season. Quarterback Seneca Moore leads a potent and well-balanced offense.

### GRAND LEDGE COMETS

**Record:** 6-3, 3-3 4<sup>th</sup> CAAC Blue  
**Offense:** 29.8 ppg. Defense: 20.1 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 45-0 Jackson (5-4), 54-12 Lansing Everett (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** The Comets have qualified for the playoffs six times in the past eight years.

**Playoff road:** The Comets travel to Rockford to face the top-ranked Rams with the winner playing either Traverse City West or Grandville.

**Skinny:** The Comets started the season fast winning their first four games by 15 or more points.

### Top D1 contenders in the state:

Rockford, Detroit Cass Tech, Rochester Adams, Saline, Grand Blanc.

### HSSS DIVISION 1 STATE FINAL

PREDICTION: *Detroit Cass Tech 35, Rockford 21*

## DIVISION 2

### BAY CITY WESTERN WARRIORS

**Record:** 7-2, 3-2 3<sup>rd</sup> SVL Red  
**Offense:** 48.2 ppg. Defense: 20.8 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 40-19 Saginaw Heritage (5-4), 60-42 Flint Kearsley (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** Western is making its second-straight playoff appearance after reaching the second round last year.

**Playoff road:** Western travels to Midland

Dow for round one with the winner playing either Traverse City Central or Saginaw Heritage.

**Skinny:** The Warriors have a high-powered offense that has scored 50 or more points five times this season.

### MIDLAND DOW CHARGERS

**Record:** 6-3, 4-1 2<sup>nd</sup> SVL Red  
**Offense:** 27.8 ppg. Defense: 19.6 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 45-44 Bay City Western (7-2), 34-21 Saginaw Heritage (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** The Chargers are in the playoffs for a ninth straight season.

**Playoff road:** Dow hosts Bay City Western in the district semifinal. Winner to play Traverse City Central or Saginaw Heritage.

**Skinny:** The Dow defense posted shutouts in the last two regular season games.

### EAST LANSING TROJANS

**Record:** 6-3, 4-2 3<sup>rd</sup> CAAC Blue  
**Offense:** 27.7 ppg. Defense: 18.1 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 20-15 Portage Central (7-2), 27-12 Grand Ledge (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** Trojans have qualified for the playoffs six straight seasons. Dropped a three-point decision to eventual state champion Muskegon Mona Shores in last year's regional final.

**Playoff road:** Travels to 7-2 Milford in district semifinal. Winner plays winner of South Lyon and Swartz Creek.

**Skinny:** The Trojans have a balanced offense led by quarterback Brevin Jackson and running back Asher Gregory.

### SAGINAW HERITAGE HAWKS

**Record:** 4-5, 2-3 4<sup>th</sup> SVL Red  
**Offense:** 26.7 ppg. Defense: 34.9 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 34-20 Flushing (4-5), 42-7 Midland (2-7).  
**Playoff history:** The Hawks are in the playoffs for a second straight season and facing Traverse City Central in a rematch of last year's playoff opener.

**Playoff road:** The Hawks travel to 8-1 Traverse City Central for the district opener.

**Skinny:** The Hawks face a tall task in the opener against a Traverse City Central team led by Notre Dame recruit Josh Burnham.

### Top D2 contenders in the state:

Muskegon Mona Shores, Warren De La Salle, Traverse City Central, South Lyon.

### HSSS DIVISION 2 STATE FINAL

PREDICTION: *Muskegon Mona Shores 34, Warren De La Salle 28*

## DIVISION 3

### DEWITT PANTHERS

**Record:** 8-1, 6-0 1<sup>st</sup> CAAC Blue  
**Offense:** 48.3 ppg. Defense: 15.4 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 47-27 Traverse City Central (8-1), 51-28 Holt (7-2).  
**Playoff history:** Defending Division 3

state champions.

**Playoff road:** DeWitt hosts Ionia in first round with winner playing Mt. Pleasant or Marquette.

**Skinny:** Panther offense is rolling having scored 49 or more points in last seven games. The combination of quarterback Tyler Holtz to wide receiver Tommy McIntosh is one of the best in the state.

### MT. PLEASANT OILERS

**Record:** 9-0, 5-0 1<sup>st</sup> SVL Red  
**Offense:** 21.8 ppg. Defense: 12.6 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 33-10 Midland Dow (6-3), 31-16 Bay City Western (7-2).  
**Playoff history:** Oilers in the playoffs for a fourth straight season.

**Playoff road:** Oilers host Marquette in the opening round with the winner to face DeWitt or Ionia.

**Skinny:** Mt. Pleasant features a balanced offense led by quarterback Ryan McIntyre and running backs Max Humphrey and Kory Davis. The Oiler defense is paced by the linebacking trio of Jesse Henrie, Davis and Humphrey.

### MASON BULLDOGS

**Record:** 7-2, 4-1 t 1<sup>st</sup> CAAC Red  
**Offense:** 33.7 ppg. Defense: 14.8 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 34-27 Williamston (6-3), 49-8 Jackson (5-4).  
**Playoff history:** Mason has qualified for the playoffs seven out of the past nine years, falling to eventual D3 state champ DeWitt in last year's district title game.

**Playoff road:** Bulldogs host South Lyon East in the first round with the winner playing Haslett or Pinckney.

**Skinny:** Bulldogs are riding a five-game winning streak into the playoffs with the defense pitching two shutouts during the streak.

### HASLETT VIKINGS

**Record:** 7-2, 4-1 t 1<sup>st</sup> CAAC Red  
**Offense:** 24.8 ppg. Defense: 10.7 ppg.

**Signature wins:** 21-8 Mason (7-2), 16-3 Dearborn Divine Child (3-6).

**Playoff history:** The Vikings have made the playoffs four out of the last five years. **Playoff road:** Host Pinckney in the first round with the winner to face either Mason or South Lyon East.

**Skinny:** The Vikings have played solid defense all season holding five of nine opponents to single digits.

### IONIA BULLDOGS

**Record:** 5-4, 2-3 t 3<sup>rd</sup> CAAC White  
**Offense:** 28.3 ppg. Defense: 22.4 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 48-26 Charlotte (6-3), 35-14 Lakewood-Lake Odessa (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** Making its second straight playoff appearance.

**Playoff road:** Ionia travels to defending D3 state champion DeWitt in the first round.

**Skinny:** The Bulldogs feature a strong running game led by Trevor Tooker, Austin Hillbrandt and Travis Tucker Jr. who helped lead Ionia to its first winning season since 2013.

### LOWELL RED ARROWS

**Record:** 4-5, 4-3 4<sup>th</sup> OK White  
**Offense:** 17.8 ppg. Defense: 23.7 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 24-7 Northview (4-5), 24-7 East Grand Rapids (3-6).  
**Playoff history:** Making its third straight appearance in the playoffs.

**Playoff road:** Travels to 8-1 Muskegon with the winner facing either Coopersville or Cedar Springs.

**Skinny:** Red Arrows won three of their last four games to qualify for the playoff.

### Top D3 contenders in the state:

Detroit King, DeWitt, Muskegon, Birmingham Brother Rice.

### HSSS DIVISION 3 STATE FINAL

PREDICTION: *Detroit King 40, DeWitt 34*



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# DIVISION 5, 6, 7 AND 8 MHSAA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PLAYOFF PREVIEW

## DIVISION 5

### FRANKENMUTH EAGLES

**Record:** 9-3, 7-0 1<sup>st</sup> TVC Central  
**Offense:** 42.4 ppg. **Defense:** 9.9 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 48-21 Freeland (8-1), 28-14 Goodrich (7-2).  
**Playoff history:** The Eagles have qualified for the playoffs 11 straight seasons.  
**Playoff road:** The Eagles host Carrollton with the winner facing either Essexville-Garber or Swan Valley.  
**Skinny:** The Eagles were runner-up in Division 5 last season and bring in a high-powered offense and stingy defense into this year's playoffs.

### PORTLAND RAIDERS

**Record:** 7-2, 4-1 2<sup>nd</sup> CAAC White  
**Offense:** 30.1 ppg. **Defense:** 13.6 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 20-17 DeWitt (8-1), 31-7 Montague (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** Since 2003 the Raiders have missed the playoffs just once, making it to the state finals twice during that span.  
**Playoff road:** The Raiders open the playoffs hosting Hopkins with the winner facing Olivet or Williamston.  
**Skinny:** The Raiders have defeated two defending state champions in DeWitt and Montague this season.

### GLADWIN FLYING G'S

**Record:** 9-0, 6-0 1<sup>st</sup> Jack Pine  
**Offense:** 53.0 ppg. **Defense:** 7.4 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 48-42 Clare (6-3), 31-7 Standish-Sterling (7-2).  
**Playoff history:** In the playoffs for the second straight year.  
**Playoff road:** Host Clare in a rematch of a week seven thriller with the winner facing either Kingsford or Kingsley.  
**Skinny:** The Flying G's have been a buzzsaw this season with a defense that is allowing just a touchdown per game and an offense that is averaging over a point a minute.

### WILLIAMSTON HORNETS

**Record:** 6-3, 4-1 1<sup>st</sup> CAAC Red  
**Offense:** 25.9 ppg. **Defense:** 15.4 ppg.

**Signature wins:** 43-20 Crosswell-Lexington (8-1), 21-14 Haslett (7-2).  
**Playoff history:** The Hornets have qualified for the playoffs six straight seasons, falling in the state semifinals last year to the eventual Division 4 state champion Detroit Country Day.  
**Playoff road:** Williamston hosts Olivet in the first round with the winner to play either Portland or Hopkins.  
**Skinny:** After reaching the Division 4 state semifinals last year, the Hornets are in Division 5 this year where they open with an Olivet team that they dropped a 20-19 decision to in week 8.

### CLARE PIONEERS

**Record:** 6-3, 5-1 2<sup>nd</sup> Jack Pine  
**Offense:** 42.8 ppg. **Defense:** 12.4 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 56-6 Shepherd (4-5), 34-6 Harrison (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** In the playoffs for a sixth straight season.  
**Playoff road:** Face league champion Gladwin in a rematch of a week seven game with the winner playing either Kingsford or Kingsley.  
**Skinny:** The Pioneer feature a balanced offense led by quarterback Jacob Recker along with running backs Al Warner and Beau Weldon.

### CARROLLTON CAVALIERS

**Record:** 5-4, 1-3 4<sup>th</sup> TVC Central I  
**Offense:** 27.7 ppg. **Defense:** 22.8 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 22-6 Macomb Lutheran North (6-3), 52-12 Chesaning (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** In the playoffs for a third straight season.  
**Playoff road:** Opens the playoffs by traveling to 9-0 Frankenmuth.  
**Skinny:** The Cavaliers needed wins in the final two weeks of the season to earn a playoff berth against last year's D5 finalist Frankenmuth.

### ESSEXVILLE-GARBER DUKES

**Record:** 5-4, 4-5 3<sup>rd</sup> TVC Central  
**Offense:** 25.4 ppg. **Defense:** 21.2 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 41-8 Carrollton (5-4), 35-14 Swan Valley (5-4).  
**Playoff history:** The Dukes are in the

playoffs for a third straight season.  
**Playoff road:** Garber opens the playoffs by hosting Swan Valley with the winner to play either Frankenmuth or Carrollton.  
**Skinny:** After opening the season with a 5-2 record the Dukes have battled injuries and are on a two-game skid heading into the playoffs.

### SAGINAW SWAN VALLEY VIKINGS

**Record:** 5-4, 4-3 3<sup>rd</sup> TVC Central  
**Offense:** 26.6 ppg. **Defense:** 31.1 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 35-34 Hemlock (5-4), 29-28 Alma (5-4).  
**Playoff history:** Swan Valley has qualified for the playoffs the last 10 years in a row.  
**Playoff road:** Swan Valley opens the playoffs at Essexville-Garber with the winner playing Frankenmuth or Carrollton.  
**Skinny:** The Vikings have come out on top in close games this season with one-point wins against both Alma and Hemlock against Alma and a six-point win against Bay City Glenn.

### BELDING BLACK KNIGHTS

**Record:** 5-4, 2-4 5<sup>th</sup> OK Silver  
**Offense:** 38.0 ppg. **Defense:** 24.8 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 34-7 Ionia (5-4), 36-0 Lakewood-Lake Odessa (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** The Black Knights have qualified for the playoffs five out of the last six years.  
**Playoff road:** Belding draws the short straw as it travels to Grand Rapids Catholic Central to play the undefeated, defending Division 5 state champions.  
**Skinny:** The Black Knights started the season strong reeling off four straight wins.

### CORUNNA CAVALIERS

**Record:** 5-4, 3-2 1<sup>st</sup> Flint Metro  
**Offense:** 23.4 ppg. **Defense:** 15.8 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 20-17 Ortonville-Brandon (6-3), 20-13 Hemlock (5-4).  
**Playoff history:** Corunna has qualified for the playoffs in five of the last eight

years.  
**Playoff road:** Corunna travels to Flint Powers for round one with the winner playing either Richmond or Armada.  
**Skinny:** The Cavaliers finished the season strong with wins in three of their last four games.

