

# Free Press top 25 Michigan high school teams: Nos. 1-5

By Mick McCabe Detroit Free Press Sports Writer

1:00 AM, Aug. 23, 2012 EDT



Mick McCabe picks the state's top-25 teams. Here are Nos. 1-5; all players are seniors unless noted:

## 1. Birmingham Brother Rice

**Top players:** LB Jon Reschke, 6-3, 235; DE Sergio Perkovic, 6-4, 225; OT Griffin Anderson, 6-6, 270; LB Lucas Cherocci, 6-0, 218; DE Kevin Henry, 6-5, 230; junior RB Brian Walker, 5-8, 205; QB Cheyne Lacanaria, 5-8, 165.

**All-time state playoff record:** 58-17.

**Coach:** Al Fracassa: 404-119-7, 53rd season, 44th at Rice.

**Biggest game:** Oct., 6 vs. Novi Detroit Catholic Central at Berkley, 7 p.m.

\* Related: [Teams 6-10](#)

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**Overview:** The Warriors return three offensive linemen and their front seven on defense. Lacanaria will be a more effective passer this season, and Reschke is in line for another terrific season.

## 2. Utica Eisenhower

**Top players:** OT/DT David Curle, 6-3, 275; QB Joey Zerafa, 6-1, 190; NT Andrew Supanich, 6-1, 235; CB Idode Kerobo, 6-1, 195; OT/DT tackle Garrett Bush, 6-2, 290; OT Jared Matte, 6-6, 300; junior WR Daniel Chmielewski, 6-2, 175.

**All-time state playoff record:** 31-20.

**Coach:** Chris Smith, first season.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 21 at Macomb Dakota, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** The Eagles return eight offensive starters and nine defensive starters from the team that lost to champion Cass Tech in the semifinals. Zerafa is experienced and is a threat running and passing.

## 3. Grand Blanc

**Top players:** LB Luke MacLean, 6-4, 240; DE Dan Davis, 6-3, 245; QB Bart Williams, 6-5, 195; OT Lamar Jenkins, 6-3, 295; C Tevon Blake, 6-2, 230; junior S Malik Fisher, 6-2, 170.

**All-time state playoff record:** 8-13.

**Coach:** Joe Delaney, 110-86; 106-72, 19th season at Grand Blanc.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 14 vs. Brighton, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** The Bobcats seem to be on the verge of becoming a state power. Williams threw for more than 1,000 yards in three playoff games and more than 3,200 yards for the season. The offense will score a lot of points, and the defense should be better.

#### 4. Cass Tech

**Top players:** OT David Dawson, 6-5, 305; DB Jourdan Lewis, 5-11, 170; CB Delano Hill, 6-1, 190; DT Kenton Gibbs, 6-2, 290; CB DeJuan Rogers, 6-0, 175; OT Dennis Finley, 6-6, 285; junior LB Deon Drake, 6-1, 215; junior WR Damon Webb, 5-11, 170.

**All-time state playoff record:** 14-12.

**Coach:** Thomas Wilcher, 16th season, 101-56.

**Biggest game:** Saturday vs. Brother Rice at Wayne State, 7:30 p.m.

**Overview:** The Technicians lost most of their prime-time players from last season's Division 1 championship team, but they could be just as talented. Twelve players hold scholarship offers, and sophomore QB Jayru Campbell should be even better.

#### 5. Grand Rapids Christian

**Top players:** Junior WR Drake Harris, 6-4, 180; junior OT/DE Tommy Doles, 6-5, 250; TE/DE Zach Crouch, 6-5, 255; C Alex Korhorn, 6-2, 280; QB Alex VandeVusse, 6-1, 185; K Joel Schipper, 6-2, 180.

**All-time state playoff record:** 3-7.

**Coach:** Don Fellows, 17-5, third season at Christian.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 1 at Cincinnati Moeller, 1 p.m.

**Overview:** There are as many as 16 players on this roster who will play college football. Harris is a gifted athlete -- Michigan State and Indiana have offered him in basketball -- and he could be Christian's version of Calvin Johnson.

