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Publisher's note

Are you ready for some football? It's a great day here at Sport Scene, and it is getting even better with the kickoff of the 2013 high school and college football seasons.



Randy Miniard

It's hard to believe that we are beginning our fifth year here at Sports Scene. The 2013 season promises to be great, as we welcome aboard the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC). The GLIAC is home to some of the best schools and athletic programs around the entire state, and hundreds of former high school athletes are competing at GLIAC schools.

A special thank you to all our sponsors and supporters who have helped Sports Scene over the past five years grow into the premier high school sports monthly in the state. Your help and support has made the magazine and web site "must reads" for high school athletes, parents, and fans.

A special thanks goes out to all the guys and gals who helped put together the 2013 football issue. Great job everyone!

This year's football issue is jam-packed with stories covering high school and college football teams and players from around the area.

The upcoming football season is full of intriguing story lines. Can Ithaca make it four in a row? Can Lowell slow down the Grand Rapids Christian express? Can Portland make another memorable playoff run? Will Holt regain the top spot in the CAAC Blue? Will DeWitt pick up where it left off last season? Who will win the wide-open Saginaw Valley North?

Football fans will also be able to watch some great individual players this fall. Ithaca quarterback Travis Smith, Alma lineman Curtis Doyle, Grand Rapids Christian wide receiver Drake Harris, Heritage junior running back Brian Cole, and DeWitt junior quarterback Jake Johnson are all worth the price of admission.

The college football season will also be full of excitement. Can Michigan or Michigan State break through and win the Legends Division and make it to the Big 10 title game? Can Central Michigan earn another bowl bid? Who will win what should be a wide-open GLIAC title, and what teams can advance to the D2 playoffs?

So settle in, head down to your local football field, and enjoy what promises to be a memorable 2013 football season!

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Streaking

With 42 straight wins, three straight Division 6 championships, Ithaca isn't showing signs of letting up heading into 2013 season

By Scott Keyes
Sports Scene

The old adage states that "records are meant to be broken," but there are a few that are so amazing that it is difficult to imagine that they will ever be surpassed.

Joe Dimmagio's 56-game consecutive hitting streak and Cal Ripken's consecutive games played streak are two records that night never be touched in our lifetime.

And so might a streak that is probably one of the most mind-boggling in all of high school athletics - the 151-game winning streak compiled by the De La Salle High School football program in Concord, California, from 1992 to 2003.

In the process of setting that mark, the Bob Ladouceur-coached Spartans more than doubled the previous record of 72 consecutive victories set by the Hudson (Michigan) High School football program from 1968 to 1975.

The closest any team has come since that time was when Charlotte Independence High School in North Carolina won a very impressive 109 consecutive games

from 2000 to 2009. Even so, that's a shortfall of 42 games, which equates to roughly three full seasons in most states.

Now think about this.

Ithaca coach Terry Hessbrook and the Yellowjackets are two seasons and two games away from tying the state mark set by Hudson, but nearly seven years away from the national record. Seven years...can you even imagine what a 151-game winning streak is like? You know every athlete that walked through those doors didn't want to be on the team that finally lost a game and broke the streak.

Even as dominant as Ithaca has been over the previous three seasons, just think of what it would be like to be at that level for another eight seasons. Simply amazing.

Ithaca currently has the fourth-longest winning streak in Michigan. It has yet to surpass Hudson with its 72 consecutive wins, Morenci with 44, and Cheboygan with 43.

Hypothetically, the Yellowjackets' senior class is on the verge of going its entire high school career without a loss and winning four consecutive Division 6 state

titles, if the team is able to run the table again in 2013.

It might be premature to give Ithaca the title even before the season gets underway, but on paper this year's team has enough talent, determination, and drive to get the job done and move one step closer to calling itself a dynasty.

Senior quarterback Travis Smith has the rare opportunity to finish his prep career without a loss. He threw for more than 2,000 yards last season and will play college ball at the University of Toledo. He also has receiver Logan Hessbrook, the coach's nephew, returning for his senior year.

Do Smith and the rest of the seniors think about the streak? Is there added pressure heading into this season knowing what is at stake?

Smith thinks so.

"I think there is pressure because everyone is looking at this class as being the one class to go out there and bring home another state championship," Smith said.

"Myself, Bryan [Shaw], and Logan as well as the rest of the seniors on the team know what we have to do. You never want to be the team that ends the streak. So there might be a little added pressure, but I think we



After starting quarterback Travis Smith went down with an injury on the Yellowjackets first offensive possession during the Division 6 finals a year ago, Logan Hessbrook stepped in and guided his team to victory. Ithaca enters the season with a 42-game winning streak. (Jamey Conn Photo)

can handle it."

For Logan, playing for his uncle and dad [assistant coach Todd Hessbrook] has been an honor, but it did add pressure to perform at times. His older brother Jordan played on all three of the previous state title teams, and Logan knows all about pressure - he stepped up big time a year ago when Smith went down with an injury during the Yellowjackets' first offensive series in the state title game. He came in, carried the offensive load, and helped his team to another state championship.

"I couldn't envision playing for anyone else," Logan said. "It's real special to play for this program. Sure there's a little pressure to keep it going, because nobody wants to be the team that breaks the streak. But there's so much interest in the program. Everybody around

town stops you, asking you how the team's going to be this year. It really makes you feel proud to be a part of this."

As the streak has grown from year to year, it has kind of taken on a life of its own, but Terry Hessbrook tries not to think about it—the state's longest winning streak in football in 31 years.

Forty-two games and three consecutive Division 6 championships may lurk in the back of his mind, but he knows that 2013 is a different year and it's important to keep working.

"You try not to think about the streak.

You try to go to work everyday, stay focused. I know it might sound cliché, but its the only thing we can do," Hessbrook said.

"If we stand around talking about how good we were or how good

we are, then someone is going to smack us in the face. Really, one of the major keys is that we are a disciplined team and the kids pay attention to detail, and that comes from our coaching staff.

A lot of what we do is instilled through our coaching staff.

From the smallest details, but the kids pay attention, but it's also contributed to the intelligent kids we have, who are allowing themselves to be coached and making adjustments on the field that need to be made. Those things you can't teach."

Whatever it is, things are definitely working in the favor of Hessbrook and his staff.

Pressure aside, don't be surprised if the Yellowjackets are hoisting the championship trophy for the fourth consecutive year in November at Ford Field.

Five Questions Ithaca Coach Terry Hessbrook



T. Hessbrook

Q: Can you talk a little bit about the streak?

A: "As it grows or as it has grown, it has kind of carried a life of its own. To be honest with you, I try and not think about it. To show up to work focused, ready to work, and not talk about what you did or how good you were in previous years. If you start to do that, someone along the way will show up, smack us in the mouth and beat you."

Q: How big was it to have Travis Smith commit before the start of the season?

A: "I was so happy when he did that. I tried not to get involved in his decision-making process. I'm glad it was done early. Got out of the way and now we can concentrate on winning another state championship."

Q: You lost four quality linemen from last year's team. Where do you go from there?

A: "We have a lot of kids back that played a great deal up front for us a year ago. They might not have been starters for us, but two or three of them played a tremendous amount of time during a 14-game season."

Q: Your core six players on offense are extremely solid, and most coaches in the state would love to have that many weapons on offense. Talk a minute about being blessed with so many talented guys on offense.

A: "It's a very elite group of players. They are extremely gifted athletically, and they are very intelligent players. We have had a lot of fun with them this summer just seeing what they can do out there on the field."

Q: Talk a bit about the importance of running back Bryan Shaw's progression over the last year.

A: "Bryan has definitely become more of a vertical runner coming into this season. He has worked on his feet getting quicker. He is going to run under 4.7 seconds in the 40. He's impressive as a blocker, and I am really looking forward to Bryan Shaw having a big season for us this year."

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Ithaca continues to build dynasty on gridiron

In my Opinion

By Scott Keyes
Sports Scene

Talk about irony. . .
The two quarterbacks who are battling for the starting job at Central Michigan University played against one another more than once at the high school level.
Former Montague standout Cody Kater was the same guy who gave Ithaca its last lost when he led his team past then junior quarterback Alez Niznak 47-16 in 2009 in the D6 semifinals. Montague went on to win the state championship that year.
Niznak came back his senior season to lead Ithaca to its first of three Division 6 championships in as many seasons.
So think about this. Three seasons. A perfect 42-0. And to be honest, this year the juggernaut Yellowjackets should be as impressive, if not more impressive, than they were the past three seasons.
Yes, people are going to think "Oh, can I say that." Well, history is definitely on my side, and the numbers don't lie.
As a senior, Niznak put on a clinic, completing 22 of 26 passes to lead the Yellowjackets to their first Division 6 championship 45-35 over St. Mary's Preparatory.
The following year, a poised sophomore

quarterback Travis Smith threw for 299 yards in the final against Constantine to give Ithaca its second D6 title and another perfect season.
Last year, Smith went down on Ithaca's first offensive series. In stepped junior quarterback Logan Hessbrook and the Yellowjackets offense didn't skip a beat in defeating Constantine once again 37-27 to cap another perfect season and win another D6 crown.
Three state championships. Three different winning quarterbacks. The same results. Is there something in the water out there in Ithaca that no one is talking about?
The one constant in the last three seasons is coach Terry Hessbrook and his coaching staff, which includes his brother Todd Hessbrook, Brad Showers, and Craig Snyder.
Hessbrook's coaching staff keep the ship afloat and they help push the next generation of athletes to the next level. Success starts at the top, and the Ithaca faithful have been blessed with one of the good ones, a man who grew up in the small town off U.S. 127 and who learned under the guidance of former Ithaca coach Jim Ahern. Now Hessbrook is rewriting the record books and doing it his way.
Toughness, togetherness, and tireless work ethic have the 'Jackets back this



Jared Evers scores a touchdown for Ithaca during the Division 6 state finals last season at Ford Field. Ithaca has won three consecutive state championships entering this season. (Scott Keyes Photo)



Senior quarterback Travis Smith is back to lead the Yellowjackets offense heading into the 2013 season. Smith will play his college football at the University of Toledo next season. (Scott Keyes Photo)

season stomping on the front porch of another perfect state title and another perfect season.
A strong group of offensive weapons will be on display once again this season, with Smith leading the way as a three-year starter at quarterback.
Heading into this season, Smith has some unfinished business after going down with injury in the state final last year. His post-graduation future is already known with his recent commitment to the University of Toledo, and Smith is one key ingredient this season that will help Ithaca continue its assault on the Michigan High School Athletic

Association record books.
Not to mention, seniors Bryan Shaw and Logan Hessbrook will help the Yellowjackets offense along the way this season.
Even though everyone will talk about the perfect season and the back-to-back-to-back state titles, don't expect Ithaca to buy into the hype too much, especially the senior class.
These guys are ready, focused, and determined to get after anything that stands in their way of perfection. It wouldn't be too much of a surprise to see Hessbrook and the boys hoisting another state championship.

Five Questions Ithaca RB Bryan Shaw



B. Shaw

Q: With Garrett Miniard and Jared Evers coming before you, winning state titles and everything else they did on the field, do you feel you have to live up to expectations of guys before you?
A: "You definitely are going to see that added pressure, but that's just what happens when teams are successful. You just don't want to be that team or that guy that stops the streak. Sometimes you try and block the streak out of your mind, but that can be hard sometimes."
Q: Talk about what it would be like to end your high school career as a four-time undefeated state champion if you happen to make it that far this season.
A: "It's something that you want to look at 30 years from now say, "Did we do that." Never in our wildest dreams did you ever think you would get to this point in your career and realize you haven't lost a game. It's pretty amazing."
Q: People often talk about expectations. What do you want take out of this upcoming season?
A: "We definitely want to get back to what everyone is talking about, and that is back to Ford Field and be in the position to win another state championship. It's going to take a lot of hard work, but I think we have the team this season to do it."
Q: How do guys like Travis Smith and Logan Hessbrook raise your level of play?
A: "They push me every day in practice, and they want to win, and that raises the level of play of everyone on the team. They keep pushing me. Travis is a motivator. He pushes everyone, but that is basically how the whole team is."
Q: Talk about this group as a whole and what it will take to keep the streak going.
A: "As a whole, we lost quite a few guys on the line on both sides of the football, but I think we have enough talent in place that will help offset those losses. It doesn't matter how big or fast you are, but if you are ready to put in the time and effort to continue to improve. That's just how our team is made up."



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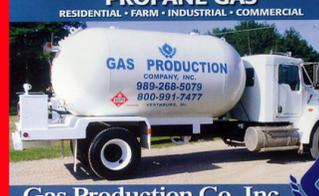
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Rollin Rumbles

Beal City workhorse looking forward to senior season for Aggies

By John Raffel
Sports Scene

Ty Rollin has had a fabulous three-sport career with the Beal City Aggies, but he's far from being finished.

This football season, Rollin and the Aggies are hoping to return to Ford Field, where a 13-0 campaign ended a year ago in a loss to Harbor Beach.

Last year was "a very good season," Rollin said. "Obviously, the last game didn't end the way we wanted it to. We were on top except for the last one."

The semifinal win over St. Ignace and the district title win over archrival Sacred Heart Academy were two victories that Rollin especially cherished.

In this, his senior season and fourth as a starter, he will once again be playing running back and safety.

Knowing the system offensively and defensively "and being able to read things quicker" is what Rollin said he can do to help the team on both sides of the ball.

Offensively, the strengths he uses as a running back, Rollin said, will depend on the situation.

"I can make the guys [on the other side] miss tackles," he said.

He also hopes to use his quickness.

Rollin is excited about the number of players the Aggies are returning. They will have most of their offense back. "We have a pretty good line,"

he said. "I'll get some good blocks." The team will have a new quarterback, though. During preseason, there have been three players bidding for the spot, and Rollin said he's comfortable with whoever of the three is the new signal caller.

"Everyone is returning except three guys on defense, too," he said, noting that the team will be aggressive on defense. "We don't sit back and wait for them."

Rollin's hopes for his football team and for his senior season are very simple: "To make it back to Ford Field" and to have success this time.

When asked about a college athletic career, he indicated that he is "thinking more of baseball," and that he is "still open for anything."

The 2012-13 school year was sweet for Beal City, considering that the Aggies were runners-up in the state in football and in baseball and were a quarterfinalist in basketball.

"I enjoy all sports equally," he said. "I enjoy whom I'm playing with."

It's no secret that in all three sports, Beal City continues to have impressive success. "Even in the classroom and everything, success is success, and excellence is expected, and anything less is not going to do," he said. "If you're not willing to give it your all and work hard every day in practice, even if you're better than somebody, the coaches are going to take whoever gives the most heart and most effort. They tell you that from day one."

Beal City coach Lou Rau calls Rollin, at 5'6" and 180 pounds, his Barry Sanders running back.

"He's built like no other," Rau said.

"He reminds me of Barry Sanders because he's short in stature but has tremendous lower body strength and balance."



Beal City along with senior running back Ty Rollin will look to make a return trip to Ford Field and the Division 8 finals. The Aggies lost to Harbor Beach in the finals a season ago. (Staff Photos)

Aggies just win



By John Raffel
Sports Scene

Lou Rau expects to have another excellent football team in Beal City.

The Aggies were 13-0 last season before falling to Harbor Beach in the state final. From that team, 20 players are returning. Three offensive players and three defensive players graduated, and that means eight return both ways.

Sam Schafer, the quarterback, heads the list of key graduates for the Aggies. But even with a new quarterback, many people will be surprised if Beal City doesn't return to the finals.

"We always have high expectations. It's one game at a time," Rau said. "I've been working with them as hard as any team I have in my career, trying to push them over any barriers they might have and trying to keep them focused on the task at hand."

During the summer, "we have had great participation," Rau said. "The basketball team had a great year, and the baseball team went to the state finals as well. A majority of our kids play those sports as well. It's kind of a year-round thing."

It's Rau's 14th season as head football coach, and it's no secret that his program and others at Beal City consistently have stunning success. "The kids we have here work harder," he said. "We tell them that if you want to succeed, you will have to outwork your opponent. They have done just that. They take it personally and work to be the best they can be."

The Aggies have 27 players on varsity and 31 on junior varsity, which isn't bad for a Division 8 program. Those numbers are up from a year ago. Having winning programs doesn't hurt.

"A majority of the boys at the school have played football or every sport almost," Rau said. "We're not a big enough school to get much more than what's there."

Rau likes his 2013 team's potential. "The strength is the experience and the skill kids we have returning. The offensive line will be much improved this year," he said. "Those are the keys. The experience factor is huge for us."

Ty Rollin leads the running attack.

Going into the season, Rau has been looking at three candidates at quarterback and was set to make a decision after the preseason scrimmage.

"They're all great athletes and great kids," Rau said. "It just so happens that they're also first cousins."

Alex Schafer, Kurt Gross, and Tucker Gross are the candidates. There's always a chance he might use more than one quarterback in a game, Rau said. But regardless of who gets the job, plenty will be expected of him. The Aggies aren't expecting another Sam Schafer, but it wouldn't hurt to have someone close.

"For any team, the quarterback is critical," Rau said. "We have to be able to focus, not just on our running game, but have an accurate passing game."

Rau expects his team's first two opponents, Sacred Heart Academy and Clare, a pair of non-league powers, to be extremely competitive. Lake City and McBain will be tough in the Highland Conference.

"It may look like an easy schedule," Rau said, though he begs to differ. "Lake City last year was a play or two away from also being in the state finals."

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Portland gearing up for title defense

By Butch Harmon
Sports Scene

After winning the Division 5 state title last season, the question around Portland this summer has been "what can the Raiders do for an encore?"

The Raiders experienced a season for the ages last fall, as they followed up a strong regular season by advancing to the Division 5 state title game, where they defeated Grand Rapids West Catholic 12-9.

With the taste of winning fresh in their mouths, Portland football fans are anxious for more this fall. Football fever has taken over Portland, not just in the high school but also in the elementary schools and the middle school.

"The biggest thing is that from the JV level down to fourth grade, all the kids are super excited," Portland coach John Novara said. "We had a camp this summer, and over 100 kids came. Our younger kids are excited about football. The older kids are feeling the pressure and the expectations from the community to have a successful season again this fall."

If the Raiders are to make another run to Ford Field, it will be behind an experienced offense and a rebuilt defense.

On offense, the Raiders return seven starters, although the offense suffered a blow over the summer when returning quarterback Tanner Allison, a Western Michigan University baseball recruit, had season-ending shoulder surgery.

Without Allison, the Raiders have spent the fall camp grooming a pair of young quarterbacks to take over the reigns. Junior Clay Morris (6'0", 170 pounds) and sophomore Mark Brooks (6'6", 230 pounds) both have strong arms and have very good accuracy.

Having a quarterback who can get the ball down the field is essential for the Raiders, who return wide receiver Austin Brandt (6'0", 180). Brandt totaled 195 yards receiving in last year's state title game, the fifth-highest total in state finals history.



The Portland football team made history a year ago when it won the Division 5 state championship. The Raiders would love to repeat in 2013. (Randy Miniard Photo)

The Raiders also have a pair of talented running backs. Jacob Kimmell (6'0", 180) rushed for over 1,500 yards last season, while Sam Goodman (6'2", 210) added over 800 yards.

Up front, Portland has a trio of returning starters. Seniors Hunter Scott (6'4", 200) and Zack Gustafson (6'5", 220) both started at tackle last season but are moving inside to guard this fall. Senior center Jacob Fox (5'10", 180) also returns. Senior Spencer Palmer (6'5", 240) has the inside track at one of the open tackle spots, with a pair of players challenging for the other spot.

"We're excited about our offense," Novara said. "We really like our set of running backs. We have five different kids who can carry the ball and do a good job. I think our offensive line will gel; the big question mark is how our young quarterbacks step up."

Another big key is how the defense develops. Portland lost 10 starters from last year's defense. The lone returning starter is Gustafson at defensive end. "Zack is a heck of a football player," Novara said. "He goes both ways for us and is one of the better

defensive players in the area."

While only one starter returns, the Raider defense does have several players who gained starting experience last year. JD Kerr started five games at cornerback, while Andrew Quick and Goodman both saw plenty of playing time at inside linebacker last year.

"We have some size on defense, but we have a lot of inexperience, too," Novara said. "We just have to keep getting better and better every week. I think once the season rolls around, we will be better and better; we just have to grow up fast."

Overall, Novara and his team are focusing on the job in front of them instead of returning to the state finals.

"The big thing is to focus on one game and one play at a time," Novara said. "We have to keep working hard and focus on the short term and the long term will work itself out. We want to compete for a league championship, and I think we have a reasonable shot at a district title."

Five Questions with Alma's Curtis Doyle

Q: Talk a little bit about the makeup of this year's Alma team.

A: "We lost a few key receivers from last year's squad, but we have all been working hard in the weight room during the off-season, and I really like the chemistry of this team going forward into the season."

Q: How big was it for you to commit early to Western Michigan University and now just focus on your senior season?

A: "I couldn't be any happier to commit to Western before the season started. I can now focus on my senior season and look forward to what next year will bring at Western. The new coaching staff embraced me, and we have a great class coming in next year."



C. Doyle

I couldn't be happier with my decision."

Q: Talk a little bit about your move over to Alma from Breckenridge. How has that move made you into the player that you are today?

A: "Honestly, when I made the move here, I didn't know that coach Randy Lark was a Michigan State grad and played there. I knew that he was a good coach, and my cousin played there, and he had

nothing but good things to say about the coaching staff. Not to mention Alma had top notch academics,

so I knew I wanted to continue to move forward athletically and academically, so I decided to make the move."

Q: Talk about playing against a kid like Swan Valley's Alex Grace and what you need to do to stop someone like that who is big and strong.

A: "Got to hit Alex low. He is so big and strong and if you hit him high we will run right over you. The kid is tough."

Q: Talk a little about the league in general.

A: "Every team we face will have solid athletes, so we are going to have to prepare and do our best every time we hit the field. The league as a whole I feel will be down this year. A lot of seniors graduated, so we just have to prepare like every week is our last."

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Drake's got game

State's best receiver gearing up for big senior season; heading to U of M in 2014

By Jeff Chaney
Sports Scene

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – Drake Harris knows the importance of good chemistry between a quarterback and a wide receiver.

The Grand Rapids Christian senior wideout experienced it the last two seasons with Eagles' signal caller Alex Van De Vusse, especially last year when the two became the state's most prolific passing combination.

Harris, an all-stater who will be taking his talents to the University of Michigan as one of the nation's top recruits at wide receiver, set a state record for receiving yards with 2,016. He and Van De Vusse also connected for 25 touchdowns, which was one shy of the state record.

In the Division 3 state finals, Harris caught eight passes from Van De Vusse for 243 yards and a touchdown in the Eagles' 40-37 overtime win over St. Mary's Preparatory.

But Van De Vusse is gone, graduated from Grand Rapids Christian and playing baseball at Lincoln Trail College in Illinois.

Harris remains for his senior year, looking for chemistry with the Eagles new quarterback Tyler Sigler, grandson of former Belding state championship coach Irv Sigler.

When asked about how things are going so far, Harris says well. "It's been great; so far we have been working a lot throwing the ball," Harris said. "He is very accurate throwing the ball, and

we are good friends off the field, so the chemistry has been great."

Coach Don Fellows also likes what he sees from his new quarterback, a transfer from Jenison High School, and his star receiver.

"The chemistry has been great," Fellows said. "Drake has been dealing with some hamstring issues, so there wasn't a lot of extra time for reps, but the chemistry has been great."

If it is possible, Fellows says he has seen improvements in Harris' play heading into his senior season, and that may be because he is spending more time working on his football craft.

Last year at this time, Harris was committed to play both football and basketball at Michigan State University. But he decided to back out of that, and he committed to Michigan to play only football.

"Obviously he is more focused on football now," Fellows said. He has decided to work in the weight room more, has gone to more camps, and has really learned how to play football. He is a smart kid, but now he is a smart football player."

That is not good news for opposing defensive backs.

"He runs more complete routes now, and he knows situations on the field," Fellows said. "He is a complete football player now."

Harris doesn't think so, though. "I want to keep improving, because I know nobody is perfect," he said. "Now I want to focus more on this team now that I have my college stuff done. My main concentration now is to win another state title."

When asked if this year's Eagles can do that, Harris is noncommittal. "I can't tell that right now," he said. "We lost some key players, like Alex and some key players on our line. But I know we have the potential to be better."



Grand Rapids Christian's Drake Harris went over 2,000 yards receiving a year ago. Harris is headed to the University of Michigan next season. (Alan Holben Photos)



Rockford, Lowell continue to set bar year-after-year; Munger, Dean among best coaches in state

By Jeff Chaney
Sports Scene

They coach two of the most successful high school football programs in the state.

But when asked for the secret to their programs' successes, both had to pause and ponder all the great players they have led in all the great games before coming up with a suitable answer.

Rockford Rams coach Ralph Munger and Lowell Red Arrows coach Noel Dean are both coaching legends who are still walking the sidelines, coaching the game they love.

"To be honest, I can't give you a good answer to why we've been so successful, as I myself haven't been involved with a number of other programs you can compare it with," Munger said. "That's hard to answer. We have been fortunate to be able to maintain a stable staff and have been fortunate to have half of our staff from seventh through 12th grade of former players. Within that stability, we have staff members that are all on same page."

Dean has had that stability as well, which has helped him keep reloading the Red Arrows roster year in and year out, even with the graduation of some former great players like Mark Catlin, Keith Nichol, and Gabe Dean.

"Out at Lowell, you have to develop a program," Dean said. "You have to build it from a the ground up, and hopefully the kids are playing for community and playing for each other. If that mindset is there, they will have great success."

Success has been there for both programs. Currently Rockford is on a streak of 19 straight playoff performances. During that time, the Rams have been to five Division 1 state finals and have won three state titles.

And over at Lowell, the Red Arrows have 14 straight playoff appearances. During its run, Lowell has been to five Division 2 and 3 state finals and has also won three state titles.

The records for the programs during this time – Rockford is 182-39, while Lowell is 147-26.

"The young men are first, and then all our

coaches have a deep passion to work with kids and coach football," Munger said. "We just keep going about doing the things the way we do them. In the end, we prove them to be successful, and obviously we have had the talent over the years."

Added Dean, "We go back to work every year with a new group of kids, and we just want to win the next game and not worry about all the other silly stuff."

But being a successful coach means having the ability to turn a new group of kids every year into the best team.

"Back when I was coaching at Frankenmuth, I was also getting my Masters at Central Michigan and I had a talk with their coach Herb Deromedi," Munger said.

"He told me two things: one, is the kids you have will learn whatever you will teach them. The other thing he told me, remember even though the kids will learn and know what you teach them, they will never know as much as you do because you spend more time on it, so it is easy to create paralysis from analysis.

You don't want to stymie their play, so it's not what you know, but what you can teach and they can learn."

Both coaches will try to teach successfully this year as they get ready for another brutal season in their respective leagues, Rockford in the OK Red and Lowell in the OK White.

Throughout the season, both teams hope to keep their playoff streaks alive and get a chance to make another deep run in those playoffs and to Ford Field.

The last time Rockford played for a championship was 2008, the last time for Lowell was 2011.

Each team has solid leadership coming back, Rockford's is on the defensive side in the ball in the form of senior linebacker Brent Showers, and Lowell's is on offensive side in senior quarterback Kyler Shurlow.

"I like our chances this year; we have a great group of kids," Dean said. "Fifteen of the 18 seniors on the team are ranked top 50 in their class. So we have intelligent, smart, hard-working kids. Hopefully avoid injury bug."