**Top D5 contenders in the state:** Grand Rapids Catholic Central, Frankenmuth, Grand Rapids West Catholic, Portland and Marine City.

**HSSS DIVISION 5 STATE FINAL PREDICTION:** *Grand Rapids Catholic Central 28, Portland 13*

## DIVISION 6

### LANSING CATHOLIC COUGARS

**Record:** 8-1, 5-1 1<sup>st</sup> CAAC White  
**Offense:** 31.0 ppg. **Defense:** 14.9 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 31-29 Portland (7-2), 30-21 Williamston (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** The Cougars won a state title in 2019 and reached the state semifinals last season.  
**Playoff road:** The Cougars open district play hosting Durand with a showdown against undefeated Millington looming in the district finals.

### CENTRL MONTCALM HORNETS

**Record:** 5-4, 4-3 4<sup>th</sup> CSAC  
**Offense:** 22.0 ppg. **Defense:** 23.9 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 28-14 Morley-Stanwood (5-4), 25-21 Grant (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** The Hornets are in the playoffs for the third straight season.  
**Playoff road:** The Hornets travel to defending Division 6 state champion Montague for round one.  
**Skinny:** The Hornets opened the season strong winning four of their first five games.

### MILLINGTON CARDINALS

**Record:** 9-0, 4-00 1<sup>st</sup> TVC West I  
**Offense:** 37.9 ppg. **Defense:** 9.6 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 21-8 Standish-Sterling (7-2), 15-14 Ithaca (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** The Cardinals have missed the playoffs just twice since 1994.  
**Playoff road:** Millington hosts Ovid-Elsie in the first round and then face the winner of Lansing Catholic and Durand.  
**Skinny:** The Cardinals have a senior-dominated squad determined to reach For Field.

### IVID-ELSIE MARAUDERS

**Record:** 6-3, 6-1 1<sup>st</sup> CMAC  
**Offense:** 24.7 ppg. **Defense:** 13.2 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 23-22 Montrose (7-2), 28-8 Durand (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** The Marauders have qualified for the playoffs seven out of the past nine years.  
**Playoff road:** Travels to 9-0 Millington to open the playoffs.  
**Skinny:** The Marauders tied for the CMAC title this season with New Lothrop.

### DURAND RAILROADERS

**Record:** 6-3, 4-3 4<sup>th</sup> MMAC  
**Offense:** 39.1 ppg. **Defense:** 18.0 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 58-20 Detroit Community (6-3), 42-0 Chesaning (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** After a nine-year playoff drought, the Railroaders have made the playoffs three years in a row.  
**Playoff road:** Travels to 8-1 Lansing Catholic to open the playoffs.  
**Skinny:** The Railroaders three losses have come against Montrose, New Lothrop and Ovid-Elsie, all playoff teams.

### CENTRL MONTCALM HORNETS

**Record:** 5-4, 4-3 4<sup>th</sup> CSAC  
**Offense:** 22.0 ppg. **Defense:** 23.9 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 28-14 Morley-Stanwood (5-4), 25-21 Grant (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** The Hornets are in the playoffs for the third straight season.  
**Playoff road:** The Hornets travel to defending Division 6 state champion Montague for round one.  
**Skinny:** The Hornets opened the season strong winning four of their first five games.

### HSSS DIVISION 6 STATE FINAL PREDICTION: *Lansing Catholic 34, Constantine 26*

### Top D6 contenders in the state:

Lansing Catholic, Millington, Constantine, Reed City, Jonesville.

## DIVISION 7

### PEWAMO-WESTPHALIA PI-RATES

**Record:** 9-0, 6-0 1<sup>st</sup> CMAC  
**Offense:** 38.8 ppg. **Defense:** 4.3 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 12-7 Lansing Catholic (8-1), 33-6 Redford Union (8-1).  
**Playoff history:** Pirates have missed the playoffs just once since 1998, winning the 2019 D7 state title.  
**Playoff road:** Hosts Ithaca in what should be a classic first-round matchup.  
**Skinny:** Pirates play incredible defense and have impressive wins against D4 Redford Union and D6 power Lansing Catholic.

### NEW LOTHROP HORNETS

**Record:** 6-3, 6-1 1<sup>st</sup> CMAC  
**Offense:** 39.8 ppg. **Defense:** 17.0 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 66-24 Ovid-Elsie (6-3), 33-20 Durand (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** The last time the Hornets missed the playoffs was in the last century.  
**Playoff road:** Hornets look to avenge lone league loss when they open playoffs at Montrose.  
**Skinny:** Defending D7 state champs are tested tough having dropped season opener at Jackson Lumen Christi and a week 9 struggle against unbeaten Frankenmuth.

### ITHACA YELLOWJACKETS

**Record:** 6-3, 4-0 1<sup>st</sup> TVC Central II  
**Offense:** 39.7 ppg. **Defense:** 19.7 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 54-13 St. Louis (5-4), 55-12 Shepherd (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** The Yellowjackets have missed the playoffs just once since 2006.  
**Playoff road:** The Yellowjackets face the unenviable task of traveling to Pewamo-Westphalia to open the playoffs.  
**Skinny:** Yellowjackets have won six of seven games since opening the season 0-2. Two have Ithaca's three losses have come against undefeated teams (Hudson and Millington).

### MONTROSE RAMS

**Record:** 7-2, 5-1 3<sup>rd</sup> CMAC  
**Offense:** 40.2 ppg. **Defense:** 19.6 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 40-28 Clarkston Everest (7-2), 35-14 New Lothrop (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** The Rams have made the playoffs 12 straight years, falling in the regional finals to eventual state

champion Montague in Division 6 last season.  
**Playoff road:** Playing in D7 this year after being in D6 last year, Montrose opens the playoffs by hosting rival New Lothrop in what should be a classic.  
**Skinny:** The Rams are poised for make another deep run after dropping down from Division 6 to Division 7 this year.

### HEMLOCK HUSKIES

**Record:** 5-4, 2-2 3<sup>rd</sup> TVC WEST 1  
**Offense:** 30.6 ppg. **Defense:** 21.4 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 45-33 Carrollton (5-4), 33-8 Breckenridge (7-2).  
**Playoff history:** In the playoffs for the sixth straight season.  
**Playoff road:** Huskies host 7-2 Bad Axe in playoff opener with winner playing Reese or Elkton-Pigeon-Bay Port.  
**Skinny:** Hemlock offense is led by the one-two punch of quarterback Max Dinninger and running back Robert Knapik.

**Top D7 contenders in the state:** Pewamo-Westphalia, Jackson Lumen Christi, Traverse City St. Francis, Muskegon Catholic, New Lothrop.

**HSSS DIVISION 7 STATE FINAL PREDICTION:** *Pewamo-Westphalia 20, Jackson Lumen Christi 14*

## DIVISION 8

### BEAL CITY AGGIES

**Record:** 8-1, 6-0 1<sup>st</sup> Highland  
**Offense:** 33.9 ppg. **Defense:** 8.3 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 55-20 Ewart (7-2), 14-12 Sand Creek (6-3).  
**Playoff history:** The Aggies have missed the playoffs just twice this century.  
**Playoff road:** The Aggies host Bark-River Harris with the winner to meet Iron Mountain or Frankford.  
**Skinny:** Since dropping a 21-20 decision to Ravenna in week one, the Aggies have reeled off eight straight wins including four wins by shutout.

### CARSON CITY-CRYSTAL EAGLES

**Record:** 8-1, 2-1 2<sup>nd</sup> Mid-State  
**Offense:** 36.0 ppg. **Defense:** 12.3 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 38-19 Fowler (6-3), 41-14 Muskegon Heights (5-4).  
**Playoff history:** Eagles have made the playoffs eight out of the past 10 years,



Lansing Catholic and Pewamo-Westphalia are both looking to bring home state titles this season in Divisions 6 and 7 respectively.

reaching the regional title game last season.  
**Playoff road:** Eagles host White Cloud in the district opener with the winner of Muskegon Heights/Holton up next.  
**Skinny:** The Eagles feature a balanced offense that relied on the passing attack early in the season but has improved the running game down the stretch.

### BRECKENRIDGE HUSKIES

**Record:** 7-2, 3-0 1<sup>st</sup> Mid-State  
**Offense:** 33.2 ppg. **Defense:** 18.0 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 12-0 Carson City-Crystal (8-1), 34-21 Laingsburg (5-4).  
**Playoff history:** The Huskies have

been to the playoffs six straight years including a state finals appearance in 2018.  
**Playoff road:** The Huskies host Vassar in the first round with the winner going against Flint Beecher or Fowler.  
**Skinny:** The Huskies tested themselves against Clarkston Everest and Hemlock at the beginning of the season and have reeled off six straight wins since starting 1-2.

### FOWLER EAGLES

**Record:** 6-3, 5-1 2<sup>nd</sup> CMAC  
**Offense:** 27.8 ppg. **Defense:** 16.4 ppg.  
**Signature wins:** 27-7 Laingsburg (5-4),

36-13 Dansville (4-5).  
**Playoff history:** The Eagles have reached the playoffs 11 out of the last 13 seasons.  
**Playoff road:** Open on the road at Flint Beecher with the winner facing Breckenridge or Vassar.  
**Skinny:** Closed out the season strong with four straight wins allowing just 14 total points in the four wins.

**Top D8 contenders in the state:** Hudson, Addison, Beal City, Ubyly, Breckenridge.

**HSSS DIVISION 8 STATE FINAL PREDICTION:** *Hudson 27, Beal City 20*



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# Relentless Spirit Has Breckenridge Poised For Deep Playoff Run

## David Cook Sports Scene

After starting the season with a 1-2 record, the Breckenridge football team has been on a roll since. The Huskies reeled off six straight wins since the third week of the season and enter the playoffs as one of the hottest teams in Division 8.

Breckenridge experienced the rocky start with losses against bigger schools in Hemlock in week one and Clarkston Everest Collegiate in week three. Facing tough competition to open the season, however, was by design.

"We front loaded our schedule with some real tough games," said Breckenridge coach Kris Robinson. "We played teams like Hemlock, Michigan Lutheran Seminary and Clarkston Everest to give us some really tough games in order to help

us down the stretch and in the playoffs."

The week three loss against a 7-1 Clarkston Everest team was especially a turning point even though the Huskies dropped a 50-37 decision.

"One of our bigger highlights of the season was the Clarkston game," Robinson said. "We traveled down there to play them and we were behind something like 17 or 24-0. The kids kept battling and clawing back and we got it to like an eight or nine-point game. I even heard one of their fans yell that they needed to score another touchdown because our kids were having so much fun. That really sold me on our team. Our kids just keep coming and battling and never give up."

That spirit and a love of the game makes this year's Huskie team special according to Robinson.

"I think the strong point of our team is its overall mentality," Robinson said. "They are relentless on the football field. They come at you and never quit.

This is also a really smart team. They watch a ton of film. They know what is happening and are always mentally into the game. You don't end up with any missed assignments with this team."

With the players football IQ and love of learning combined with a coaching staff that watches a ton of film, few teams are as prepared as the Huskies.

"I give a lot of props to our coaching staff," Robinson said. "They make me look really good. They probably watch 20 to 30 hours of film every week. These are some of the best coaches I've ever worked with."

On the field, the Huskies feature a balance offense led by senior quarterback Luke Saunders. A threat passing or running, Saunders has thrown for over 1,000 yards and rushed for over 600 yards. Saunders is also a force on defense where he has intercepted eight passes at defensive back before moving to linebacker.

"Luke is one of the more dynamic players I've ever coached," Robinson said. "He has a great understanding of the game of football."

The Huskie ground game is also getting a big lift from running back Cramer Laurenz who has over 700 yards rushing this season.

When the Huskies stretch the field Saunders can look to wide receivers Jace Horman and Ryan Wolfgang who area leading the team in receiving this season.

The Huskies feature a strong offensive line led by Slater Miller, Zach Hoerner and Dillon Goward.

"We have six kids who have all be doing a good job blocking," Robinson said. "It's been a really strong group and I am really proud of them."

On defense, the Huskies are led by linebackers Collin Sitts and Laurenz. Xavier Garcia leads the way along the defensive line while Wolfgang and Horman have give the team strong play at cornerback.

With the combination of a balanced



After starting the season with a 1-2 record the Breckenridge football team reeled off six straight wins to enter the playoffs on a roll.

offense and a stout defense, the Huskies have a team built for a deep playoff run.

"I do feel like we have the potential for a deep run," Robinson said. "I feel that if teams take away our passing game, we can run the ball and if they take away the run, we can pass it. We have good balance on this team."

# Carson City-Crystal Football Team Brings Explosive, Efficient Offense In State Playoffs

## Butch Harmon Sports Scene

Led by a high-scoring, efficient offense and a stingy defense, the Carson City-Crystal football team is turning in a big season.

The Eagles started the season strong reeling off six straight wins before coming up short in a Mid State Activities Conference showdown with Breckenridge. Carson City rebounded from that setback in a big way and is carrying momentum into the playoffs.