## Free Press top 25 Michigan high school teams: Nos. 6-10

By Mick McCabe Detroit Free Press Sports Writer

1:00 AM, Aug. 22, 2012 EDT



Mick McCabe picks the state's top-25 teams. Here are Nos. 6-10 (come back Thursday for Nos. 1-5); all players are seniors unless noted:

#### 6. Chelsea

**Top players:** RB Berkley Edwards, 5-9, 185; DT Michael Steinhauer, 6-3, 250; TE Luke Hollandsworth, 6-3, 215; RB Colton Platt, 5-9, 175; DT Jay Szcodronski, 6-2, 220; K Zach Rabbitt, 5-10, 170.

**All-time state playoff record:** 14-15.

**Coach:** Brad Bush 120-41, 16th season.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 21 at Adrian, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** This will be one explosive offense built around Edwards, who gained more than 1,800 yards last season. Platt is a solid complementary back and Hollandsworth is an excellent receiver. The question mark is the defense, but Steinhauer is a tremendous pass rusher.

## 7. Warren De La Salle

**Top players:** QB Shane Morris, 6-3 1/2, 206; OG Andrew DiFranco, 6-1, 235; DB/WR Josh Cox, 6-0, 195; WR Jack Wangler, 6-1, 175; LB Allen Jefferson, 6-3 1/2, 200.

**All-time state playoff record:** 19-10.

**Coach:** Paul Verska 187-167; 78-38, 12th season at De La Salle.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 15 vs. Birmingham Brother Rice at Lake Shore, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** With Morris, the top player in the state, the Pilots will have a dynamite passing attack. RB Damorria Lilly, a four-year starter, should exceed 1,000 yards on the ground again for a balanced offense. Much will depend on the defense.

## 8. Clarkston

**Top players:** OT Jesse Chadwell, 6-5, 265; junior DT Nick Matich, 6-3, 260; C Craig Columbo, 6-3, 275; LB Chris Calvano, 6-1, 190; LB/TE Nathan Yeloushan, 6-2, 205; OG Matt Azzopardi, 5-10, 240; junior DB/WR Tim Cason, 6-0, 170.

**All-time state playoff record:** 16-15.

**Coach:** Kurt Richardson 187-77, 27th season at Clarkston.

**Biggest game:** Oct. 12 at Lake Orion, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** This is the biggest Clarkston has ever been. Led by Chadwell, the Wolves should have a terrific offensive line and the defensive line will also be outstanding. Overall, this will be a strong defensive unit and the Wolves will be able to move the ball effectively on the ground.

## 9. Rockford

**Top players:** QB/DB Kyle Short, 6-2, 182; OG Justin Hopkins, 6-0, 250; RB Connor Darby, 6-0, 190; junior LB Brent Showers, 6-0, 215; junior LB Randy Garvin, 6-0, 208; junior LB Blake McDonald, 6-1, 185; S KC Zenner, 6-1, 195.

**All-time state playoff record:** 41-15.

**Coach:** Ralph Munger 271-82; 184-52, 21st season at Rockford.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 7 vs. Muskegon, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** The defense will be rugged as usual, featuring an outstanding corps of linebackers. Short was the backup last season, but played well when pressed into service early in the season. Darby is a dangerous back.

## 10. Novi Detroit Cath. Central

**Top players:** TB/LB Anthony Darkangelo, 6-0, 192; OG Derek Edwards, 6-5, 255; FB/DT Wyatt Shallman, 6-3, 250; FB David Houle, 5-11, 230; LB/RB Brandon Malinowski, 6-0, 205; junior DE Dylan Roney, 6-2, 215.

**All-time state playoff record:** 69-12.

**Coach:** Tom Mach 324-77, 37th season at CC.

**Biggest game:** Oct. 6 vs. Birmingham Brother Rice at Berkley, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** The Shamrocks will once again pound the ball down the field with Darkangelo following Shallman through the line of scrimmage. CC will also play excellent defense as it attempts to reach the Division 1 title game for the third straight year.