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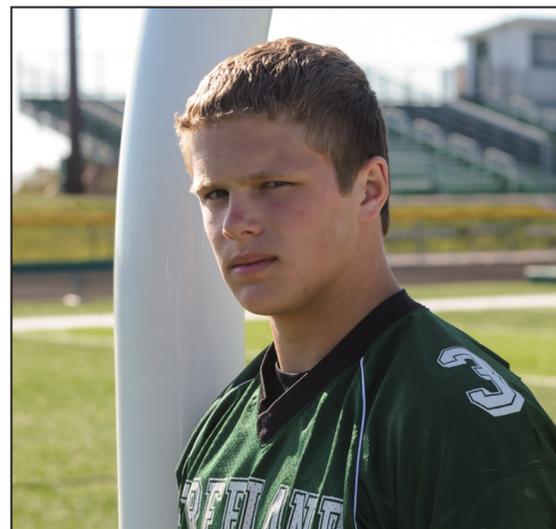
Area loaded with talented running backs this season

By Jeff Chaney
Sports Scene

There is a lot of patience in high school football teams in mid-Michigan this year. Several teams should be led by top-notch running backs, players like Mount Pleasant's Michael Tweh, Saginaw's Keyon Addison, Nouvel's Ryan Sullivan, Freeland's Kyle Guster, New Lothrop's Amari Coleman, and Portland's Tanner Allison to name a few. And when talking to some of those running backs, they mostly agreed on what makes a good one. "A lot of patience," said Tweh, a three-year starter who played a big part in leading the Oilers to the Division 3 state final in 2011 as a sophomore. "You have to wait for the play to develop, because a

lot of people just get the ball and take off. You need to wait for the hole to open." Addison agrees. "You need great vision and the ability to be patient. You have to trust your offensive linemen and wait for the hole to open up and then hit it." From there, athletic ability and toughness take over. "I love the contact, that's the best part of the position," Tweh said. "And then being free to do what you want when you have the ball. Once you go through hole, I'm in control." Tweh and Addison were both tough and patient last year, as each rushed for over 1,000 yards. Tweh finished with just over 1,500 yards and scored 16 touchdowns, while Addison ended up with just over 1,000 yards and 10 touchdowns. Unfortunately, those great performances didn't result in wins on the field. One year after going 13-1 and playing perennial

power St. Mary's Preparatory in the 2011 finals, Tweh's Oilers fell to 2-7 last year, including two forfeits, one of which was to Addison's Saginaw team. As for Addison and Saginaw, they finished with a 4-5 mark in 2012. Both hope to use their senior years to get more wins for their teams. "This year, I hope to go far in the playoffs; get back to where we were," said Tweh. "My goal personally, is to help us do that." Added Addison: "Hopefully we can make the playoffs and be a better team. I want us to be more disciplined and prove to people that we can play with the better teams out there." These two great running backs will square off October 4 in a Saginaw Valley-North Division showdown. In that game, fans will be able to see who is better at being patient – and tough.



The area is loaded with a lot of talented runners including Mt. Pleasant's Michael Tweh (Far Left), Saginaw Nouvel's Ryan Sullivan, Freeland's Kyle Guster and Swan Valley junior running Back Alex Grace. (File Photos)

Five Questions with Saginaw High's Keyon Addison



Q: With coach Durrett coming back to the sidelines this season, describe the atmosphere around the first practice.
A: "It feels real good to be out here with coach D. Way more conditioning we have gone through than any other year I have been here at Saginaw High. I really feel honored to have coach Durrett coaching me."
Q: Talk about the atmosphere around here with Coach D coming back.
A: "Everyone is really excited to see him on the sidelines again. We are hoping that we can play well for him and bring Saginaw High football back to the level it once was."
Q: Are the kids buying into the new teachings of Coach Durrett and what he brings to the table?
A: "There is definitely no playing around him. What you see is what you get. People respect him, and he deserves respect. Practice is all about the preparation. It's just a warm up of the game."
Q: What was the biggest change that you saw during the first practice under coach Durrett, compared to the previous three seasons under other coaches?
A: "When we first got here, it was conditioning for like the first hour. He wants us to be in shape. Nothing can beat you if you are in shape. We really weren't in real good team shape in the previous years, and we are really working on that a lot this season."
Q: As a leader of this team, talk about getting everyone on the right path to win this season.
A: "Everyone wants to win this season just as much as me, so we need to come to work. Work hard and focus on getting better every time we hit that field."

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Nouvel seeks redemption

After losing to Flint Beecher in last year's regional finals, Panthers using loss as motivation heading into 2013 campaign; strong seniors lead way

By Geoff Mott
Sports Scene

SAGINAW TWP. – While the Nouvel Catholic Central football team doesn't like to admit it, last year's 19-15 loss to Beecher in the third round of the playoffs was a tough pill to swallow.

"That was definitely a motivator for our season and team," Nouvel senior running back, linebacker, and kicker Ryan Sullivan said. "We have a little bitter taste in our mouth, and we're ready to get back at it."

Tyler Jacqmain, a senior linebacker bound for Division 1 college football, agreed. "That was a big motivator for everybody, because nobody expected to lose," he said. "We did, and that was a wake-up call. So we went to work on everything in the off-season."

Nouvel coach Mike Boyd was impressed with his team's work ethic after they followed a state title in 2011 with a 9-3 finish last season. "I think our off-season participation was as high as it's ever been," Boyd said. "We're real happy with the effort and attitude that they displayed."

Jacqmain is a three-year starter and first team all-stater at inside linebacker. He spent the summer attending camps at Western Michigan University, Central Michigan University, Michigan State University and Northwestern University. Boyd said his defensive anchor is well-prepared for the next level.

"He's all over the field; he's like a coach on the field, and he's a great leader on and off the field," Boyd said. "He's one

of those kids that makes things easier for us. He takes care of the little things, and his attention to detail is spot on. And he has good classmates to help him along those lines. He has a great tenacity and competitiveness."

Those qualities translate well in academics. Jacqmain carries a 4.3 grade-point average, and he scored 32 on the ACT.

"Any college would make a mistake by not looking at this kid," Boyd said. "He trains like mad, and everything is positive. He has created great opportunities on and off the field."

Jacqmain is looking for the best fit on the football field and in the classroom. "I want to go into engineering, and that sort of limits the schools," he said.

Jacqmain will also see action at tight end in an offense that has great leadership in the offensive backfield. Senior Garrett Graham split quarterbacking duties last season before taking over in week seven. Sullivan saw action as a sophomore during the state title run and returns as the Panthers' top running back.

"Those two can make some special things happen, and both are great with their feet," Boyd said.

Sullivan said the team is prepared for a season that features a difficult schedule.

"We have a lot of experience on offense, and everything seems to be clicking," said Sullivan, who'll also see action at outside linebacker. "There's a lot more responsibility as a senior, because we want to go out strong. There's not added pressure, but we really want to succeed."

"That experience from the 2011 state title was great, because it showed us the commitment it takes to win."

Five Questions with Saginaw High Coach Don Durrett

Q: After being away from the sidelines for as long as you have been, how does it feel to be back?

A: "It feels great to be back coaching, but after this first practice, I'm pretty tired. Just haven't been up talking, walking, and demonstrating for so long, but overall a great first day."

Q: With Saginaw High having quite a few sub-par years over the past decade, how do you get the Trojans back on the path of winning?

A: "You got to get the kids believing in our format and our teachings. They need to be committed, is what we want for the kids. They need to want to come to practice every day and be committed to getting better and helping their team win at all levels. To me, I'm a person who believes in repetition. You have to get your reps in over, over, and over good things happen."

Q: The cupboard isn't bare with this year's team, and you have a talented group returning. How do you take that group of kids and move them to the next level?

A: "You can have a lot of good athletes, but you also need a lot of hard workers that want to get better. It's that mixture of good athletes and hard workers that make a good team."

Q: When people talk to you about all of the kids you have

sent to college and to the National Football League and want to know what they have to do to get to that level, what is your advice to them?

A: "Once you show them and tell them to believe and show them a little love, Hard Love I call it, the kids come to practice and they start to show commitment to the team. When they are sore, they still will come. When they are hurting, they still show up and give it all they have for the team. It's a "we" thing and not an "I." When you get the "I" thing out of their head, good things happen."

Q: Talk a little bit about Keyon Addison and his importance to the the team this season.

A: "Keyon has had a great summer. He is a hard worker. He will play on both sides of the ball. He is going to be playing on defense at the next level. You put Keyon on a team's best receiver and he will lock him down. It's going to be important for him to be in good condition, because he will be playing on both sides of the football."



Don Durrett



Below: Nouvel senior Tyler Jacqmain leads a talented group of players into the season as Nouvel looks for big things in 2013. (Scott Keyes Photos)



Garber's Alex Nearing readies for senior season

By Ben Murphy
Sports Scene

At 6'6" tall and 233 pounds with gaudy defensive stats, it's no wonder that Garber senior Alex Nearing had been recruited by several college coaches. The phone calls from recruiters may keep coming, but Nearing recently decided to attend Central Michigan University.

"I really like the coaches; they were down to earth and relateable," Nearing said of verbally agreeing to become a Chippewa. "It's close to home, and I know a lot of people that go there."

Nearing plans to play left tackle and defensive end in his senior year as a Duke, after finishing last season with 86 tackles (11 for loss), five sacks, four forced fumbles (two recovered), and one 69-yard fumble-return for a touchdown.

What position he plays in college is still up in the air. "It depends on how much weight I gain," Nearing said, adding that he wants to get up to 245 pounds by the time he graduates this spring. "I just lift and eat everything in sight and keep running. When I've gone to their camps I've played both sides of the ball."

His coach Jake Coquillard believes Nearing has the tools to be successful at the next level. "It's been a privilege to coach him," Coquillard said. "He comes from a great family, so that helps a lot. He's a very respectful and a great young man. You throw that in, and he's hard working and talented - it's easy to see why he's getting recruited. There's no doubt in my mind that he will be playing withing a year or two, it just depends on what they want to do with him."

"Without sounding too cocky, we dare people to run at him," Coquillard added. "Last year against Goodrich [in the playoffs], they sent three guys on him and he was still relentless. He's one of our leaders, and we're going to lean on him heavy this year."

For now, Nearing plans to keep his sights on his senior season. "It's nice to just focus on high school football. I want to see us go undefeated; I want the whole team to be happy at the end of the season."

The Dukes finished last year's regular season 6-3 and dropped their opening round playoff game to Goodrich 30-20. Despite possibly being double- or even triple- teamed to keep him at bay on defense, Nearing feels his Dukes can make another post-season run.

"We're definitely making the playoffs," he said. "We have a lot of team chemistry, a lot better than last year. We should have an undefeated season this year."



Essexville Garber Senior Alex Nearing will play college football next season at Central Michigan University. Nearing is one of the top defensive players in the area. (Ben Murohy Photo)

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Clarkston enters season with deep well of talent

By Dan Stickrad
For Sports Scene
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CLARKSTON — After nearly 30 years as a head coach, Kurt Richardson hit a milestone even before the 2013 high school football season began. It's a milestone that he finds is almost a distraction.

Clarkston has had five players commit to Division I schools, the most the program has ever produced at one time.

"Never. We have never had this many in one season," admitted Richardson, who is entering his 28th season with the Wolves. "We've had more than one in a season a couple of times, but never five."

Clarkston was ranked No. 1 in Division 1 for the second half of last season — and for good reason. Hailing from the OAA Red Division, Clarkston ran the tables in the regular season to go 9-0 and ended its campaign with a fine 11-1 record. The Wolves' only loss was to perennial powerhouse Rockford in the D1 regional finals.

Two-thirds of the starting lineup is back, led by several high-level players. Richardson is quick to point out that what colleges players are headed to or

what the Wolves did on the field last season does not necessarily equate into a special season this year.

"We have a long way to go," he noted. "We have to understand that we play for the name on the front of the jersey. It's nice to have talent, but wherever these players go doesn't win football games. We have a lot of work to do."

Clarkston, which has only suffered two losing seasons in the past two decades, is considered in most circles one of the top five Division 1 schools in the preseason and a legitimate threat to make a run at the state championship.

The Wolves have never made it to the final weekend, but they have come close on three occasions. In 1999, 2000, and 2009, Clarkston reached the state semifinals and held the lead inside two minutes of the fourth quarter, only to see the opposition dash away their dreams with comebacks.

In 2009, Sterling Heights Stevenson scored in the final 10 seconds to reach the state final. Richardson and Co. were left standing on the outside looking in once again. "That one stung," Richardson recalled.

Perhaps this year's group will get Clarkston football over the hump and to Ford Field, site of the state finals since 2003. The Wolves are led by running back Ian Eriksen, offensive lineman Nick Mattich, wide

receiver-defensive back Timothy Cason, placekicker Shane Hynes, and offensive lineman David Beadle.

All five have already given verbal commitments to Division I colleges. Eriksen, the state's leading rusher last season, will head to Eastern Michigan University, Cason and Mattich have committed to Western Michigan University, Hynes sent his notice to Kent State University during the first week of practice, and Beadle announced that he will sign in November with Michigan State University.

There are several other DI or DII prospects on the roster. None of that matters to Richardson, though. He would trade all of the individual attention for a great season in 2013. In fact, he doesn't call this year's senior class special because "they haven't won anything yet."

"We have the potential to be good again. But we're nowhere near where we need to be," said Richardson. "Right now, we're just trying to get better in practice and prepare for our season opener against Adams."

"There are several very good teams out there," he continued. "Cass Tech has a great team, Detroit Catholic Central is always good, Rockford is there almost every year, and Lake Orion is in our league, and we know how good they are every year. They advanced further than we did last season."

Powers, Buckel look to continue winning ways in SVL South

By Geoff Mott
Sports Scene

FLINT — Powers Catholic football coach Bob Buckel has finally seen his senior, Division 1-bound running back on the field for the first time in person, and the veteran coach likes what he sees.

After graduating six players to college football programs — including quarterback Garrett Pougnet, last year's Associated Press Division 5-6 Player of the Year — Buckel's offense needed a shot in the arm. The Chargers will get that with transfer student Trent Grimes.

Grimes led Fenton to the playoffs the last two seasons, helping the program to an 18-5 record and a share of two Flint Metro League titles. The second team all-conference selection chose to transfer to Powers in January for his senior season, as Fenton lost several players to graduation.

"This last week is the first chance I've gotten to see him," Buckel said. "I had only seen him on film and in the weight room. He's a very polite kid and we like everything about him. He'll play running back and safety."

The 6-foot, 190-pounder was the first to verbally commit to Central Michigan University's 2014 recruiting class. He runs the 40-yard dash in 4.4 seconds, and that speed is major contributor to his ability to play in Division 1.

"Anybody going Division 1 is very fast," Buckel said. "He gets to his top speed quickly and has a strong upper body. It's his first year in the offense, so he has to learn the ins and outs. He will have to catch the ball more here and he's adapted to that."

Grimes has adjusted well to his new teammates, who include returning starters Jacques Pougnet, Wyatt Warner, Jonathan Dzido, Charlie Buckley, Chris Gonzalez,

John Andrysiak, Chase Ross, and Hunter Whitworth. The chemistry is growing, Buckel said.

"Trent went to school with some of the boys, so he's no stranger around here," Buckel said. "He lives in Fenton, and we have a lot of kids from that area. He'll have no trouble blending in to the school."

Grimes also helps provide senior leadership that the Chargers lost from the 2012 team that went 11-1 and advanced to regionals and from the 2011 team that won the state title.

"If you're going to have a good football program, you will have good seniors every year," Buckel said. "We have seven guys playing college sports, with one playing basketball. That's a lot of people to replace, but we are working to get better like everybody else is."

Buckel expects Grimes will make a seamless transition to Powers.



Flint Powers must replace the likes of Nick Sullivan who was a huge contributor for the Chargers in previous years. Sullivan graduated, but Powers still has loads of talent heading into the season (Scott Keyes Photo)

New Lothrop has sites on another big season

By Geoff Mott
Sports Scene

NEW LOTHROP — Central Michigan University is getting the total package with New Lothrop senior Amari Coleman, a 5'11", 180-pound receiver who has committed to the Chippewas' 2014 recruiting class.

"He's the best athlete I've ever coached," New Lothrop coach Clint Galvas said. "He's that rare, special player. He ran a 4.39 40-yard dash at the combines over the summer and is very good at stop and go. He's got great hands."

Coleman's versatility will help the Hornets this year, as they look to improve on a 10-1 finish from a year ago.

"He's able to do a lot of things, and we can move him around," Galvas said. "In the slot, in the backfield... that ability helps provide us with matchup problems for the other team."

That versatility from the first team all-state selection resulted in 19 touchdowns on the 38 offensive touches that he had, scoring every other time he touched the ball. That big-play ability allowed him to break a school record with 24 yards per carry and another school record with 26 yards per reception. He's also a playmaker on the defensive side, where he broke the school record as a sophomore with nine interceptions.

"He only had three interceptions last year, because he wasn't tested that much," Galvas said. "He also has great punt and kick return ability, and CMU really likes that. They offered him a defensive back spot, but also the prospects as a

return specialist."

Coleman has lost his quarterback, as Austin Newman graduated. But the Hornets are steady in the backfield. Josh Wendling is returning, and junior Ben Muron started at quarterback for two seasons at the junior varsity level.

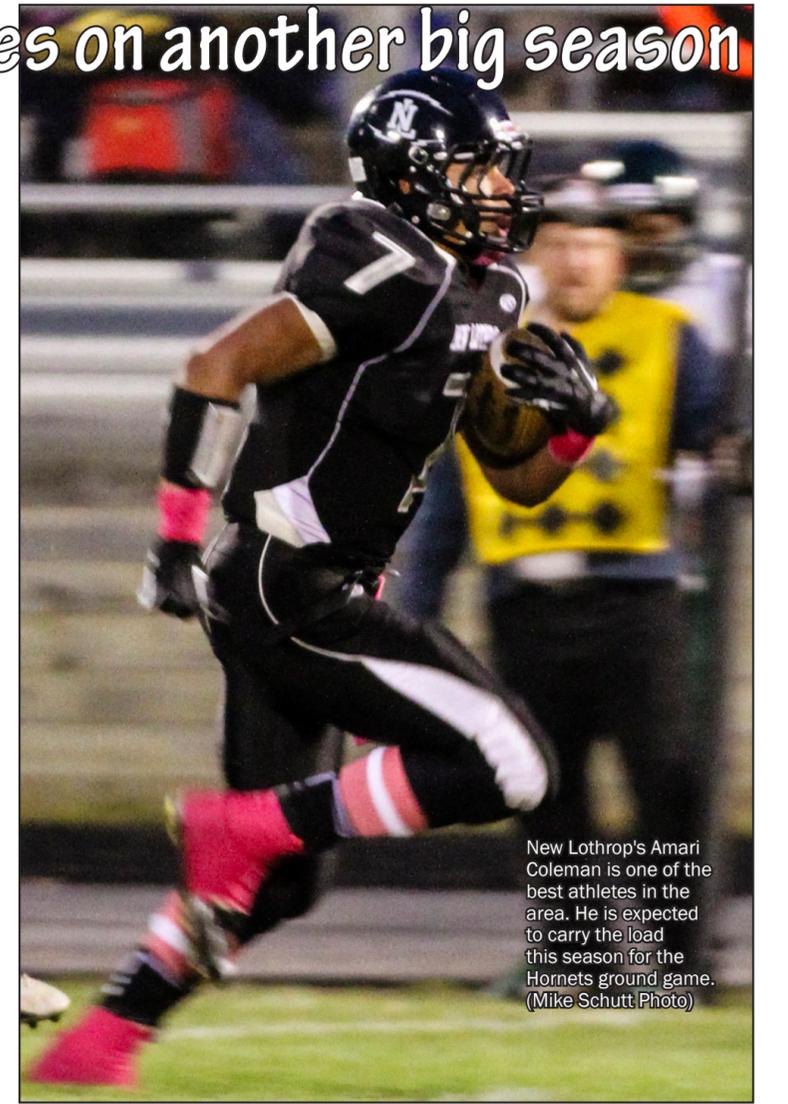
"[Muron] did a great job down there," Galvas said. "Newman was a pocket passer. Ben can you hurt you with his legs, but he also has a solid arm. We have our whole backfield back, and our top receiver, so he's surrounded by experience."

Central Michigan was the first school to show interest in Coleman, and when the 16-year-old verbally committed, the Chippewas had one of the youngest recruits on board.

"His body is still maturing, and he's starting to hit the point where he's still bulking up," Galvas said. "He has a lot more room to grow and improve and get better. He's the third-strongest kid on our team, and we have some big linemen up front. This kid is not afraid to lower his shoulder, and with that extra bulk, he's kept his speed."

Galvas thinks CMU is a perfect place for his top player. "I think it's a great fit," Galvas said. "Central Michigan was there from the beginning, and that was a big deal to him. He visited them and fell in love with the complex and the coaching staff. He'll fit right in, and it's nice because committing to a college is something he wanted to get done with."

"We are all excited for him. He's very deserving, because he's done a lot of work to get there."



New Lothrop's Amari Coleman is one of the best athletes in the area. He is expected to carry the load this season for the Hornets ground game. (Mike Schutt Photo)

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High School Football Overview

CAPITAL AREA ACTIVITIES CONFERENCE WHITE

School: Corunna
Nickname: Cavaliers
Coach: Jim Meerman
2012 record: 3-6
Players lost: Hank Sizemore, Josh Osika
Players returning: MJ Myles, Frankie Ardelean, Johnny Fattal, Logan Rogers, Mykhail Myles, Robert Compton, Grant Renwick
Notes: The Cavaliers won three games last season and are looking for their first winning season since 2005. Corunna has plenty of weapons on offense, led by running back MJ Myles and wide receiver Mykhail Myles. It also returns a veteran quarterback in Grant Renwick.
School: Lakewood
Nickname: Vikings
Coach: Nick Boucher
2012 record: 1-8
Players lost: Lars Pырzynski, Zach Kilbourn, Austin

Darling
Players returning: Doug Suntken, Charlie Reiser, Tyler Oesch, Andrew Wisecup, Alex Salgat
Coach's comment: "We will be young at the skilled positions. Portland, Lansing Catholic, and Williamston have all been in the title game in the last three years. We have to win all of the close games."
School: Lansing Catholic
Nickname: Cougars
Coach: Jim Ahern
2012 record: 8-2
Players lost: Brock Rucinski, Jack Swain, Rory Liesman, Tim McKay, Ryan Shannon, Dan Palmer, Josh Baker
Players returning: Peter Atkins, Ethan Leppanen, David Poljan, Austin Schertzing, Jordan Smith, Adam Zarotnay
Coach's comment: "Our offensive and defensive lines

will be our strength. They will be the largest size-wise in many years."
School: Portland
Nickname: Raiders
Coach: John Novarra
2012 record: 13-1
Players lost: Dylan Carroll, Adam Goodman, Logan Seal, Randy Gensterblum, Drew Roe, Justin Goodman, Jeff Feldpausch
Players returning: Zach Gustafson, Hunter Scott, Jacob Kimmel, Sam Goodman, Auston Brandt, Jacob Fox
Coach's comment: "Offense returns seven starters. Running backs are strong. Defense only returns one starter."
School: Stockbridge
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Jeremy Killinger
2012 record: 2-7
Players lost: Josh Esign, Devin Allen, Ethan Fillmore

Players returning: Lucas Showerman, Richard Newman, Cord Acosta, Kaleb Grammer, Shane Allen
Notes: The Panthers' stay in the CAAC is short-lived. After two seasons, they will be moving to a new Lansing-area league next season.
School: Williamston
Nickname: Hornets
Coach: Steve Kersten
2012 record: 7-4
Players lost: Ray Duncan, Logan DeGarmo, Zach Bentley, Robbie Harbert, Jake Tkaczyk, Isaak Jump, Pat Loewen
Players returning: Ryan Watters, Chaz Moore
Notes: Graduation hit the Hornets hard. The offense will be in good hands with the return of senior quarterback Ryan Watters. Defensively, junior Chaz Moore is a standout in the secondary.



The Portland football team will look to defend its Division 5 state championship in 2013. (Scott Keyes Photo)

CAPITAL AREA ACTIVITIES CONFERENCE RED

CAAC Red Division
School: DeWitt
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Rob Zimmerman
2012 record: 10-3
Players lost: Ryan Anderson, Andrew Clements, Noah Evans, Jimmie Melton.
Players returning: Jacob Heath, Chris Bukoski, Chris Ruby, John Lippert, Justice Shankel.
Notes: The Panthers return plenty of talent from a team that fell to Grand Rapids Christian in the state semifinals. Another deep playoff run make be in the cards this season as well.
School: Fowlerville
Nickname: Gladiators
Coach: Jack Wallace
2012 record: 1-8
Players lost: Adam Coon, Jordan Jabara, Zachary Patterson, Brian Moran.
Notes: The Gladiators were hit hard by graduation. Two-way line standout Adam Coon will be missed as well as a number of other key veterans.
School: Haslett
Nickname: Vikings



Coach: Charlie Otlewski
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Connor Brewer, Tom Baldwin, Sam Rathbun, Dan Turpin.
Players returning: Graham Riley, Connor Wilson, Griffin Fox, Blake Roe, Bryce Dickman.
Coach's comment: "We always have high expectations, but with so many young

players in 2013 and a tough schedule, we will need to grow up fast."
School: Ionia
Nickname: Bulldogs
Coach: Chris Schrauben
2012 record: 3-6
Players lost: Ryan Klumpp, Jordan Miller, Mike Cory, Bryan Nummer.
Players returning: Colin Prominski, Kyle

The St. Johns football team celebrates after defeating Owosso last year in a District championship game held on the RedWings home field. (Mike Schutt Photo)

Parks, Mason Eldridge, Brian Wiles.
School: Owosso High School
Nickname: Trojans
Coach: Tom Harkema
2012 record: 7-4 won 1st playoff game in school history
Players lost: 24
Players returning: 11
Coach's comments on season: "We are very inexperienced group. But I feel we can still have a successful season because we have a great group returning and had a good JV team last year."
School: St. John's
Nickname: Red Wings
Coach: Dave Mariage
2012 record: 8-4
Players lost: Bryce LaBar, Josh Hafner, Cameron VanAtta, Josh Rademacher, Kris Lindquist, Ben Proctor.
Players returning: T.J. Havens, Adam Young, Adam Zeciac, Kody Stockwell.
Notes: The Redwings were hit hard by graduation. Senior running back T.J. Havens gives St. Johns a talented back to build around while Adam Young is an all-league lineman.



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CAPITAL AREA ACTIVITIES CONFERENCE BLUE

School: East Lansing
Nickname: Trojans
Coach: Bill Feraco
2012 Record: 7-4
Players lost: Javon Haines, Ronnie Russell, Caleb Goodman
Players returning: Patrick Moriarty, Devin Paritee, Matt Ethington, Tyler Gulick
Notes: The Trojans turned in a solid season last year, as they reached the district finals before falling to Caledonia by one point. They return a strong core and will again be in the hunt for the league title.
School: Grand Lodge
Nickname: Comets
Coach: Matt Bird
2012 Record: 7-3
Players lost: Ben Cornell, Will Farr, Ben Bedard, Redmond Riggs, Devante Dear, Jacob Quain
Players returning: Joe Reverman, Keefer Johnson, Marq Adams, Jon Dobie, Jalen Brady
Notes: The Comets have reached the playoffs for five years running. Led by running back Joe Reverman and quarterback Jalen Brady, the Comets will have a potent offense this season as long as the line rounds into shape.
School: Holt
Nickname: Rams
Coach: Al Slamer
2012 Record: 5-4
Players lost: Marquise Wilson, Joe Thurman, Charles Waits, Chris Morgan
Players returning: Ty Glover, Austin Kent, Josh Marsh, Dakota Lawhon, Eric Potter, Zac Peterson, Romeel Dozier
Notes: The Rams have not

experienced a losing season since 1999, although they saw a three-year playoff string end last fall. They will have a solid ground game led by Ty Glover, while Austin Kent is a solid receiver. The offensive line should also be a strong point.
School: Jackson
Nickname: Vikings
Coach: Scott Farley
2012 Record: 0-9
Players lost: Doug Miller, Matt Bell, Ben Seppa, Zach Sperry
Players returning: Elvis Haight, Tony Anderson, Jacob Rumler
Notes: The Vikings suffered through a winless season last fall and have won only one game the past two seasons. A new coach takes over this fall, and the Vikings are looking to begin an upward trend.
School: Lansing Eastern
Nickname: Quakers
Coach: Robert McBride
2012 Record: 1-8
Players lost: Ernie Wilson, Dar'Relle Welch, Phoenix Washington
Players returning: Joe Hutchins, Jeffrey Mills, EJ Jackson
Notes: The last time the Quakers enjoyed a winning season was 1997. They have won just one game each of the past two seasons, and the outlook for a winning season this fall is challenging in the rugged Blue.
School: Lansing Everett
Nickname: Vikings
Coach: Marcelle Carruthers
2012 Record: 9-1
Players lost: Alec Cambrie, Jaleel Cauty, James Mills, Antonio

Reynaga, Tyairre Bragg, Anthony White
Players returning: Lucas Barner, Xavier Couthen, Marquan Windham
Notes: The Vikings enjoyed a perfect regular season and captured the league title outright last fall. Although hit hard by graduation, the return of all-league quarterback Lucas Barner will help.
School: Lansing Sexton
Nickname: Big Reds
Coach: Daniel Boggan
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: AJ Hobbs, LaRon Nixon, Jamelle Peebles
Players returning: Malik Mack, Marshaun Blake, A'vonte Bell, Gerard Lewis, John Norton, Nate Emens
Coach's comment: The Big Reds saw a five-year winning and playoff streak come to an end last fall. This year, the outlook is brighter with a large group of veterans back. Junior quarterback Malik Mack and sophomore lineman Marshaun Blake are two of the top young players in the league.
School: Okemos
Nickname: Chieftains
Coach: Jack Wallace
2012 Record: 2-7
Players lost: Dan Brown
Players returning: Chris Nelson, Kome Johnson, Chris Moore
Notes: The Chieftains suffered through a rugged season last fall. They are on the young side again this season, and they have some talented younger players who will see plenty of playing time.



