



Jim Sopha, an experienced signal-caller, was to quarterback Redford Union against some tough Northwest Suburban League competition until he injured his back and was lost for the season. (Staff photo by Art Emanuele)

## Sopha injured; RU hopes dim

Redford Union's football squad will be competing in the Northwest Suburban League for the first time this fall and coach Harvey Heitman felt fairly optimistic about his team's chances.

That was until Jim Sopha, who was expected to lead the team at quarterback, broke two bones in his back during practice. Sopha will be out for the entire season.

Andy Szabo, a sophomore with no high school football experience, and Tim Holmes, a junior who lettered as a defensive back last year, are contending for the quarterback slot. "Our strength this year is our returning seniors. They are all leaders. Some of them have been together since ninth grade and they know each other very well as a team," said Heitman.

Heitman added, however, that he has a good team but a tough schedule. With the likes of North Farmington, Westland John Glenn, Livonia Stevenson and Livonia Franklin, you can't argue with that.

There are 27 returning seniors and 17 starters in uniform this year for the Panthers who reaped a 3-6 record last fall.

"We knew last year was going to be a learning year for us. We were a little in awe of teams like Plymouth Salem and Trenton. Now, I think we

have more confidence," Heitman said. All-league senior Bob Friedman at fullback and linebacker and Bob Ugoch at tailback will be a potent threat to most area teams. The team runs a flanker-offense. "These boys are real easy to work with," said Heitman.

Another key player is Gary Lewandowski, an offensive guard and defensive end. He is a senior and was a second team all-Suburban Eight choice last year.

Glenn Roberts, Kirk Marsh, Ron Neph and Andy Mikols will also be key personnel in the offensive and defensive pit area. Roberts is a 6-6 senior tight end; Marsh is a senior, three-year starter at end; Neph is a senior center and Mikols is a senior tackle.

Scott Reaume, a senior, and Tim Holmes, a junior, will monitor things in the defensive secondary. "I could name a lot more players. We have some size and a lot of depth. Our offensive line is a little thin and it's a major concern," Heitman said.

The veteran coach said that it's hard for him to predict what will happen in the Northwest Suburban League but added that John Glenn and North Farmington are two top teams in the state.

Thursday, September 6, 1979

(F7B)

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