"We have had a very solid season and one that will help us keep building our program for the future," said Carson City-Crystal coach Tim Swore. "Recently the challenge has been trying to keep people healthy, not from injury but illness. We got hit hard with the flu two weeks ago and had a number of kids out for a large chunk of time and trying to play games with very little practice is tough, but we seem to be back on track now and ready to hit the playoffs."

Carson City-Crystal has been rolling on offense this season. The Eagles are averaging 34.5 points per game and that average would be 39.1 points per game if the 2-0 forfeit victory against Wyoming Lee was factored out.

Junior quarterback Mason Smith pilots the offense having thrown for 1,153 yards and 16 touchdown passes. Wide receiver Paul Wright has caught 30 passes with five touchdowns while Bryce Stanley has 24 catches and seven touchdown receptions. Running back Cole Stone has 24 receptions and a touchdown.

Carson City features a balanced attack with 1,153 yards passing and 1,170 yards rushing. Taking care of the football is also a strength of the offense.

"We have done a great job protecting the football," Swore said. "We have not had a lost fumble all season and have five turnovers total. We have also forced 17 turnovers, so we are plus 12 on the turnover ratio and that will win you a lot of games. We also have had two games

with just one penalty and another with zero so our kids are learning to play disciplined football as well."

Defensively, all-state linebacker Cole Stone leads the team with 76 tackles. Stone has also rushed for 566 yards on offense.

Carson City is also bringing an improved ground game and defense into the playoffs.

"Our defense has really stepped up the last three weeks allowing just over nine points a game against three playoff teams," Swore said. "Offensively we started out primarily throwing the ball but the last three weeks we have put a big emphasis on running the football because you have to be able to do that to win playoff games."

The improvement has the Eagles poised for what could be a deep playoff run.

"Our goal since last offseason has been to be built for the post season and to get to Ford Field," Swore said. "We know it will take great effort to accomplish that but we also believe if



The Carson City-Crystal football team celebrates winning the Weber's Eagle Trophy after defeating Fowler earlier this season.

we play our best, we have as good a chance as anyone to get there."

Swore credits his coaching staff for playing a major role in the team's improvement and success.

"We have a veteran coaching staff with Tim Johns leading the defense and his assistant John Lewis, both of those guys played and coached at Alma College for coach Cole," Swore said. "On the offensive side Michael Porter is the head junior varsity coach and varsity offensive line coach. Greg McAlvey and TJ Swore are also huge assets to our day-to-day progression and helping us get better and better."

# HSSS FOOTBALL STATS

Coaches, statisticians, High School Sports Scene Magazine wants to be the source for high school football stats this season. Feel free to contact us with any updates or statistics you have. Send any updates to greg102300@yahoo.com . HSSS will be updating the football stats page on a daily basis.

## PASSING YARDS

Joey Baker, Lansing Catholic 1,889  
Preston Wallace, Ewart 1,835  
Jake Townsend, Crosswell-Lexington 1,775  
Tyler Holtz, DeWitt 1,763  
Braylen Himmelein, Davison 1,626  
Will Strickler, Big Rapids 1,529  
Zak Ahem, Rockford 1,420  
Seneca Moore, Holt 1,394  
Drew Barrie, Midland 1,387  
Jack Kulhanek, New Lothrop 1,387  
Luke Saunders, Breckenridge 1,331  
Jack Bakus, Midland Dow 1,189  
Jeff Kolb, Grand Ledge 1,182  
Brandon Green, Linden 1,145  
Brevin Jackson, East Lansing 1,140  
Bronson Bupp, Ithaca 1,106  
Nick Wheeler, Gladwin 1,100  
Mason Smith, Carson City-Crystal 1,078  
Parker Edwards, Saranac 1,026  
Tommy Szczepanski, Essexville-Garber 1,013  
Bryson Huckleby, Freeland 1,001  
Max Dinninger, Hemlock 970  
Ty Klopf, Coleman 958  
Wyatt Weyrowske, Bay City Glenn 951  
Ryan McIntyre, Mt. Pleasant 946  
Connor Benton, Eaton Rapids 820  
Charlie Grant, Charlotte 792  
Jacob Recker, Clare 799  
Reece Giles, St. Louis 764  
Ty Randall, Laingsburg 764  
Jacen Torres, Birch Run 716  
Colton Klien, Swan Valley 675

## PASSING TOUCHDOWNS

Tyler Holtz, DeWitt 25  
Jack Kulhanek, New Lothrop 23  
Preston Wallace, Ewart 23  
Joey Baker, Lansing Catholic 21  
Seneca Moore, Holt 21  
Jake Townsend, Crosswell-Lexington 20  
Jeff Kolb, Grand Ledge 17  
Zak Ahem, Rockford 15  
Luke Saunders, Breckenridge 15  
Mason Smith, Carson City-Crystal 15  
Drew Barrie, Midland 14  
Braylen Himmelein, Davison 14  
Tommy Szczepanski, Essexville-Garber 14  
Bronson Bupp, Ithaca 13  
Will Strickler, Big Rapids 13  
Nick Wheeler, Gladwin 12  
Jack Bakus, Midland Dow 11  
Bryson Huckleby, Freeland 11  
Brevin Jackson, East Lansing 11  
Ryan McIntyre, Mt. Pleasant 10  
Brandon Green, Linden 9  
Klopf, Coleman 9  
Reece Giles, St. Louis 8  
Charlie Grant, Charlotte 8  
Ty Randall, Laingsburg 8  
Jacen Torres, Birch Run 8  
Max Dinninger, Hemlock 8  
Jacob Recker, Clare 7  
Wyatt Weyrowske, Bay City Glenn 7

## RUSHING YARDS

Evan Wakefield, Michigan Lutheran Seminary 1,591  
Bronson Bupp, Ithaca 1,286  
Robert Knapik, Hemlock 1,183  
Kahleel Brown, Birch Run 1,102  
Cole Lindow, Frankenmuth 1,042  
Zak Ahem, Rockford 1,014  
Trevor Tooker, Ionia 975  
Conner Shrank, Coleman 968  
Cole Bailey, Vestaburg 951  
Ashton Laguire, Charlotte 879  
Caleb Christie, Essexville-Garber 877  
Ignatius Jackson, St. Louis 847  
Max Humphrey, Mt. Pleasant 837  
Nick Wheeler, Gladwin 826  
Bryant Calderon, Ewart 795  
Tristan Hinkley, Swartz Creek 779  
Bryce Cornelius, Holt 754  
AJ Warner, Clare 734  
Logan Kokotovich, Gladwin 720  
Jay'len Flowers, Davison 705  
Jake Townsend, Crosswell-Lexington 690  
Wyatt Weyrowske, Bay City Glenn 690  
Will Strickler, Big Rapids 689  
Beau Welden, Clare 683  
Austin Hillabrandt, Ionia 679  
Dayshawn Bowman, Laingsburg 675  
Braden Hill, Charlotte 662  
Asher Gregory, East Lansing 653  
Wyatt Leeuw, Vestaburg 640  
Gabriel Groppi, Crosswell-Lexington 613  
Cole Hopkins, Ewart 570  
Travis Tucker Jr., Ionia 559  
Bryce Debrri, DeWitt 557  
Bryce Eliuk, Linden 553  
Garrett Pistro, Freeland 551  
Justin Gerczewicz, Big Rapids 543  
Brendan Hocquard, Grand Ledge 530  
Kory Davis, Mt. Pleasant 525  
Brandon Green, Linden 517  
Jack Kulhanek, New Lothrop 504  
Rafael Woods, New Lothrop 502  
Connor Laurenz, Breckenridge 494  
Andy Liu, Michigan Lutheran Seminary 490  
Ralph Thompson, Holt 480  
Jack Bakus, Midland Dow 457  
Ryan Dabe, Michigan Lutheran Seminary 436  
Luke Saunders, Breckenridge 434  
Eddy Evans, Ovid-Elsie 420  
Mitchell Hall, Beaverton 409  
Drew Barrie, Midland 407  
Tyler Holtz, DeWitt 407

## RECEIVING YARDS

Alex Watters, Lansing Catholic 891  
Tommy McIntosh, DeWitt 757  
Kellen Reed, Holt 738  
Logan Anthony, Essexville-Garber 712  
Brandon Lewis, Lansing Catholic 707  
Jamal Strickland, Big Rapids 680  
Saige Slanec, Crosswell-Lexington 672  
Dawson John, Clare 619  
Teon Armstrong, Davison 617  
Mason Woods, East Lansing 608  
Marcel White, Ewart 536  
Jason Davenport, Midland 528  
Paul Wright, Carson City-Crystal 520  
Jace Horman, Breckenridge 489  
Carson Dabrowski, Bay City Glenn 487  
Bryant Calderon, Ewart 486  
Ethan Hull, Ithaca 486  
Bryce Kuntz, DeWitt 477  
Alex Duley, Freeland 475  
Rafael Woods, New Lothrop 471  
Bryce Stanley, Carson City-Crystal 464  
Bryce Murphy, Hemlock 460  
Max Fellows, Essexville-Garber 459  
Dontae Parker, Eaton Rapids 431  
Cole Hopkins, Ewart 423  
Cos Davis, Birch Run 410  
Tucker Pomranky, Midland Dow 408  
Kaden McDonald, Gladwin 402  
Jalen Brown, Midland 377  
Tyler Vroman, Rockford 362  
Shawn Foster, Grand Ledge 354  
Dorrian Jackson, East Lansing 352  
Mitch Jackson, Saranac 331  
Alex McLean, Rockford 336  
Jacob Shelagowski, Hemlock 318  
Caden Chritz, Midland Dow 302  
Ayden Ruhle, Coleman 302

## RUSHING TOUCHDOWNS

Evan Wakefield, Michigan Lutheran Seminary 24  
Zak Ahem, Rockford 22  
Bronson Bupp, Ithaca 20  
Max Humphrey, Mt. Pleasant 20  
Logan Kokotovich, Gladwin 19  
Cole Bailey, Vestaburg 18  
Robert Knapik, Hemlock 17  
Cole Lindow, Frankenmuth 16  
Kahleel Brown, Birch Run 14  
Conner Shrank, Coleman 14  
Gabriel Groppi, Crosswell-Lexington 13  
Beau Welden, Clare 13  
Kory Davis, Mt. Pleasant 12  
Asher Gregory, East Lansing 12  
Austin Hillabrandt, Ionia 12  
Ignatius Jackson, St. Louis 12  
Will Strickler, Big Rapids 12  
Dayshawn Bowman, Laingsburg 11

Trevor Tooker, Ionia 11  
AJ Warner, Clare 11  
Jack Bakus, Midland Dow 10  
Bryant Calderon, Ewart 10  
Bryce Eliuk, Linden 10  
Tristan Hinkley, Swartz Creek 10  
Garrett Pistro, Freeland 10  
Luke Saunders, Breckenridge 10  
Nick Wheeler, Gladwin 10  
Brendan Hocquard, Grand Ledge 9  
Cole Hopkins, Ewart 9  
Cole Laguire, Frankenmuth 9  
Wyatt Leeuw, Vestaburg 9  
Wyatt Weyrowske, Bay City Glenn 9  
Caleb Christie, Essexville-Garber 8  
Bryce Debrri, DeWitt 8  
Ashton Laguire, Charlotte 8  
Drew Barrie, Midland 7  
Bryce Cornelius, Holt 7  
AJ Hill, Davison 7  
Logan Kulaneck, New Lothrop 7  
Jhace Massey, Gladwin 7  
Dontae Parker, Eaton Rapids 7  
Eddy Evans, Ovid-Elsie 6  
Nick Flegler, DeWitt 6  
Brandon Green, Linden 6  
Braden Hill, Charlotte 6  
Ty Holtz, DeWitt 6  
Garret Mangino, New Lothrop 6

## RECEIVING TOUCHDOWNS

Alex Watters, Lansing Catholic 891  
Tommy McIntosh, DeWitt 757  
Kellen Reed, Holt 738  
Logan Anthony, Essexville-Garber 712  
Brandon Lewis, Lansing Catholic 707  
Jamal Strickland, Big Rapids 680  
Saige Slanec, Crosswell-Lexington 672  
Dawson John, Clare 619  
Teon Armstrong, Davison 617  
Mason Woods, East Lansing 608  
Marcel White, Ewart 536  
Jason Davenport, Midland 528  
Paul Wright, Carson City-Crystal 520  
Jace Horman, Breckenridge 489  
Carson Dabrowski, Bay City Glenn 487  
Bryant Calderon, Ewart 486  
Ethan Hull, Ithaca 486  
Bryce Kuntz, DeWitt 477  
Alex Duley, Freeland 475  
Rafael Woods, New Lothrop 471  
Bryce Stanley, Carson City-Crystal 464  
Bryce Murphy, Hemlock 460  
Max Fellows, Essexville-Garber 459  
Dontae Parker, Eaton Rapids 431  
Cole Hopkins, Ewart 423  
Cos Davis, Birch Run 410  
Tucker Pomranky, Midland Dow 408  
Kaden McDonald, Gladwin 402  
Jalen Brown, Midland 377  
Tyler Vroman, Rockford 362  
Shawn Foster, Grand Ledge 354  
Dorrian Jackson, East Lansing 352  
Mitch Jackson, Saranac 331  
Alex McLean, Rockford 336  
Jacob Shelagowski, Hemlock 318  
Caden Chritz, Midland Dow 302  
Ayden Ruhle, Coleman 302