## Free Press top 25 Michigan high school teams: Nos. 11-15

By Mick McCabe Detroit Free Press Sports Writer

1:00 AM, Aug. 21, 2012 EDT



Mick McCabe picks the state's top-25 teams. Here are Nos. 11-15 (come back Wednesday for Nos. 6-10); all players are seniors unless noted:

### 11. East Grand Rapids

**Top players:** TB Jahaan Brown, 5-11, 187; junior OT Connor Conaboy, 5-11, 260; WR Marcus Hall, 6-3, 190; junior OG Terry Gotch; TE Pat Cvengros, 6-1, 170; DT Andrew Nelson, 6-3, 205; DL Miles Bower, 6-1, 240.

**All-time state playoff record:** 61-10.

**Coach:** Peter Stuursma 138-17, 13th season.

**Biggest game:** Oct. 5 at Lowell, 7 p.m.

\* Related: [Players 16-20](#)

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**Overview:** East will have a dynamic running attack with Brown running behind a talented offensive line. The Pioneers will have fine receivers for whomever emerges from the quarterback battle. There are some defensive holes to fill, especially at linebacker.

### 12. Southfield

**Top players:** WR/DB Brandon Bean, 6-2 1/2, 200; QB Trey Walton, 5-11, 185; OT Colin Buchanan, 6-5, 305; LB Jeff Madison, 6-1, 205; LB Willie Duncan, 5-10, 175; junior LB Lawrence Madison, 6-4, 220; junior LB Jordan Cry, 6-1, 195; junior DB Carteris Carter, 5-11, 190.

**All-time state playoff record:** 9-9.

**Coach:** Tim Conley 45-28, eighth season.

**Biggest game:** Aug. 31 vs. Farmington, 4 p.m.

**Overview:** Expect a breakout season at wide receiver from Bean. Walton moving from receiver to QB will provide the Bluejays with a dual threat. The linebackers should be excellent.

### 13. Detroit King

**Top players:** S/WR Mycial Allen, 6-0, 190; WR/DB James Alexander, 6-1, 190; QB Davaun Williams, 6-1, 205; OT Lance Perry, 6-4, 320; junior LB Carl Fuller, 6-3, 215; DE Nick Davenport, 6-4, 215; CB Robert Wallace, 5-9, 170.

**All-time state playoff record:** 26-19.

**Coach:** Dale Harvel 27-16; 23-11, fourth season at King.

**Biggest game:** Aug. 31 vs. East English Village Prep, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** The Crusaders are the top team in the PSL East. QB Williams possesses a strong arm and has some impressive wins in his first two seasons as a starter. As usual, defense will be king at King. The secondary will be exceptional.

### 14. Lowell

**Top players:** DE Pierce Watson, 6-1, 185; junior DB Jeff Houston, 6-1, 180; sophomore DE Josh Colegrove, 6-0, 220; OG Dan Dyer, 6-4, 230; LB Reed Stormzand, 6-4, 220; DT Ryan Shaefer, 5-10, 195; LB Shannon Massey, 5-11, 190; junior DB/WR Kyler Shurlow, 6-2, 190.

**All-time state playoff record:** 35-11.

**Coach:** Noel Dean 183-55; 161-29, 17th season at Lowell.

**Biggest game:** Oct. 19 at Grand Rapids Christian, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** There are a lot of pieces to replace at Lowell, most notably QB Gabe Dean, but what else is new? The Red Arrows will play excellent defense again, and it is just a matter of time before the offense jells.

### 15. Orchard Lake St. Mary's

**Top players:** RB/LB Grant Niemiec, 6-1, 225; OG/DT Austin Johnson, 6-2, 265; QB Matt Linehan, 6-3, 185; junior WR/CB Jalen Watts-Jackson, 5-11, 175; OG/DT Andrew Koterba, 6-3, 295; RB Parker McInnes, 6-0, 190.

**All-time state playoff record:** 50-13.

**Coach:** George Porritt 206-57, 24th season at St. Mary's.

**Biggest game:** Oct. 12 vs. Novi Detroit Catholic Central, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** The defending Division 3 state champs will be good again. The Eaglets have a veteran offensive line that enabled Niemiec to runs for over 1,000 yards last season. He and McInnes will form the state's best running back duo.