DeWitt celebrates after defeating St. Johns in a regional finals game last season. The Panthers have a strong group of players returning this season. (Alan Holben Photo)

School: Tawas Area
Nickname: Braves
Coach: Tim Webb, eighth year
2012 record: 1-8
Players lost: Matt Krumm, Hunter Walker
Players returning: Justin Kirinovic, Jacob Morgan, Erik Thatcher, Dan Howell, Cameron Ellis
Coach's comment: "So far it's been a lot of fun. Our numbers are good and the attitudes and effort have been outstanding. The chemistry on this team seems to be good, but we haven't played any games yet, so it's easy to get along right now."
School: Standish-Sterling Central
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Paul Walderzak, 31st year
2012 record: 7-4
Players lost: Jacob LeClair, Dan Miller, Isiah Doremus
Players returning: Seth Malcolm, Clay Walderzak, Matt Crawford, Tyler Walker, Jimmy Spencer, Anthony Prohaska, Kyle Blakley
Coach's comment: "Our biggest chore is rebuilding our offensive line. We lost tackle to tackle, so we have to fill those positions. Also, on the defensive line, we lost two of our starting defensive linemen, so we have to replace those and our inside linebackers. We have some good candidates there, it's just a matter of getting the right person to the right place and having some depth there. If we put those things into place, I think we're a pretty balanced team. We have some kids that can run with decent speed, and I think we could put together a pretty solid team."
School: Pinconning
Nickname: Spartans
Coach: Ben Tomke, third year
2012 record: 0-9

AREA INDEPENDENTS

Players lost: Garrett Rezler, Gabe Kolbiaz, Tyler Perrou
Players returning: Dylan Staevler, Brandon Craven, Travis Thomas, Jacob Backus, Brenden Vieau, Josh Fiebbe, Tyler Zinke, Jake Sylvester
Coach's comment: "We're excited for a couple reasons. We return 60 percent of our offensive line from last year. We are excited because I feel we have more team speed, we're a little more explosive than we have been in the last couple years, and we're excited we have two junior quarterbacks, and it's been a nice competition for them."
School: John Glenn
Nickname: Bobcats
Coach: Jeremy Werner
2012 record: 2-7
Players lost: Ryan Leiterman, Quentin Thomas
Players returning: Derek Clyde, Austin Bublitz, Garrett Krager, Tyler Robbins, Ryan Schofield
Name: Nouvel Catholic Central
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Mike Boyd
2012 record: 9-3
Players lost: Josh Schipper, Matt Ross, Brad Ross, Josh Koeplinger
Players returning: Tyler Jacqmain, Ryan Sullivan, Garrett Graham, Ryan Collins, Tyler Hendricks, Griffin Weigl, Jake Jimenez, Evan Sasiela
Coach's comment: "I think we have outstanding leadership. We will be a well-conditioned and very fast team. I think on the defensive side of the football, we should be able to keep ourselves in games because of how I expect us to play defense. We have some playmakers on offense, but we have to solidify a couple things on offensive line."



The Saginaw Nouvel football team has a lot of fire power returning on offense this season and should put together another fine season under coach Mike Boyd. (Scott Keyes Photo)

CAPITAL AREA ACTIVITIES CONFERENCE GOLD

School: Charlotte
Nickname: Orioles
Coach: Jeff Finney
2012 Record: 6-4
Players lost: Ryan Bartolacci, Ryan Sumner, Josh Yeary, Damian Mielke, Lindsey Prudden
Players returning: Latrell Levanduski, Zach Telfor, Shane Goodrich, Chad McLintock, Colten Walsler, C.J. VanAlstine, Adam Fisher, A.J. VanAlstine, Bryce Rudden, Jake Gravina
Notes: The Orioles have plenty of talent returning, but one big loss is three-year quarterback Ryan Bartolacci. They also have a new coach. If a new signal caller is developed, the Orioles will take flight.
School: Eaton Rapids

Nickname: Greyhound
Coach: Mike Smith
2012 record: 1-8
Players lost: Wyatt Howard, Gage Morris, Logan Haney, Jacob VanVliet
Players returning: James Cruz, Alex Fast, Kyle Sawyer, Nate Stoll, Reese Waters
Notes: The Greyhounds have been in a deep funk for the past decade. Eaton Rapids has not won more than two games in a season since 2006. This year it must replace its entire offensive line.
School: Lumen Christi Catholic
Nickname: Titans
Coach: Herb Brogan
2012 record: 8-2
Players lost: Amani Bass, Justin O'Dowd, Isaiah Blierer, AJ Abrams, Matt Malecki

Players returning: Coley Crowley, Khari Willis, Chris Gaddy, Devon Barrett
Notes: After reeling off eight straight wins to start last season, the Titans hit the skids. After a week nine loss to Howell, they were upset at home in the first round of the playoffs by Lake Fenon.
Notes: They have major rebuilding to do on defense and both lines as well as quarterback and running back in their final season in the CAAC Gold.
School: Waverly
Nickname: Warriors
Coach: Anthony Walker
2012 record: 6-4
Players lost: Delano Glosson, Alante Sims, Lechon Marshall, Derrick Hartwell, Thomas

Houston
Players returning: Austin Jackson, Airic Boyce, Nick Morris, Kevin Kirkland
Notes: The Warriors finished with back-to-back winning seasons after going 6-4 last fall. They qualified for the playoffs for the first time since 2002 and fell to Linden in the first round.
School: Mason
Nickname: Bulldogs
Coach: Jerry VanHavel
2012 record: 5-4
Players lost: Chris Karcher, Gage Morris, Austin Barr, Micky Selby, Austin Droscha
Players returning: Cole Dekett, Stone Miller, Nathan Jones, Jarrett VanHavel, Josh Flamme, Isaiah Barker
Notes: After starting last season

4-0, the young Bulldogs hit the skids, won only one more game, and missed the playoffs for the first time since 2007.
 With a more veteran crew this season, look for them to rebound.
School: Western
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Dave Mifsud
2012 record: 1-8
Players lost: Ryan Conklin, Andy Floate, Eric Simmons, Easton Oliver, Levert Franklin-Potter, Trey Shaunessy, Aaron White, Drew Martin
Coach's comment: "We have a nice core of seniors that bring experience and some new players to the team that make it a well-rounded team. The offensive line is very experienced, and we have balance with decent athleticism."

School: Oakland Christian
Nickname: Lancers
Coach: Bill Schaeffer, third season
2012 record: 2-7, 0-5 MIAC (sixth)
Players lost: Josh Rupright, Chris Polite
Players returning: Stephen Nichols, sr. WR-DE; Javarian Smith, jr. QB-DB; Ryan Kostich, soph. SL-DE; Bobby Roose, sr. DT-OT; Preston Lasala, sr. WR; Cody Marazita, sr. RB; Chase Sumner, sr. WR understand the game a whole lot better."
School: University Liggett School
Nickname: Knights
Coach: Dan Cimini, first season
2012 record: 8-3, 5-0 MIAC (first)
Players lost: Nate Gaggin, Joe Manniaci, Antoine Cres, Nicky Kassab, Kavanaugh Jackson, Drew Jerome, Dan Baird, Antoine Crews
Players returning: Antonio Malkoun, sr. OT-DT; Josh Dickens, sr. OL-DL; Tommy Jackson, soph. RB-QB; Matt Gushee,

soph. MLB-OL; Darryl Lewis, sr. TB-LB; Lordanthony Grisson, sr. WR-CB; Jake Smith, jr. FB; Tommy Farr, sr. OL-DE; Nick Goul, soph. WR-CB
School: Lutheran High School Northwest
Nickname: Crusaders
Coach: Don Justice, 10th season
2012 record: 5-4, 4-1 MIAC (second)
Players lost: Nathan Drews, Josh Morrison, Ben Agosta, Ian Wellhousen, Matt Mischley, Greg Maynard, Josh Macks, Justin Novack, Evan Carter
Players returning: Nick Raby, sr. OT-DT; Jake Klausmeier, sr. OG-LB; Trevor Schmidt, sr. OT-DE-DB; Nick Gapski, sr. RB-LB; Drake Uplinger, sr. G-DT
Coach's comment: "It will be interesting this year because we lost a lot of key players. We have some nice new kids coming up, and there doesn't appear to be a team in our league that everyone thinks

will dominate."
School: Parkway Christian
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Todd Francis, fifth season
2012 record: 4-5, 1-4 MIAC (fifth)
Players lost: Jonny Kocik, PJ Dysarczyk, Jake Schwartz
Players returning: Noah Allen, sr. QB-DB; Phil Lapinski, jr. TE-LB; Roger Narlock, sr. OL-DL; Nick Halaas, sr. LB-OG; Cole Costerowicz, sr. LB-WR; Nathan Schick, sr. RB-DB-K-P; Dylan Thompson, sr. OL-WR
School: Southfield Christian
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Larry Weiss
2012 record: 3-6, 2-3 MIAC (fourth)
Players lost: Jason Fusco, Justin Pritchett, Eion Donnelly
Players returning: Bobby Banks, jr. MLB-TB; Steven Helms, sr. OG-DT; Matt Taylor, sr. C; Jack Harrington, sr. WR; Harding

Sears, sr. WR; Jonathan Sarwer, sr. QB; Ryan Hanson, jr. K-P; Cameron Gannin, jr. WR-DB; Deshawn Moore, soph. WR-LB
School: Westland Lutheran
Nickname: Warriors
Coach: Paul Guse
2012 record: 6-3, 3-2 MIAC (third)
Players lost: Nick Andrzejewski, Greg Klein, Alex Glinn, Jacob Richter, Martin Kemp, Alex Reardon, Ricky LaChance, Cullan McNamara.
Players returning: Kole Niemi, jr. C-DL; Conus Kruger, sr. LG-DT; Brad Hura, jr. OG-DE; DJ Guse, sr. QB; Jacob Davenport, jr. TE-HB; Newman Harper, sr. WR-DB; Austin Olson, jr. SL-DB; Josh Reigel, sr. OT; Caleb Richter, jr. OLB; Luke Bonkowski, sr. LB
Coach's comment: "We have some good athletes at the skill positions, but we are not all that big as we have been. Our conference is wide open."

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TRI-VALLEY CONFERENCE WEST

Name: Merrill
Nickname: Vandals
Coach: Jeff Buckley
2012 record: 6-4
Players lost: Austin Coty, Cody Mellon, Dustin DeBeau
Players returning: Austin Glazier, Kyle Jugnitsch, Hunter DeBeau, Tom Siler
Coach's comment: "We're really excited. We've got five guys back on each side of the ball and two or three other kids coming back who saw a lot of playing time. We had a great summer, and the kids worked hard to get better. Attitudes have been fantastic, and coming in as a new coach, you're not sure they're going to accept you. We've made the playoffs 12 of the last 14 years, so for being a small school program, we're awfully proud of that. Not too many small schools around the state can boast that accomplishment. But we're not real deep, and injuries at one or two positions could put us in trouble. We're a little thin at receiver and offensive line."

Name: Michigan Lutheran Seminary
Nickname: Cardinals
Coach: Karl Schmutge
2012 record: 5-4
Players lost: Mike Greenwood, Stephen Dietrich, Andy Wall, Eli Van Sice
Players returning: Wyatt Towne, Nathaniel Schroeder, Ethan Doble, Caleb Selves
Coach's comment: "I feel like we can take the next step and get back in the playoffs after coming so close last year. We're hoping we built some momentum by ending last year on three-game win streak. We will be young with our junior class, but I think we'll be more athletic this year. We were seven points away from being 7-2. We lost by five points to Valley Lutheran and two points to St. Charles, and those are two games that could have gone our way. We're the smallest school in the conference, and we have to battle every night with the teams we have to play against."

Name: Valley Lutheran
Nickname: Chargers
Coach: Randy Finney
2012 record: 6-4
Players lost: Travis Welch, Evan Howard, Christopher Deneen, Darien Benner, Jacob Kaufmann, Chad Jaskiewicz, Cody Rajewski
Players returning: Tim Ilpis, Logan Gatzka, Royden Pett, Paul Schoenow, Justin Houthoofd, Royce Houthoofd, Ricky Butler
Coach's comment: "It feels good [making the playoffs for the first time], but we have a complete rebuild right off the bat. We have to find out what we're made of this year. I think we'll be competitive at the very least. Last year we were a power running team, and this year we will throw a lot more. We have some good receivers, and that will become a good part of our arsenal. We lost both runners, and each went over 1,000 yards last year. We'd never had one go over 800 yards. We lost all six games to playoff teams two years ago, and all of our losses last year were to playoff teams. We're not losing games that we shouldn't lose."

Name: Carrollton
Nickname: Cavaliers
Coach: Greg Wasmer
2012 record: 8-2
Players lost: Derrick Nash, Dom Williams
Players returning: Ishmail Rembert, Jacob Jolin, Glenn Washington, Austin Morley
Coach's comment: "We lost 19 seniors from last year and have just nine seniors this year, but our goals never change year in and year out. We want to compete for a TVC championship. I hope the guys returning can carry the team early on while we develop some of our other players. They have big shoes to fill, and these kids understand what the expectations are."
Name: Ithaca
Nickname: Yellowjackets
Coach: Terry Hessbrook
2012 record: 14-0
Players lost: Josh Capen, Mike Mallory, Bradley Martyn, Jordan Hessbrook, Tyler Gibson

Players returning: Travis Smith, Bryan Shaw, Logan Hessbrook, Eli Villalobos, Seth Capen, Jake Smith.
Noteworthy: The Yellowjackets have won 42 consecutive games dating back to November 20, 2009, when they lost to Montague in the state semifinals. Ithaca finished 11-2 that year, and after capturing three-straight Division 6 state titles, the program is 53-2 over the past four seasons.
Name: St. Charles
Nickname: Bulldogs
Coach: Jason Dinninger
2012 record: 3-6
Noteworthy: The Bulldogs were outscored 293-97 last year and suffered their first losing season in nine years. St. Charles hasn't won the league title since 2007, when it finished 10-1.

Name: Breckenridge
Nickname: Huskies
Coach: Kris Robinson
2012 record: 1-8
Noteworthy: Robinson takes over a program that hasn't had a winning season since 1997 and hasn't reached the playoffs since 1993. The Huskies were outscored 348-84 last season with their lone victory a 36-22 win over St. Louis.
Name: St. Louis
Nickname: Sharks
Coach: Aaron Munderlough
2012 record: 0-9
Noteworthy: Munderlough takes over a St. Louis program that finished 0-9



The Saginaw Valley Lutheran football team finished last season 6-4 and lost in the first round of the playoffs to Saginaw Swan Valley. The Chargers should be a solid team in 2013, (Scott Keyes Photo)

TRI-VALLEY CONFERENCE EAST

Name: Millington
Nickname: Cardinals
Coach: Roger Bearss
2012 record: 9-2
Players lost: Nick Hajdo, Dakota Seaver, Joe Cole, Dustin Smith
Players returning: Colin Meacham, Chase Maxon, Jordan Hudson, Wyatt Munson, Jacob Hager, Jason Keinath, Nicholas Ranney, Jeremy Johnson, Austin Weber
Coach's comment: "I think we have a good group of kids and real good chemistry. We have some veterans with youth. We'll try to get better each game. I like the chemistry and hope to be competitive, and I think we can. We will take it game by game."
Name: Caro
Nickname: Tigers

Coach: Todd Topham
2012 record: 0-9
Player lost: Trevor Jaster
Players returning: Chad Bennett, Mike Gonzales, Kyle Sharp, Brandon Tomlinson
Coach's comment: "This is always such a tough football league. We are just taking it one day at a time. We have gotten some more kids to play and are at 27 with our 10th graders. We are trying to improve each day, and the kids have had a great attitude for the coaches."
Name: Frankenmuth
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Phil Martin
2012 record: 10-1
Players lost: Blaine Malochleb, Kyle Lafferty, Alex Helpap, Joel Warnemuende, Bryce Frahm, Zach

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Heyse, Ian Fischer, Jordan Stainforth, Jesse Micho, Jothom Micho, Chris List, Chase Kreager
Players returning: Jake Reinbold, Michael Frahm, Alex Mawer, Brian Stearns, Nick Volk, Andrew Woodard, Ethan Maurer, Jeff Knoll
Coach's comment: "The league will be very competitive this season. Millington is always at the top of the league, and Birch Run will be much improved. North Branch and Garber will both have teams that are improved and will be in contention. Not sure what we have with Bridgeport and Caro with new staffs and Lakeville being new to the league. We have to stay healthy and play well every week to have a chance to repeat. Our start will tell us where we stand this season."
Name: Birch Run
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Chris Gilliam
2012 record: 2-7
Players lost: Grant Childs, Taylor Ellis
Players returning: Willie Periard, Jared Elliott, Derek Kern, Connor Taylor, Andrew Helm, Jared Burke, Joe Okopien
Coach's comment: "We have 16 guys coming back that played a lot last year. All started at least one game somewhere. We feel like we have some experience. The kids that we got from the JV have good potential. The attitude is good, and the work ethic is good."

We want to protect the ball and not make mental mistakes. If we do that, good things can happen."
Name: Garber
Nickname: Dukes
Coach: Jake Coquillard
2012 record: 6-4
Players lost: Wes Asel, Will Frye
Players returning: Alex Neering, Noah Bargouthy, C.J. Glaza, Simeon Berry, Logan Martin, Steven Cecchini, Joe Foret
Coach's comment: "We feel very positive about being in the second year of the veer offense and pistol. We installed it last year and had our share of hard knocks. We feel comfortable with it this year, and our opportunities as a team to get back to the playoffs and extend our winning ways from last year."
Name: North Branch
Nickname: Broncos
Coach: Patrick Forster
2012 record: 5-4
Players lost: Laben Woidan, Corey Franks, Travis Kukkola
Players returning: Doug Stikeleather, Jacob Young, Josh Lopez, Nate Weingartz, Trevor Mindelli, Michael McKee, Logan Woidan
Coach's comment: "We are really excited to start the year. I've had to replace a lot of my staff in the off-season, and the guys I have

put in place have done a great job. More importantly, the kids here at North Branch are excited, as we have over 50 kids on our roster, the most in the 14 seasons I've been here. As always, our concentration currently is on getting better."
Name: Lakeville
Nickname: Falcons
Coach: Drew Johnson
2012 record: 0-9
Noteworthy: The Falcons make the jump from the Genesee Area Conference Red Division to the Tri-Valley East. They've closed their season with TVC East foe Millington the past four seasons and finished 0-4, getting outscored 188-18. Lakeville beat Bridgeport 66-0 in 2010. The Falcons have had one winning season since 2000 and have never advanced to the postseason.
Name: Bridgeport
Nickname: Bearcats
Coach: Anwar Jackson
2012 record: 1-8
Noteworthy: Anwar Jackson returns to his alma mater after a head coaching stint with Arthur Hill. The Bearcats beat Caro to finish 1-8, breaking up three-straight seasons of 0-9 finishes. Bridgeport has had six winless seasons since 2003 and haven't had a winning record since 1999 when it qualified for the postseason and finished 6-4.



Carrollton's Derrick Nash rushed for nearly 2,000 yards a year ago for the Cavaliers. (Scott Keyes Photo)

SAGINAW VALLEY CONFERENCE SOUTH



Frankenmuth's Ian Fischer has graduated from an Eagles team that finished 10-1 a year ago. (Chip DeGrace photo)

Name: Powers Catholic
Nickname: Chargers
Coach: Bob Buckel
2012 record: 11-1
Players lost: Garrett Pougnet, Vinnie Palazetti, Derek Trecha, Prescott Myers, Chris Koenigsnecht, Nick Sullivan
Players returning: Jacques Pougnet, Wyatt Warner, Jonathan Dzido, Charlie Buckley, Chris Gonzalez, John Andrysiak, Chase Ross, Hunter Whitworth, Camm Lapeen, Trent Grimes
Coach's comment: "We have a very simple outlook. We have to find replacements for our losses on the offensive line with only one returning starter there. We also have big shoes to fill at quarterback. We are a young team with only eight returning seniors."
Name: Davison
Nickname: Cardinals
Coach: Jake Emmendorfer
2012 record: 6-4
Players lost: Clinton Rooker, Max McCombs, Julian Molina, Trevor Thomas, Maverick Prine
Players returning: Jacob Davis, Brandon Pasco, Thomas Garty, Dalton Root, Cam

Momany, George Sternburgh
Coach's comment: "I know we have a tough schedule ahead of us, tougher than last year. We open with Lapeer West, and they are good, and our crossover is Midland High, and they're always good. ... We have Orchard Lake St. Mary in week eight, and in the last week we have Flint Carman Ainsworth, which has a lot back from last year. My job as coach is to try to get the most potential out of the team we have. Week in and week out, we should be competitive. But I'm not quite sure what our record will be."
Name: Flushing
Nickname: Raiders
Coach: Robert Oginsky
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Blake Hilsabeck, Turner Endicott, David Rauch, George Hyde, Mitch Taylor
Players returning: Aaron Walker, Tyrice Jenkins, Baigh Brotherton, Alex Yue, Dalton White, Derek Cornell
Coach's comment: "Based on the summer and the way we have worked, I have high expectations for this



Flint Powers will need to find a replacement for Garrett Pougnet who is playing his college football at Southern Illinois. (Scott Keyes Photo)
 season. They've really worked hard, and we will see how that pans out for the season. This year's seniors have worked tremendously hard."
Name: Flint Northwestern
Nickname: Wildcats
Coach: Andre Rison
2012 record: 0-9
Name: Carman-Ainsworth
Nickname: Cavaliers
Coach: Nate Williams
2012 record: 8-2
Name: Flint Southwestern Academy
Nickname: Knights
Coach: Bert Henderson
2012 record: 2-7

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TRI-VALLEY CONFERENCE CENTRAL

School: Swan Valley
Nickname: Vikings
Coach: Ken Bourbina
2012 record: 10-3
Players lost: Travis Bell, Tyler Branch, Brad Boehler, Mike Sielinski
Players returning: Alex Grace, Alex Dils, Taylor Reaume, Ben Finzel, Brock Notter, Nick Call
Coach's comment: "The guys have worked pretty hard. It's getting the new pieces of the puzzle in and getting them up to speed. We have skill players coming back and a good core of kids. [Running back] Alex Grace is bigger and faster. We are anxious to see how he does. We are coming back with experience from that long playoff run, and the guys know how hard it was to get there. We have strong leadership back."
School: Freeland
Nickname: Falcons
Coach: Kevin Townsend
2012 record: 6-4
Players lost: Chris Graebner, Mitchell Noack, Shane Flattery, Matt Schauman, P.J. Luebbert, Mitchell Whitting, Aaron Townley, Alex Green, Eric Sheffield
Players returning: Kyle Guster, Josh Schlack, Ryan Richter, Charlie Ferens, Drew Mojica, Spencer Trimble, Zach Reimus,



Keegan Reimus, Noah Steburger, Will Schwartz, Dustin Leslie
Coach's comment: "We are young, real young, with 22 juniors. We have seniors that played a lot last year and are ready to go. Our quarterback is a junior, our running back is a junior, and we have three juniors on the offensive line. Our incoming juniors went undefeated last year. They averaged 58 points and gave up an average of six. They know how to win. But they are

young, and we have to get them to handle adversity when we run into some."
School: Hemlock
Nickname: Huskies
Coach: Bruce Bendix
2012 record: 9-2
Players lost: Chase Wiechmann, Aaron Mathias, Reese Engel, Ryan Hagarty, Dylan Honsinger, Mitch Menard, Matt Jesse
Players returning: John Kaufmann, Logan Mulvaney, Ethan Apsey, Austin York, Alberto Flores, Ben Lange, Tony Speckhard
Coach's comment: "We won nine games with a pretty successful senior class. We don't have a lot of starters back, but the kids got experience from injuries and when games got out of hand. We had a good summer. We are not lost on talent. We have a little size and speed, and we've learned to win over the past couple years despite being the smallest school in the conference. Depth is an issue. We need to stay healthy, and if we do, I think we can be competitive."
School: Shepherd
Nickname: Bluejays
Coach: Nathan Ferency
2012 record: 1-8
Players lost: David Hiner, Nate Casper
Players returning: Brandon Stressman, Justin Shufelt, Nick Sponseller, Tim Kirby, Skylar Neyome
Coach's comment: "We are a really young team, but the kids are working hard. They know the expectations, and that 1-8 is not acceptable. They are working toward that and we will meet that. We are going to get this program turned back around. We are a run team. We want to establish the run and open up the pass."
School: Bullock Creek
Nickname: Marauders
Coach: Travis Long
2012 record: 3-6
Players lost: B.J. Meisel, Jacob Helms, Jacob Price, Jacob Micka
Players returning: Skyler Cramer, Eric Smith, Luke Alexander, Chris Luckhurst, Zach Swartz, Travis Delaney, Austin Loynes
Coach's comment: "We need to get more physical. I think if we do that and we come together as a team — we are pretty young — but if we work together, my expectations are to make the playoffs. The conference top to bottom will be a difficult schedule."

Running the football and stopping the run are our strengths."
School: Chesaning
Nickname: Indians
Coach: Jason Gray
2012 record: 3-6
Players lost: Derek Bocek, David Yeager, Alex Devota
Players returning: Alex Forsyth, J.T. Gross, Colton Vrable, Justin Sloan
Coach's comment: "Chesaning is a pretty proud program, winning state titles in 1998 and 2001. They were very competitive, and we are looking to get back to that. But I tell the kids that we have to crawl before we can walk. We need to learn how to block and learn how to tackle. We've got 30 juniors and seniors on varsity, and that's good participation. That's almost twice as many as last year. That's a positive, and we are excited to get going."
School: Alma
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Jeff Ingersoll
2012 record: 5-4
Players lost: Brett Green, Mitch Mott, Vinny Costanzo, Tyler Brecht, Aaron Gilbert
Players returning: Curtis Doyle, Austin Coleman, Matt Young, Clayton Carr, Bryce Patton, Shae Nelson
Coach's comment: "This is a great group of guys. The whole off-season they've worked hard in the weight room, on agility drills, and in seven-on-sevens. I think we will surprise a lot of people. We've lost some key guys, and a lot of people think we'll be down and out, but I think we will be a surprise."
School: Ovid-Elsie
Nickname: Marauders
Coach: Travis Long
2012 record: 3-6
Players lost: B.J. Meisel, Jacob Helms, Jacob Price, Jacob Micka
Players returning: Skyler Cramer, Eric Smith, Luke Alexander, Chris Luckhurst, Zach Swartz, Travis Delaney, Austin Loynes
Coach's comment: "We need to get more physical. I think if we do that and we come together as a team — we are pretty young — but if we work together, my expectations are to make the playoffs. The conference top to bottom will be a difficult schedule."