## RECEPTIONS

Alex Watters, Lansing Catholic 53  
Teon Armstrong, Davison 45  
Jamal Strickland, Big Rapids 45  
Jason Davenport, Midland 44

Logan Anthony, Essexville-Garber 42  
Alex McLean, Rockford 41  
Saige Slanec, Crosswell-Lexington 39  
Jalen Brown, Midland 37  
Tucker Pomranky, Midland Dow 34  
Mason Woods, East Lansing 32  
Marcel White, Ewart 31  
Kellen Reed, Holt 30  
Tommy McIntosh, DeWitt 29  
Bryce Murphy, Hemlock 29  
Paul Wright, Carson City-Crystal 29  
Cos Davis, Birch Run 28  
Bryce Kuntz, DeWitt 28  
Nathan Dick, Eaton Rapids 27  
Mitch Jackson, Saranac 27  
Grant Kidder, Big Rapids 27  
Brandon Lewis, Lansing Catholic 27  
Ethan Gomez, Linden 26  
Max Fellows, Essexville-Garber 25  
Cole Hopkins, Ewart 25  
Rafael Woods, New Lothrop 25  
Jace Horman, Breckenridge 24  
Dontae Parker, Eaton Rapids 24  
Ayden Ruhle, Coleman 24  
Dawson John, Clare 23  
Bryce Stanley, Carson City-Crystal 23  
Mac VandenHout, Rockford 23  
Bryant Calderon, Ewart 22  
Alex Duley, Freeland 22  
Carter Kohtz, Midland Dow 22  
Caden Chritz, Midland Dow 21  
Carson Dabrowski, Bay City Glenn 21  
Monte Keener, Linden 21  
Kaden McDonald, Gladwin 21  
Cannon Cromwell, New Lothrop 20  
John Harrell, Davison 20  
Ethan Hull, Ithaca 20  
Chad Pratt, Ithaca 20

## RECEIVING TOUCHDOWNS

Alex Watters, Lansing Catholic 13  
Tommy McIntosh, DeWitt 12  
Kellen Reed, Holt 11  
Saige Slanec, Crosswell-Lexington 11  
Bryce Kuntz, DeWitt 10  
Jamal Strickland, Big Rapids 10  
Logan Anthony, Essexville-Garber 8  
Max Fellows, Essexville-Garber 8  
Dawson John, Clare 8  
Mason Woods, East Lansing 8  
Brandon Lewis, Lansing Catholic 7  
Bryce Stanley, Carson City-Crystal 7  
Rafael Woods, New Lothrop 7  
Carson Dabrowski, Bay City Glenn 6  
Dontae Parker, Eaton Rapids 6  
Tyler Vroman, Rockford 6  
Cos Davis, Birch Run 6  
Bryant Calderon, Ewart 5  
Caden Chritz, Midland Dow 5  
Cannon Cromwell, New Lothrop 5  
Jason Davenport, Midland 5  
Cos Davis, Birch Run 5  
Shawn Foster, Grand Ledge 5  
Cole Hopkins, Ewart 5  
Jace Horman, Breckenridge 5  
Garret Mangino, New Lothrop 5  
Bryce Murphy, Hemlock 5  
Paul Wright, Carson City-Crystal 5

## TACKLES

Cole Hopkins, Ewart 112  
Kirk Wilson, Crosswell-Lexington 111  
Kory Davis, Mt. Pleasant 110  
Ben Dousuah, St. Louis 105

Mason Knippen, Lansing Catholic 103  
Dawson Studabaker, Midland Dow 94  
Bryce Eliuk, Linden 93  
Joseph Maier, Bay City Glenn 93  
Kevin Tanner, Clare 90  
Max Humphrey, Mt. Pleasant 87  
Matthew Gehle, Lansing Catholic 86  
Noah Brandt, Big Rapids 82  
Kaleb Peska, Ithaca 82  
Westyn Bryant, Clare 81  
Wyatt Gocha, Linden 81  
Anthony Zechmeister, Hemlock 81  
Cade Coquillard, Essexville-Garber 79  
Wyatt Ervin, Mt. Pleasant 78  
Daniel Hilgendorf, Michigan Lutheran Seminary 78  
Bo Poljan, Lansing Catholic 78  
Brad Gross, New Lothrop 77  
Noah Risner, Ithaca 77  
Jesse Henric, Mt. Pleasant 75  
Robert Knapik, Hemlock 74  
Ayden Ruhle, Coleman 74  
Rick Beison, Rockford 73  
Tony Groppi, Crosswell-Lexington 72  
Kanye Jackson, East Lansing 72  
Carter Herriman, Davison 70  
Dale Miller, Big Rapids 70  
Christians Tucker, Lansing Catholic 69  
Ty Hutchins, Mt. Pleasant 68  
Cole Stone, Carson City-Crystal 68  
Tanner Szczepanski, Essexville-Garber 68  
Konner Carbeno, Coleman 67  
Cramer Laurenz, Breckenridge 67  
Conner Schrank, Coleman 67  
Ethan Burrows, Essexville-Garber 66  
Colin Weiss, Linden 64  
Bryant Calderon, Ewart 61

## SACKS

Michael Baysah, St. Louis 7  
Wyatt Gocha, Linden 7  
Jack Lamancusa, Rockford 7  
Sam Bailey, Ewart 6  
Ashton Benkert, Frankenmuth 6  
Jacob Gillis, Breckenridge, 6  
Mason Knippen, Lansing Catholic 6  
Cramer Laurenz, Breckenridge 6  
Alex VanStumeren, Essexville-Garber 6  
Anthony Zechmeister, Hemlock 6  
Gabe Blanchard, Freeland 5  
Cole Hopkins, Ewart 5  
Cody Malenfant, East Lansing 5  
Alex Duley, Freeland 6  
Teddy Williams, Grand Ledge 5  
Alex Eichenberg, Ovid-Elsie 4  
Nick Flegler, DeWitt 4  
Kade Kostus, Rockford 4  
Brenden Marker, Frankenmuth 4

## INTERCEPTIONS

Luke Saunders, Breckenridge 8  
Carson Dabrowski, Bay City Glenn 5  
Max Fellows, Essexville-Garber 5  
Carter Kohtz, Midland Dow 5  
Yahaya, Dukuly, Davison 4  
Cole Jankowski, Frankenmuth 4  
Grant Kidder, Big Rapids 4  
Brandon Lewis, Lansing Catholic 4  
Kaden McDonald, Gladwin 4  
Zach Pappadakis, Davison 4  
Marcel White, Ewart 4



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# Ithaca Volleyball Team Hopeful Of Strong Postseason

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

Ithaca volleyball coach Karla MacDonald likes the prospects for her team as the Yellowjackets head into the later parts of the season.

"The season started off a little slow because we have a young team and only have one senior," MacDonald said. "I have only two sophomores starting. It was a little slow. But when it got going, they did well. They're getting better all the time. We're taking a lot of teams to tie games. We're keeping things close. Eventually, I

know we'll come out on the winning end once they get everything figured out.

"Our strength is I've got a lot of different weapons we can go to. There's a lot of different people for offense. I would say the serving and hitting are where we're really strong at. That's where we have the most experience." Brynn Bootsma is a junior in her third year on the varsity and is an outside hitter. She is leading the team in aces, serve receive and kills.

Olyvia Saxton is a junior in her second year on the varsity and is a middle hitter. Jordyn Smith is a sophomore setter with

her second year on the varsity and leads the team as she assists. She has more than 200 digs.

Samantha Richardson is a junior defensive specialist for the Yellowjackets. Alyssa Carrillo is a middle hitter and outside hitter who, at 5-7, has been getting the job done, for Ithaca. Maria Polo and Hannah Sherman are junior outside hitters. Jennah Cantu is a sophomore middle hitter.

The district tournament starts on Nov. 3 and Ithaca is hopeful of advancing to the regionals.



Olyvia Saxton has been a force at the net for Ithaca's volleyball team.

# St. Louis Volleyball Team Hopes To Have Strong Finish Of Season

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

St. Louis volleyball coach Tiffany Diaz was liking her team's prospects as they headed into the final weeks of the regular season.

"Key athletes this season are seniors Korah Honig and Kiersten Francisco," Diaz said. "They were voted last year's MVP and best offensive and defensive athlete of the season. These two four-year varsity athletes are looking to have a great senior season. Korah has already signed with Indiana Tech to further her volleyball career and has been clutch in putting the ball away for us when we need a kill. Kiersten is our defensive standout, always diving to make some great plays and holding down on serve receive to set up our offense.

"Our strengths, I think, we are a scrappy team, we make a lot of hustle plays and keep the ball in play. Some things we can work on

would be the mental aspect of the game. Sometimes we focus too much on the score and previous errors and we get ourselves right out of the game that way."

As for the conference, the "league favorite has got to be Valley Lutheran," Diaz said. "They are a strong competitive team that forces you to work. It's always a really fun match and Jon Frank is an excellent coach. So far we have been outstanding in our conference but we have a tough run of matches these next few weeks that will have a huge impact on where we finish for the season. I have high hopes that we can stay near the top but we have suffered greatly with some injuries this season and have had to make a few changes in our lineup."

Diaz said the team "had a great start to the season. We won the very first tournament we played in and started out 3-0 in conference. We're trying to build things back up how we



St. Louis' volleyball team is looking for a strong finish this season.

started."

Honig is a four-year varsity player.

"She is my best attacker," Diaz said. "In our game against Nouvel, she had 19 kills. Against Ithaca, she had 18 kills. She's not afraid to take swings late in the game which is really great. She's fearless and likes to take swings all game long. You need someone

who is not afraid to put the ball away."

Francisco "is also having a great season," Diaz said. "Against Ithaca, she had three aces and seven digs. She's great for us in service receive. She's had quite a few good games with digs."

Alexys Rodriguez has had a strong season as a setter for St. Louis.

# Fowler Looking To Make Noise In Division 4 Volleyball

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

Patty Feldpausch is coaching a Fowler volleyball team which has had a good start to the season.

After 31 matches, Fowler was 18-13 overall and 5-1 in the CMAC.

Top players included Mia Riley, a senior setter, who has 432 assists, and is averaging six assists per set and has 169 digs, 2.3 digs/set. She also has 102 kills for the season.

Madison Wirth is a senior outside hitter, who has 205 kills, is averaging 2.6 kills per set and has 210 digs, 2.7 digs/set. She is the team's top serve receiver.

Anna Vanneste, a junior outside hitter, has 161 kills and 25 blocks this season. Emily

Epkey, a senior middle hitter, has 115 kills, 40 aces and 30 blocks. Avery Koenigsnecht, a junior defensive specialist, has 204 digs. Candis Myers, a junior middle hitter, leads the team with 36 blocks; Carly Andros, a junior rightside hitter, leads the team with 52 aces.

"We had our very competitive CMAC tourney on Oct. 23," Feldpausch said. "We are facing many talented teams with Bath, Dansville, Pewamo-Westphalia and Fowler being the top four teams.

"In districts on Nov. 1, we face off against Lansing Christian, currently ranked No. 4 in Division 4, with Fowler being honorable mention. We have excellent senior leadership. Both on and off the court, these ladies are great role models for all young athletes."



Fowler volleyball team which has had a good start to the season.

# Rockford Aims To Bring Home D1 Volleyball Crown

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

Rockford and coach Kelly Delacher are taking aim at the Division I volleyball title this season.

Seniors Alina Anderson and Ava Horton lead the attack for the Rams.

Horton is in her second season and Anderson in her third.

"Alina is one of the best defensive players on the team and covers a ton of court defensively and in serve receive," Delacher said. "And her leadership has been amazing. She is really pushing our team to great heights this year. Ava is a force offensively for us. She is fast and plays above the net. We run our offense through her and Ava Young, our other middle hitter. Ava is hitting .405 on the year and has 201 kills."

"Alina is leading the team in digs with 416

and has eclipsed 1,000 digs for her career. Both Ava and Alina are hard workers who compete day in and day out. They continually strive to be their best. Alina is a multisport athlete who excels on the basketball court as well as the soccer field. Her overall athleticism and understanding of team culture and leadership is a huge reason for our success this year."

Delacher has seen improvements from both athletes.

"They both have become more consistent and have improved their leadership," she said. "They both play volleyball year round. Alina plays basketball and soccer."

Rockford expects to have a successful month of November.

The Rams are 30-6 overall and 6-1 in the conference. The team has been ranked in the top 3 in the state all year.



Rockford's volleyball team hopes to be a state contender.