## Free Press top 25 Michigan high school football teams: Nos. 16-20

By Mick McCabe Detroit Free Press Sports Writer

1:00 AM, Aug. 20, 2012 EDT



Mick McCabe picks the state's top-25 teams. Here are Nos. 16-20 (come back Tuesday for Nos. 11-15); all players are seniors unless noted:

#### 16) Grand Haven

**Top players:** Junior RB/LB Aaron Gordon, 5-11, 195; junior S/WR Isaak Newhouse, 6-0, 185; C/LB Matt Mulcahy, 6-0, 210; DE Anthony Perrier, 6-4, 210; sophomore OT Chase VanHoef, 6-4, 265.

**All-time state playoff record:** 2-4.

**Coach:** Mike Farley 72-42; 59-30, seventh season at Grand Haven.

**Biggest game:** Oct, 19 vs. Rockford, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** With three straight playoff appearances -- the school has only one other in its history -- Farley has changed the culture. Winning is now expected at a school that rarely won. The Bucs should be able to control the ball with a consistent running attack and there is good team speed on defense.

#### 17) Canton

**Top players:** OT/DT Cameron Dillard, 6-3 1/2, 290; RB/CB Kenny Scott, 5-8, 160; DT Danny DeRosio; OG Mike Ditzler, 6-1, 240; LB/TE Matt McKoy, 6-1, 190.

**All-time state playoff record:** 21-12.

**Coach:** Tim Baechler 165-57; 120-37, 15th season at Canton.

**Biggest game:** Oct. 5 vs. Plymouth, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** There are three returning starters defensively, but the team speed will be much improved and so will the defense. Dillard (Florida) will anchor an excellent offensive line. Scott was pressed into service defensively last season and played well and has big-play capabilities.

#### 18) Muskegon

**Top players:** C Quincy Crosby, 6-2 1/2, 285; OT Chandar Ricks, 6-4, 275; OG-T Antwan Billings, 6-4, 260; OG Noah Tozer, 5-11, 255; WR Sherman Hodges; RB/LB Demetrius Brown, 5-9, 185; junior LB William Hunt, 5-11, 206; DE Ronald Jenkins, 6-2, 255.

**All-time state playoff record:** 32-15.

**Coach:** Shane Fairfield 42-30; 16-7, third year at Muskegon.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 7 at Rockford, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** With five returning starters on the offensive line, the Big Reds will have a formidable running attack and will be able to pound the ball down the field. Muskegon will also use its immense speed to play good defense.

#### 19) Farmington

**Top players:** DB/WR Isaiah Gourdine, 6-3, 197; OT Ryan Caprathe, 6-5, 305; LB/RB Connor Mohr, 6-0, 205; DB/TB Jordan Degrefferreed, 5-9, 184; OT/DT Michael Purry, 6-2, 275; OG/DT Keenan White, 6-3, 270; junior WR/DB Curtis Brunson, 5-10, 170; TE/LB John Perry, 6-0, 187.

**Coach:** John Bechtel 76-72; 72-67, 14th season at Farmington.

**All-time state playoff record:** 5-8.

**Biggest game:** Aug. 31 at Southfield, 4 p.m.

**Overview:** The Falcons are experienced and explosive and have made the playoffs the last four seasons, a school record. With the good size in the offensive line, they should be able to move the ball on the ground.

## 20) Midland

**Top players:** OT/DT Steve Elmer, 6-6, 315; QB/DB Alec Johnson, 6-0, 170; RB Travis Patten, 5-7, 10; DL Terrence Thomas, 6-3, 205; S Alex Goodwin, 5-9, 175; LB Michael Wright, 6-2, 200; LB/RB Scott Naples, 5-10, 195.

**All-time state playoff record:** 26-22.

**Coach:** Eric Methner 70-41; 36-9, fifth season at Midland.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 21 vs. Mt. Pleasant, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** Job 1 is rebuilding the offensive line where Elmer is the lone returner and an excellent building block. Johnson is a playmaker on both sides of the ball and Patten will shine in his first year as a starter. The Chemics should be good defensively.

