

## Sports

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## No easy road in WLAA

## Season will challenge prep teams

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

Farmington teams would like to upset the status-quo in Western Lakes Activities Association boys soccer this year but will face an uphill struggle trying to accomplish it.

Playing in the toughest soccer league in the state, the Farmington teams traditionally have been overshadowed by the Livonia and Plymouth-Canton powerhouses.

Harrison, Farmington and North Farmington enter the 1992 season hoping to challenge those teams but in the meantime will focus on winning the city title, improving their skills and being the best they can be.

As a Class B school, Harrison has found the rugged WLAA schedule to be good preparation for the district tournament, and the Hawks will enter post-season play as defending champs, having beaten Redford Thurston 4-0 last year.

Harrison was beaten by Mount Clemens Lutheran North in the first round of the regional tournament, but a post-season run is always a strong possibility for the Hawks.

## FARM. HARRISON

With its leading scorer from a year ago gone, Harrison will require time to develop an offense while relying on its strengths at the half-back and goalkeeper.

Mark Lebovitz, an all-state honorable mention, scored 10 goals and had four assists to lead the Hawks, who were 7-8-2.

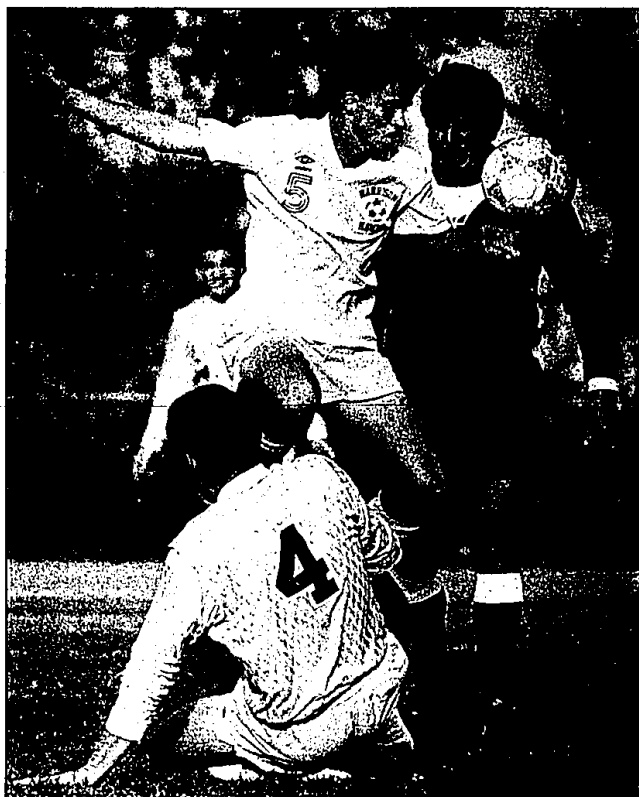
Harrison lost five starters in all, including defenders Ray Beger and Mike Jacobs, halfback Mike Walters and forward Vince Berg.

But the Hawks return nine varsity players and have enough holdover talent to possibly repeat as district champs if not make some noise in the WLAA.

Harrison is strongest in the mid-field where seniors Ben Pinsky, Derek Leaz and Steve Blankenship are returning starters.

"They're workhorses," Harrison coach Glen Breuhan said. "They never give up and always give 100 percent. They're real aggressive players."

The Hawks also have a veteran



Harrison's Steve Blankenship (5) is one of three seniors returning to anchor the Hawks' midfield.

goalkeeper in senior Chris Schrowe, a returning starter who spends his summers attending camps and playing for teams in California.

"We asked for volunteers three years ago to play goalkeeper, and he's really progressed well," Breuhan said. "He's looking for good things this year."

The heir apparent to Lebovitz could be sophomore Alex Dryngel, who scored four goals last year and is the lone assured starting forward in Harrison's 4-3-3 lineup.