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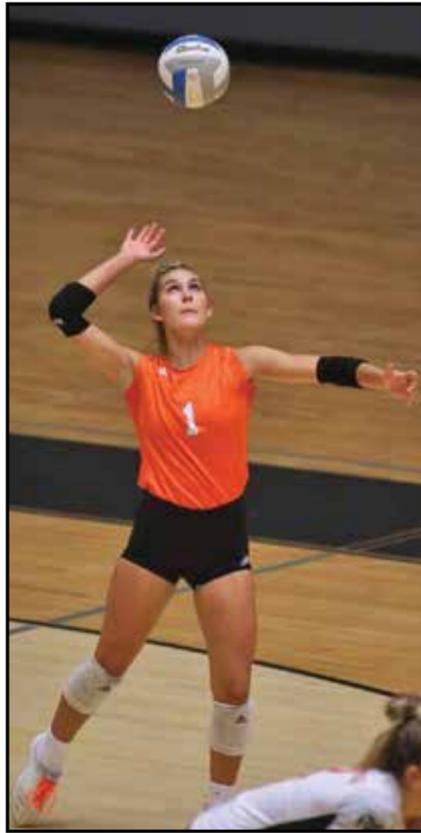
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## Several Area Volleyball Teams Hope To Be State Contenders

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

The state volleyball finals will be on Nov. 18-20 at Kellogg Arena in Battle Creek after having been played in January last season because of the COVID-related delay.

Two local teams, Lowell in Division I and Lakewood in Division 2 were state runners-up. Saginaw Valley Lutheran advanced to the semifinals in Division 3.

This season, several local teams are high in the rankings.

It could go down to Rockford vs. Birmingham Marian in Division 1. Rockford is ranked third in the most recent coaches association poll.

Lowell is an honorable mention poll choice.

In Division 3, Pewamo-Westphalia has been ranked third and Saginaw Valley Lutheran eighth.

Ranked local teams in Division 4 have included Lansing Christian and Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart.

Rockford seems to be the local team with the best shot and is led by seniors Alina Anderson and Ava Horton.

"My team and I have been working hard and have been playing at a high level and competing very well," Anderson said. "My strengths have been my leadership. I've been put in the captain's role. I try the best in the libero position. I'm kind of like the quarterback. I tell my hitters where to hit. I try to perform well to help my teammates perform well."

Her team, Anderson said, "is capable of winning the state championship. We have the talent. We played them in the Beast of the East Tournament and lost by in the first set and four in the third.

Horton has been a middle hitter for two years. It's been her best season so far.

"I'd say I have improved after a slow start from this year," Horton said. "As a middle, I'm good at hitting around the block."

Like Anderson, Horton likes Rockford's chances in the postseason.

"We have the potential to go really far this year," Horton said. "The key has been our team chemistry. Everyone gets along and the energy is good."

Horton said her season high 13 kills in a game against Beast of the East was a highlight.

Volleyball has been her only sport.

"I like the competitiveness of it," Horton said.



Alaina Anderson (1) and Ava Horton have been two of Rockford's top players.

## Breckenridge Libero Hits 1,000 Digs Mark

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

Mindy Horman coaches a Breckenridge girls volleyball team, led by libero Kya Horman, a third-year varsity player, who has had an exceptional season.

"Kya has always been a hard working athlete," Mindy Horman said. "As her coach, I always knew I would get her best effort

no matter where she was playing on the court. Kya only played one year on JV and has been on varsity since being a sophomore. As a sophomore, Kya played both front and back row, until she moved to libero during her junior year.

"As a junior, Kya received second team all-conference, all-county and All-Academic team honors. She was a part of the first team to win a volleyball district title in school

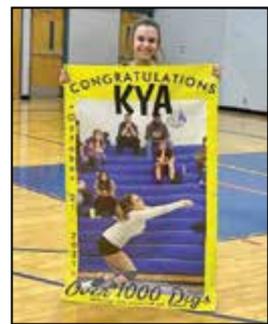
history last season. On October 21, Kya reached her goal of getting her 1,000th dig and continues to add on to that total. This has been a goal of Kya's for a long time and she did it. Kya had 16 digs, 3 kills and 3 aces during those 2 sets."

Her coach points out Kya is a competitive athlete.

"She gives 110 percent all of the time and when she told me her plan was to reach at least 1,000 digs, I knew she could do it and was going to do it because that's the kind of player that Kya is," Horman said. "Kya is also a leader on the court. She is one of our

team captains and her leadership during games and in practices really shows. "Each season Kya has improved. She continues to pass and attack very well from the back row. Kya also runs track. She is a sprinter on the 4X100 and 4X200 relay teams. Kya is a great athlete and an even better person. I am proud of her."

Mindy Horman indicated there may be college potential in Kya's future. "I think there could be, however, she is excited to head to college to focus on her education," Horman said. "She has decided to make every moment of her senior year the best that she can."



Breckenridge's Kya Horman celebrated passing the 1,000 career digs mark this season.

## Young Alma Soccer Team Turns In Winning Record With Future Looking Bright

**David Cook Sports Scene**

After graduating six senior starters from a team that won a district title last fall, the Alma boys soccer team entered this season expecting some growing pains. Those growing pains were at a minimum as the Panthers chalked up plenty of victories this season.

Alma finished the soccer season with an 11-5-4 record after falling to Freeland in the semifinals of the district tournament. With the bulk of the team being non-seniors, the future is even brighter for the Panthers.

"We were a real young team this year," said Alma coach Nick O'Neill. "We had three seniors and three juniors and the rest were sophomores or freshmen. That said, I knew we had a hard-working group with plenty of talent. We knew that we would have to have some kids step up to be successful this season. Our seniors and juniors stepped up and our young players also stepped up."

The senior trio of Connor Lemerand, Mason Stambaugh and Moritz Richter led the way for the Panthers this season. All three were team captains and proved to be anchors for the team.

Lemerand capped his career as the most prolific goal scorer in school history. Lemerand broke the career goal-scoring record of Brevan Bender that was set in 2014.

Stambaugh filled a key role in the middle of the field from his center-mid position.

"Mason was a stalwart in midfield for us," O'Neill said. "He made great plays for us and was the ball stopper in the middle. He was also an outstanding leader for us."

Richter was a defensive anchor for the Panthers from his center-back position.

"Mortitz improved a ton from last year," O'Neill said. "He was a great defensive player for us all year."

Corey Yates and Aidan Barnes are a pair of juniors who not only provided strong play but their unselfishness was key to the team's success as they both changed positions this season for the good of the team.

"Corey was our fourth team captain," O'Neill said. "He was a midfielder for us the first two years but we needed help on defense. He saw the need on defense and he volunteered to move to center back for us. He really helped to solidify our defense. It was a great move for the team and showed a lot of character and leadership."

Barnes made the move to the wing position to help out on offense.

"Aidan did really well for us this season," O'Neill said. "He scored some big goals for us this season and also contributed some key assists as well."

The bulk of this year's team was comprised by nine sophomores who have plenty of experience playing together.

Center-midfielder Aidan O'Neill, forward Danial Ash and outside hitters Collin Helinski and Eli Haller were key starters from the



Alma turns in strong season led by underclassman.

sophomore class.

"This is a group that has been fun watching come up through the ranks," O'Neill said. "It's a group I've had the pleasure to coach when they were young and I watched them play together even in AYSO soccer when they were four, five-years old. Being able to see them play high school soccer and see the growth in them has been fun to watch."

The Alma youth movement is also on display in goal where freshman Noah Vega provided the Panthers with outstanding play in net.

With so many young players on the roster, the future continues to look bright for the Panthers. While the young players are talented, they also love the sport of soccer and put in work the year round to improve their skills.

"Their improvement is a testament to their work in the offseason," O'Neill said. "They are committed to a weight program to get stronger. They also play a lot of soccer in the offseason. They play indoor soccer and play for the local club team. Many of them also play for a second club team in Midland. The kids love the sport and really enjoy working and getting better."

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## Connor Lemerand Wraps Up Career As All-Time Leader In Goals For Alma Soccer Team

Alma senior Connor Lemerand turned in a record-breaking career with 79 career goals and 31 goals this season.

### David Cook Sports Scene

One of the most talented soccer players in school history, Alma senior Connor Lemerand wrapped up his career as the all-time leading scorer in Panther soccer history.

A four-year varsity player for the Panthers, Lemerand turned in a memorable four-year run. This season Lemerand set the Alma school record for goals in a season with 31, breaking the old record of 30 goals set by Brevan Bender in 2014. Lemerand also set the new career scoring record with 79 goals, breaking Bender's previous record of 74 career goals.

"It has been a record-breaking

season for Connor this year," said Alma coach Nick O'Neill. "He's had a tremendous season and career for Alma soccer."

Lemerand made steady progress as a goal scorer during his four years with the team. After scoring 11 goals his freshman season, he added 18 goals as a sophomore, 19 as a junior and 31 this season. Lemerand also totaled 26 assists during his career.

A combination of natural skills, hard work and determination enabled Lemerand to become an accomplished goal scorer.

"To start, Connor is a phenomenal athlete," O'Neill said. "He possesses great size, strength,

speed and quickness. In terms of goal scoring, he uses hard-earned skill and determination to best defenders and keepers. I think it's also important to add that Connor has spent much of his career surrounded by talented and supportive teammates."

Along with playing soccer for Alma, Lemerand competes for club teams during the offseason where he improves his all-around game.

"Connor plays a lot of soccer and has done so his entire life," O'Neill said. "This past year he played for both Midland Soccer Club and Alma Strikers Soccer Club in the offseason. He participates with the team in a year-round strength and conditioning program led by

Chris Holton of CMYFC. He also competes with his teammates in the Lansing Indoor Soccer League and the Lansing Area Summer League."

Lemerand is an all-around athlete who also plays varsity basketball and is a talented golfer.

Lemerand's strong play helped Alma to an 11-4-4 overall record this season and 6-2-4 conference record.

Along with his goal-scoring ability, Lemerand's leadership has been a big plus for the team.

"Connor took ownership as a senior leader on the team," O'Neill said. "He also adapted to being a marked man on the field. Connor

didn't sneak up on anyone we played against, they knew he is our goal scorer. As a result, teams tried to take him out of the game through various tactics. While there was a lot of pressure on him to score goals for our team, I think he handles the responsibility extraordinarily well."

Overall, O'Neill enjoyed having Lemerand on the team and watching him develop into the player and person he has become.

"I have had the pleasure of watching Connor grow as a person and athlete for most of his life," O'Neill said. "I'm extremely proud of the man he has become and the accomplishments he has earned on the soccer field."

## Cross Country Teams Will Bid For State Titles



Area runners will be at the state finals on Nov. 6.

### John Raffel Sports Scene

Several teams and athletes will be going to the state cross country finals on Nov. 6 at Michigan International Speedway with hopes of taking home trophies and medals.

Its back to a one-day event after COVID restrictions forced the MHSAA to have a two-day event for 2020.

**Division 1 boys:** Rockford took third last year and four of its top five runners are returning as seniors. Midland's Matthew Crowley hopes to be a top 10 contender.

**Division 2 boys:** Fremont lost some seniors from last year's title team but appears to be solid again. St. Johns was a distant second but has three of its top seven runners back. Braydon Honsinger of Freeland is among the local runners who could finish top 10.

**Division 3 boys:** Four of St. Louis' top six runners last year's state championship team return, making the Sharks the clear team to beat. St. Louis' Aaron Bowerman was ninth last season and is the top returning runner locally.

**Division 4 boys:** Carson City-Crystal edged Breckenridge

157-162 for last year's state title but the numbers might favor the Huskies this time. They return six of their top runners from last season. The Eagles return four of their top seven. Mason Sumner of Breckenridge hopes to cross the finish line first.

**Division 1 girls:** Okemos was 16th last season but had four freshmen as runners two through five and a sophomore and junior in the sixth and seventh places.

**Division 2 girls:** Shepherd was sixth last season and returns five of its top seven runners and could be a

darkhorse for the title. Megan Ford from Mason was second last year and the No. 1 runner has graduated.

**Division 3 girls:** Hart might be too tough for anyone to catch but St. Louis might have the talent to do it with all of its top six runners back from a year ago. Ithaca's Lani Bloom hopes to cross the finish line first.

**Division 4 girls:** Lansing Christian has five of its top runners back from last year and should hold back the threat from Beal City and Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart to win another title. Beal City's Rachel Weber was fourth last year but has been fighting illnesses this season.



## Chippewa Hills Runner Bidding For State Honors

### John Raffel Sports Scene

Chippewa Hills' Jake O'Neil has established himself as one of the top runners in the Central State Activities Association's Gold Division and as a contender for state honors.

Chippewa Hills' Jake O'Neil comes to the finish line during a home race on Oct. 22.

But it's been a challenging season for the Warrior junior.

His personal record came on Sept. 8 at Shepherd with a time of 16 minutes, 30.3 seconds.

He had a strong race at home on Oct. 23 with a time of 16:53.5.