# Free Press top 25 Michigan high school football teams: Nos. 21-25

By Mick McCabe Detroit Free Press Sports Writer

1:00 AM, Aug. 19, 2012 EDT



Mick McCabe picks the state's top-25 teams. Here are Nos. 21-25 (come back Monday for Nos. 16-20); all players are seniors unless noted:

## 21) Macomb Dakota

**Top players:** OT/DE Christan Gore, 6-3, 245; junior S David Basirico, 6-1, 180; C Mitch Gralewski, 6-3, 250; junior DT Scott Masyra, 6-1, 265; junior WR-RB Matt Crossley, 6-1, 185; LB junior Niko Savich, 6-0, 210, 2014; junior OT Brandon Lozon, 6-2, 270.

**All-time state playoff record:** 26-10.

**Coach:** Mike Giannone 120-42, 15th season at Dakota.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 21 vs. Utica Eisenhower, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** A dominating defense should make the Cougars contenders in the rugged MAC Red. OT/DE Christan Gore is a standout on both lines, and junior safety David Basirico adds stability to a reliable secondary.

## 22) Walled Lake Western

**Top players:** S/RB Josh Jones, 6-2, 210; junior QB/DB/K Kyle Bambard, 5-9, 170; LB Melis Johnson, 5-9, 180; junior OT Alex Joss, 6-4, 270; LB Zach Prokes, 5-9, 185; CB/RB Jake Neracher, 5-11, 170; junior RB Malik Green, 6-0, 180.

**All-time state playoff record:** 20-12.

**Coach:** Mike Zdebski 101-47, 15th season at Western.

**Biggest game:** Oct. 5 at Walled Lake Central, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** S/RB Josh Jones (Illinois) is a difference maker on both sides of the ball. QB/DB Kyle Bambard is an effective runner and passer, but he might be most dangerous as a kicker, where he booted nine field goals last season.

## 23) Mt. Pleasant

**Top players:** Junior TB Michael Tweh, 5-11, 200; S/QB Cory Williams, 6-1, 185; LB/WR Antonio Povinelli, 5-11, 190; OG/LB Matt Keller, 6-0, 210; junior OT Erik Belco, 5-11, 260; junior DB/WR Evan Huber, 5-7, 155; OT Jaime Hoyt, 5-9, 290.

**All-time state playoff record:** 15-12.

**Coach:** Jason McIntyre 60-12, seventh season at Mt. Pleasant.

**Biggest game:** Sept. 21 at Midland, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** The Division 3 runner-up returns only three starters defensively, but the overall athletic ability is improved. Look for another huge year from junior RB Michael Tweh, who ran for 1,912 yards and 25 TDs as a sophomore.

## 24) Holt

**Top players:** Junior TB Ty Glover, 5-8, 180; LB Charles Waits, 6-0, 200; LB Jalen Scott, 6-1, 190; LB Chris Morgan, 6-3, 205; DB Trevor Stone, 5-10, 170; junior DB Austin Kent, 5-11, 180.

**All-time state playoff record:** 15-13.

**Coach:** Al Slamer 156-88; 28-15, fifth season at Holt.

**Biggest game:** Oct. 19 at Grand Ledge, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** The Rams were young last season and showed great promise in coming from behind in several games. Junior TB Ty Glover is going to be the workhorse in the backfield, carrying the ball more than 30 times a game. This could be an exceptional defense with key veterans in the line, at linebacker and in the secondary.

## 25) Detroit East Village Prep

**Top players:** TE/DE Khalid Hill, 6-3, 240; DB/RB Desmond King, 5-11, 180; DE Leon Johnson, 6-0, 247; OT/DT Jalen Dandridge, 6-3, 285; C Antoine Johnson-Clark, 6-3, 315; LB Equan Moore, 5-10.

**All-time state playoff record:** 0-0.

**Coach:** Rod Oden 60-20, 1st season at East Village.

**Biggest game:** Aug. 31 at Detroit King, 7 p.m.

**Overview:** This is the combination of Crockett and Finney, with almost all of the players coming from Crockett. There is a massive offensive line that will allow East Village to dominate the ground game. The defense's front seven will be strong.



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