SAGINAW VALLEY CONFERENCE NORTH



It's about us. Making sure our players understand our system and what we are doing."
Name: Midland
Nickname: Chemics
Coach: Eric Methner
2012 record: 11-1
Players lost: Steve Elmer, Alec Johnson, Travis Patten, Alex Goodwin, Tyler Sauve, Terrence Thomas
Players returning: Jacob Dostal, Austin Rapanos, Michael Alexander, Will Williams, Alex Lorenz, Austen Irler, Tanner Gross, Matt McInerney, Brad Belson, Andy Russell, Azariah Porter-Koning, Tanner Diment, Ben Luzar, Nate Fisher, Zach Stirn, Alex Welter
Coach's comment: "A lot of our kids are new starters who are seniors; they've waited their turn and they're excited to leave their mark. I like our chemistry. We've been focused on getting better and better every day. We have young guys looking to make an immediate impact. Everybody goes through some regrouping, and we had a lot of tight games where starters played a majority of the games. The long playoff run helped, because we got extended time with them. A lot of new guys come from the scout teams, and we had terrific scout teams last year. We were able to give our guys good looks all season. We've got good players who are excited to put their own stamp on the program."
Name: Saginaw
Nickname: Trojans
Coach: Don Durrett
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Darius Price
Players returning: Keyon Addison, Darrion Buckner, Steven Roberts, Raymond Bady
Coach's comment: "We just want to be competitive right now. We'll be competitive with a commitment from the players. We want them to make sure they understand that hard work pays off."
Name: Heritage
Nickname: Hawks
Coach: Don Maloney
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Dan Sproull, Zach Vega, Kyle Telder, Michael Buchanan, Marcus Wright, Marquin Evans
Players returning: Steven VanTiffin, Blake Carmichael, Anthony Whyte, Adam Degroat, Austin Tyren, Thomas Bugenske, Brian Cole, Jalen Young, J.J. Honemann, Chris Yarn, Cooper Phibbs
Coach's comment: "I think we have a strong junior class coming up, and our seniors have the experience. With that combination, expectations are pretty high. Our goals are winning the Saginaw County and competing for the Saginaw Valley League title. Every year it seems to go to Midland, and we have to play Midland High on their home field. That's a tough task. We're looking at being competitive and playing for a league title."
Name: Arthur Hill
Nickname: Lumberjacks
Coach: Fred Townsend
2012 record: 1-8
Players lost: Nicholas Trigg
Players returning: Omar Canales, Anthony DeBardalaben, Lawrence Gordon, Jamar Hardy, Ecka Henderson, Sylvester Lawson, Darrion Robinson
Coach's comment: "The big thing is getting our guys to focus on us and getting improvement every day and every week. Our goal is 1-0. Get ready for game one. We will worry every week about going 1-0. Our focus is short term to long term. Build in short term to get long term goals. The league will be a challenge each week. We can be a very consistent team. We may be able to surprise some teams with what we can do. But it's not about opponents."

Midland High made it all the way to the regional finals a year ago before losing to Muskegon. (Scott Keyes Photo)

Name: Midland Dow
Nickname: Chargers
Coach: Jason Watkins
2012 record: 5-4
Players lost: Lucas Bourelle, Gavin Groszek, Rob Rogowski, Donny Doughty
Players returning: Travis McNally, Brennan Miller, Caleb Richard, Chase McNamara, Wes Meyers
Coach's comment: "We've got a lot of guys that were part-time players and on the junior varsity. We were 5-4 last year and this is my fifth year as head coach. Twice we were 5-4, we were 9-2 and 3-6. Even the 9-2 year, we left one game on the table that we should have gotten. We're not satisfied with that. We want to be in the playoffs annually, and we have goals beyond that. I think we're in good position this year. We might need a few breaks, and we all have to come together, stay healthy, and execute. If we do that, we can make some noise."
Name: Mount Pleasant
Nickname: Oilers
Coach: Jason McIntyre
2012 record: 2-7
Players lost: Antonio Povinelli, Jaime Hoyt, Matt Keller, Cory Williams
Players returning: Michael Tweb, Erik Belco, Robert Backus, Joe Genia, Jonny Clark, Keith Odykirk, Isaac Parks, Max Heeke, Austin Ferguson, Tyler Jackson, Zach Rogers, Ray MacGillivray, Shane

Seelye
Coach's comment: "We return a great deal of experience off a team that dealt with a wide range of adversity last season. Our leaders are hungry to experience the success many of our previous teams had and have a lot of experience to build upon in trying to accomplish these goals. The expectations within our program are high, however, we face one of the most difficult schedules our school has ever had. We open with DeWitt and Flint Powers Catholic before we even start our always-tough league schedule. I think with the strong core of 27 seniors we have, we can deal with the adversities we are sure to face. I expect us to be better and more athletic on defense this year and more balanced on offense."
Name: Bay City Western
Nickname: Warriors
Coach: Bruce Mann
2012 record: 8-2
Players lost: Joe Ivan, Charles Proctor, Andrew Mudd, Jason Meyers, John Metz, Cameron Roth
Players returning: Nathan Droptiny, Jake Hernandez
Coach's comment: "We will be young. We don't have a lot of returners, and it's a challenge learning the system at the varsity level both offensively and defensively. Speed will be an issue for us. We'll have some skill on outside at receivers, and we can run, but we won't be fast. With all 11 starters gone on defense, it'll be a challenge to make some plays on that side of the ball."
Name: Bay City Central
Nickname: Wolves
Coach: Morley Fraser
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Austin Jones, Tommy Jacobs
Players returning: Russell Brown, Stone Manczak, Andre Houston, Logan Rabideau, Alyn Mativia, Chris Jacobs, Nic Schabel, Josh Billette, T.Q. Rutledge, Davon Jackson
Coach's comment: "We think offensively we should be good. We've got lots of linemen back, and we have our running back and quarterback back as well. Our defense is pretty young, so the offense has to play well to let us catch up. I think the league is open, and I think we can be in the mix. I don't see anybody going undefeated."

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Either Freeland, Swan Valley or Alma should contend for the TVC Central crown this season. (Veas Photos)

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CENTRAL MICHIGAN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

School: Bath
Nickname: Fighting Bees
Coach: Chris Rypstra
2012 record: 3-6
Players lost: Mike Flegal, Nick Preville, Richard Sivak
Players returning: Dylan Moffitt, Anthony Rhyndress, Leslie Payne, Cameron Ellsworth, Marcus Allen, Brandon Chapko, Mike Miller, Deontay Walker
Coach's comment: "Solid senior leadership hopefully makes us competitive in every game. In order to compete for the playoffs, we need to win the close games."
School: Dansville
Nickname: Aggies
Coach: Dan Price
2012 record: 8-3
Players lost: Garrett Soule, Jake Grice, Cam Jones, Joe Parson, Jeremy Demers
Players returning: Will Walker, Evan Pregitzer, Zac Runciman, Blake Renfro, Brent Flynn
Notes: The Aggies suffered some major losses, especially at the skill positions. Junior running back Brent Flynn will play a bigger role in the offense this season.
School: Fowler
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Kris Ernst
2012 record: 9-2
Players lost: Tyler Koenigsnecht, Kevin Koenigsnecht, Cam Bongard, Dustin Wirth
Players returning: Austin Feldpausch, Quinn Myers, Austin Cook, Chandler

School: Campbell
Coach's comment: "We have two great running backs that have good size and speed in Austin Feldpausch and Austin Cook. They will be running behind a group of offensive linemen that have worked really hard in the off-season to get stronger and more physical. The defense will be anchored by Quinn Myers at middle linebacker."
School: Fulton
Nickname: Pirates
Coach: John Winkler
2012 record: 3-6
Players lost: Korey Moomey, Joe Wilson, Jake Knight, Zach Thum
Players returning: Tyler Spade, Jordan Buck, Jacob Litwiller, Eli Stephens, Josh Stephens
Notes: Sophomore quarterback Jacob Litwiller is a promising young signal caller. The Pirates also have some quality offensive linemen.
School: Laingsburg
Nickname: Wolfpack
Coach: Brian Borgman
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Shaun McKinney, Dan Kiesling, Jake Zielinski, Luke Jorae, Sam Edwards, Hayden Arthur
Players returning: Michael Schauer, Zach Rosenberry, Adam Wickham, Jake Arthur
Notes: The Wolfpack have the makings for a strong defense but will have some work to do on offense."
School: Pottersville
Nickname: Vikings

Coach: Phil Davis
2012 record: 1-7
Players lost: James Tisdale, Garrett Whipple, Dominic Curtis, Kody Wood
Players returning: Seth Austin, Clinton Ward, Logan Pitcher
Notes: The Vikings will build around Austin, a standout at fullback and linebacker. Ward (6'2", 270 pounds) provides an anchor to the offensive line.
School: Pewamo-Westphalia
Nickname: Pirates
Coach: Jeremy Miller
2012 record: 9-4
Players lost: Jake Nurenberg, Michael Peterson, Clayton Platte, Ty Simon, Anthony Klein
Players returning: Kyle Nurenberg, Lane Simon, Owen Schaefer, Ben Fox, Aaron Rademacher
Coach's comment: "We have many returning players who have a lot of experience at the varsity level. We expect to compete for the league title and make a deep run into the playoffs."
School: Saranac
Nickname: Redskins
Coach: Terry Johnson
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Jacob Coulier, Nick Kooiman, Dustin May, Ryan Gowing, Noah Anderson, Bryce Besson
Players returning: Christian Belt, Jeremy Gleson, Zane Swagert
Notes: The Redskins were hit hard by graduation, losing a number of talented linemen and backs.



Fulton look will look to get back to the playoffs after missing it last season for the first time in nearly 20 years. (Scott Keyes Photo)

HIGHLAND CONFERENCE

School: Beal City
Nickname: Aggies
Coach: Lou Rau
2012 record: 13-1
Player lost: Sam Schaefer
Players returning: Greg Keiser, Ryan Tilmann, Kurt Gross, Hayden Huber, Alex Schaefer, Nick Hoogerhyde, Josh Starr, Ty Rollin, Luke Schaefer, Trenton Armstrong, Kevin Straus, Nick Ward, Jordan Carson, Cody Mottin, Kevin Bleise, Zach Bauer, Carson Salisbury
Coach's comment: "The strength is the experience and the skill kids we have returning. The offensive line will be much improved this year. Those are the keys. The experience factor is huge for us."
School: Evert
Nickname: Wildcats
Coach: Pat Craven
2012 record: 8-3
Players lost: Devon VanOrder, John Danley,

Austin Grein, Chapman Long
Players returning: Larry VanBuren, Robert Burge, Derek Bowen, Jamin Drake, Dean Marsh
Coach's comment: "Our greatest strength will be our experience. Our team is battle-tested. We will be as skilled as any team in the Highland Conference; we must get better every day and work to maximize our potential."
School: Lake City
Nickname: Trojans
Coach: Tim Peterson
2012 record: 10-2
Players lost: Ryan Vincent, Kyler Root, Storm Francisco, Jeramie Lyle, DJ Hunt
Players returning: Drew Marion, Nathan Holt, Kevin Kunkel, Dylan Allard
Coach's comment: "We are expecting to be very competitive with the teams on our schedule and to provide a fun style of football for people to watch."

School: Manton
Nickname: Rangers
Coach: Steven Hejnel
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Austin Shivillie, Lbers Arron, Alex Powell
Players returning: Matt Skiver, Triston Rosted, Zack Skiver, Rob Wilczewski, Luke Shepler, Keefe Brotherton, Jonah Nelson
Coach's comment: "Strengths of this team will be a technique-sound football team that plays fast on both sides of the ball. If you're thinking on Fridays, you are playing slow...if you are reacting, you're playing fast."
School: McBain
Nickname: Ramblers
Coach: Chad Grundy
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Trevor Lutke, Jared Larr, Andy Lucas

Players returning: Zach Stephen, Briar Mulder, Grant Koster, Kyle Heuker
Coach's comment: "We are expecting to make the playoffs; that is our goal every year. The backfield is our strength. We have three backs over 190 pounds that all run well. Our line is really young, so we have to get better up front. Our schedule is pretty strong. We play five playoff teams from last year. Beal City and Lake City will be really good."
School: Pine River
Nickname: Bucks
Coach: Terry Nelson
2012 record: 2-7
Players lost: Devin Ruppert
Players returning: Skyler Nelson, Brandon Fulks, Mitch McDonald
Coach's comment: "Our expectation is for our young team to improve every time we take the field and give us an opportunity to compete in every game."

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CENTRAL STATE ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

School: Big Rapids
Nickname: Cardinals
Coach: Mitch Cumings
2012 record: 8-2
Player lost: Nick Baldwin
Players returning: Ty Lattimore, Lucas Armand, Remington Ulman, Eric Boyd, Jamison Green
Coach's comment: "We need to do more work to create our own identity."
School: Central Montcalm
Nickname: Hornets
Coach: Marty James
2012 record: 2-7
Players returning: Keagan James, Tyler Baker, Austin Phenix, James Fancet
School: Chippewa Hills
Nickname: Warriors
Coach: Larry Jose
2012 record: 7-4
Players lost: Trent Karcher
Players returning: Tyler Williams, Zach Biller, Matt Dietz, Marcus Merrill, Marcus Guerrero, Andrew Whaley
Coach's comment: "We're strong on the line, and we're strong at running back this year."
School: Hesperia
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Todd Myers
2012 record: 4-5
School: Holton
Nickname: Red Devils
Coach: Chris Hilliker
2012 record: 1-8
Players returning: Corey Sokolowski, Brad Epplett, Nic Liuker, Austen Gillette
Coach's comment: "We are the smallest school in our conference; each game is a battle."
School: Lakeview
Nickname: Wildcats

Coach: Sean Rinehart
2012 record: 5-4
Players lost: Jared Taylor, Gus Ward
Players returning: Shawn Lindsey, Garret Cavendish, Brad Hamlin, Jared Behrenwald, Terry Grieser
Coach's comment: "I feel we will have a very special season. Ever since we started workouts, we talked about being committed and never letting anyone outwork you. They have responded with a great attitude and feel that they can compete with the best teams in the area. One of our strengths is our senior leadership. We have 13 seniors on the team this year, and they all have high goals for the program. Another strength is a strong commitment to the core of our program, which is a relentless intensity to be successful."
School: Morley Stanwood
Nickname: Mohawks
Coach: Clark Huntley
2012 record: 3-6
Player lost: Steven Malloy
Players returning: Levi Arnold, Damian Dewey, Chase Huntley, Matt Maguire
Coach's comment: "Damian Dewey and Levi Arnold are returning as starting offensive linemen and starting middle linebackers."
School: Newaygo
Nickname: Lions
Coach: Andrew Busch
2012 record: 9-3
Players lost: Max Harrington, Preston Cross, Conor Bradley
Players returning: Weston Butler, Zach Cantu, Dustin Childs, Brandon Foster, Zack Night, Heath Harrington

Coach's comment: "We do not have a large number on this year's roster. Depth will always be an issue with a small squad. Each day we work with all the players as if they are all starters to build skills and knowledge, so we can keep a rotation of fresh legs on the field. We need to focus more during the big moments of the season to not make mental mistakes or penalties that create ugly situations that are hard to come back from. As a team, we will also talk a great deal about keeping our composure during road games, because each venue was new for us last year. I feel that we may have been rattled a bit on the road. That will also again be the case this year, so we must focus greater for our road trips. We will continue to do major footwork and speed drills each day at practice to improve our overall team speed."
School: Reed City
Nickname: Coyotes
Coach: Monty Price
2012 record: 10-1
Players lost: Garrett Benson
Players returning: Chad Samuels, Dean Eichenberg, Eric Grannis, Kyle Wright
Coach's comment: "We have to see where we're at and where we need to go."
School: White Cloud
Nickname: Indians
Coach: Julian Castillo
2012 record: 0-9
Players returning: Aaron Koning, AJ Asuncion, Alan Burkholder, Bowman Seabrook, Brandon Schumacher, Cameron Hutson, Daric Paul, David Dykstra, Dillon Maring, Dylan Woytik, Erik Visser

MID-STATE ACTIVITIES CONFERENCE



The Ashley football team will look to improve on its 4-5 record from a year ago. (Chuck Prikasky Photo)

School: Ashley
Nickname: Bears
2012 record: 4-5
School: Carson City-Crystal
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Devin Pringle
2012 record: 7-3
School: Coleman
Nickname: Comets
Coach: Chad Klopff
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Tim Anderson, Christopher Lovejoy, Dakota Fike, Jacob Kipp, Mike Rocha
Players returning: Zack Frazer, Adam Stremlow, Matthew Warner, Lars Murray, Blake Scott, Mark Drake, Hunter Gross, Mitchell Franklin, Brandon Leitz, Blaine Yeager
Coach's comment: "This team's expectations are very high this year. We are returning so many multi-year starters that are very talented. This team will not settle for less than a trip back to the playoffs. The strengths of this team will be our passing attack, with a second-year starting QB and six or seven quality receivers to throw to. Our seniors will be our strength, but we still have quality juniors to go along with them. As long as they can stay healthy, our O and D lines will be a big part of our team success."

We need to work on staying healthy. The past few years, the injury bug has hit us hard. Depth is not a strength for us, so a few injuries at certain positions could cost us."
School: Montabella
Nickname: Mustangs
Coach: David Clay
2012 record: 3-6
School: Sacred Heart Academy
Nickname: Irish
Coach: Rick Roberts
2012 record: 9-2
Players lost: Mitchell Myler, Nick Hire, Steve Rudoni, Mike Heller
Players returning: Dustin Neyer, Brooks Hyble, Cole Younger, Matt Motz, Justin Cowell
Coach's comment: "We return seven starters on defense, so we should be a strong defensive team this season. We lost a lot of our offensive production from last year, so we will be a work in progress as the season moves along. We need to find out who will carry the load for us this year on offense. We feel very comfortable with the pieces we have, but the players need to step up and perform in games if we are to reach our goals."
School: Vestaburg
Nickname: Wolverines
Coach: Dan Ryckman
2012 record: 6-4

JACK PINE CONFERENCE

School: Beaverton
Nickname: Beavers
Coach: Aaron Seiser, second year
2012 record: 4-5
Players lost: Austin Schneider, Scott Longstreth
Players returning: Hunter Walters, Aidan O'Rourke, Roger Miller, Brad Demski, Paul Haney, Ian Hasenfratz
Coach's comment: "I feel our team has a lot of potential this year. I think we have much more depth, and we have more participants than last season. We're going to be relying on seniors who have come out who haven't played for quite a few years. We have some depth now, but we are going to be experienced in spots."
School: Clare
Nickname: Pioneers
Coach: Kelly Luplow, 26th year
2012 record: 9-3
Players lost: Mitch Greenacre, Patrick

Hughes, Hunter Ruby
Players returning: Colton Panches, Logan Emery, Seth Harton, Jordan Gross, Brandon Ayris
School: Gladwin
Nickname: Flying G's
Coach: Tyler Foot
2012 record: 7-3
Players lost: Brandon Wackerle, Landon Grove, Michael Fennell
Players returning: Austin Lagalo, Ethan Gary, Jake Shell, Clay Bowen, Stephen Esinile
School: Farwell
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Alan Esterline, second year
2012 record: 2-7
Players lost: Jacob Turner, Keegan Rohdy, Quincy Crawford
Players returning: Ryan Simmons, Seth Baginski, Jacob Sutton, Riley Skornicka, Noah Wilson, Devin Warner, Dustin Weber

Coach's comment: "We need Simmons, Wilson, and Baginski [to have big years]. I feel we have a great group of athletes that are working extremely hard."
School: Harrison
Nickname: Hornets
Coach: Mike Petrongelli, sixth year
2012 record: 3-6
Players lost: Jacob Stuhr, Cody Rodgers, Brooks Leonard
Players returning: Justin Yager, Nathan Lipovsky, Matt Haskel, John LaTulip, Ryan Johnson, Bret Coughlin, Clay Dennis
Coach's comment: "Very smart group that is very motivated. [We need to] stay away from injuries and keep improving."
School: Houghton Lake
Nickname: Bobcats
Coach: Tim VanWormer, first year
2012 record: 1-8
Player lost: Dalton Bailey

Players returning: Nathan Hudson, Tyler Sluck, Jared Duil, Justin Blanchard, Harrison Fulco, Steven Storey
School: Roscommon
Nickname: Bucks
Coach: Joe Holloway
2012 record: 6-4
Players lost: Hunter Mires, Gage Richards, Mitch Tyler
Players returning: Donald Jernigan, John Miller, Brett Jobin, Jamie Hammond, Nick Anderson
School: Meridian
Nickname: Mustangs
Coach: Mike Bilina, first year
2012 record: 5-4
Players lost: Zach Arthur, Aaron Boxey, Jeff Franklin
Players returning: Jacob Wenzlick, Kevin Scheibert, Brandon Webber, Christian Petre, Daniel Johnson

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GENESEE ATHLETIC CONFERENCE RED

School: Durand
Nickname: Railroaders
Coach: Mark Worsham
2012 Record: 2-7
Players lost: Tyler Phillips, Hadyr Havard, Jacob Sabja
Players returning: Jordan Pearce, Eli Walter, Kyle Graham, Jacob Yager
Notes: After winless seasons in 2010 and 2011, the Railroaders finished with a pair of wins last season. New coach Mark Worsham looks to build on that success this season.
School: Beecher
Nickname: Bucs
Coach: Courtney Hawkins
2012 Record: 8-5
Players lost: Eric Cooper, Tyrone Southward, Kermit Craig, Kareem Blaylock
Players returning: Brandon Mixon, Robbie Brown, Tevon Bailey, Marcus Wright, Mustafa Hopkins, Marquis Colburn
Notes: The Bucs advanced all the way to the Division 7 state semifinals last season before falling to Loyola.
School: Goodrich
Nickname: Martians
Coach: Tom Alward
2012 Record: 8-3
Players lost: Mitch Rubio, JR Dawley, Cody Krause, Kyle Klimek
Player returning: Andrew Sweet, Jake Gleason
Notes: Graduation hit the Martians hard, but the program

has a history of success, having qualified for the playoffs four of the past five years. Look for newcomers to step up.
School: Lake Fenton
Nickname: Blue Devils
Coach: Eric Doyle
2012 Record: 8-3
Players lost: Nick VanDuser, Tyler Begley, Zac Zielinski, Lance Hasenfratz, Austin Frank
Players returning: Neil Allor, Chase Hull, Tyler Smith, Alex Schwartz, Tim Symons, Andy Donoho, Logan Readdy, Gage Smith, Brandon Keen
Coach's comment: "We have a talented group, led by seven third-year varsity players. We should have very good team speed on both sides of the football."
School: Montrose
Nickname: Rams
Coach: Dennis Reinhart
2012 Record: 10-2
Players lost: Caleb Reinhart, Sam Kitts, Kyle Kettler
Players returning: Malik Taylor, Jimmie Hodge, Dakota Jelinek, Riley Warren, Ben Turchi, Tyler Doyle
Notes: The Rams loss a battering ram in Caleb Reinhart but have a slew of talented players returning. **TSchool:** Mount Morris
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Ben Almay
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Chase Nagy, Brad

Clark, Shabonn Boone, Kody Goodman
Players returning: Isaiah Collins, Tony Saldana, Bryce Watts
Notes: The Panthers have fallen one win short of a winning season the past three years.
School: Perry
Nickname: Ramblers
Coach: Rob Porritt
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Shane Devota, Corbin Curtis
Players returning: Dillon Brooks, Kenny Polhemus, Jebediah Spencer, Dakota Hart, Alex Proudfoot
Notes:
Name: New Lothrop
Nickname: Hornets
Coach: Clint Galvas
2012 record: 10-1
Players lost: Austin Newman, Leo Harris, Jameson Toma, Michael Mucha
Players returning: Amari Coleman, Josh Wendling, Taylor Krupp, Owen Wilson, Tom Merlow, Brandon Green
Coach's comment: "I think the expectations are pretty high. We have a lot back on both sides of the ball and in key spots. We should contend for the league title again. The league is improved this year, and we have the toughest schedule in the five years that I've been here. We open with Traverse City St. Francis, and we close with Pewamo-Westphalia."



Big things are expected from the New Lothrop football team this season, but a tough schedule will be a difference maker for the Hornets this season. (Mike Schutt Photo)

GENESEE ATHLETIC CONFERENCE BLUE

School: Atherton
Nickname: Wolverines
Coach: Jared Noel
2012 Record: 1-8
Players lost: Demarko Morgan, Rasheed Millhouse
Players returning: Ernesto Felton, Devin Stadfeld, Joey Curran
Notes: The Wolverines are looking to bounce back from a one-win season. Shoring up the defense will be the main concern heading into the season.
School: Bendle
Nickname: Tigers
Coach: Mark Chapman
2012 Record: 7-3
Player lost: David Younger-Dean
Players returning: Dion Reed, Alex Richmond, Sam Lyden, Josh Mikesell, Tevin Pully, John Pike, Alex Krajniack
Coach's comment: "Obviously the league is very tough. New Lothrop has a very strong program and others like Byron, as well. We plan to compete hard for the title."
School: Bentley
Nickname: Bulldogs
Coach: Ryan Tomaselli
2012 Record: 2-7
Players lost: Chance Wesner, Quentin Sterling
Players returning: Gage Connor, Austin Nickles, Kenny Pilarski
Notes: It's been five years since the Bulldogs posted a winning season. They have their work cut out for them, but they could get out of the gate quickly, and a 4-0 start to the season is not out of the question.
School: Byron



The Morrice football team finished 4-5 last season under coach Brad Long. (Mike Schutt Photo)

Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Dave Richardson
2012 Record: 8-2
Players lost: Hunter Taylor, Jordan Coffey
Players returning: Dustin Blom, Joel Lanning, Andy

Wiggins, Hunter Dalianis-Turner, Nathan Philburn
Coach's comment: "Our offensive line will be above average, and this will help with our balanced running game and passing offense."
School: Hamady
Nickname: Hawks
Coach: Gary Lee
2012 Record: 7-4
Players lost: Sal Williams, Russell Wright, Fred Luster
Notes: The Hawks returned to the playoffs last year after a five-year absence. To make it back for a second straight season, a number of newcomers must step up.
School: Genesee
Nickname: Wolves
Coach: Steve Vergurg
2012 Record: 5-4
Players lost: Caleb Potter, Justin Turner
Players returning: Derek Hopper, Phillip Jones
Notes: The Wolves have posted winning seasons four of the past five years but are looking to make it to the playoffs for the first time in three years.
School: Morrice
Nickname: Orioles
Coach: Brad Long
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Andrew Dixon, Nate Hart, Josh Stambaugh
Players returning: Connor Green, Mark Copeland, Joe Gutting, Hayden Jackson, Connor Riley
Notes: The Orioles won four games last season, the most they have totaled since making the playoffs in 2006. With a number of key returnees back, they will be looking to post a winning season this fall.