"It's been a pretty good season," he said. "It's been progressing like I wanted to. I'm hoping to get into the low 16s by the end of it, maybe even in the 15s."

O'Neil hopes to return to the state finals.

"All-state would be great," he said. "I hope to do better than I did last year when it was really hot."

But O'Neil acknowledged it will help on knowing what to expect by having been there a year ago.

"I think I should have a better race unless something happens," he said. "I hope to have a better race and have a better time."

From a year ago, "I've improved quite a bit," he said. "Last year it took me pretty much until the end of the season to get to the 16s. I got into the 16s in one of my earlier meets. I think I've been progressing. I found out today if I go out and pay attention and not get too carried away but pay attention to making gains, it works really good...just go your own pace."



## Vestaburg Runner Eager For Trip To State Meet

### John Raffel Sports Scene

Owen Patton has had a strong sophomore season as Vestaburg's No. 1 runner.

He had a spectacular PR of 16:10 in early October. One of his best

times was a 16:53 at the final MSAC jamboree.

"I improved quite a bit from last year," he said. "I'm stronger. I ran 17:59 last year as a freshman."

Patton indicated he's been strong with both his start and finish this

season. "I'm kind of a middle distance runner. I have a better kick than some of the guys. I've been meaning to hold down the third mile a little bit."

Patton played basketball as a freshman. Lately, he's been focusing on track and cross country.

"I like parts of both but I like track a little more because I'm better at it," he said.

Patton also runs distance races in track and said he does a lot of

offseason running.

He was hopeful of qualifying for the state finals Nov. 6 at Michigan International Speedway.

"I'm currently ranked third in our region," Patton said, adding he has a good chance to qualify for the state meet this year after missing it by one place last year.

Vestaburg competes in the Mid-State Activities Conference, which includes powerhouse opponents such as Carson City-Crystal.

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# Freshmen Leading Central Montcalm Attack

## John Raffel Sports Scene

Central Montcalm has had two special solid freshman runners this season with Ashley Choponis and Kyah Hoffman.

Choponis was fourth at the Late Season Chippewa Hills Invitational on Oct. 23 in 20 minutes and 3.67 seconds.

"It's been going pretty good," Choponis said. "I've been in the top five all season so it's been going

good."

She's exceeded her own expectations.

"I wasn't going to run cross this season," she said. "I haven't since the sixth grade. Then I came back. I decided to do this instead of volleyball."

Choponis is happy with her decision. Her personal record was a 19:57.8 at the Sparta Invitational.

The best part of her race has been the first mile. She wants to improve

on the second mile.

The team "has been doing pretty good," Choponis said.

Hoffman indicated she has exceeded her expectations. She was fifth at Chippewa Hills in 20:26.28.

"I was always expecting to get top 20," she said. "I never expect to get as good as I am now. During the summer, I ran over 100 miles with my sister. We're lucky enough to have a trail at the back of our house. So we practiced over the summer and worked as hard as we

possibly could."

A 20:28 was her personal record prior to the Chippewa Hills race. Her goal is to get a 20:21 before the season ends.

Hoffman has been working on running a consistent race and said she wants to work on her last mile.

"I'm working so hard the first two," she said. "We got second overall in our league (Central State Activities Association Gold Division) which is insane."



Ashley Choponis (top) and Kyah Hoffman (bottom) have been leading Central Montcalm's running attack this season.

# Beal City Senior Runner Hoping For Strong Finish

## John Raffel Sports Scene

Rachel Weber is looking to end her Beal City cross country career in a special way.

The Aggie All-Stater has been leading the way for her team this season. Her season record was a 21:09.5 at the Apples to Apples meet. She won her home Beal City Invitational and finished third in her team's final Highland Conference jamboree.

Weber has been dealing with some health

issues. She indicated her doctor indicated it might be from asthma-related issues.

As the season progresses, Weber is looking to overcome health issues and continue to be a leader for the Aggies.

"I think last year was my best season so far," she said. "I'm hoping to maybe be top 10 in the state and maybe get my personal record, which is 19:32."

Weber indicated the strength of her race has probably been her second or last mile.

It's been a relatively warm season for runners. Weber competed at a late-season meet at Chippewa Hills with temperatures in the high 40s, a welcome sign for most runners.

But not for Rachel Weber.

"Personally, I like it when it's really hot," she said. "I just perform better when it's hot."

Weber has been pleased with her team's performance.

"It's been good," she said. "We took second in the Highland Conference. Manton took first."



Beal City's Rachel Weber hopes to be among the top run runners in the state again this season.

# St. Louis Sharks Hungry For Another State Title

## John Raffel Sports Scene

St. Louis' cross country team seems to have all the tools in place to make another run for a state Division 3 title.

Last season, St. Louis edged Hart 103-116 for the title; Keegan Hong and Joe Erickson graduated from the top five of that team. But Aaron Bowerman, who was fifth, plus Nate March who was 12th and Ben March, who was 17th, are back. No. 6 runner from last year Dylan Marr is also back.

In the final TVC jamboree, the Sharks gobbled up places three through seven.

It was Ben March (17:16.82), Nate March (17:32.48), Aaron Bowerman (18:01.41), Marr (18:20.54) and freshman Landon Pestruie (18:24.02).

St. Louis narrowly won all three jamborees over Ithaca.

Ben March is a sophomore and had

his PR at the Alma Scottie Classic with a 16:24.0. He had a 16:44.90 at the TVC overall final.

At the second TVC West Jamboree, March was second in 16:58.7.

He was second at the MSU Spartan Invitational in 17:40.4.

Nate March, also a senior, had his personal record at the Scottie Classic with a time of 16:27.6. He was third at the second league jamboree in 17:27.2 and was 20th at the MSU Spartan Invitational in 18:05.9.

Bowerman has had an impressive senior season. He was fourth in the Scottie Classic in 16:46. But his season record came in the Shepherd Bluejay Invitational in 16:23.4.

Marr, a junior, also had a PR in the Scottie Classic with a 17:21.87.

Earlier in the season at Shepherd, he had a 17:26.2.



Pestruie, a freshman, had a personal record of 17:35.5 at the Shepherd Bluejay Invitational. That was way below his 19:50.3 the first meet of the season at Chippewa Hills.

St. Louis boys were able to secure another league title.

# St. Louis Girls Eye High State Finish

## John Raffel Sports Scene

(20:19.5).

St. Louis edged Ithaca at all three TVC West jamborees.

Munderloh is a senior headed for a very special season. She had a season record of 19:15.45 at the Alma College Scottie Classic. Prior to that, she had a time of 19:33.3 at the TVC overall final.

Borie had a season record of 19:15.41 at the Alma College Scottie Classic. It was almost two minutes lower than her time three days prior at the TVC overall final.

Dickman, a sophomore, has

They put the wraps on the title in mid-October with a narrow win over Ithaca 29-35 in the final jamboree.

The Sharks sealed the deal by taking places two through four, led by Libby Munderloh (20:18.21), Monika Borie (20:18.92) and Jaiden Dickman

indeed had a special season of her own. She set a personal record at the Alma College Scottie Classic of 19:26.21. It's a far cry from where she started from on Aug. 24 with a clocking of 21:59.5. She then went to Shepherd for a 20:11.1 and had a 20:54.5 at Breckenridge.

In the first TVC West, she had a 20:56.8 at Michigan Lutheran Seminary. Then she had a 21:43.9 for 17th at the MSU Spartan Invitational. She got another fourth at the second TVC West jamboree in 20:28.1 and then had a 19:57.6 at the Greater Lansing Cross Country championship.

All three girls are back from last year's team which finished fourth in the Division 3 state meet and could make a bid for a higher spot this year.



St. Louis' cross country team celebrated a league title this season.

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# Alma Girl Runners Eye Trip To State Meet

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

Alma cross country coach Dale Devine has had some top notch runners this season.

His No. 1 girls runner has been Ezgi Kurt, who was the team's lead runner in the final TVC race with an eighth-place time of in 20 minutes, 9.7 seconds.

She got her personal record a few days later at the Alma College Scottie Classic with a 19:16.7.

"Last year, I had a good feeling about it for her," Devine said. "She has a real good chance to make it to state."

Sophomore Hannah Raglin has also had a strong season for Alma and had a season's best of 21:43.3 at the Marauder Invitational.

"The girls fluctuate a little bit on how they finish," Devine said. "They switch up spots quite often. That's why they have an excellent chance of making it out of the regionals and being one of the top three teams."

Junior Jordan Cleveland has had a season record of 21:33.2. Senior Sarah Grove had a personal record of 21:07.2 at the Alma Scotty Classic.

Another strong freshman has been Vivian Wickes, who had a personal record of 21:41.1 at one of the jamborees.



Junior McKenzie Betts has been up there too in 21:50.77 at the final TVC jamboree. Her PR of 21:34.6 came in the previous league jamboree.

Sophomore Ali Kudmani has been the No. 1 boys runner. His season record of 17:17.8 came at the Alma College Scottie Classic. Bodie Heiss is a promising freshman who set his personal record at the Scottie Classic of 18:15.9. Blaze Abell, a senior, had a season at the Scottie Classic with 17:16.0.

The boys were sitting fourth in the conference midway during the season.

"We're definitely in a rebuilding year for the boys," Devine said.

Alma boys get off to the start of a race during the season.

# Ithaca Boys, Girls Expect To Do Well At State Cross Country Meet

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

Gene LeBron is Ithaca cross country coach this year and points out "we're having a great season on the boys' side. We're ranked sixth in the state right now."

Ithaca is led by Espen Lehnst and Parks Allen. At the Alma College Scottie Classic, Lehnst won it in 16 minutes, 18.94 seconds. Allen was fifth in 16:54.53.

"They've been doing a really good job all year," LeBron said. "Our numbers three-four-five have stepped up all year. After losing Braxton (Lamey), our school record holder from last year, we're ranked just as high as we last year because those other guys have stepped up."

He was referring especially to Nolan Woodman, Keegan Ouillete and Connor Mikulka.

"They're getting better every week and I think we'll keep climbing," LeBron said. "I'm looking for a top five at the state meet."

LeBron calls Lani Bloom "one of the best female runners in the country who is kind of leading us. We're had some sickness early on, so we've been ranked around most of the year. But I honestly think we're a better team than that. Our girls are finally starting to get healthy. We had a couple of girls out with COVID. Rachael Sierakowski, a senior, is running really well right now. She just ran a big PR and moved up to No. 5 on our all-time list of top times."

"Liliana Lehnst is only a sophomore and she is running really. We have a girl (Karisa Deacons) who didn't start running until the day after cross country camp. She's new. She moved here from Central Montcalm. She's skyrocketed up the ladder and has been a solid No. 4. She's a game changer for us. Kylea Bramer is really coming around. She was sick also. She's a senior. I know she's going to give me her best at the state meet. I think the girls team is really going to shock some people at the state meet."



Leading the attack for the Ithaca boys cross country team have been Espen Lehnst (176) and Parks Allen (175).

There are also some promising freshmen, LeBron added.

They like what they see in Cole Yaros, a junior and a third-year runner.

# Freeland Runners Hope To Be State Contenders

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

It's looking like another strong season for Freeland's cross country teams.

Last season, Freeland's girls were third in the region and 11th at state. The boys qualified for the first time in Division 2 state after having been in Division 3.

Braydon Honsinger was all-state at 16th and the individual regional champion. Six Freeland girls finished in top 15 at the regional.

Jacob Wurtzel was also all-region.

Mara Longnecker and Kiera Hansen were All-State.

"We were in a tough conference," Freeland coach George Drown said. "Frankenmuth has been our nemesis the last few years. They're in our region and they're in our conference. They were rated a top five team last year."

This year, "our goal on both boys and girls side is to finish top five in Division 2 for state finals," Drown said.

Freeland wound up winning the league for both boys and girls.

Hansen was nursing an injury and hopes to return to the lineup as a three-time All-Stater.

"Mara Longnecker is looking good and she's a returning All-Stater," Drown said. "Whitney Farrell was all-state this spring in track. We're hoping she can get on that podium at Michigan International Speedway as well. Landry Kuhn is a freshman and is already running (19:40). She's stepped in and has helped us with the absence of Kierra as she is rehabbing."

Honsinger is looking to be among the top boys in the state. Wurtzel is also hoping to be an all-stater along with freshman TJ Hansen, who has a PR of 15:49.7.

"You never know what will happen at Michigan International Speedway," Drown said.

That state finals will be Nov. 7.



Last season, Freeland's girls were third in the region and 11th at state. The boys qualified for the first time in Division 2 state after having been in Division 3.

# Yaros Having Strong Running Season For New Lothrop

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

New Lothrop High School cross country coach Vera Root, and her husband Greg Root, the team's running mentor, have coached for 19 years.

They like what they see in Cole Yaros, a junior and a third-year runner.

Yaros, a junior and a third-year runner.

"He has ran varsity each of his high school years and has scored for the team each race," Vera Root said. "Cole is a very committed runner and works hard in the off-season. He takes his running very seriously."

