

Clarenceville prepares to defend their Metro West football crown

Clarenceville's football team turned in a very strong season last year, losing just one contest and winning eight.

The Trojans captured the Metro West Conference title and just missed qualifying for the Class B state playoffs.

Leading the Clarenceville attack will be Jim Beyer, three-year starter at quarterback. Beyer has been an important

element in the Trojans' offense, using both a strong passing arm and quick running speed. Last year, Beyer was the team's second leading

starter. Martin will be a split end on Clarenceville's offense and a line-backer on the other side of the scrimmage line.

As for newcomers on the Clarenceville team, Weddle pointed to one as being a potential starter. Tom Soop is a freshman running back and will most likely see action this year.

"Tom is a hard worker. He's got speed and right now he looks very good," Weddle said. "Quarterback will be our strongest single position. Beyer is a fine leader and will most definitely do the job. Our other backs look good but we're not going to be sure until we get out on the field," continued the coach. "Our defense also looks tough."

On the other side of the coin, Weddle said his two front lines are the big question mark. Neither the offensive nor the defensive lines, Weddle pointed out, have more than one or two players with experience.

As for Clarenceville's opponents this year, Weddle said Dearborn Heights Robichaud will be the toughest. Last year Robichaud edged the Trojans, 15-14, for their only loss of the year.

Jockey enjoys track

The newly-installed \$50,000 racing surface at the Detroit Race Course has slowed times of the horses to a gallop, but it has also served to hasten the career of jockey Mike Morgan, off to the fastest start of his five-year racing career.

Morgan, a resident of Redford, has had a history of being a bridesmaid in jockey races throughout his brief career.

The diminutive Nebraska native has always been a good place bet, finishing second in the jockey race at both DRC and Hazel Park to more publicized rivals. This year, Morgan may be for real.

"I've got the lead now and I want to keep it," he said following his 12th winning ride of the meeting last Monday.

Morgan had just whipped Timely Girl home three lengths in front of the pack on Monday's eighth race.

Through the hurried process of weighing, weigh-out and change of silks, interrupted by a quick cigarette, Morgan talked about his fast start in the first nine days of the DRC meeting.

The new track has a lot to do with it. It's deeper. You have to be able to hold the horse up when he gets tired," Morgan said.

Morgan said there were other things which he did not care to elaborate on which have put him on top of the early jockey standings.

Among these "other things" certainly has been the quality of horses brought to him by agent Frank "the Greek" Garousalis. Both in quality and quantity, Morgan's mounts have been matched only by traditional jockey leader Wayne Catalano.

Through Monday's races, Morgan had ridden 58 times, better than six times a day and second only to "the Cat" who has gotten top jockey title at Hazel Park.

"I'm stronger now," said Morgan. "I like to ride the card if I can," he said, expressing his desire to ride every race.

Morgan now hits the scale at 110 to 111 pounds, three pounds over his track weight last year. Only those who deal in the pounds and ounces of the thoroughbred sport can appreciate what that kind of a weight difference can mean when trying to rate a thousand-pound horse.

Rating has become especially important over the new surface of the Livonia track which is deeper and heavier than its predecessor. As a result, horses with early speed have been faltering as have jockeys who have made careers out of hustling horses out of the gate and holding off the field.

Morgan has never been such a rider, as is reflected in his four-win lead over the ever-present Catalano and the remainder of the jockeys.

"Certainly my goal is to win the title here. And I intend to stay the entire meeting to do it," Morgan said.

Jeff Weigand, along with Beyer and Nabony, is the only other key senior on the squad, said Weddle. Weigand will be the center and will also see action as a defensive tackle.

Tony Soave started for the Trojans last year as an offensive and defensive guard. This year, Weddle is putting a lot of hopes on him to hold down what looks like a weak offensive and defensive line.

Sophomore Jim Martin will also be a two-way

player. Martin will be a split end on Clarenceville's offense and a line-backer on the other side of the scrimmage line.

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