Seniors Steve Bruni and Dan Millar played on the JV team last year, and Breuhan sees potential in freshman Andrew Dryngel. The Hawks

used Jeremy Teachman as a utility player last year, but Breuhan hopes to play him regularly on defense. "We're going to have to work with (the forwards) a lot, but the potential is there," Breuhan said. "Hopefully, they'll get better as the season goes

Please turn to Page 2

## Marshall moves; Cox is returning

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Dave Marshall's major is law enforcement, so it's ironic he has only one more year of duty with Eastern Michigan University football squad.

"I'm a criminal justice major, I want to be a cop," said the fifth-year senior from Redford Union High. "My dad (Herman) is a retired Detroit cop. He worked 25 years on the force. I don't want to get into a kind of job where I'm busting kids for breaking windows all my life, but I'm willing to start there. It's something I've always wanted to get into."

Marshall, who is moving from defensive back to outside linebacker in the Eagles' (formerly the Hurons) new defensive scheme, has had enough of foot patrol. He's ready to move up the ranks and play more of a role in EMU's upcoming season.

"I'm really optimistic," said Marshall, who will graduate next spring. "Right now I'm No. 2 at outside linebacker. Fred McClendon (a returning starter) is a big, strong linebacker-type, whereas I'll play in nickel situations. I'll be able to drop back on pass plays and have to come up and hit on the run. All I can do is give it my all and try to beat Fred out."

MARSHALL, who has beefed up his 6-foot-1 frame to 210 pounds, will also play on special teams.

In 1989 he played in all 11 EMU games, recording five tackles.

Marshall, whose injury report reads like a rap sheet, has something to prove in his final year of eligibility. He sat out the 1990 season with a knee injury, a torn anterior cruciate ligament suffered that year during spring practice on the artificial practice surface at the University of Michigan.

"I'd be lying to say that you're the same (after knee surgery)," Marshall said. "You can't run as fast or jump as high. There's swelling in my left leg, sometimes it doesn't ever go down, but I can come very close to being where I once was."

After going in for surgery in April of 1990, Marshall began practicing again with the Eagles last last season, only to be sidelined again with a broken thumb (torn ligament), which required surgery.

"I sat out last year because my knee was not totally better," he said. "It's tough, anyway, to come back in six months."

## college sports

"But I did everything right as far as rehabilitation. I'm happy with the way it is. I dedicated myself for once this summer. It's a lot stronger."

AFTER A SUCCESSFUL spring practice and summer of weightlifting and running, Marshall is anxious to start the season. He hopes EMU can do an about-face after a dismal 2-9 showing in 1990.

"It's hard to say if we'll be as good as the 1987 California Bowl team," said Marshall, who was a freshman that championship season. "I think we'll be one of the most improved teams (in the Mid-American Conference). I see a lot of new faces. The key is the younger players and how they develop. We have a good bunch of seniors. It's an interesting mix."

Marshall, who earned a scholarship after walking on, is glad he was given one more chance to contribute.

"I have no complaints about the way I've been treated here," he said. "I have nothing but respect for coach (Jim) Harkema."

And someday Marshall hopes to earn that same respect as a police officer.

LOCAL EMU FOOTBALL NOTES: Several area players will figure prominently in the Eagles' 1991 season.

Chris Cox, a junior (eligibility-wise) from Farmington, returns at linebacker where he finished sixth last season in tackles. The 6-3, 230-pound Cox had 29 solos and 21 assists in 1990.

Chris Parvett, a 6-2, 234-pound senior linebacker from Livonia, returns after playing in eight games last season (including one start). He returns from hernia surgery.

Mike Boyle, a 6-1, 260-pound offensive tackle from Redford St. Agatha, may get the starting call. The red-shirt junior "could be an interesting piece of the puzzle," according to Harkema.

"He's shown a lot of ability and we're hoping he'll come through," said the EMU coach. "It's really at a point where if he stays healthy, he'll have a chance to impact because he's pretty good enough," said Harkema of the 6-2, 180-pound pass catcher.