"Cole's personal record this season so far is 17:24. His PR last season was 17:20. He is right on track to better this by the end of the season. We look for Cole to make a return trip to the state finals again this season. Cole is very much a team player and he works with his teammates to improve at each practice. He is very upbeat and positive when it comes to running."

Last season, Yaros was primarily New Lothrop's third runner and this season he has moved into the

top runner position.

He started the sport in the sixth grade and it's his third season on the varsity.

"We won conference last year and our team made it to states," Yaros said. "I'd like to win conference, again but it will be tough. I'd also like to go to state. I'd like to get as close to the 16s as I can if not get in them."

The strength of his race, "is definitely my drive up the hills," he said. "I think I can strive pretty well there."



Cole Yaros, is a junior and a third-year runner for New Lothrop.



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# Area Golfers Cap Season In Big Way By Competing For Honors At State Meets

## David Cook Sports Scene

The girls golf season drew to a close with several teams playing for state titles on one of the first cool weekends of the fall season. Following is a look at how this year's Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) girls golf state tournaments played out.

### DIVISION 1

It was a fourth straight title for the golfers from Northville as the Mustangs defeated rival Plymouth by 12 strokes to win the Division 1 state title at The Meadows on the campus of Grand Valley State University. Northville totaled 615 strokes while Plymouth finished second with a 627 score. Plymouth senior Bridget Boczar won individual medalist honors with a 143 while her twin sister Grace finished second with a 144.

### Okemos Golfers Take Third

The Okemos girls golf team closed out the season with a strong showing with a third-place finish at the Division 1 state finals. A pair of Okemos golfers finished in the top 10 as individuals to lead the way for the squad. Senior Allison Cui shot rounds of 74 and 74 to finish in seventh with a 148 total. Freshman Alena Li came in with rounds of 75 on both days of the tournament for a 150 total that placed her ninth overall as an individual. Senior Ashley Cho totaled a 165 for the two-day tournament to finish 23<sup>rd</sup> while senior Audrey Chen totaled 188 and junior Chloe Chen totaled 198.

### Rockford Finishes In Top Ten In D1

The Rockford girls golf team capped the season by placing eighth at the Division 1 state finals. The Rams totaled 697 for the tournament.

Sophomore Jessica Jolly led the way for Rockford as she carded rounds of 76 and 78 for a 154 total that was good for 13<sup>th</sup> place.



Junior Bridget Palmer totaled 176 for two days while sophomore Aubrey Wilson totaled 183, junior Mackenzie Davidson totaled a 184 and senior Marley Haeberle totaled 188.

### DIVISION 2

Dearborn Divine Child took home the team trophy in Division 2 as the Falcons shot a 691 to win the title at Bedford Valley Golf Course in Battle Creek. Byron Center placed second with a 700. Gabriella Tapp of South Lyon won individual medalist honors as she totaled a 144 for two days.

### Haslett Finishes Top Ten At State

The Haslett golf team turned in a big effort at the state meet with a two-day total of 712 that placed the Vikings sixth overall in Division 2. Senior Prabhleen Pawar and junior Sydney Dausman led the way for Haslett at the state meet as they both finished the tournament with 171 totals to tie for 18<sup>th</sup> place overall. Pawar carded rounds of 84 and 87 while Dausman shot rounds of 85 and 86. Haslett sophomore Mina Yoo placed 31<sup>st</sup> individually with a total of 178 while junior Richa Shah totaled 192 for the tournament.

Haslett earned a trip to the state finals by placing second at the regional at Groesbeck Golf Course in East Lansing. Dausman led Haslett at the regional as she placed third overall with a 77. Yoo placed seventh individually with an 84.

### Midland Dow Golfers Compete At State Meet

The Midland Dow girls golf team competed at the Division 2 state finals where it placed 17<sup>th</sup> overall with an 864 total. Senior Abey Leuter led the way for Dow with a 205 total. Junior Abby Wilson shot a 211 followed by freshman Kylie Keefer with a 219.

Freeland earned a trip to the state finals by placing second at the regional that took place at the Pine River Country Club in Alma. Pumford won individual medalist honors at the regional as she shot an 81. Argyle placed 10<sup>th</sup> overall at the regional with a 103 while junior Kendal Ferchau was 17<sup>th</sup> with a 107 and Markey was 20<sup>th</sup> with a 109.

### Quartet Of Area Golfers Compete At State Individually

Four area golfers competed at the state meet after qualifying as individuals.

DeWitt senior Kaitlyn Lawver capped off her high school golf career by finishing 15<sup>th</sup> as an individual at the state finals with rounds of 77 and 92 for a 169 total. Lawver qualified for the state meet by placing third at the regional tournament with a 77.

East Lansing senior Ella Miller placed 23<sup>rd</sup> as an individual. Miller shot rounds of 87 and 86 for a 173 total. Miller qualified for the

The Chippewa Hills golf team capped the season by placing fifth at the Division 4 state finals.

state meet by shooting a 76 to place second individually at the regional tournament at Groesbeck Golf Course.

Elle Sluss of Lowell ended her freshman season in a big way by competing as an individual at the state finals. Sluss shot rounds of 94 and 91 at state for a 185 total. Sluss earned a trip to the state meet by shooting an 84 to place fifth individually at the regional that took place at Lincoln Golf Course in Muskegon.

Bay City Western senior Caitlyn Krause finished her career by shooting rounds of 108 and 115 at the state finals. Krause earned a spot in the state finals after shooting a 98 at the regional tournament.

### DIVISION 3

Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook-Kingswood won the Division 3 state title at Forest Akers West course on the campus of Michigan State University. Cranbrook-Kingswood totaled a 694 with Grosse Ile placing second with a 700. Macomb Lutheran North sophomore Lauren Timpf won the individual medalist honors by 14 strokes as she shot a 139 total.

### Freeland Golfers Cap Season

The Freeland golf team ended the season competing at the Division 3 state meet where it placed 12<sup>th</sup> overall with a 790 total. The Falcons were led at the state meet by freshman Ava Pumford who placed fifth overall. Pumford carded rounds of 79 and 83 to finish with a 162 total. Junior Ava Mata totaled 205 with rounds of 102 and 103 while junior Zoey Markey totaled a 209 and senior Sophie Argyle a 214.

Freeland earned a trip to the state finals by placing second at the regional that took place at the Pine River Country Club in Alma. Pumford won individual medalist honors at the regional as she shot an 81. Argyle placed 10<sup>th</sup> overall at the regional with a 103 while junior Kendal Ferchau was 17<sup>th</sup> with a 107 and Markey was 20<sup>th</sup> with a 109.

### Williamston Duo Competes At State Meet

A pair of Williamston golfers competed as individuals at the Division 3 state finals. Freshman Nicole Schafer placed 15<sup>th</sup> at the state meet with rounds of 83 and 90 for a 173 total. Sophomore Ellie Thorburn placed 25<sup>th</sup> as she shot rounds of 89 and 88 for a 177 total. Schafer earned a trip to the state finals as she placed second at the regional at Pine River Country Club with an 84. Thorburn finished in seventh at the regional with a 97.

### DIVISION 4

The Division 4 finals at Forest Akers East finished in a tie between Montague and Lansing Catholic as both squads totaled 675 for the tournament. Montague won the



The Lansing Catholic golf team earned runner-up honors in Division 4.

state championship based on the fifth-score tiebreaker. Mia Melendez of Ann Arbor Greenhills won the individual medalist title as she carded a 143.

### Lansing Catholic Golfers Finish Runner-Up

The Lansing Catholic golf team finished the season strong to earn runner-up honors at the Division 4 meet. The Cougars were led by the senior duo of Amanda Melling and Sailor Somerville. Melling finished third individually with rounds of 80 and 79 for a 159 total while Somerville shot 77 and 87 for a 164 total. Senior Maya Blonshine placed 18<sup>th</sup> with a 174 total while sophomore Sophie Hauser placed 29<sup>th</sup> with a 181.

Lansing Catholic qualified for the state meet by winning the Jackson Lumen Christi regional with a team score of 331. Melling led the Cougars as she was regional medalist with a 75. Somerville and freshman Brynn Anderson tied for fourth with rounds of 85 while Hauser was sixth with an 86 and Blonshine 10<sup>th</sup> with a 90.

### Chippewa Hills Golfers Place Fifth

The Chippewa Hills golf team concluded a memorable season by placing fifth at the state finals. Senior Kerstin Stadfeld led the way for the team at the state meet as she finished 14<sup>th</sup> overall with rounds of 83 and 88 for a 171 total. Sophomore Ryleigh Allen placed 27<sup>th</sup> with rounds of 84 and 93 for a 177. Senior Hannah Herman totaled 182 while freshman Madison Allen totaled a 192.

Chippewa Hills advanced to the state meet by placing second behind eventual state champion Montague at the regional. Madison Allen led the Warriors at the regional as she placed third with an 86. Stadfeld placed sixth with a 92 while Herman was 10<sup>th</sup> with a 99.

### Sacred Heart Golf Team Competes At State Finals

The Mt. Pleasant Sacred Heart golf team wrapped up the season by placing 13<sup>th</sup> at the Division 4 state finals. Senior Anna Terwilliger led the way for Sacred Heart as she shot

rounds of 89 and 94 for a 183 total.

Sacred Heart earned a trip to the state finals by winning the regional at the Mt. Pleasant Country Club. Senior Taylor Cotter led the way at the regional as she placed fourth overall with a 98. Senior Nicole Olivieri placed sixth with a 99 while Terwilliger placed 10<sup>th</sup> with a 105.

### Shepherd Golfers Finish Season Strong

The Shepherd golf team finished the season strong with a big effort at the regional tournament that earned the Bluejays a trip to the state finals.

Shepherd placed second at the regional tournament that took place at the Mt. Pleasant Country Club. Junior Grace Bohannon led the team with an 89 and placed second individually at the regional. Senior Jenna Gates placed seventh individually with a 104 at the regional.

Shepherd placed 15<sup>th</sup> at the state finals. Junior Natalie Lloyd led the team at state with a two-day total of 197 while junior Anna Lator totaled 218 at state.

### Bath Golfers Earn Trip To State Meet

The Bath golf team capped the season in a big way by earning a trip to the state finals. Bath placed third at the Jackson Lumen Christi regional to earn a spot in the state finals. Freshman Anna Schaubly led Bath at the regional as she placed 13<sup>th</sup> overall with a 95. Bath placed 14<sup>th</sup> overall at the state finals. Schaubly led the Bees with a 193 total for two days at the finals followed by senior Ally Estrada with a 203 and sophomore Aubrie Schaubly with a 215.

### Central Montcalm Advances To State Finals

The Central Montcalm golf team wrapped up the season competing at the state finals. The Hornets placed 18<sup>th</sup> at state led by sophomore Erika Thomas who shot a 209. Senior Cailin Lambert added a 222 at state. Central Montcalm earned a trip to the finals by taking third at the Mt. Pleasant regional. Lambert placed fourth as an individual at the regional with a 98 while Thomas placed seventh with a 104.

### Four Area Golfers Compete As Individuals In D4

Four area golfers wrapped up their seasons by qualifying for the state meet as individuals. Grace Elfring of Laingsburg placed 23<sup>rd</sup> at the state finals with rounds of 88 for a 176 total. Elfring qualified for state by shooting an 84 and placing third individually at the regional.

Clare senior Mara Pomerville shot rounds of 107 and 101 for a 208 at the state meet. Pomerville qualified for state with a 104 at the regional.

St. Louis sophomore Josie Schrot carded rounds 108 and 104 for a 212 total. Schrot shot a 96 at regional to qualify for state.

Lakeview senior Jenna Voelker shot rounds of 108 and 112 at state for a 220 total. Voelker shot a 97 at regional to earn a trip to state.

# Young Alma Girls Golf Team Showed Plenty Of Improvement Throughout The Season

## David Cook Sports Scene

With no seniors on the roster, the Alma girls golf team focused on improving their skills this season. Putting in plenty of practice and hard work, the Panthers showed steady improvement as the season went on.

The Alma girls golf team wrapped up the season with one of its strongest showings as it placed seventh at the Division 3 regional tournament. Junior Abigail Treacy led the way for Alma at the regional as she shot a 108. Freshman Kaleigh Johnston shot a 122 at the regional while fellow freshman Ava Vogt shot a 124.

“Team wise, we played pretty well at regionals at the end of the

year,” said Kettler. “We played pretty good there and that was definitely a highlight of the season. Individually, we had some girls shoot some nice rounds throughout the year.”

Both Johnston and Vogt were named second-team, all-conference this season along with Treacy.

“We are a very young team,” said Alma coach Steve Kettler. “We had no seniors this year. The team made good progress this year as two freshmen earned second-team, all-conference honors and a junior also made second team.”

Johnston turned in a solid freshman season as she recorded rounds of 107 and 108 during two of the league matches. Treacy recorded low rounds of 108 and



The Alma girls golf team showed plenty of improvement this season as it finished the year with three golfers earning second-team, all-conference honors.

109 while Vogt recorded rounds of 106 and 110 during league play.