OK CONFERENCE RED

School: East Kentwood
Nickname: Falcons
Coach: Ryan Gallogly
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Houston Glass, Ricky May, Alex Browley
Players returning: Kyle Friberg, Mike Ivy, Colin Calloway, Kevin Smith, Elliott Jordan, John Keenoy, Donte Nelson, Gabe Ramirez, Sammy Ryans
Coach's comment: "So far it's been a pretty smooth transition. We are trying to install a new offense and defense as quickly as we can."
School: Grand Haven
Nickname: Buccaneers
Coach: Mike Farley
2012 Record: 3-6
Players lost: Matt Mulcahy, Mike Penland, Conner Moynihan, Jeff Olson
Players returning: Isaak Newhouse, Dakota Juarez, Abe Westerman, Aaron Gordon, Wade Wilson, Cody Jonas, Tyler Tippins
Coach's comment: "We have good team speed this year. We are able to run and be physical, and if we do that, we have a chance to have success."
School: Grandville
Nickname: Bulldogs
Coach: Mike Lapciuk

2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Andrew Vavere, Jessie Perez, Utah Barholic, Dylan Jolliffe
Players returning: Ryan Fischer, Austin Schuur, Jake Schmid, Zak Koster, Brian Cappello, Danil Young, Daniel Schanley
Coach's comment: "This is the third year of our system, and things are a whole lot better. We are looking to take things to the next level. We won four games last year, and we want to qualify for the playoffs this year."
School: Hudsonville
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Dave Lidgard
2012 Record: 2-7
Players lost: Cody Brower, Justin VanDam, Louis Diaz, Jake Bull, Dustin Cole, Nate Kaboos
Players returning: Mason Opplé, Dakota Prince, Mark Dieterle, Curt Doornbos, Dustin Tripp, Jack Ellermetts, Mitch Laninga, Evan Akins, Zach Reynolds
Coach's comment: "We are very excited and optimistic. We are going back to playing strong, fundamental football with an emphasis on the off-season program."
School: Rockford

Nickname: Rams
Coach: Ralph Munger
2012 Record: 10-3
Players lost: Connor Darby, Sam Reinke, KC Zenner, Kyle Short, Jared Johnson
Players returning: Austin McKellar, Brent Showers, Randy Garvin, Josh Olson, Zach Sargent, C.J. Farmer, Jimmy Scales, Jarett Sobkowiak, Jimmy Olewinski, Trevor Coughlin
Coach's comment: "We have a lot of inexperience, but we also had a lot of guys working hard in the off-season. We will have to see what happens. This is a fun group to work with."
School: West Ottawa
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Rory Zegunis
2012 Record: 8-3
Players lost: Trevor VanTubergen, Ato Condelee, Nate Colvin, Seth Mika, Miguel Correa
Players returning: Jared McNitt, James Lacey, Christian Rodino, J.D. Otteman, Mason Dekker, Alex Zimmerman, P.J. Trammel
Coach's comment: "We are very experienced on defense. We have a good core group and a lot of experience coming back, and that has created a lot of excitement."



The Rockford football lost in the Division 1 semi finals a year ago and should be tough this season. (Submitted Photo)

FLINT METRO

School: Clio
Nickname: Mustangs
Coach: Nate Taylor, season
2012 record: 0-9, 0-8 FML (ninth)
Players lost: Aaron Huff, Chris Lanyi
Players returning: Tyler Eible, sr. OT; Luke Weslowski, sr. RB-CB; Zach Pakacs, jr. WR-CB
Coach's comment: "The hardest part is trying to get these guys to believe that they can win."
School: Fenton
Nickname: Tigers
Coach: Jeff Setzke, 21st season
2012 record: 9-2, 7-1 FML (tied-first)
Players lost: Cody Hovevar, Nick Chappell, Joe Diller, Jacob Keese, Mitch Shegos, Damon Thomas, Alex Okepein, Brennam Clarke, Trent Grimes
Players returning: Scott Lukas, sr. WR-DB; Luke Itoni, sr. DE; Tyler Hudson, sr. DT; McKay Hamilton, sr. FS
School: Kearsley
Nickname: Hornets
Coach: Rod Schuch, fourth season
2012 record: 3-6, 2-6 FML (tied-sixth)
Players lost: Nate Kamert, Richard Conrad, Lance Mucha, Vinnie Brandt, Zack Link, Trevor Oaks, Alex Schmitter, Caleb Pyscher, Matt Romono, Brett Morin
Players returning: Matt Weine, sr. RB-P; Aaron Jones III, sr. OT;

Anthony McMasters, sr. CB; Hayden Prine, sr. SE; Cedric Moten, jr. WR.
Notes: The Hornets graduated most of their size and must develop new linemen to aid the return of several skilled athletes. If the big men in the trenches develop, then Kearsley could surprise in a wide-open FML
School: Holly
Nickname: Bronchos
Coach: Ryan Culloty, fifth season
2012 record: 5-4, 4-4 FML (fifth)
Players lost: Johnny Williams, Evin Papuga, Kyle Vandel, Jake Schuermann, Kyle McCarty, Andrew Giles, Zach Diehl, Josh Sayles
Players returning: Tom O'Connor, sr. OL; Jake Zorn, jr. QB; Andrew Scott, sr. WR; Ben Kopopitski, sr. OL; Jose Martinez, sr. OL; Kyle Pepper, sr. LB-RB; Tyler Flores, sr. DB; Adam Tooley, soph. DL; Avery Bishop, jr. DT
Coach's comment: "We are a lot like most of the teams in our league. We lost several two- and three-year starters to graduation and have some holes to fill. It all goes down to the younger guys stepping up and filling those holes and the seniors providing great leadership."
School: Lapeer East
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Jake Weingartz, sixth season (27-21)

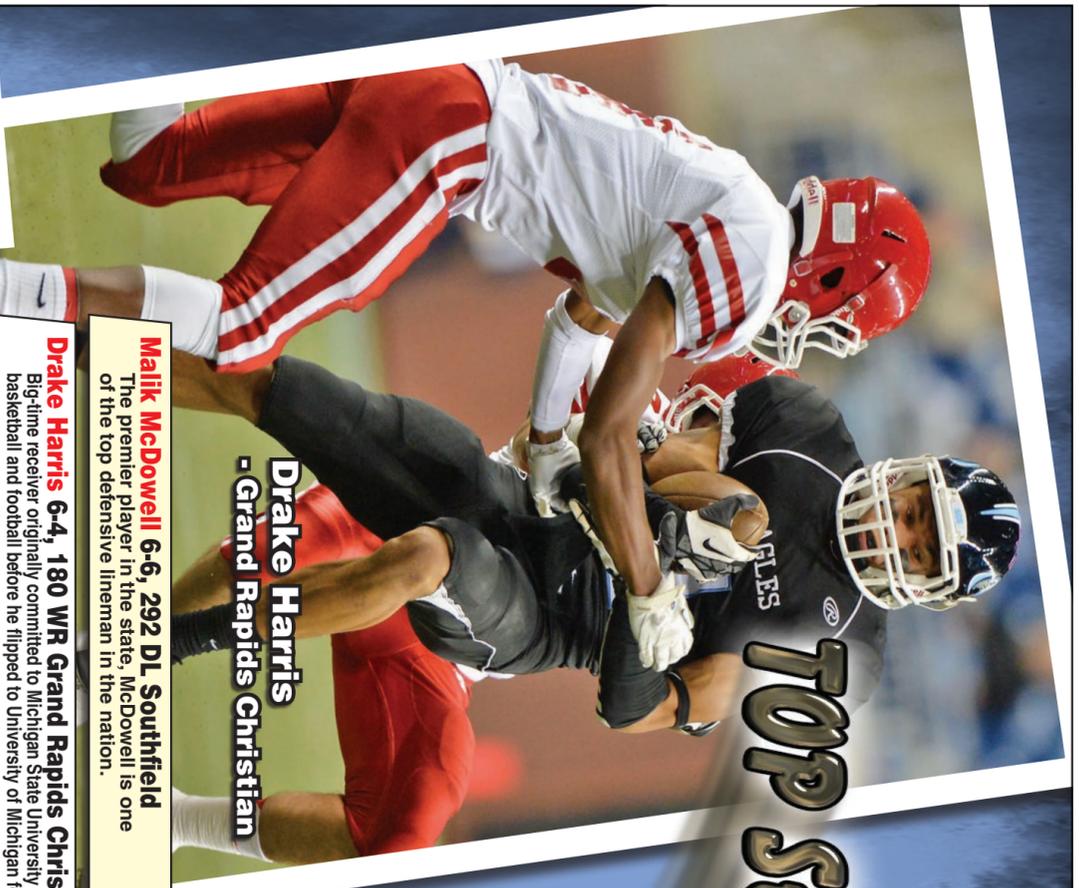
2012 record: 3-6, 2-6 FML (tied-sixth)
Players lost: Joe Perry, Austin Greenleaf, Gibson Finch, Nate Catalano
Players returning: Kyle Rachwal, sr. LB-TE; Anthony Hebert, jr. DT-OT; Dan Perry, sr. OL-DT; Jake Perry, sr. FB; Matt Frank, sr. WR; Ben Muir, sr. RB; Travis Mersino, sr. RB-DB; Trevor Fisher, jr. WR-DB
Key Newcomers: Eli Hunt, soph. QB-DB; Connor Schulte, jr. LB
Coach's comment: "We had 12 sophomores and a freshman on varsity last season, so we were really young..."
School: Lapeer West
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Mike Smith, 16th season
2012 record: 6-4, 6-2 FML (third)
Players lost: Michael Ledington, Cody Perkins, Zeshawn Jones-Parker, Brandon Welling
Players returning: Kevin Essenmacher, sr. OL-LB; Hunter Sharrard, sr. QB; Brenden Stocker, sr. DB-FB; Mark Cox, sr. LB-WR; Nick Harris, sr. DL; Noah Raymond, sr. DE-LB; Matt Place, sr. DB-WR; Malik Deverell, sr. RB
Notes: This is the last year of Lapeer West football, as the Panthers will be merged into Lapeer Community High.
School: Linden
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Dennis Hopkins

2012 record: 9-2, 7-1 FML (tied-first)
Players lost: Ed Walterhouse, Travis Hull, Taylor Anderson, Nick Carlson, Shaye Brown, Mitch Juhl, Cody Grandy, Ben Armstrong, Matt Weiriga, Patrick Ryan, Mitch Ryan, Joey Williams, Blake North, Cody Grandy, Travis Hull, Connor O'Connell, Aaron Kersten, Mason Belbot
Players returning: Marshael Ryan, jr. TE-WR; Austin McNeil, jr. OG; Kyle Korman, jr. DE.; Cameron Cook, sr. P
Key Newcomers: Garrett Beaudry, sr. WR-OLB; Charlie Gergel, sr. OG-LB; Nick Sioui, sr. OG-NG; Ian Webb, sr. OG-LB; Austin Buerkel, jr. WR-DB; Mike Gold, jr. WR-DB; Zack Kentish, jr. WR-DB; Andrew Kost, jr. C-DE; Jake Marshall, jr. WR-DB; Gage Smith, jr. QB-SE; Andy Roberts, jr. OT-LB; Kevin Bates, soph. RB-P; Noah Sargent, soph. QB-SE
Notes: Linden has been a factor in the FML on a regular basis for the past 15 years. The Eagles lost a large number of starters to graduation, leaving the door open for new opportunity. The Eagles could stroll through a rebuilding year or just simply reload. Time will tell.
School: Brandon
Nickname: Blackhawks
Coach: Tim Pizzala, fifth season

2012 record: 1-8, 1-7 FML (eighth)
Players lost: Larry Bland, Nick Wummell, Derek Klanke, Blake Nivelt
Players returning: Blake Rehan, sr. LB; Andrew Derry, sr. DB; Nick Keller, sr. QB; Matt Sears, sr. RB; Shane Arnold, jr. C; Ian Harrington, sr. LT; Dominik Delbuco, sr. OG; Jake Sutherland, jr. WR; Ryan Eldon, sr. LB; John Ware, sr. LB; Matt Howlett, sr. DB; Brad Howlett, sr. DB; Chase Cochran, sr. CB; Trevor Bourdreau, sr. CB
Coach's comment: "We will be better than last season. Last year, we only had a couple of returning starters and a roster of mostly first-year varsity players. Now we have a big senior class and these guys are hungry. They want to get back the playoffs."
School: Swartz Creek
Nickname: Dragons
Coach: Brad Brown
2012 record: 7-3, 6-2 FML (tied-third)
Players lost: Travis Campbell, Jaylen Schoefield, Max Cummings, Clay Black, Devin Mosholder
Players returning: Kevin Weiler, sr. OL-DL
Notes: The Dragons made the playoffs for the first time in 2012 but must replace most of their starting lineup due to graduation.

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Drake Harris
- Grand Rapids Christian

SPORTS SCENE'S TOP SENIORS TO WATCH

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Compiled by Sports Scene
Editor Scott Keyes and
Writer Butch Harmon

Malik McDowell 6-6, 292 DL Southfield
The premier player in the state, McDowell is one of the top defensive linemen in the nation.

Drake Harris 6-4, 180 WR Grand Rapids Christian
Big-time receiver originally committed to Michigan State University for both basketball and football before he flipped to University of Michigan for football only

Damon Webb 5-11, 177 DB Detroit Cass Tech
Shutdown corner committed early to Ohio State University and has been one of the Buckeye's top recruiters since.

Lawrence Marshall 6-4, 205 DE Southfield
Marshall now teams with McDowell, who transferred from Detroit Loyola, to give the Bluejays one of the best D-lines in the nation.

Deon Drake 6-1, 215 LB Detroit Cass Tech
Versatile, speedy linebacker gives Michigan State a foothold in the talent-rich Cass Tech program.

Chance Stewart 6-6, 205 QB Sturgis
Stewart originally committed to Wisconsin before Brent Bielenia left for Arkansas and is now one of Western's biggest recruits ever.

Maurice Ways 6-3, 193 WR Detroit Country Day
An underrated receiver who will team with Harris to give Michigan incredible size and skill at wide receiver in the coming years.

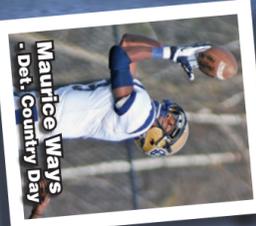
Byron Bullough 6-2, 195 LB Traverse City St. Francis
The next in the line of talented Bulloughs who have been at the heart of the Michigan State defense for years.

Connor Hayes 6-4, 270 OL Traverse City West
Strong and versatile lineman who will be playing in the ACC for Pittsburgh.

Tyler Wieggers 6-4, 213 QB Detroit Country Day
Fugers commitment who pilots a Country Day offense that is as potent as any in the state.



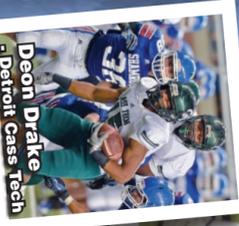
Travis Smith
- Ithaca



Maurice Ways
- Det. Country Day



Ryan Sullivan
- Saginaw Nouvel



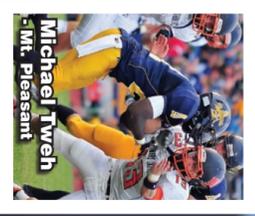
Deon Drake
- Detroit Cass Tech

OTHER SENIORS TO WATCH

H	W	P	School
6-3	205	QB	Ithaca
6-0	181	DB	Clarkston
6-5	240	OL	Grand Rapids Christian
6-5	226	TE	Rochester Adams
5-11	175	DB	Orchard Lake St. Mary
6-5	304	OL	Alma
6-5	280	OL	Zeeland West
6-5	278	DL	Clarkston
6-2	278	DL	Muskegon
5-11	176	DB	Detroit King
6-6	270	DB	Portage Northern
6-4	255	OL	Portage Central
6-5	275	OL	Walled Lake Western
6-2	290	DL	Clarkston
6-2	215	LB	De La Salle Collegiate

H	W	P	School
6-6	270	OL	Berrien Springs
6-7	250	OL	East Kentwood
5-10	210	RB	Detroit Country Day
6-0	215	LB	University of Detroit Jesuit
6-3	225	LB	Lapeer East
6-0	215	RB	Mt. Pleasant
6-2	180	DB	Saginaw
5-11	190	RB	Nouvel Catholic Central
6-2	190	QB	Nouvel Catholic Central
6-1	190	ILB	Nouvel Catholic Central
6-1	200	ILB	Freeland
5-9	155	RB	Freeland
5-11	175	ATH	New Lothrop
6-1	200	DE	Powers Catholic
6-6	230	DE	Garber
6-0	195	RB	Forest Hills Central
6-0	220	RB	Forest Hills Central
6-4	200	WR	Ithaca

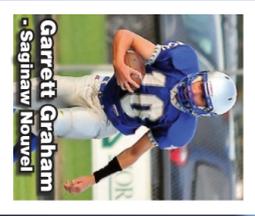
Staff Photos



Michael Tweh
- Mt. Pleasant



Curtis Doyle
- Alma



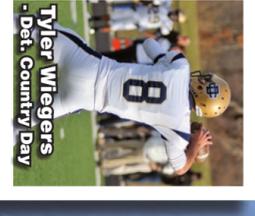
Garrett Graham
- Saginaw Nouvel



Keyon Addison
- Saginaw High



Damon Webb
- Cass Tech



Tyler Wieggers
- Det. Country Day



Kyle Guster
- Freeland

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OK CONFERENCE BLACK

School: Kenowa Hills
Nickname: Knights
Coach: Scott VanEssen
2012 Record: 5-5
Players lost: Cody Ritsema, Dylan Smith, Luke VanEssen, Chad Meister, Mike Pickart
Players returning: Travis Breuker, Zach Evans, Sean Beachnau, Eric Orsinger, Josh Fransted, Chase Dunneback, Malik Swain, Jared Zczesny, Derek Smith
Coach's comment: "We lost a lot of offensive skill players that we have to replace. The kids have been working hard in the off-season, and I know who we put on the field will play hard."
School: Mona Shores
Nickname: Sailors
Coach: Matt Koziak
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Darnell Longmire, Alek Jend, Brandon Stafford, Collin Sullivan, Chris Bradford, David Bloom
Players returning: Tyree Jackson, Marquan Sargent, Diante Moffitt, Cody Schneider, Jake Workman, Hunter Broersma
Coach's comment: "We have a lot of skill kids back and a lot of talented skill kids. If we can get our offensive line to be just average, we can be really good because we can really get the ball on the perimeter."
School: Muskegon
Nickname: Big Reds
Coach: Shane Fairfield
2012 Record: 12-2
Players lost: Antoine Billings, Quincy Crosby, Shandar Ricks, Noah Tozer, Sherman Hodges, Jalen Smith, Ronald Jenkins
Players returning: DeShaun Thrower, Javauntae Thomas, Caleb Washington, John Hall, Justin Foster, Malik King, Ken Finley, Will Hunt, Jacob Sims, John Hall
Coach's comment: "We have seven starters back on defense. They all played in 14 games last season, and to have the mental toughness to play 14 games and the leadership they bring is a big

strength."
School: Reeths-Puffer
Nickname: Rockets
Coach: Kyle Jewett
2012 Record: 3-6
Players lost: Johnderius Betts, Marquis Livers, Kyle Kolbe
Players returning: Garrett Blanshine, Julian Munday, Dereko Riley, Buck Tottingham, Matt Hoover, Corey Plichta, Steve Hanson, Jake Balkema, Josh Buie
Coach's comment: "We have pretty high expectations. This is my second year with the program, and I think everyone has a better grasp of the offense and the defense, and I think we will be that much better."
School: Union
Nickname: Red Hawks
Coach: Tommie Elliott
2012 Record: 1-8
Players lost: Devon Baker, Aaron Wright, Jalen Vasser, Javon Burns, Deseean Herrera
Players returning: Paul Brown, Jacquiese Rogers, Juwan Sterling, Anthony Rios, Jakar Key, Alanta Brown, Taimu Nhytro, Cedric Pennamen, Robert Arrington
Coach's comment: "We have a lot of new faces on defense. We are going to be very aggressive and get after people. We will use our aggressiveness to cause opposing offenses problems."
School: Zeeland East
Nickname: Chix
Coach: Derek Pennington
2012 Record: 9-1
Players lost: Michael Custer, Andrew Bouwman, Josh Blauwkamp, Patrick Banks
Players returning: Spencer Viening, Corey Westra, Jacob Compagner, Bud Cliffman, Gordon Hoonhorst, Josh Hart, Devin Butler, Jacob Gregory, Jadin Hunderman, Seth Nyberg, Austin Bellis, Travis Jacobs
Coach's comment: "I think defensively we return more kids. We are probably further ahead there then we are on offense."

OK CONFERENCE GREEN

School: Byron Center
Nickname: Bulldogs
Coach: Marc Ciscio
2012 Record: 5-4
Players lost: Garrett Cross, Jake Lancaster, Nick Ireland, Tabias Coleman, David Nickles, Brian Marcus, Clay Spaak
Players returning: Al Lake, Josh Lee, Eric Chard, Mickey Sturm, Jake Bylsma, Phil Sattler
School: Hamilton
Nickname: Hawkeys
Coach: Chad Miller
2012 Record: 7-4
Players lost: Ethan Buresh, Jeff Dyke, Trenton Haverdink, Matt Kolean, Nick

Kronemeyer, Connor McMahon
Players returning: Zach VandeVusse, Hayden Smith, Dylan Buresh, Heath Danenberg, Jared Overbeek, Garit Eding
School: Holland
Nickname: Dutch
Coach: Andrew Pratley
2012 Record: 0-9
Players lost: Cory Willis, Sam Sanchez, Cristian Martinez, Joey Seiler, Bobby Drew
Players returning: Mason Rosado, Brandon Davis, Elroy Payne, Connor Borah, Christian Ceeka
School: Holland Christian
Nickname: Maroons
Coach: Jim Caserta
2012 Record: 5-5

Players lost: Kurtis Slenk, Reid Johnson, Ross Schreur, Jon Kraker, Max Gerrits
Players returning: Kyle Steigenga, Caleb VanderLught, Isaac Boes, Matt Dekoock
Coach's comment: "Our lines don't have quite the experience we'd like them to have."
School: Unity Christian
Nickname: Crusaders
Coach: Craig Tibbe
2012 Record: 5-5
Players lost: Josh Bordewyk, Aaron Bossgraff, Nolan Coallier, Palmer Ponstein, Nate Schuitema, Seth VanDyken, Jon Katt
Players returning: Tice Dykstra, McCoy Wondergem, Mike Dykstra, Brad Steenwyk
Notes: Unity plays smart football and pays

attention to fundamentals. While not the biggest team in the league, the Crusaders play with good technique and will again be in the hunt for a playoff spot.
School: Zeeland West
Nickname: Dux
Coach: John Shillito
2012 Record: 7-4
Players lost: Casey Mesbergen, Braden Werley, Jon Pung, Bryn Tiemeyer, Nathaniel Blanton
Players returning: Jordan VanDordt, Marcus Lambert, Danny Bauder, Zach Poppema, Trent Kujawa
Notes: The Dux have plenty of experience and talent. On offense, they have great size with VanDordt (6'5", 280 pounds),

OK CONFERENCE BLUE

School: Allendale
Nickname: Falcons
Coach: Ben Burk
2012 Record: 8-2
Players lost: Mitchell VanFarowe, Kyle Landis, Ian TeGrootenhuis, Keith Rogers, Nick Avink
Players returning: Haiden Majewski, Nate Couterier, Colin Beebe, Dayton Wierenga, Glen Geurink, Hunter Jarsma, Damon Schut, Aaron DeWeerd
Coach's comment: "Our strength is the defensive side of the ball, where we like it to be. We play very aggressive football defensively."
School: Belding
Nickname: Redskins
Coach: Joe Schwander
2012 Record: 2-7
Players lost: Brady Badder, Jake Jones, Cody Zham, Levi Eldred, Michael Stephan, Brendan Zuver
Players returning: Brice Wilker, Kole Hart, Neil McCully, JP Wilmore, Garret Anderson, Garrett Strotheide
Coach's comment: "We have a great group of kids that love football, are fierce competitors, care for their teammates, and have demonstrated a championship work ethic during the off-season."
School: Comstock Park
Nickname: Panthers
Coach: Mark Chapman
2012 Record: 11-2
Players lost: Jake Brown, Blake Mazur, Luke Sullivan, Jack Razmus, John Welson



Belding was 2-7 a year ago. (Submitted Photo)

Players returning: Ryan Gruzka, Jake Bush, Craig Armock, Sam Laroche, Drake Baar, Jack Razmus
Coach's comment: "Our strength is our experience. We have five guys in their third year. That's our strength for sure."
School: Cooopersville
Nickname: Broncos
Coach: Jared Hudson
2012 Record: 4-4
Players lost: Justin Howe, Dan Sherman, Tommy McCarthy, Alex Mervenne, Matt Liefifers, Jimmy Borgman
Players returning: Aaron Curtiss, Clayton Schoenborn, Jack Cunningham, Tucker Kloote, Nate Darcy, Jack Woodcock, Corey Snyder, Logan Panetta, Michael

Becerra
Coach's comment: "We are a real athletic team, not only on the edge with our skilled guys. In the trenches we have some real athletes."
School: Sparta
Nickname: Spartans
Coach: Mike Rivers
2012 Record: 2-7
Players lost: John Donazollo, Luke Snyder, Evan Stubbs, Darrin DeBoer, Riley Kutzlie
Players returning: Peter Momber, Thomas Cheslek, Ryan Rogers, Dylan Ray, Braden La Tour, Shane Miedzelec, Nick Priest, Adrian Garza, Christian Pangborn
Coach's comment: "Our goal this season is to improve, and I think we're going to improve. The kids are buying into the system."
School: Wyoming
Nickname: Wolves
Coach: Tom White
2012 Record: 5-4
Players lost: Jack Rozema, Hunter Halas, Stephen Gietzen, Steven Talsma, Chad Barber
Players returning: Sully Goodman, Rodney Johnson, Juanya Duncan, Alex Ramirez, Jurquan Harris, Jamall Cooley, Derek Fry, Brian Hallum, Draian Brooks
Coach's comment: "I think we'll be as competitive as we were last year. I like our attitude a lot this year. The kids are working hard and are enjoying winning."

