# Former grid rivals pull together at Hillsdale

By M.B. DILLON

It's kind of like George Bush and Ronald Reagan joining forces on the Republican team at the end of the bit-ter battle for the presidential nomina-

tion.
On the football roster of Great Lakes
Independent Athletic Conference
champion Hillsdale College are sophomores Bill Eberhart, Dave Mehelas
Laces who were and Bill Kendro – players who were once at each other's throats on the foot-ball fields of opposing local high

schools.

But Eberhart, a slotback from Birmingham Groves; Kendro, a tailback from Birmingham Seaholm, and Mehelas, a center from Birmingham Brother Rice, were together on one other team before graduating to Hillsdale — the

high school football career. And Mehelas, a 6-1, 215-pound offen-sive tackle for the Warriors, received an honorable mention on the all-area

AS FELLOW GLIAC champions, the trio's prowess remains evident. Mehe-las and Eberhart received honorable mentions on All-Great Lakes conference team

1978 Observer & Eccentric all-area football squad.

Eberhart, 5-600-8 and 170 pounds, rushed for 1,090 yards and scored 15 touchdowns in his senior season. Kendro, 5-9 and 175 pounds, gained 92 yards in 124 carries to polish of this, both of bothall career.

And Mehelas, 3-6 1, 215-pound offenders are the second year, and Mehelas for the first. Kendro played backup tailback and saw some action on the special teams, rounding four rickoffs of 87 yards. Joining the same team kindled a special special

rs. "Kendro and I always played on opposing teams, and our schools and the media created a big rivalry," said Eberhart.
"I think we pictured each other nega-

"Now that I'm playing with these guys I wish we could have played to-

guys I wish we could have played to-gether in high school.
"But that was impossible then — we were all striving for the same thing."
"WE'RE ALL GOOD friends now." said Mehelas.
"In high school, teams supposedly

high school, teams supposedly

hate each other even though the players barely even know each other."

Kendro described the first days on Hillsdale's squad as "a little awkward."

"But as the season progressed," he continued, "we became a team.

"There's lots less rivalry now among the players. We don't have anyone in the backfield who's a real big star," said Kendro.

the backfield who's a real big star," said Kendro.
"Our defense held us together."
There's almost a tapestry of connections between the three.
Eberhart recalls Brother Rice coach Al Fracassa. — a man who molded Mehelas' football mettle — befriending bits of few some back. him a few years back.
"He helped me quite a bit," said

Rice beat us in the playoffs, so I guess Fracassa knew who I was. I used to see him at my health club a lot. "I remember him telling me that if I

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said Kendro. "He worked maintenance could for me."

IN THE LAST GAME of the high school regular season, Kendro and Eberhart met on the gridiron as und Groves clashed in a bid to reach the Jayoffs.

"The game ended on a controversial play and we beat Seabolm," recalled Eberhart.

"I was on my way to the locker room and Bill was already on the bus. When saw me, he jumped off, came up and congratulated me.
"I thought that was something else." It was really big of him and I respected him for it.

The way Kendro tells it, "we just salked after the game.

Kendro and Mehelas met long before Hillsdale - in a kitchen.

The remembered him as a helluva football player, but leave the game.

Eberhart on Mehelas: "I remembered him as a helluva football player, but leave really knew him.

"We've all become good friends and "

llsdale -- in a kitchen. "We both worked at Oakland Hills,"

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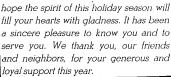
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