“It was nice having the two freshmen this year,” Kettler said. “They want to get better and they work hard at it.”

One downside to the season was junior Mallory Edwards missing time with a back injury that bothered her all season.

“Mallory was only able to play in half of our matches,” Kettler said. “She is one of our better golfers. She was fighting a bad back all season. The doctor said it wouldn't get any worse if she could tolerate the pain.”

With all of the roster due back next season, the future is bright for the Panthers.

“Overall, the season definitely went better than my expectations,” Kettler said. “Getting the two freshmen helped a lot. We will have all our players back next year so we should be a pretty good team. We exceeded our expectations for this year. Next year the expectations will be higher and hopefully we live up to them.”

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# Area Tennis Players Wrap Up Season With Strong Efforts In State Tennis Tournament

## David Cook Sports Scene

The boys tennis season wrapped up with area teams battling for post-season glory in the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) state tournament. Following is a look at this year's state finals and how area teams fared in the state tournament.

### DIVISION 1

Metro Detroit teams held serve at the Division 1 state finals with Troy winning the state title with 30 points followed by Bloomfield Hills with 26 points.

### Rockford Top Area Finisher In D1

Rockford was the top area team at the D1 finals as the Rams finished in a tie for 13<sup>th</sup> place with six points. The Rams were paced at the state finals by the No. 3 doubles team of seniors Xavier Gee and Nate Frost. Gee and Frost reached the semifinals at No. 3 doubles as they finished the season with a 29-4 record.

Rockford qualified for the state finals by placing third at the regional. The No. 3 doubles team of Gee and Frost won a regional title. Sam Danner was runner-up at No. 4 singles while the No. 1 doubles team of Reese Kent and Brett Mehling and the No. 2 doubles team of Arman Rhimi and Ben Lewis both reached the finals.

### Holt Tennis Competes At State Finals

The Holt tennis team totaled three points at the state finals in Division 1. The Rams were led at the state meet by senior Alec Stout who reached the quarterfinals at No. 2 singles. Stout finished the season with a 20-13 record.

Holt qualified for the state finals by winning the regional championship at Grand Blanc. Stout won the regional title at No. 2 singles with Haytham Sandu winning the No. 4 singles regional title. A trio of Holt doubles teams won doubles titles at the regional. Andrew Rutter and Adam Williams won the title at No. 2 doubles, Trevor Cordell and Isaac Jonker-Burke won the title at No. 3 and Cade Greene and Charlie Geitzel won the No. 4 doubles title. Jacob Sundermann was runner-up at No. 3 singles.

Midland qualified for the state tournament by placing third at the Midland Dow regional. Greiner and O'Malley were runner-up at No. 3 doubles at the regional tournament as were Parker Hillman at No. 2 singles and Tommy Kroll at No. 3 singles.

### DIVISION 2

The Division 2 state finals was closely contested with Birmingham Groves coming out one-point ahead of Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern. Groves totaled 27 points while Northern took second with 26 points. Midland Dow and Okemos tied for third place with 20 points.

### Haslett Netters Place 11<sup>th</sup> At State Finals

The Haslett tennis team finished the season strong as the Vikings placed 11<sup>th</sup> at the Division 3 state finals with six team points. Haslett was led at the finals by a trio of singles players who all reached the quarterfinal round. Freshman Sree Komiresetty reached the quarterfinal at No. 2 singles and wrapped up the season with a 22-7 record. Sophomore Ian Opel reached the quarterfinal round at No. 3 singles and ended the season with a 22-5 mark. At No. 4 singles, junior Aremis Leung reached the quarterfinals and ended the year with a 20-9 record.

Haslett earned a trip to the team finals by taking second at the regional it hosted. Komiresetty and Leung won individual regional titles at No. 2 and No. 4 respectively. Shaheer Ahmad and Max Betten won the title at No. 2 doubles. Anish Raja was runner-up at No. 1 singles. In doubles play Andrew Gingras and Ethan Park were runner-up at No. 1 doubles.

### Mason Tennis Team Earns Trip To State

The Mason tennis team ended the year with a 13<sup>th</sup>-place finish at the Division 3 state finals. The Bulldogs totaled four team points at the finals. Leading the way for Mason at the finals was the No. 4 doubles team of senior Tommy De La Fuente and sophomore Luke Marlan who reached the quarterfinal round.

Mason qualified for the state finals by winning the regional title at Haslett. The Bulldogs won three of the four doubles titles at the regional with Brendan Richardson and Lane Morris winning the title at No. 1 doubles, Jay Sartor and Cooper Cross winning the title at No. 3 doubles and De La Fuente and Marlan winning the title at No. 4 doubles. Lucas Preston won the No. 3 singles title. Collin Moore was runner-up at No. 4 singles with Sawyer Thomas

and Aiden Placer taking second at No. 2 doubles.

### DIVISION 3

Traverse City St. Francis took home the Division 4 state championship as the Gladiators totaled 34 team points. Grosse Pointe University Liggett placed second with 27 points.

### Big Rapids Placed In Top Ten At State

The Big Rapids tennis team turned in a strong effort at the Division 4 state finals as the Cardinals took seventh place with 12 team points.

The Cardinals received strong efforts from their singles players at the finals. At No. 2 singles, junior Nathan Sanders reached the quarterfinals and ended the season with a 29-7 record. Sophomore Preston Young reached the quarterfinals at No. 3 singles while junior Logan Fuller reached the quarterfinals at No. 4 singles. The No. 4 doubles team of Zach Jones and Ari Ziska also reached the quarterfinals.

### Portland Tennis Team Advances To State Meet

The Portland tennis team qualified for the state meet and placed 14<sup>th</sup> overall with four points. The Raiders were paced at the state finals by senior Timothy Pohl. Pohl reached the quarterfinals at No. 4 singles and ended the season with a 22-10 record. In doubles action, Jorgen Sunday and Casey Smith reached the quarterfinals at No. 1 doubles.

Portland qualified for the state finals by winning the regional tournament it hosted. Portland singles players won three individual titles at the regional including Ryan Leonard at No. 2 singles, Ethan Webert at No. 3 singles and Timothy Pohl at No. 4 singles. Sunday and Smith were regional runner-ups at No. 1 doubles while Austin Getchell and Damien Ledu were runner-up at No. 2 doubles.

### Saginaw Nouvel Tennis Team Competes At State

The Saginaw Nouvel tennis team ended the season with a trip to the state finals. Nouvel placed 15<sup>th</sup> at the state finals with a total of three team points. Senior Bill Buchalski led the way for Nouvel as he reached the quarterfinal round and ended the season with a 19-5 record.

Nouvel qualified for the state finals



Okemos freshman Suchir Nagisetty was one of two Okemos singles players to win individual state championships at the Division 2 state tennis finals.

by winning the regional tournament it hosted. Nouvel players won a pair of individual regional titles as Giorgio Fabiano won the title at No. 2 singles and Brady Vance won the title at No. 4 singles. Christian Beyers was runner-up at No. 1 singles while Buchalski was runner-up at No. 3 singles. In doubles play, Shawn McDonald and Andrew Wagner were runner-up at No. 2 doubles and Cooper Swackhamer and Jayden Lucas were runner-up at No. 3 doubles.



The Big Rapids tennis team finished in the top ten at the Division 4 state tennis tournament.

# Midland Dow Boys Tennis Team Keeps Tradition Alive With Lofty State Finals Finish

## David Cook Sports Scene

The Midland Dow boys tennis team is one of the premier schools for tennis in Mid-Michigan and the Chargers kept their tradition of excellence going this year with a top-three finish at the Division 2 state finals at Hope College in Holland.

Dow totaled 20 team points at the Division 2 finals to finish in a tie for third place with Okemos. The third-place finish was Dow's highest finish at the finals since finishing in a second-place tie at

the 2017 finals. Dow reached the quarterfinals at last year's state meet which had a different format due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Dow placed fifth at the finals in both 2018 and 2019. Since 2000 Dow has won six state team championships, the last coming in 2016.

Dow featured a young team this year and with so many young and talented players in the program the future looks even brighter.

The Chargers were paced at the finals by the No. 1 doubles team of junior Thomas Ladwein and sophomore Aaron Li who reached

the championship match. The No. 3 doubles team of Shubhan Nagarkar and sophomore Vishagen Karthikeyan reached the semifinal round. Reaching the quarterfinal round in doubles play were the No. 2 doubles team of sophomores Boaz Qui and Roofy Eisaadany and the No. 4 doubles team of senior Michael McGaugh and sophomore Jonathan Song.

Dow also received strong efforts from their singles players. At No. 1 singles freshman Austin King reached the quarterfinal round and wrapped up the season with a 28-7 record. Sophomore Joaquin Argibay reached the semifinal round at No. 2 singles and finished the season with a 14-4 record. Sophomore Logan Yu reached the semifinal round at No. 4 singles and finished the year with a 32-3 record.

Dow qualified for the state tournament by winning the



Midland Dow tennis coach Terry Schwartzkopf talks with one of his doubles teams during action at the Division 2 state tennis finals.

regional tournament is hosted. Dow won all eight flights at the regional with King, Argibay and Yu winning singles titles along with Nimai Patel at No. 3 singles. Ladwein and Li won the title at No.

1 doubles with Qui and Eisaadany winning the No. 2 doubles regional title. Nagarkar and Karthikeyan won at No. 3 doubles with McGaugh and Song winning at No. 4 doubles.

# Familiar Names Keep Okemos Tennis Team Among The Best In The State

## David Cook Sports Scene

successful tradition continued this season as the Chiefs placed third in the state in Division 2.



This year's Okemos team was led by a pair of young players who have grown up around the program. Sophomore Ethan Portnoy and freshman Suchir Nagisetty know full well what it takes for Okemos tennis to be successful having followed in the footsteps of successful older brothers.

Both Portnoy and Nagisetty followed in the footsteps of their brothers by winning state individual state titles at the Division 2 state finals.

Portnoy won the No. 1 singles title as he defeated Connor Stafford of Grosse Pointe South 6-3, 6-4. Portnoy's older brother, Josh Portnoy, who currently plays tennis for Michigan State University, was a two-time, state individual champion during his career at Okemos.

Okemos sophomore Ethan Portnoy returns a shot during action at the Division 2 state tennis finals.

"It's really cool to follow in my older brother's footsteps," Portnoy said. "I had a lot of confidence that I could do it."

Okemos coach Karim Jelassi had plenty of confidence that his stand-out sophomore could get the job done as well.

"Ethan is a very aggressive player and is a very consistent player," Jelassi said. "He moves well on the court and know when to finish a point. He had some wins against some really good players this year so I knew he had a very good chance to win state this year."

Nagisetty followed the example of his older brother Sid by winning a state championship during his freshman season. Suchir won the title at No. 4 singles as he stopped Andrew Williams of Mattawan 7-5, 6-1 in the title match.

Sid was in attendance at the finals cheering his brother on. Sid also spent plenty of time helping his brother prepare for his first season

of high school tennis as he helped coach and train Suchir during the summer.

"I wanted to follow in his footsteps and win a state title in my freshman year," Suchir said. "It is something I've thought about for a long time. There is some pressure but once you start playing the match your love of tennis takes over and you just concentrate on playing the game. Winning the title feels great and it's nice to have something in common I can share with my brother."

Okemos received strong efforts from all of its singles players at the state finals as all four singles players reached at least the semifinal round.

Senior George Fan reached the finals at No. 2 singles where he came up short in a three-set match against Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern senior Owen Goodrich. Fan suffered through severe leg cramps in the later stages of the

match that hindered him from bringing home another individual title for the Chiefs.

Sophomore Hannah Letzer reached the semifinal round at No. 3 singles where she dropped a hard-fought three-set match.

In doubles play, Okemos featured a number of young players this year who gained valuable experience that will benefit the squad going forward. Of the eight doubles players for Okemos at the state meet, one was a freshman, one was a sophomore and four were juniors.

The team state champions in Division 1 last year, Okemos had a young team this year as it made the transition to Division 2. With the large group of younger players due back next year, the future is bright for the Chiefs.

"We had a very young team this year," said Jelassi. "They did a really nice job and the future looks very good for us."

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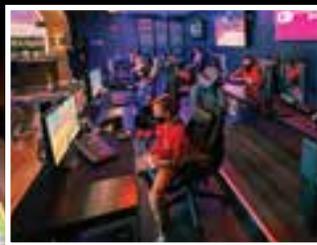
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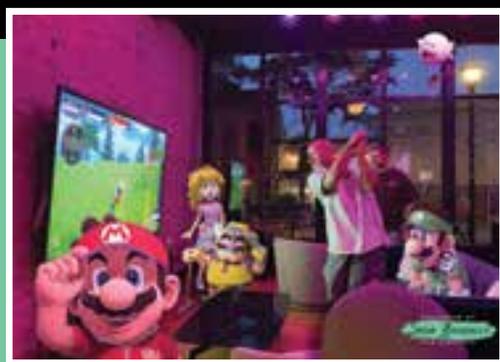
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