OK CONFERENCE WHITE



Lowell's Noel Dean and the Red Arrows have had their share of success over the last 20-plus years and don't be surprised if they are fighting for another D2 title this season. (File Photo)

School: Caledonia
Nickname: Fighting Scots
Coach: Steve Uyl
2012 Record: 9-4
Players lost: Ryan Zoet, Isaac Andrusiak, Garrett Hubbell, Heath Hoogerhyde, Tanner Ellens
Players returning: Matt Delaney, Zach Zoet, Tagg Huver, Jake Vanderveen, Eddie Kelly, Landon Tompkins, Kobe Wilson, Jon Hubbell, Michael Andrusiak, Logan Soule
School: East Grand Rapids
Nickname: Pioneers
Coach: Pete Stuursma
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Gunner Elder, Jahaan Brown, Marcus Hall, Chris Dickow
Players returning: Carter Masek, Conor Conaboy, Troy Gotch, James Eerdmans, Stephen Gillispie, Mikey Roth, Tre Fields, Colin Grogan
School: Forest Hills Central
Nickname: Rangers
Coach: Tim Rogers
2012 Record: 5-4
Players lost: Justin Chopp, Spencer Nehls, Collin Schlosser, Nick Lamica, Chris Bosscher, Hunter Folkertsma
Players returning: Zach Walker, Patrick Donovan, Alex VanVossen, John Nutter, Brett Miller, Parker Tillman, Josh Lamica

School: Grand Rapids Christian
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Don Fellows
2012 Record: 13-1
Players lost: Alex VanDeVusse, Christian VanDeBergh, Davaris Collier, Zach Crouch, Alex Korhorn, Matt Hall
Players returning: Drake Harris, Tommy Doles, Dwayne Barfield, Sammy Kuiper, Jack Bates, Qi' Ante Ewing, Mitch Damstra, Juwan Jarnegan
School: Lowell
Nickname: Red Arrows
Coach: Pete Stuursma
2012 Record: 8-3
Players lost: Dan Dyer, Pierce Watkins, Ryan Schaffer, Shannon Massey
Players returning: Alex Kaminski, Jeff Houston, Zach Kaywood, Josiah Buys, Matt Ritsma, Ben Bigham, Kyle Blough, Josh Colegrove, Jake Stephens, Dillon Brower
School: Jenison
Nickname: Wildcats
Coach: Todd Kolster
2012 Record: 0-9
Players lost: Collin Nyboer, Connor Blanch, Alec Withrow, Austin Duval, Kyle Chestnut, Logan Johnson, Ian Koziateck
Players returning: Darian Dismukes, Ben Deritter, Timmy Jirtle, Luke Diekevers, Jake Bailey, CJ VanTimmeren, Brett Bethke

OK CONFERENCE SILVER

School: Calvin Christian
Nickname: Squires
Coach: Tom Hochhalter
2012 Record: 7-3
Players lost: Andrew Woodfin, Nick Reed, Caleb Friends, Luke Harkema
Players returning: Drew Zwiers, Jamie Bristol, Austin Johnson, Drew Besselsen, David Kuiper
School: Godwin Heights
Nickname: Wolverines
Coach: Andy Dent
Players returning: Essa Kella, Jacob Jordan, Jared Myers, Phillip Lam, Anthony Vazquez, Tyler Hindenach, RJ Henry
School: Hopkins
Nickname: Vikings
Coach: Cody Francis
2012 Record: 9-1
Players lost: Matt Modreske, Cody Brainard, Nick Holshoe, Joey McPeck
Players returning: Danny Tubergan, Dylan Madigan, Dylan Wilson, Wyatt Frank, Brendan Miller, Alex Roberts
School: Kelloggsville
Nickname: Rockets
Coach: Don Galster
2012 Record: 2-7
Players lost: Jordan Shannon, TJ Burnett, Alston Ferrell, LC Phillips, Sean Branagan

Players returning: Jarryd Gauthier, Alex Zibanic, Jon Mulero, Austin Spratling, Mark Crum, Andre Price, Josh Rocafort
School: Kent City
Nickname: Eagles
Coach: Tom Krueger
2012 Record: 2-7
Players lost: Tyler Kruis, Justin Phillips, Zach Westphal, Arnold Chavez
Players returning: Jake Krueger, Chad Brown, Kyle Boyd, Shane Rodenburg, Dalton Dayton, KJ Herreman
School: Lee
Nickname: Rebels
Coach: Ty Elander
2012 Record: 3-6
Players lost: Harrison Yang, Edward Vasquez, Richie Perez, Anthony Pena
Players returning: Karon Patrick, Jamie Cedillo, Xavier Baez, David Gutierrez, Javier Garcia
School: NorthPointe Christian
Nickname: Mustangs
Coach: Tim Swore
2012 Record: 6-4
Players lost: Michael Lewis, Austin Miedema, Austin Van De Weide
Players returning: Nick Swore, Joey Stevens, Preston Huckabey, Jordan Douglas, Thomas Blackport, Kenny Willekes, Nick Anderson

OK CONFERENCE GOLD

School: Catholic Central
Nickname: Cougars
Coach: Trip Gallery
2012 Record: 10-1
Players lost: Joe Craven, Nate Hollern, Noah Sullivan, Ryheem Stokes, Dominic Paiz
Players returning: Joe Nixon, Nick Marosi, Austin Gordon, Colin Moran, Luke Ens, Jake VanderWal, Calvin Bischoff, Daniel Drummond
School: Hastings
Nickname: Saxons
Coach: Fred Rademacher
2012 Record: 6-4
Players lost: Kenny Cross, Jon French, Michael Eastman, Stefan Horvat, Eric Hart
Players returning: Stephen Shaffer, Jason Slaughter, Taylor Horton, Nate Powoski, Logan Clements, Miguel Arjona, Zach McMahon
School: Thornapple Kellogg
Nickname: Trojans
Coach: Chad Ruger
2012 Record: 3-6
Players lost: Addison Schipper, Danny Dykstra, Pete Westra, Aaron Ordway, J Bronkema, Cole Gahon
Players returning: Garrett Harris, Connor Collier, Dan Yates, Clay Francisco, Devin Sloan, Kamryn Kidder,

Jacob Nelson
School: Grand Rapids Ottawa Hills
Nickname: Bengals
Coach: Chuck Ruffin
2012 Record: 3-6
Players lost: Quinton Pulley, Jordyn Guy, Eric Reyes
Players returning: Rodney Davis, Sam Beal, Keshawn Wilkerson, Rajamon Watkins, Greg Epps, Elijah Townsend, Jeffrey Hughes
School: South Christian
Nickname: Sailors
Coach: Mark Tamminga
2012 Record: 11-3
Players lost: Brandon Kuiphof, Andy Grasman, Jason Miller, Seth VanEngen, Jordan Sundelius
Players returning: Jon Wassink, Travis Steenwyk, Sam Heyboer, Todd Postma, David Boomsma
School: Wayland Union
Nickname: Wildcats
Coach: Jerry Diorio
2012 Record: 0-9
Players lost: Taylor Winger, Jerry Janson, Taylor Collins
Players returning: Trevor Clausen, Quentin Sweeney, Dominic LaHuis, Mike Miklusciak, Mike Schanedorf, Colton VanDyke, Justin Eastman, Jack Phillips

OK CONFERENCE BRONZE

School: Cedar Springs
Nickname: Red Hawks
Coach: Gus Kapolka
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Cam Cooper, Baylee Sterling, Andy DePiazza, Jason Vietti
Players returning: Austin Hilyer, Dylan Block, Jordan Johnson, Jeff Newland, Cameron Klompstra
School: Forest Hills Eastern
Nickname: Hawks
Coach: Eddie Ostipow
2012 Record: 1-8
Players lost: Rylan Prafftko, Kyler Kregel

Players returning: Luke Wilkerson, Sam Harrison, John McReady, Kyle Kregal, David Andrusiak, Trevvor Barclay
School: Forest Hills Northern
Nickname: Huskies
Coach: Jeff Rapelje
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Nick Wassenaar, Karum Abdelgader, Mike Hogan
Players returning: Jacob Howe, Marcus Matthews, Bob Halso, Wyatt Batdorff, Trey Mitcham
School: Greenville
Nickname: Yellow Jackets
Coach: Dave Moore
2012 Record: 4-5
Players lost: Curtis Heppie, Miguel Nieto, Greg Krusniak, Tyler Rasmussen, Dakota Sherrick
Players returning: Carter Stephens, Luke Bontrager, Tegan Boni, Jordan Dassinger, Chase Harrington, Brennan Ramirez
School: Northview
Nickname: Wildcats
Coach: Greg Ganfield
2012 Record: 7-3

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HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCENE'S TOP JUNIORS TO WATCH PRESENTED BY:

TOP JUNIORS TO WATCH

Saginaw Heritage's Brian Cole Leads Talented Group



Brian Cole
- Saginaw Heritage

- Brian Cole 6-2, 190 RB Heritage**
A dynamic athlete who is already being heavily recruited by Michigan, Michigan State, Ohio State, and Tennessee.
- Kyonta Stallworth 6-4, 270 OL St. Clair Shores South Lake**
A talented offensive lineman who is being recruited by UCLA and Florida among others.
- David Moorman 275 OL Northville**
A huge and talented tackle that Big 10 teams are zeroing in on.
- Jayru Campbell 187 QB Detroit Cass Tech**
Multi-talented quarterback has led Cass Tech to back-to-back state titles his first two high school seasons.
- Tyson Smith 5-10, 175 DB Orchard Lake St. Mary**
The latest in a long line of talented defensive backs to come out of the powerful Catholic League.
- Mike Weber 5-10, 205 RB Detroit Cass Tech**
A punishing, explosive running back who is drawing the attention of a number of high-profile D1 powers.
- Ray Buford 5-11, 170 DB Southfield**
A big-play receiver and standout defensive back who already has Michigan and Ohio State leading the recruiting charge.
- Jon Wassink 6-2, 178 QB South Christian**
This talented quarterback led his team to a state title last fall and opens this season against powerful Grand Rapids Christian.
- Josh Alabi 6-4, 260 DE Detroit Cass Tech**
The Technicians have a stockpile of talent in both the junior and senior classes, and Alabi is a big-time pass rusher.
- John Kelly 5-10, 170 DB Oak Park**
Defensive back who is the most talented player at Oak Park since former MSU tailback Edwin Baker.



Alex Grace - Swan Valley
Jayru Campbell - Cass Tech
Mike Weber - Cass Tech

OTHER JUNIORS TO WATCH

	H	W	P	School
Tyree Jackson	6-4	173	QB	Mona Shores
Qi'ante Ewing	6-1	229	LB	Grand Rapids Christian
Alex Malzone	6-2	185	QB	Brother Rice
Tyriq Thompson	6-0	206	DB	Detroit King
Grant Perry	5-11	175	DB	Brother Rice
Cole Chewins	6-7	210	TE	Clarkston
Jake Johnson	6-1	184	QB	DeWitt
Jacques Pougnet	6-2	190	LB	Powers Catholic
Keith Jones	6-1	225	LB	Detroit Cass Tech
Damon Terry	6-0	185	RB	Lansing Everett
Alex Grace	6-1	230	RB	Swan Valley
Taylor Reaume	6-0	220	LB	Swan Valley

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2013 may be the year of the repeat in Michigan high school football, as several of last year's state champions are primed to repeat, three-peat or possibly four-peat.

With the start of the state playoffs a little over two months away, let's take a stab at guessing who will make it to Ford Field this November.

DIVISION 1

Detroit Cass Tech has won the last two Division 1 state titles, and the Technicians are a favorite to make it three in a row this season. Several outstate teams have the talent to make a run at Cass Tech, including Rockford and Traverse City Central, while Clarkston looks to have a loaded squad from Oakland County.

Pick to win: Detroit Cass Tech

DIVISION 2

Brother Rice and Muskegon staged a dramatic Division 2 state title game last November, and the two long-time powerhouses may meet again this season. Both teams return plenty of talent and will be favored to make it back to Ford Field behind experienced quarterbacks.

Pick to win: Brother Rice

DIVISION 3

Grand Rapids Christian captured the D3 title last year in dramatic fashion with an overtime win against Orchard Lake St. Mary's. With the return of all-anything wide receiver Drake Harris and a host of other talented players, Christian is an overwhelming favorite to add another state title this season. However, St. Mary's, Zeeland West, DeWitt, and Lakeshore will have something to say about that.

Pick to win: Grand Rapids Christian

DIVISION 4

Grand Rapids South Christian won the D4 title in a rout over Detroit Country Day last year. The Sailors accomplished the feat without standout quarterback Jon Wassink, who missed the game due to injury. Wassink is back this year as a junior and it better than ever. However, Country Day also returns a wealth of talent.

Pick to win: Detroit Country Day



DIVISION 5

Portland stunned the experts by overcoming every hurdle enroute to the D5 title last November. Anything could happen again this season in Division 5, where Powers Catholic, Menominee, Oakridge, Reed City, Grand Rapids West Catholic and Portland again have solid squads.

Pick to win: Grand Rapids West Catholic

DIVISION 6

Ithaca has dominated Division 6 over the past three years, and with plenty of firepower back this season, the Yellowjackets are looking for the four-peat. Quarterback Travis Smith is as talented as any in the state. Ithaca surrounds him with plenty of talent, including running back Bryan Shaw and wide receiver Logan Hessbrook.

Pick to win: Ithaca

Despite graduating many of its seniors from its third straight D6 championship team, Ithaca still is loaded and should make another run at a state title this season. (L-R) Tyler Gibson, Jacob Barnes, Markes Gadlen, Bradley Martyn and Josh Capen will be missed. (Randy Miniard Photo)

DIVISION 7

Ishpeming captured last year's D7 state title, and the upper peninsula powerhouse will again be a force. Look for Traverse City St. Francis to regroup and make a serious run at claiming another state title. Lake City will have a potent offense, while Pewamo-Westphalia will carry the banner for mid-Michigan.

Pick to win: Traverse City St. Francis

DIVISION 8

Harbor Beach rode a prolific offense to the state title, as it defeated Beal City in the title game. The D8 title will again be a wide-open battle this fall. Traditional powers Mendon and Beal City are solid once again, while New Lothrop has a potent offense. Muskegon Catholic Central also looks strong from the shores of Lake Michigan.

Pick to win: Mendon

SPORTS SCENE COLLEGE TEAM PREVIEWS



CENTRAL MICHIGAN

CHIPPEWAS

During his third season as head coach of the Central Michigan football team, Dan Enos may have heard whispers on the Mount Pleasant campus that he was in the hot seat and needed a big season to save his job. After all, the Chippewas were just coming off a great run led by then-CMU coaches Brian Kelly and Butch Jones. Fans of Central Michigan were used to wins and Mid American Conference championships, and after a 3-6 start in 2012, it was getting hot. But a win over Big Ten's Iowa and four straight wins to end the season gave Enos and his staff a little breathing room.

THE SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time
8/31	U of M	3:30 p.m.
9/7	NHU	3 p.m.
9/14	UNLV	10 p.m.
9/21	TOLEDO	Noon
9/28	NC State	TBA
10/5	Miami	1 p.m.
10/12	Ohio	2 p.m.
10/19	NIU	3 p.m.
11/6	Ball State	8 p.m.
11/16	Western	Noon
11/23	UMASS	TBA
11/29	EASTERN	TBA

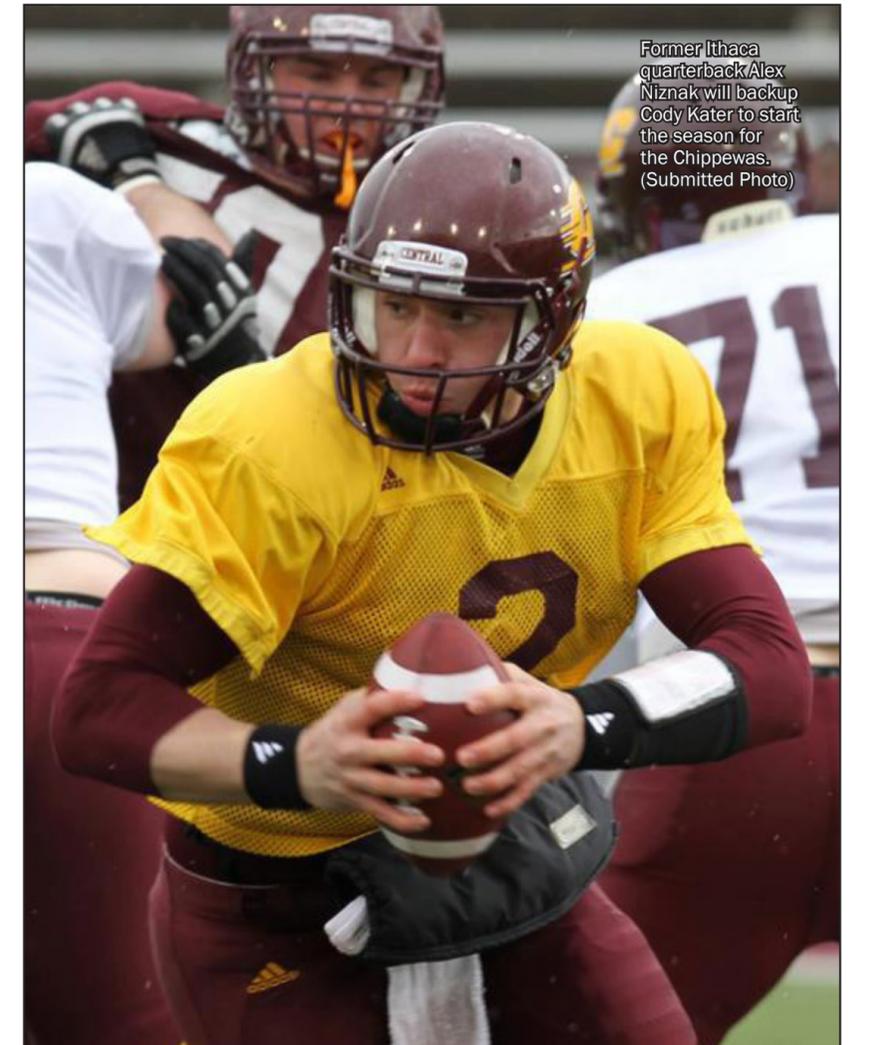
ALL CAPS HOME GAMES

OFFENSE: The Central Michigan offense was pretty balanced last year, thanks to the throwing of quarterback Ryan Radcliff, who finished with 3,158 yards and 23 touchdowns through the air. Add the running of Zurlon Tipton, who finished with 1,531 yards and 19 touchdowns on the ground. Radcliff is gone, but Tipton returns for his senior season. The only other quarterback to see action last year was junior Cody Kater, who completed two of four passes for 12 yards, so replacing Radcliff is key. And don't forget the loss of tackle Eric Fischer, who was the first pick in the NFL draft in April.

DEFENSE: The defense returns seven starters, including junior linebacker Justin Cherocci, who finished with 132 tackles (team leader) and 2.5 sacks. But it did lose the heart and soul of its backfield in defensive back Jaheel Addae, who led the team with four interceptions. In a pass-happy league like the MAC, strong defensive backfield play is key.

OUR TAKE: One cannot ignore that the Chippewas caught fire at the end of the 2012 season with four straight wins. Maybe Enos and his staff have their players in place to finally take off and start competing for MAC championship again. But quarterback and offensive tackle are two key positions to lose and they are tough to replace. Maybe another slow start is in store - Central Michigan has a tough opening test against Michigan at the Big House.

COACH'S COMMENT: "We are very excited. The way we finished last year gave us a lot of positive momentum going into the off-season. We look at our roster now, and at every position there is competition. We are to the point where the older guys are playing and the younger guys are backing them up and working their way up the system." Enos said at MAC Media Day.



Former Ithaca quarterback Alex Niznak will backup Cody Kater to start the season for the Chippewas. (Submitted Photo)

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2013 University of Michigan Preview



Last year was a season of near misses for the Michigan football team. The Wolverines just missed beating rivals Notre Dame and Ohio State and just missed representing the Legends Division in the Big Ten Championship game by losing to Nebraska. With some strong recruiting classes under his belt, third-year coach Brady Hoke hopes to turn those near misses into hits in 2013.

OFFENSE: The Wolverines lost one of the most dynamic players in their history when quarterback Denard Robinson was drafted into the NFL by the Jacksonville Jaguars in April. Replacing him will be red-shirt junior Devin Gardner, who may be just as dynamic, but who is a little larger, weighing in at 210 pounds. The two quarterbacks posted comparable stats in 2012 - Robinson threw for 1,319 yards and nine touchdowns and Gardner threw for 1,219 yards and 11 TDs. But what Hoke and his offensive staff will miss most about Robinson is his running. Last year, Robinson ran for 1,266 yards and scored seven times on the ground. What's nice for Gardner is that red-shirt senior left tackle Taylor Lewan decided to come back for his last year in Ann Arbor, instead of going to the NFL, where he would have most likely been a first-round selection.

DEFENSE: The Michigan defense should be on solid ground, even though the unit lost five players to graduation. The defense has at least two players returning at each level (line, linebacker, and defensive backfield), including red-shirt junior linebacker Jake Ryan, who led the team in tackles with 88 and in sacks with 4.5. Special teams should also be solid, as kicker Brendan Gibbons and share-time punters Will Hagerup and Matt Wile return.

OUR TAKE: There is no reason that the Wolverines can't make a strong push to post double digit wins and make it to the Big Ten Championship game. Michigan hosts its three biggest games this year (Notre Dame, Nebraska, and Ohio State), and only has one road game until almost mid-October. That sets up for some good momentum.

COACH'S COMMENT: "I like our football team. I usually don't say that. I said it after the spring. I will continue to say it, because I like how they've handled themselves on the field and off the field so far this summer. I like their work ethic and how they've represented Michigan in a lot of ways," Hoke said at Big Ten Media Day.

THE SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time
8/31	CMU	3:30 p.m.
9/7	NOTRE DAME	8: p.m.
9/14	AKRON	3:30 p.m.
9/21	Ucon	TBA
10/5	MINN.	3:30 p.m.
10/12	Penn State	5:00 p.m.
10/19	INDIANA	3:30 p.m.
11/2	Michigan State	TBA
11/9	NEBRASKA	TBA
11/16	Northwestern	TBA
11/23	Iowa	TBA
11/30	OSU	TBA
12/7	Big Ten Game	TBA

ALL CAPS HOME GAMES



2013 Eastern Michigan Preview



After an impressive 2011 season that saw the Eagles go 6-6 overall and 4-4 in the Mid American Conference and saw coach Ron English awarded MAC Coach of the Year, Eastern Michigan took a step back last year and finished with a 2-10 overall record and a 1-7 mark in the MAC. It has not been easy for English and the Eagles to win - he has just 10 wins in his first four years at the helm. Conference respectability is what all EMU players and fans are looking for -- something they got in 2011 and lost in 2012.

OFFENSE: Last year, the Eagles had two players who saw considerable time under center - Alex Gillett, who played five games and Tyler Benz, who played the other seven. Benz, who threw for 1,511 yards and 14 touchdowns in his time on the field, is back as a red-shirt junior, while Gillett graduated. Eastern Michigan also has its leading rusher back in junior Bronson Hill, who rushed for 944 yards and six touchdowns.

Some key pieces are back, but it remains to be seen if they are enough. The Eagles will need better line play, but they can get that with some decent returning talent.

DEFENSE: The Eastern Michigan defense lost two of its top three tacklers from last year. The only returner from that group is junior strong safety Donald Coleman, who ended 2012 with 88 tackles. Aside from Coleman, eight other lettermen do return on the defense, but improving a unit that gave up 5,747 yards and 37.6 points per game last year is critical. The MAC is too tough not to have a unit that plays some defense.

OUR TAKE: Winning at Eastern Michigan is not easy, not even for a successful coach like English, who has a great resume and pedigree. The Eagles did prove they can win in 2011, and they would like to repeat that this year. This team can score some points, but so can their opponents. It could be another long year in Ypsilanti.

THE SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time
8/31	HOWARD	6 p.m.
9/7	Penn State	Noon
9/14	Rutgers	1 p.m.
9/21	BALL STATE	1 p.m.
10/5	Buffalo	Noon
10/12	Army	Noon
10/19	OHIO	1 p.m.
10/26	NIU	2:30 p.m.
11/2	Toledo	7 p.m.
11/9	WESTERN	1 p.m.
11/23	BOWLING GREEN	1 p.m.
11/29	Central Michigan	TBA

ALL CAPS HOME GAMES

COACH'S COMMENT: "You know I've been doing this 21 years, and there are always expectations, but more than that, I'm concerned with developing players. I'm in a role where I can have a significant impact in developing players," English told the Mount Pleasant Morning Sun recently.



Center: Michigan QB Devin Gardner is expected to have a big season for the Wolverines in 2013: Left: Fitz Touissant is expected to be back at full strength after suffering a broken leg last season. (Submitted Photo)

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2013 Michigan State University Preview



The 2012 season started out well for the Michigan State football team, as the Spartans ground out a solid 17-13 win over perennial power and the team-you-don't-want-to-face Boise State. That was followed the next week by a trouncing of Central Michigan, a team that has always caused Michigan State problems. But from there it went badly, and the team lost four of the next six games, including a heartbreaking 12-10 loss at Michigan. The good news for coach Mark Dantonio, who is in his seventh year as coach, is that he has a lot of returning players who felt the pain of 2012.

THE SCHEDULE		
Date	Opponent	Time
8/30	.....WMU	8 p.m.
9/7	.....SOUTH FLORIDA	Noon
9/14	.....YSU	2 p.m.
9/21	.....Notre Dame	3:30 p.m.
10/5	.....Iowa	Noon
10/12	.....INDIANA	Noon
10/19	.....PURDUE	TBA
10/26	.....Illinois	3:30 p.m.
11/2	.....MICHIGAN	TBA
11/16	.....Nebraska	TBA
11/23	.....Northwestern	TBA
11/30	.....MINN	TBA
12/7	.....Big Ten Game	TBA

ALL CAPS HOME GAMES

OFFENSE: The Spartans return nine players on their offense, including four of five on the offensive line and senior quarterback Andrew Maxwell.

The problem for Dantonio and his offensive staff is that the team lost workhorse running back Le'Veon Bell, who is now playing for the Pittsburgh Steelers in the NFL. Bell ran for 1,793 yards and 12 touchdowns last year, and since Michigan State likes to run the ball, finding his replacement is a must. Maxwell did have solid stats last year, throwing for 2,606 yards and 13 touchdowns, but a running game is needed in East Lansing, and it will be interesting to see that play out.

DEFENSE: The defense also has a lot of experience, as seven players return, including senior linebacker Max Bullough, who led the team in tackles with 111.

The team's sack leader, William Gholston, is playing in Tampa Bay now.

He had 4.5 sacks last year, so finding a push up front is another 'must' this fall. In all, though, defense is always played in East Lansing, and that should be no different this year with a defensive-minded head coach.

OUR TAKE: The schedule sets up for Michigan State to have a pretty solid season.

The Spartans only have one really tough game in their first eight, and that is the September 21 game at Notre Dame. After the first eight games, Michigan State hosts Michigan November 2, and there will likely be more than just state bragging rights on the line that day. Consecutive games against Michigan and at Nebraska and Northwestern may limit the Spartans to eight wins this year.

COACH'S COMMENT: "We're excited about 2013 coming and look forward to it. We've got a lot of experience back. [We've been to] six straight bowl games, and the last two we were able to win. There is a feeling, I think, among our football team that a foundation has been laid, but we're still chasing a dream right now," Dantonio said at Big Ten Media Day.



Michigan State sophomore Aaron Burbridge is expected to have a break out season for the Spartans in 2013. (Submitted Photo)

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2013 Western Michigan University Preview



After eight seasons of walking the sidelines as head coach at Western Michigan, Bill Cubit was let go after a disappointing 4-8 season last year. Replacing him is P.J. Fleck, the former Northern Illinois wide receiver. Fleck, who played at NIU from 1999-2003, doesn't have any head coaching experience, but he does have a lot of offensive experience. He was a wide receiver coach at Northern Illinois and Rutgers and for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the last position he held before coming to WMU. Maybe a fresh young face who knows the MAC is just what the Broncos need to turn around a tough 2012 season.

OFFENSE: The 2012 Western Michigan offense was thrown for a loop when starting quarterback Alex Carder hurt his throwing hand and was lost for part of the season. Junior Tyler Van Tubbergen came in and played well, throwing for 1,825 yards and 15 touchdowns in six games. Van Tubbergen is back for his final year, and he will have help, as both of Western Michigan's top running backs from 2012 are back. Dareyon Chance and Brian Fields ran for nearly 1,300 yards and six touchdowns combined, so pieces are in place.

DEFENSE: This unit has a lot of returning talent from last year, including the top three leading tacklers in senior linebacker Johnnie Simon (103 tackles), junior LB Justin Currie (98), and senior LB Desmond Bozeman (90). This unit gave up 352 points last year (29.7 per game average), but look for improvement with three linebackers who have a lot of snaps under

their belts coming back. But like all MAC teams, how they play in the defensive backfield is key in a throwing league like this.

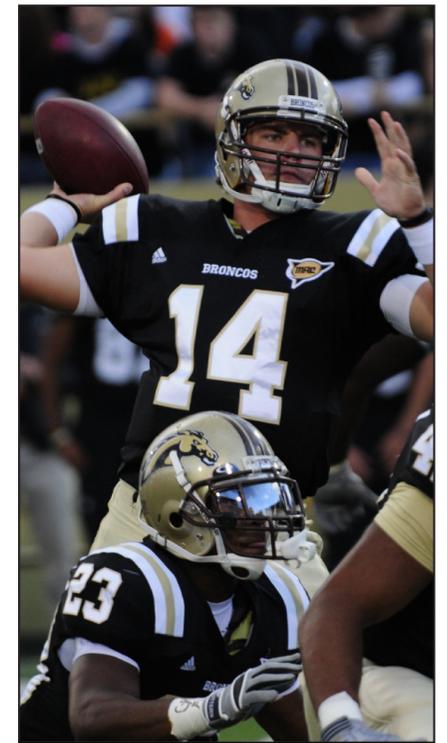
OUR TAKE: The Broncos do have some senior leadership coming back in key positions all over the field, but a tough early schedule

against three Big Ten teams may stunt some growth for a first-year coach and his staff. This team will win some games, but maybe not enough to compete for a MAC title.

COACH'S COMMENT: "There are a lot of people in this [program] that haven't changed in 30 years. It's hard to change after 30 years. Now you've got this young punk coming in here and telling you need that change and here is where we are going. Here is the direction we are going, and hold on tight," Fleck told the Mount Pleasant Morning Sun at MAC Media Day.

THE SCHEDULE		
Date	Opponent	Time
8/30	.....Michigan State	8 p.m.
9/7	.....NICHOLLS STATE	7 p.m.
9/14	.....Northwestern	9 p.m.
9/21	.....Iowa	TBA
9/28	.....KENT STATE	7 p.m.
10/5	.....Toledo	3 p.m.
10/12	.....BUFFALO	2 p.m.
10/19	.....BALL STATE	2 p.m.
10/26	.....Umass	3 p.m.
11/9	.....Eastern	p.m.
11/16	.....CENTRAL	Noon
11/26	.....NIU	7 p.m.

ALL CAPS HOME GAMES



Alex Carder was injured most of last season for the Broncos but Tyler Van Tubbergen stepped in and did a solid job as a backup a year ago. (File Photo)

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2013 Detroit Lions Preview



2013 Detroit Lions Preview



Make or break year for Lions, Schwartz

The hot seat is warranted. Yes, Jim Schwartz inherited an absolute mess in 2009 and in two seasons got the team to the playoffs for the first time in 12 years. But that season, the Lions started a white hot 5-0. They finished 5-7 the rest of the way. From that perspective, Schwartz's Lions appear less like a rising franchise and more like the same old downtrodden one that has just one playoff victory since the 1950s.

There's speculation that Martin Mayhew, who took over as general manager midway through 2008, could also be on thin ice. But the problem in Detroit isn't talent as much as how the talent is being used. The fact is that the Lions' best player just broke Jerry Rice's single-season receiving record, yet they still finished at least six games behind every team in their division. That suggests something is wrong their approach.

***Which player is under the most pressure?**

After signing a contract extension that averages \$18 million per year for the next five years, all the pressure is clearly mounted on the shoulders of Matthew Stafford. Even though signing him with two years remaining on his rookie contract will clear cap room and most likely save the Lions a bigger contract in the future, the fans and local media won't see it that way.

The contract extension pays \$41.5 million in guaranteed money to a quarterback who is coming off a season in which he completed fewer than 60 percent of his passes and threw just three more touchdowns than interceptions.

With more money comes more responsibility, and it is Stafford's responsibility to put a product on the field that more closely resembles the 2011 playoff team than the 4-12 team of a season ago. Stafford will definitely handle the pressure and get the Lions moving in a positive direction.

***What is the team's biggest obstacle?**

This is interesting, because the defensive line was supposed to be the Lions' biggest strength entering the 2012 season. Now, it's their biggest unknown. Ndamukong Suh posted eight sacks last season, but for a second straight season, he posted just half of the 66 total tackles of his dominant rookie season.

Speaking of sacks, the team's leader in 2012, Cliff Avril, left via free-agency, and defensive end Kyle Vanden Bosch has yet to reach an agreement with the Lions. When Detroit drafted Nick Fairley in 2011,

the defensive line was supposed to become the most feared in all of football, but last year the Lions ranked just 20th in total sacks and gave up the 16th-most rushing yards in the league. They addressed this concern with their fifth overall pick in April's draft by selecting Ziggy Ansah from Brigham Young University. But Ansah is extremely raw and may take a full season to develop into anything more than a situational pass rusher.

***Which player stands the best chance to be a breakout performer?**

Ryan Broyles tore his ACL for the second time in just 13 months in December but showed promise in just three starts with the team as a rookie. Despite fighting for playing time with Titus Young and Nate Burleson, Broyles managed to haul in 22 receptions for 310 yards and two touchdowns in limited action before undergoing season-ending knee surgery. Now, without Young and with Burleson entering his 11th season, Broyles will be counted on even more, but he must remain healthy, and that is a big question mark.

***What is the team's biggest addition/loss from the previous season?**

Reggie Bush was a nice addition to this offense, but he is far from the bell cow running back Detroit has been missing. Only the Cardinals have rushed the ball fewer times than Detroit since Jim Schwartz took over in 2009, and Bush isn't going to change that. Bush leads all backs in receptions since entering the NFL in 2006 and will fill the void left by Jahvid Best, who caught 85 passes in 22 career starts before concussions forced an early retirement. So rather than trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, the Lions identified who they are offensively and targeted the best receiving running back available on the market. That will pay dividends for both Bush and the Lions.

With all that said, the signing of safety Glover Quin may actually prove more beneficial in the long run. Having to face Aaron Rodgers and the pass-happy Jay Cutler twice each season means they better have a lockdown secondary, and Quin gives them stability at the safety position that they haven't had in years.

***What's the outlook for 2013?**

Defining success for a team that has won just 22 games in the past four seasons and has just one winning season this century is a little bit tricky. Anything less than a playoff berth will be disappointing and could very easily mean the end of Jim Schwartz's tenure.

The Lions' 4-12 record was a huge step backward after posting three consecutive seasons of improving records. In a win-now league, the Lions could have been justified in firing Schwartz after last season, but he was given a lifeline and what is probably a pretty short leash.

It's postseason or bust for Schwartz and the Lions.



Reggie Bush is a huge addition to the Detroit Lions and should fit right in with the Lions offense in 2013. Bush is another weapon Matthew Stafford can rely on coming out of the backfield this season for Detroit. (Lions Photos)



Lions reach agreement with ACC; will host bowl game

DETROIT – The Detroit Lions announced earlier this month that they have entered into a six-year partnership with the Atlantic Coast Conference for a bowl game that will be played at Ford Field beginning in 2014. The team previously announced a six-year partnership with the Big Ten Conference. The game will be officially named once sponsorship agreements are in place. The inaugural game is tentatively scheduled for December 30, 2014 (pending TV broadcast schedule).

"We are excited to finalize our conference partnerships for this new bowl game in Detroit," said Detroit Lions team president Tom Lewand. "Having representatives from two elite conferences like the ACC and Big Ten will provide fans with an exciting college football postseason matchup for years to come."

At the end of each college football season, each conference will determine its

team representative after discussion between bowl and conference officials to create the best possible matchup.

"The new bowl game in Detroit has great potential and support in being hosted by the Detroit Lions, which is a first-class organization," said ACC Commissioner John Swofford. "We look forward to another postseason matchup with the Big Ten and the opportunity to play at Ford Field."

The Detroit Lions become only the second NFL team (Houston Texans, 2006) to officially host and operate a college football bowl game. The team's entertainment division, DLI Entertainment, has promoted multiple large scale shows and events at Ford Field, including seven consecutive sold out Kenny Chesney concerts, Taylor Swift, The Basketball (2003), 2008 NCAA Men's Basketball Regionals, 2009 NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four, and the 2010 NCAA Men's Ice Hockey Frozen Four.

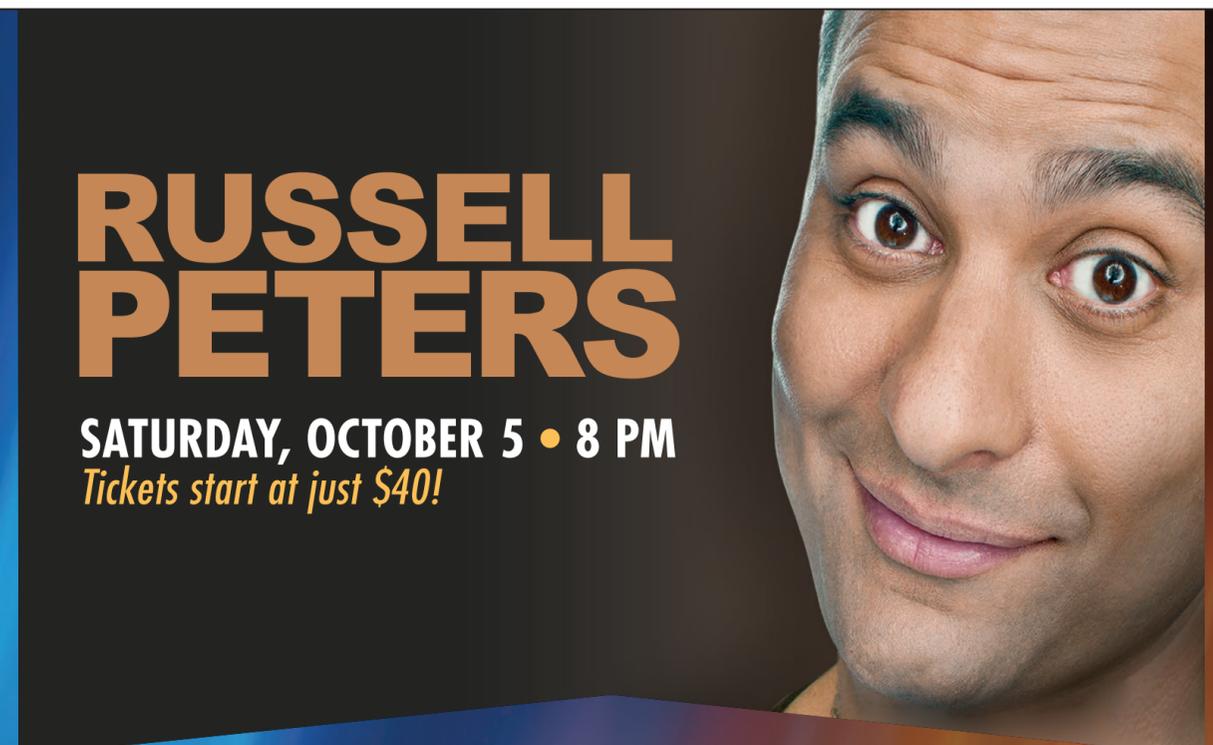
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THE GLIAC

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Football Preview:

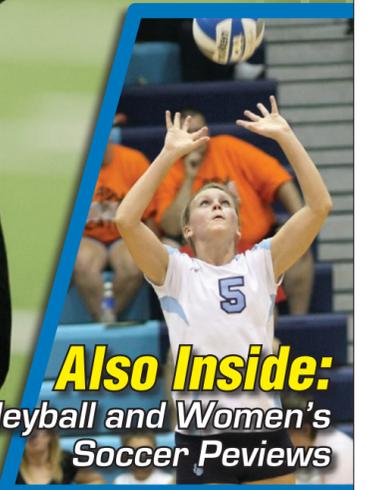
Teams Gearing Up For Division II Supremacy; Shot At DII Crown



Jeff Janis:
Saginaw Valley's All-Everything Receiver Will Likely Be Playing On Sundays



Saginaw Valley Men's Soccer Looks To Repeat Magical Season



Also Inside:
Volleyball and Women's Soccer Previews



Fall Preview 2013

www.gliac.org

THE GLIAC Fall Preview 2013

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THE GLIAC Male and Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year presented by:

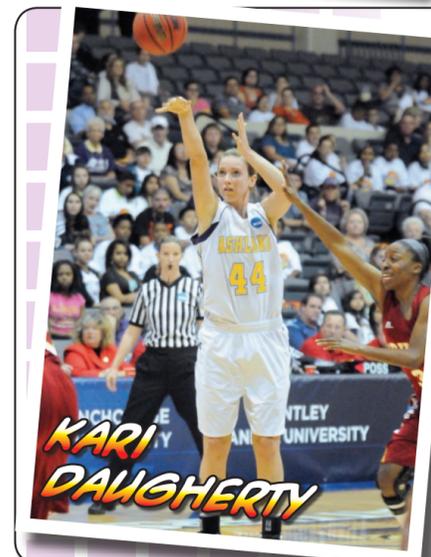


SAGINAW ATHLETIC CLUB



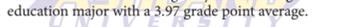
GLIAC Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year

Name: Garrett Grey
(Grahamsville, N.Y./Tri Valley Central)
School: Ashland University
Sport: Track and field thrower
Season: Grey won the first national championship of his career in the hammer at the 2013 NCAA D-II outdoor track and field championships and he was third in the weight throw at the NCAA indoor championships. He played a large role in the Eagles finishing as the runner-up at both meets. Outdoors, he won the national championship at 231-3. That was over 13 feet ahead of the second place finisher. Grey completed his career as a six-time All-American. The senior was a Capital One First Team Academic All-American and he won his second "GLIAC Commissioner's Award" this spring. Grey is a sports management major with a 3.59 grade point average.



GLIAC Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year

Name: Kari Daugherty (Fresno, Ohio/Dayton)
School: Ashland University
Sport: Women's Basketball
Season: Daugherty played two years of basketball at Ashland and those are the two most successful seasons in the history of the program. Both years, the Eagles reached the national championship game. This past spring, they won the national championship and Daugherty was named the most outstanding player at the Elite Eight. Daugherty is a two-time NCAA Division II player of the year. In 2012-13, she led the country in double-doubles, was second in rebounding and third in scoring. She holds the NCAA Division II record for consecutive double-doubles. The senior is a two-time "GLIAC player of the year and led Ashland to a pair of conference championships. Daugherty is a two-time recipient of the Honda Sports Collegiate Women Athlete of the Year. She is the only NCAA Division II woman to receive the award in consecutive years. This year, Daugherty was named a Capital One First Team Academic All-American and she was the Capital One Women's Basketball Academic All-American of the Year. Daugherty is a middle grades education major with a 3.97 grade point average.



"The GLIAC is very proud of the academic and athletic accomplishments of Garrett Grey and Kari Daugherty," said GLIAC Commissioner Dell Robinson. "Their performance in the classroom has led them to being named to one of our top academic honors. Garrett and Kari are both an example of the outstanding Scholar Athlete's we have in this conference."



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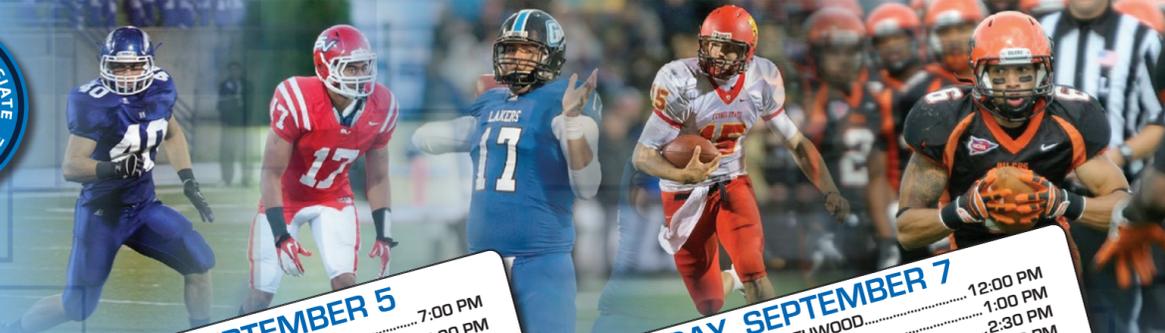


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2013 GLIAC FOOTBALL SCHEDULE



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

GANNON (PA.) AT LAKE ERIE	7:00 PM
URBANA (OHIO) AT FINDLAY	7:00 PM
OHIO DOMINICAN AT GEORGETOWN (KY.)	7:00 PM
WAYNE STATE AT CARSON-NEWMAN (TENN.)	7:00 PM
EDINBORO (PA.) AT WALSH	7:00 PM
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE AT NW MISSOURI STATE	7:30 PM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

HILLSDALE AT OHIO DOMINICAN*	12:00 PM
NORTHWOOD AT WALSH*	12:00 PM
FINDLAY AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN*	1:00 PM
MICHIGAN TECH AT TIFFIN*	1:30 PM
ASHLAND AT WAYNE STATE*	6:00 PM
LAKE ERIE AT FERRIS STATE*	7:00 PM
MALONE AT SAGINAW VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM
TRUMAN STATE (MO.) AT GRAND VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

TIFFIN AT NORTHWOOD*	12:00 PM
GRAND VALLEY STATE AT OHIO DOMINICAN*	12:00 PM
MALONE AT WAYNE STATE*	3:00 PM
MICHIGAN TECH AT FINDLAY*	6:00 PM
FERRIS STATE AT WALSH*	7:00 PM
NORTHERN MICHIGAN AT ASHLAND*	7:00 PM
LAKE ERIE AT SAGINAW VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM
INDIANAPOLIS AT HILLSDALE	2:30 PM

RIVALRY WEEK

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12

WAYNE STATE AT HILLSDALE*	1:00 PM
OHIO DOMINICAN AT ASHLAND*	1:00 PM
NORTHERN MICHIGAN AT MICHIGAN TECH*	1:00 PM
FINDLAY AT TIFFIN*	1:30 PM
WALSH AT MALONE*	2:00 PM
NORTHWOOD AT SAGINAW VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM
GRAND VALLEY STATE AT FERRIS STATE*	7:00 PM
NOTRE DAME (OHIO) AT LAKE ERIE	1:00 PM

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

GRAND VALLEY STATE AT NORTHWOOD*	12:00 PM
LAKE ERIE AT FINDLAY*	12:00 PM
MALONE AT ASHLAND*	1:00 PM
FERRIS STATE AT MICHIGAN TECH*	1:00 PM
WAYNE STATE AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN*	1:30 PM
WALSH AT TIFFIN*	7:00 PM
HILLSDALE AT SAGINAW VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

GRAND VALLEY STATE AT WAYNE STATE*	12:00 PM
FERRIS STATE AT NORTHWOOD*	12:00 PM
FINDLAY AT MALONE*	12:00 PM
LAKE ERIE AT OHIO DOMINICAN*	12:00 PM
MICHIGAN TECH AT HILLSDALE*	1:00 PM
NORTHERN MICHIGAN AT SAGINAW VALLEY STATE*	1:00 PM
TIFFIN AT ASHLAND*	1:00 PM
WALSH AT GLENVILLE STATE (W.VA.)	1:00 PM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

SLIPPERY ROCK (PA.) AT NORTHWOOD	12:00 PM
MALONE AT NOTRE DAME (OHIO)	1:00 PM
TIFFIN AT MCKENDREE (ILL.)	2:30 PM
FERRIS STATE AT NORTH DAKOTA STATE	5:00 PM
ASHLAND AT INDIANAPOLIS	6:05 PM
CALIFORNIA (PA.) AT HILLSDALE	7:00 PM
AZUSA PACIFIC (CALIF.) AT GRAND VALLEY STATE	7:00 PM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

SAGINAW VALLEY STATE AT FINDLAY*	12:00 PM
WALSH AT MICHIGAN TECH*	1:00 PM
WAYNE STATE AT LAKE ERIE*	1:00 PM
HILLSDALE AT MALONE*	2:00 PM
OHIO DOMINICAN AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN*	3:00 PM
FERRIS STATE AT ASHLAND*	7:00 PM
TIFFIN AT GRAND VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

NORTHWOOD AT WAYNE STATE*	12:00 PM
ASHLAND AT LAKE ERIE*	1:00 PM
HILLSDALE AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN*	1:30 PM
MALONE AT TIFFIN*	2:00 PM
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE AT FERRIS STATE*	2:00 PM
OHIO DOMINICAN AT WALSH*	6:00 PM
MICHIGAN TECH AT GRAND VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM
FINDLAY AT MCKENDREE (ILL.)	2:30 PM

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17

FINDLAY AT OHIO DOMINICAN*	8:00 PM
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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19

ASHLAND AT WALSH*	12:00 PM
MICHIGAN TECH AT NORTHWOOD*	12:00 PM
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE AT WAYNE STATE*	12:00 PM
FERRIS STATE AT HILLSDALE*	2:30 PM
NORTHERN MICHIGAN AT GRAND VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM
LAKE ERIE AT MALONE*	7:00 PM
TIFFIN VS. SOUTH DAKOTA MINES#	2:00 PM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2

ASHLAND AT FINDLAY*	12:00 PM
WAYNE STATE AT FERRIS STATE*	12:00 PM
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE AT MICHIGAN TECH*	1:00 PM
WALSH AT LAKE ERIE*	1:00 PM
NORTHWOOD AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN*	1:00 PM
OHIO DOMINICAN AT TIFFIN*	1:30 PM
HILLSDALE AT GRAND VALLEY STATE*	7:00 PM
MALONE AT ALDERSON-BROADBODUS (W.VA.)	12:00 PM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

WALSH AT FINDLAY*	12:00 PM
NORTHERN MICHIGAN AT FERRIS STATE*	12:00 PM
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE AT GRAND VALLEY STATE*	1:00 PM
NORTHWOOD AT HILLSDALE*	1:00 PM
WAYNE STATE AT MICHIGAN TECH*	1:00 PM
TIFFIN AT LAKE ERIE*	1:00 PM
OHIO DOMINICAN AT MALONE*	1:00 PM

* - GLIAC GAME
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GAME TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



An Eye On Ashland

FOOTBALL PREVIEW



EAGLES LOOK TO DEFEND GLIAC TITLE

After an 11-0 regular season and the school's first Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) title, one could presume it's a rosy picture for Ashland University as it enters the 2013 campaign. The stout Eagle defense of a year ago returns the league's reigning Defensive Lineman of the Year in Jamie Meder, as well as leading tackler Cody Bloom at linebacker. And if that weren't enough, nine of the offense's eleven starters will also be back, including the ground-churning 1-2 punch of Anthony Taylor and Jordan McCune. The tandem combined for more than 2,100 rushing yards last year, and each found the end zone 14 times.

While a returning bevy of production like that would be the envy of most (and it appears that it is, given that the Eagles are picked to win the South Division), Coach Lee Owens knows that the few losses he suffered due to graduation are indeed key ones. GLIAC Defensive Back of the Year Kevin Gamble has to be replaced, as does GLIAC Player of the Year Taylor Housewright. Housewright ran the Eagle offense for the last three years, and he may well have been the heart and soul of one of the best teams in school history. Add in the loss of Housewright's top target in Anthony Capasso, and there are some big shoes to fill in key spots as Ashland works to defend its GLIAC crown.

Coach O should know how the shoes are being filled early in the season, as road tests at GLVC Champ University of Indianapolis and 2011 National Runner-Up Wayne State University face the Eagles right out of the chute. Home dates with Ferris State University in week three and Ohio Dominican University in week six round out a test-laden first half of the season. Lake Erie. For homecoming on October 20, WSU hosts Northern Michigan.



An Eye On Ferris State

FOOTBALL PREVIEW



ANNESE, BULLDOGS LOOK TO CARRY OVER MOMENTUM FROM A YEAR AGO

By most accounts, the first year of the Tony Annese era had to be considered a success for Ferris State University. A 7-4 record might even belie how competitive the Bulldogs really were, and there's little doubt that the folks in Big Rapids are excited to see what kind of step forward their club can make. Leading the way will be quarterback Jason VanderLaan, who earned GLIAC Freshman of the Year honors in 2012. VanderLaan rushed for nearly as many yards as he threw for last year, and he is causing the league's defenses to decide what exactly they feel they can take away from him week to week.

While the Bulldog offense gained potency during the course of the season, the defense had some struggles at times. They allowed more than 30 points per game last year, and roughly half of their starters must be replaced. There's little doubt that the Bulldog offense will be able to generate points, so the key question might be whether or not the defense can improve and not make what the offense does a necessity.

Ferris will open its season on the road at two-time defending FCS champion North Dakota State University. After a trip to Ashland University in week three, the Bulldogs reach week five and face the month of October that pits them against all four of the GLIAC North's Co-Champions from 2012. They then finish the year with two of their final three games at home.





An Eye On Findlay

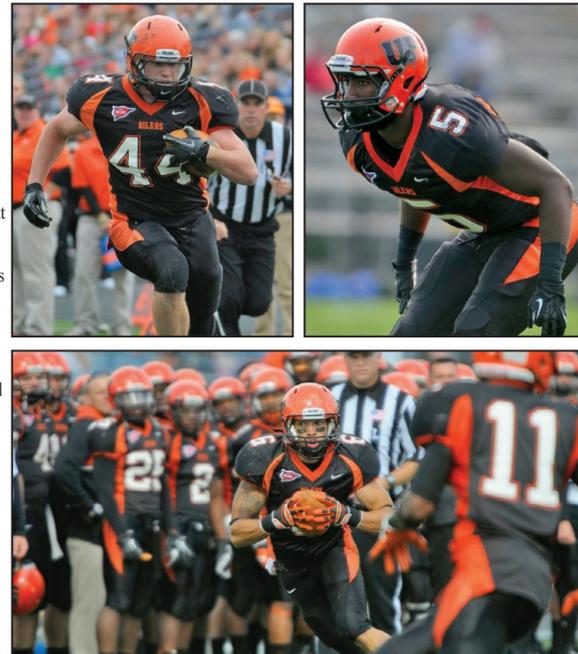
FOOTBALL PREVIEW

OILERS MUST FIND WAYS TO REPLACE OFFENSIVE WEAPONS

Coach Rob Keys is entering his third season at the helm of the University of Findlay Oilers, and he is excited about the opportunity to improve upon last year's 7-3 mark. To do that, he must first figure out who will replace multi-year starting quarterback Clay Belton and Findlay's all-time leading rusher Montrae Williams. The task will be slightly less daunting, thanks to having the Gordy Lockbaum-esque Seth White back for one more go-round. The senior wideout led the team in receiving last year and moonlit in other offensive positions as well. If that weren't enough, he handled all of the punting duties and even took the reins as a kicker, connecting on all but one of his 35 combined PAT/FG attempts. White was the team's second-leading scorer in 2012, and he has a chance this year to become UF's all-time leading pass catcher.

Nineteen players who started games last year are back this year. The defense should once again be solid, and senior Ray Ballard looks to continue to shore up the secondary as he did from his safety spot a year ago. The defense generated a +9 turnover margin last season, and Ballard and his mates will look to continue that trend in 2013.

The Oilers open the slate with three of their first four games at home. The one road game in that group is a week two trip to Marquette to face an NMU team that was much improved last season and is followed by back-to-back home dates against Saginaw Valley State University and Michigan Technological University. That opening set will certainly season UF prior to its national television date at Ohio Dominican University in week seven and its early November tilt against Ashland University.



An Eye On Hillsdale

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

CHARGERS LOOK TO CONTINUE WINNING WAYS

Despite the success of the prior two seasons (GLIAC Champs in 2011, Co-North Champs in 2012), coach Keith Otterbein and Hillsdale College may have been disappointed that neither of those campaigns were able to get them back into the playoff field. If the Chargers want to make the bracket in 2013, they'll have to find a way to do it without all-time leading rusher Joe Glendening and multi-year starting quarterback Anthony Mifsud. Aiding in the transition from those top performers will be four returning starters on the offensive line, as well as senior receiver Andrew Mott, who has led the club in receptions each of the past two seasons.

The strength of the Chargers this year may prove to be their defense, though, as nine of eleven starters return from last year's group that was second in the league in total defense. Included in that mix is arguably the best linebacking corps in the league: the trio of Steven Embry, Devin Moynihan, and Brett Pasche enters its third year starting together. They were the team's top three tacklers last year.

There just aren't any weeks for Hillsdale to relax in the 2013 slate, as it may have the most difficult schedule in the league. Many figured out in 2012 that a North Division schedule is as tough as that faced by any team in the country, and on top of that, the Chargers will have non-league tilts against perennial PSAC power California University of Pennsylvania and reigning GLVC Champion University of Indianapolis. They'll also play a week two game on the road against Ohio Dominican University, which enters the season on a five-game winning streak.



An Eye On Grand Valley

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

LAKERS LOOK TO CONTINUE WINNING WAYS IN '13

After six straight outright conference crowns, Grand Valley State University has had to settle for shares of the North Division title in each of the last two seasons. Coach Matt Mitchell and his crew look to break out from their back-to-back 8-3 finishes and return to the playoffs in 2013. They will have the luxury of selecting from a pair of experienced quarterbacks in Heath Parling and Isiah Grimes. Parling led the nation in pass efficiency in 2011, but the 2012 season was cut short for him due to an early-season injury. Grimes then stepped in and proceeded to replicate Parling's 2011 feat, leaving the Lakers with a pair of nationally-rated passers at their disposal. Aerial attack aside, this could be a run-first Laker team in 2013, as the sources of all but twelve of their rushing yards from last year return, and they lose top receiver Charles Johnson.

Whatever the Lakers do on offense, it's hard to expect them not to be potent, as they led the league in scoring last year with nearly 42 points per game. What needs to be fixed is a defense that was next to the last in the GLIAC last year. Top tacklers Charles Hill and Brad Horling are back, and they will need to help fix a run defense that allowed 237 yards or more on six separate occasions.

Grand Valley will have their difficult North slate, but in total, it may have as favorable a schedule as anyone in the division. Seven home games help to that end, the team will not have a U.P. trip, and it will face both Hillsdale College and Saginaw Valley State University at home. The Lakers open the season with three seemingly winnable home contests against Asuza Pacific University, Truman State University, and Tiffin University. We may know by a stern test at Ohio Dominican University in week four whether the coaches were right to have them as their pick to take the North in 2013.



An Eye On Lake Erie

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

STORM GEARING UP FOR STRONG SEASON

Lake Erie College has the bulk of its club back after posting a third consecutive 3-8 mark in 2012. Nearly all of the skill-position starters return on offense, including signal-caller Brendan Gallagher, who started the last five games of 2012 and notched two of The Storm's three wins. Alongside Gallagher are his top two receivers from last year, Anthony Kukwa and Tommy Jackson, as is leading rusher Anthony Bilal.

Coach Mark McNellie does have his work cut out for him on defense, as The Storm yielded nearly 40 points per game and finished last in the GLIAC in total defense. Top tackler Marcus Rogers is back after tallying 99 stops a year ago, and he'll be tasked with leading the defense in improving upon their less-than-sparkling statistics of a year ago.

Despite having six home games, the bulk of Lake Erie's tough tests will likely come on the road. Trips to Ferris State University and Saginaw Valley State University glare in September, as does a trip down I-71 to Ohio Dominican University in November. The team from Painesville will enjoy an opener with border rival Gannon University, as well as a visit from defending league champ Ashland University in week five.





An Eye On Malone

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

AFTER TOUGH 2012 SEASON, THINGS LOOKING UP FOR MALONE

It was a rough initial trip through the GLIAC in 2012, and this year, Malone University will try to improve on the 1-9 mark it garnered during that trip. Some key contributors are back on defense, particularly in the secondary, where safeties Brandon Commodore and Demarco Donaldson return after strong campaigns. Donaldson was second in the GLIAC, averaging 11 tackles per game, but he and Commodore will need some help from the front seven if the Pioneers hope to allow opponents to score fewer than the 35.9 points per game they allowed a year ago.

Leading the offense once again for coach Mark Hehman will likely be the experienced Will Szpor. The junior quarterback will be backed by his top three rushers of a year ago, including juniors Malik Felton and Steven Niewiedzial. The backfield tandem saw almost identical touches a year ago, and they will be Szpor's top targets in the passing game.

Malone will know early how it stacks up in the league, as its crossover games include trips to Saginaw Valley State University and Wayne State University. Those games are sandwiched around a visit from Hillsdale College, so the Pioneers will know where they stand as September draws to a close. They then have a mid-October date with crosstown rival Walsh University and visit Ashland University to close the month of October.



An Eye On Northern Michigan

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

WILDCATS HOPE TO CARRY MOMENTUM FROM END OF LAST SEASON INTO '13

Head coach Chris Ostrowsky had to be pleased with how his club came together down the stretch last year. After a dismal start, the Wildcats went 3-2 to finish the season. Those two losses came by a total of eight points, so Northern Michigan University definitely turned things around in the second half of the season. Keeping that momentum going won't come easy, as in addition to their North schedule, the Wildcats must face the top three finishers from the South to open the season, including a week-four trip to Ashland University.

Charged with leading the way for the Northern offense will be quarterback Cody Scepaniak, whose insertion into the lineup midway through last season was one of the catalysts leading to the turnaround in Marquette. He'll be flanked with a strong group of ball carriers, but likely the most explosive skill player returning is senior wideout Christian Jessie.

The defense will look to improve upon the 31.5 points per game it allowed a year ago. Even after the team's "turning point" last year, it yielded 28 points or more three times, so shoring up that side of the ball will prove key. Junior linebacker Nick Krause will be the lynch pin for the unit. He is coming off a 2012 that saw him lead the team in total tackles, tackles for loss, and sacks.



An Eye On Michigan Tech

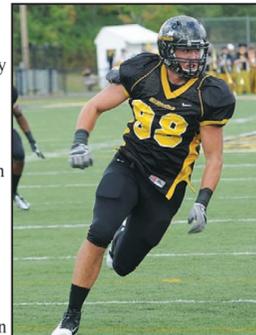
FOOTBALL PREVIEW

SCARLETT BACK TO LEAD HUSKIES OFFENSE IN '13

The North Co-champion Michigan Technological University will enjoy the luxury of a seasoned quarterback entering 2013. Junior Tyler Scarlett enters his third season at the controls, having already tallied the two highest passing yardage season totals in school history. He'll be working with a significant number of new faces, however. Three of 2012's top ball carriers have departed, as have almost all last year's receivers. Coach Tom Kearly has proven in the past that he can plug new players into key positions, and if Scarlett has any Tom Brady in him, he may just surprise everyone with how he can keep the offense churning regardless of who the other players might be.

On defense, it seems like no matter what year it is, the Huskies have players at defensive end that make everyone else in the league take notice. This season should be no exception, as Cameron Allen and Nelson Wienke return after All-GLIAC nods a year ago. The outside of the secondary is also solid, as experience returns in DeShawn Nelson, who led the league in passes defended.

The Huskies hit the road three times in their first four weeks this year, but they enjoy the opposite trend at the close of the slate when they stay in Houghton for three of their final four tilts. A week-five trip to Grand Valley State University will be circled on the calendar after a wild one in Houghton a year ago, and a week later the Huskies will host archival Northern Michigan University for the Miner's Cup.



An Eye On Northwood

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

TIMBERWOLVES DEFENSE WILL CARRY LOAD IN 2013

The 2012 campaign was a "tale of two seasons" for Northwood University and coach Mike Sullivan. After sprinting to a 4-0 start, the Timberwolves dropped six of their final seven tilts to finish a game under .500 for the year. Despite graduating nearly half its starters, Northwood is still a senior-laden group, led by running backs Jordan Jonker and Cameron Jackson. Aaron Shavers has departed, so there will be a new quarterback at the helm of the offense.

Defensively, Northwood was greatly improved last year, finishing in the top third of the league in both scoring and total defense. Top tacklers Ryan Whittum and Spencer Remtema graduated, meaning new leaders will need to emerge if the Timberwolves want to remain one of the top defensive units in the GLIAC.

At first glance, the Northwood schedule appears to be favorable to a club trying to fill a few key holes. A visit from PSAC foe Slippery Rock University will be a tough opener, but the rest of its September dates are filled with clubs that Northwood defeated last year. The division schedule sets in from there and includes the Axe Bowl game at Saginaw Valley State University, as well as visits from Michigan Technological University and Grand Valley State University to close October.





SVSU WIDEOUT JEFF JANIS EYES STRONG SENIOR SEASON AND BEYOND

by BEN MURPHY
SPORTS SCENE

A national championship, the Harlon Hill Trophy, the National Football League. Saginaw Valley senior wide receiver Jeff Janis can hear the whispers.

"I feel like the added attention I've been getting really makes me work even harder to achieve even more than what I have already done," Janis said. "I do not think I've even come close to my potential."

If Janis can tap into that not-yet-reached potential, it could lead to frightening consequences for his Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference opponents. Last year, he set school records in receptions (106) and yards (1635), while also hauling in 17 receiving touchdowns. Janis led all of Division II in receiving yards and was second in receptions. He also caught a school record 18 balls against Michigan Tech and set another school record in by receiving 300 yards in a game against Lake Erie.

"I think last year was a huge turning point for me in college football," Janis said. "The game really started to slow down for me, and I was much more relaxed while playing. Also, the offense just seemed to make more sense."

His stats helped Janis burst onto the national stage, and he was named first-team All-American, All-GLIAC First team, GLIAC Offensive Player of the Week four times, and was one of 16 finalists for the Harlon Hill Award (the DII equivalent of the Heisman Trophy.)

"Obviously, it is nice to have school records, but the success of the team is what really matters and what people remember most," Janis said. "I would much rather see us win every game, whether that is with me scoring a lot or none at all."

With all that said, Janis can't quite help but feel that last year's season wasn't a success. The Cardinals went 8-3 and shared the GLIAC-North Championship but failed to make the playoffs.

"Coming into next season you have to have the mentality that every game is for the championship," Janis said. "Our conference is so tough that you cannot afford to lose a game. So we have to come into every game and play at our highest level."

"[I want the team to] win the conference, but I also want to see our team come together as one and have every person working for each other," Janis added. "If we have that, we will be very hard to beat."

His head coach Jim Collins knows that Janis will be a vital piece of the Cardinals' success this season. "Having Jeff on our team makes our offense explosive," Collins said. "He has made a lot of big plays and clutch plays that have helped us win games. Jeff has handled the attention really well; he is down to earth and very committed to being better this year than he was last year."

After a stellar senior season in high school, Janis, a 2009 Tawas Area graduate, was red-shirted his freshman year in college. He has steadily improved, both from statistical and physical standpoints, every season. If things go as planned for the wide-out, his senior year could be his best yet.

"I think I've had the success I've had up to this point due to dedication to the weight room," Janis said. "I truly believe that if I had not committed myself to the weight room in high school, I wouldn't be playing in college. So the same goes for now - I don't think I would be playing at the level I am now if I wasn't consistently in the weight room."

With his college career coming to an end this season, Janis might be working even harder.

"This being my senior season, there is a little extra motivation," he said. "This may be the last time I ever play football, so that adds to the fire of going all-out on every snap and really giving it your all in every aspect. To play at the next level, you can't make some of the little mistakes I still make. Correcting those will be my biggest focus going into the season."

Janis has already been mentioned on several experts' draft boards, and there's no telling what a strong senior season might do for his professional chances.

"Jeff has the work ethic and talent to be successful at anything he



wants to do," Collins said. "That being said, I think he would really like to be in a position to have a chance to play football at the next level. He has definitely attracted their attention."

Janis, an Exercise Science Major, graduates in December. After that, he will be weighing his options of attending chiropractic school or getting paid to play the game that he loves.

"Being that I stay healthy, I would love to play football at the professional level," he said. "Not only for my family and I, but for everyone that has supported me and to represent my home town. But I do realize how hard it is to get into the NFL, so I'm not banking on that happening. Either way I know I will be successful in whatever it is I do; football has prepared me for that." ■■■■■■



An Eye On Ohio Dominican FOOTBALL PREVIEW



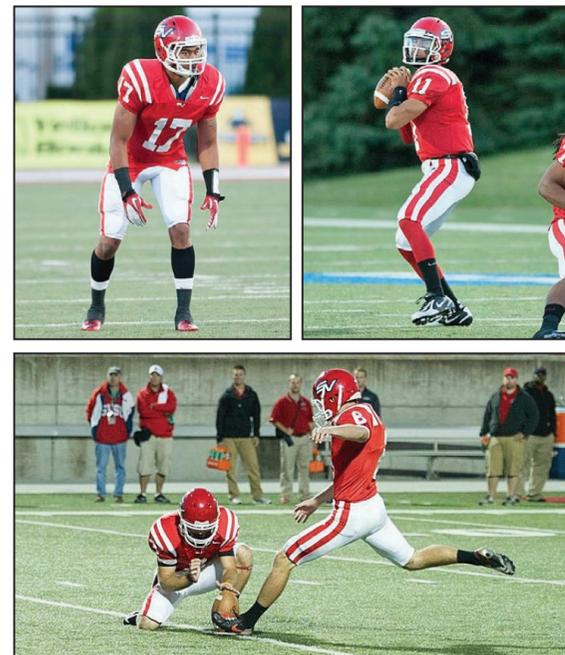
PANTHERS CONTINUE TO LOOK AHEAD IN SOUTH DIVISION

One could contend that things are "going pretty well according to plan" for Ohio Dominican University head coach Bill Conley. After learning the ropes of the GLIAC for a couple of seasons, the Panthers broke out with an 8-3 mark in 2012. Each of the three losses came at the hands of a ranked opponent, and ODU closed out the second half with a five-game win streak. Conley is a proven commodity at more than one level of college football, and he's showing his stripes once again, as ODU is quickly earning a reputation within the GLIAC as a team to be reckoned with. The rest of the league appears to have taken notice, as ODU is the coaches' pick to finish second in the South Division.

The responsibility for keeping things moving forward in 2013 will fall on the shoulders of junior quarterback Mark Miller and his fellow backfield mates. Miller was quite efficient last season and will have the luxury of having his top two receivers returning, as well as his top three ground gainers. The rushing attack will feature sophomore Brandon Schoen, who notched more than 1,000 yards in his rookie campaign. The team will need some patience in order to replicate their production last year, however, as nearly the entire offensive line must be retooled. Similarly, about half of the defense also departed, but leading tackler Justin Bell will once again lead the charge from the secondary.

With only four home dates this year, the Panthers will live a "traveler's life" for the most of the season. This is particularly true of the second half of the slate, as four of their final six games will be on the road. There is some "bang for the buck" in their home games, however. They have early visits from Hillsdale College and Grand Valley State University, and the highlight of the schedule may well be a nationally televised Thursday night game against University of Findlay in week seven.

An Eye On Saginaw Valley State FOOTBALL PREVIEW



DOUBLE J'S BACK TO LEAD CARDINALS POTENT OFFENSE

Much like last year, Saginaw Valley will likely go as their "J.J.'s" go. Quarterback Jonathon Jennings led the GLIAC in passing in 2012 notching just short of 299 yards per game. And of course, his primary target was Jeff Janis, who led the nation in receiving on his way to GLIAC Back of the Year plaudits. This pair may once again be the most feared pitch/catch combo on the league...and maybe the country. They guided the Cardinals to an 8-3 mark last year and share of the North Division crown. Add in another seven returning starters (including the entire offensive line), and the Cardinal faithful should be very excited about what their club could do this year.

As if that weren't enough, coach Jim Collins and his staff welcome back eight returning starters on defense. Senior Brian Johnson was second on the team in tackles last year with 102, and he will lead a unit that finished in the middle of the league in scoring and total defense. Let's face it, if the Cardinal offense is able to put up any kind of similar numbers to last year the defense will not be expected to do the majority of the heavy lifting.

Much like a large number of its North Division brethren, the Cardinals face a difficult schedule. They open at perennial MIAA and national power Northwest Missouri State, and also face trips to Findlay and Ferris in the first half of the year. Upon reaching November they'll make a trip to Houghton to face Tech, and will close the season at Grand Valley in a rematch of last year's "instant classic"



An Eye on Tiffin

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

DRAGONS LOOKING TO CONTINUE MOMENTUM FROM A YEAR AGO

After multiple years of going winless or only registering a single victory, Tiffin University was able to cobble together three victories in 2012, and third-year coach Gary Goff looks to parlay that improvement into some legitimate momentum in the GLIAC South. While the quarterback position remains a question mark entering the season, nine starters do return on offense. Leading rusher Dominique White is back, as is All-GLIAC receiver Marcus Beaurem. They'll be charged with pumping up a 17.7 point per game output from a year ago that put them near the bottom of the league in scoring.

Defensively, the Dragons return two of their top three tacklers in linebacker Brian McCorkle and All-GLIAC lineman Joseph Collard. Tiffin finished in the middle of the pack defensively, which is a bit of an improvement over years past.

Tiffin has a couple of interesting non-conference games on its schedule. It will face two NAIA clubs who are transitioning to Division II, McKendree University and South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. Both those games are on the road, as are games with Grand Valley State University and Ashland University. The home folks will be visited by Michigan Technological University, nearby rival University of Findlay, and in early November, Ohio Dominican University.



An Eye On Wayne State

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

WAYNE STATE LOOKS TO GET BACK INTO NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

A 5-5 mark in 2012 had to be a bit of a letdown for Wayne State University, as it came on the heels of a run to the National Championship game in 2011. Getting back on the national scene will be in the cross hairs for coach Paul Winters and company this year, as will vying for a top spot in the GLIAC North. To get there, they'll have to replace quarterback Micky Mohner, who started the last 44 games for the Warriors. Despite Mohner's departure, the bulk of the offensive production of last year returns in leading rusher Toney Davis and top pass-catcher Dominique Maybanks.

One of the GLIAC's better scoring defenses from last year will have its top tackler back in Ed Viverette. The senior linebacker is coming off an all-GLIAC season a year ago, as is defensive back Gerren DuHart. Viverette and DuHart will be called upon to lead the way for a unit that must replace more than half of its starters from 2012's group.

Prior to beginning its North slate, Wayne State will have pair of stern tests right out of the chute. It travels to SAC power Carson-Newman University to open the season in a Thursday night battle and then returns home to host reigning league champ Ashland University. Toss in a pair of road trips to the upper peninsula in its divisional schedule, and it definitely faces one of the more difficult tests in the league.



An Eye on Walsh

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

KARRAS TAKES OVER FOR LONGTIME COACH DENNISON

During the off-season, the Walsh Cavaliers lost the only head coach they've ever known. Jim Dennison retired from the post he has held since the program's inception in 1995 and passed the torch to Ted Karras, who enters fresh off winning the NAIA National Title at Marian University. Karras inherits a defense that kept the Cavaliers competitive in their inaugural run through the GLIAC, where they finished fourth in scoring defense with 21.5 points per game. This group should be heavy on experience, with as many as seven seniors slated to be in the starting lineup.

Despite running the ball the majority of the time last year, the key offensive returnee is a wideout. Anthony Schrock is back after averaging more than 18.5 yards per grab last year, and that big-play ability will be important for the Cavaliers, as there will be new faces at quarterback and throughout the offensive line. Schrock's efforts should be aided by backs Steve Smith and Justin Keith, who both saw plenty of action behind last year's primary ball carrier Toba Olarewaju.

The schedule offers no breaks for the Cavaliers. September games against Michigan Technological University and Ferris State University will be tough tests, as will an opener with Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference foe Edinboro University. October finds home tilts against Ohio Dominican University and Ashland University sandwiched around archrival Malone University. They conclude their slate by hitting the road four straight times.



NORTH DIVISION



SOUTH DIVISION

	PTS. (1ST)		PTS. (1ST)
1 GRAND VALLEY	94 (6)	1 ASHLAND	88 (10)
2 SAGINAW VALLEY	87 (6)	2 OHIO DOMINICAN	80 (4)
3 FERRIS STATE	69 (1)	3 FINDLAY	69 (1)
4 MICHIGAN TECH	66 (1)	4 WALSH	43
5 HILLSDALE	65 (1)	5 LAKE ERIE	40
6 WAYNE STATE	48	6 TIFFIN	30
7 NORTHERN MICHIGAN	23	7 MALONE	21
8 NORTHWOOD	22		

GLIAC Football Coaches Poll

GLIAC MEN'S SOCCER PREVIEW



SVSU SOCCER TEAM HOPES FOR ANOTHER STRONG RUN

The Saginaw Valley State University mens' soccer team is hoping that last year's historic season carries over into the 2013 campaign. The Cardinals entered the postseason tournament ranked no. 12 in the nation, yet they marched to the Division II national championship game, where they fell to Lynn University 3-2.

"Last year was a special year," SVSU head coach Cale Wassermann said of the squad that finished 18-3-4. "We had a very good team, but more importantly, a group of guys that believed in each other and worked extremely hard every minute of every game. We won a lot of games late in the game and in overtime because of the mentality and focus we had."

For the Cardinals, ranked second in the preseason coaches' poll, chances of repeating took a hit with the graduation of Zach Myers (17 goals, National Player of the Year, First team All-American), Jason Wise (All-American goalkeeper, ranked high in the nation in goals against average, shutouts, and save percentage) and Bobby Short (14 assists - second most in the nation).

"In order to try and repeat our success, we need to be sharp, mentally and physically and continue to play for each other," Wassermann said. "We were one of the strongest defensive teams in the country last year; if we keep that attitude, we can do some serious damage because we also have a very potent attack, but it all comes from working together."

Top returning players for the Cardinals are Taylor Clarke (all-conference defense, captain), Michael Lamb (all-conference and all-regional defense), Locky Savage (12 goals last year, all-conference and all-regional midfielder), Zach Vasold (all-conference midfielder), Ben Thomas (defense), Zach Cooney (defense), Morley Burns (defense), and Zach Minor (defense), along with Craig Neal, Tyler Channell, and Zach Walega. Wassermann also added that goalkeepers Tyler Yachcik, Josh Howell, and Aaron Gerig will battle for the starting job to replace Wise.

"It is important to stay healthy; last year we were fortunate to have almost everyone healthy for the whole year," Wassermann said. "We have a great training staff and the players need to be smart about how they take care of their bodies throughout the season."

TIMBERWOLVES TOUGH

Northwood University finished second in the GLIAC North behind the Cardinals with an 8-5 record. It brings back leading scorer Sam Nair for his sophomore season and top goalkeeper Johannes Sterobo.

PAY ATTENTION TO...

Ohio Dominican University tied for a share of the GLIAC South soccer title a year ago with a 9-4 record.

Ohio Dominican is led by head coach Willy Merrick. Top seniors returning to the team are Duncan Campbell (midfield) and Billy McGlone (forward), with Nigel Patterson and Trevor Gates also returning.



GLIAC WOMEN'S SOCCER PREVIEW



ABBEY MILLER HOPES TO LEAD GVSU TO TITLE GAME

Grand Valley State University's womens soccer team has made it to four straight national final fours, and if senior goalkeeper Abbey Miller (2010 Heritage graduate) has anything to say about it, the Lady Lakers will make a return visit this season.

"Last year, the chemistry was good; everybody worked hard at practice," she said. "We all had that common goal to go far for the season. This year we plan on doing the same thing... go back to the final four and hopefully get the win to get to the national championship game."

The Lakers finished 20-2-3 last season and won the GLIAC with an 11-1-1 record. Miller appeared in four games last year, making five saves and giving up one goal.

GVSU, entering the season ranked second in the nation, returns 14 letter winners from last year, including Miller, Kayla Kimble, Juane Odendall, Charlie Socia, and Tayler Ward.

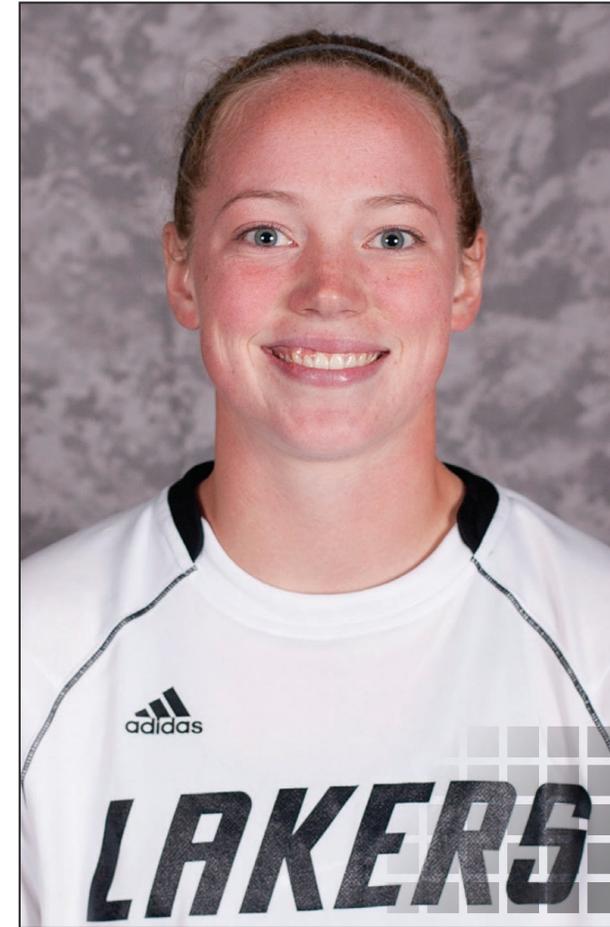
"We have eight incoming freshmen, and I'm excited to see what they bring to the table and to get to know them as teammates," Miller said. "I'm hoping to have a big leadership role in the back of the field and communicate with my teammates in front of me."

TECH EYES ANOTHER STRONG SEASON

Michigan Technological University also finished 11-1-1 in GLIAC play last year. It will be led by seniors Kaitlyn Boelter (defense), Sarah Hielsberg (defense), Lindsey Van Rooy (midfield, 14 career goals), Katie Pappas (defense), and Katie Boardman (forward, 16 career goals.)

FINDLAY STRONG

The University of Findlay also had a strong season last year, going 8-4-1 in GLIAC play. It returns seniors Kelsea Corns (three shutouts last year), Katie Burke (midfield), Lauren Marcum (defense), Ann Eichman (midfield, six career goals), Sarah Silone (forward, nine career goals), and Nicole Williams (defense.)



GLIAC VOLLEYBALL ROUND UP



NORTHWOOD

The Northwood University Timberwolves dominated the GLIAC volleyball scene last season. They won the conference with a 17-1 record, won the GLIAC tournament, and finished with an overall mark of 26-7 after falling in the regional quarterfinals.

"We have a big group of returners who went through our championship run last year," 10th-year head coach Tim Koth (last year's GLIAC and AVCA Midwest Region Coach of the Year) said. "They understand what it took. What is different now is that with success comes expectation and a very large bull's-eye on your back."

Northwood lost four players from last year's team to graduation but boasts 12 returning players, including five starters.

"Those are the goals," Koth said of winning another GLIAC title and having a lengthy postseason run. "Now it's on the coaches and players to put in the time and effort to achieve. I like our chances."

The Lady Timberwolves return seniors Elizabeth Barker (defense), Chelsea Greene, Jordan Dunn (setter, second team all-GLIAC), Ally Hoomaian (outside hitter, all-GLIAC), Julia Pakhomenko (outside hitter, first team all-American, GLIAC player of the year), and Kristin Perschon (middle blocker). Also returning are junior Erin Hoomaian (defense); sophomores Jaclyn Kimmet, Meghan Cleary (outside hitter), Krysta Kramer (outside hitter), and Cassy Marsh (middle blocker); and red-shirt freshmen Chelsea Greene (defense) and Lisa Kisil (defense).

New to the team are transfers Birta Bjornsdottir and Siyao Li (outside hitter) and freshman Marissa Pomeville (middle blocker).

"The key component of our roster makeup this fall is that we have a large amount of upperclassmen having championship experience," Koth said. "That is a valuable tool this fall as we will go through a season defending a title. I also like the depth and expected competition that we are anticipating at each position."

FERRIS STATE TOUGH

Ferris State University took second place in the GLIAC with a 16-2 mark and will once again be guided by head coach Tia Brandel-Wilhelm, who enters her 18th year leading the Lady Bulldogs.

FSU returns 10 letter winners from last year's team that reached the regional semifinals, including senior libero Brandie Merren and junior outside hitter Courtney Rehm, both of whom were All-GLIAC selections last season. Ferris State will have a huge boost to its roster this season with the addition of former Morley Stanwood standout Alexis Huntley. Huntley started her college career last season at George Washington University, but elected to transfer to FSU after her freshman season. Huntley guided Morley Stanwood to a state championship her senior season.

KEEP AN EYE ON...

Ashland University also expects a strong season. The Lady Eagles went 12-6 last year and boast returners Megan Rohlfs (defensive specialist, 317 digs last year), Baley Bernthisel (outside hitter, 240 kills), Marci Zegarac (outside hitter, 523 digs), Kate Eckels (outside hitter, 247 kills, 42 service aces), and Susie Jonas (171 kills).



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