Dennis Parker, a 6-3, 251-pound red-shirt sophomore from Redford Bishop Borgess, will see back-up duty on the defensive line.

The incoming freshman class includes defensive back Mike Thomas (Redford Catholic Central), who could see considerable action along with tackle David Dobbin (Borgess),

linebacker Scott Nichols (Harrison) and defensive

Please turn to Page 2

## Lakers picked to repeat; Raider grad should help

## football

OBSERVER-AREA  
MFC PLAYERS

Ferris State: Mike Brooks, freshman defensive tackle, Livonia Churchill Park, junior fullback, North Farmington; Pat Pettit, junior fullback, Westland John Glenn.

Grand Valley State: Todd Gerund, junior wide receiver, North Farmington; Doug Elliott, senior guard, John Glenn; Eric Thornton, junior defensive end, John Glenn.

Hillsdale College: Erik Jantz, sophomore defensive tackle, Plymouth Canton; Chris Johnston, junior fullback, Canton (Redford Catholic Central); Mark Johnston, sophomore linebacker, John Glenn; Joe Shoup, senior defensive tackle, Plymouth Canton; Joe Ramsey, junior split end, Livonia Franklin; Kurt Urban, senior center, Salem; Mark Wurtz, senior punter, Livonia Stevenson; Rob Sylvester, freshman guard/tackle, Plymouth (CC).

Northern Michigan University: Andy Avery, senior guard, North Farmington; Saginaw Valley State: Alan Pitts, sophomore defensive lineman, Stevenson; Brian Tiller, senior cornerback, Salem; Brad Wolfman, freshman defensive lineman, Wayne Memorial; Steve Dabig, freshman linebacker, Salem.

Wayne State: Mario Araujo, sophomore fullback, Canton (Redford Bishop Borgess); Erik Burton, freshman punter, Livonia (GG); Matt Corley, freshman fullback, Farmington; Harrison: Dennis Edwards, freshman line backer, Westland (Wayne Memorial); Vason Hawkins, freshman noseguard, Redford; Thurston: Elise Herbert, sophomore safety, Bishop Borgess; Scott Kukulawski, sophomore wide receiver, Stevenson; Ronno McElroy, sophomore fullback, Farmington; Hills (Troy HS): John Moore, freshman tight end, John Glenn; Brian Parvett, sophomore safety, Stevenson; Mike Radeback, sophomore linebacker, Stevenson; Eric Roth, sophomore defensive end, Stevenson; Chris Simpson, sophomore defensive lineman, Redford St. Agatha; Brett Gorka, sophomore safety, Garden City; Jeff Zwickl, sophomore split receiver, Church.

By C.J. Rissak  
staff writer

Defense is what matters, football coaches insist. Now explain why those in the Midwest Intercollegiate Football Conference cast their first-place votes for a team that is loaded offensively, but has more than a few question marks defensively — Grand Valley State.

Of course, it must be noted that the Lakers were 10-2 last year and won the inaugural MFC championship with a 9-1 record. They lost two offensive starters, but got one they missed most of last season back — tight end Bob Mitchell, a 1990 pre-season All-America candidate.

Still, eight seniors have graduated from the defense, including all three starting linebackers, which will put pressure to produce on those with experience who return.

Like Eric Thornton, a 6-foot-2, 220-pound junior defensive end from Westland John Glenn HS who recorded four quarterback sacks in part-time duty last year. The defensive line is solid, with senior defensive tackle Jim Cramer, an All-American candidate, returning.

BUT WITH a new corps of linebackers, the defense may be vulnerable. Brian Kelly, Grand Valley's 29-year-old first-year coach, knows it.

"I don't think there's an offensive coordinator around who wants to be in a position where they have to outscore the other team," said Kelly, who served as the Lakers' defensive coordinator last year. He succeeds Tom Beck, who left to join the Notre Dame coaching staff.

Still, if it comes to that, he has the offensive tools to do it — starting

with senior quarterback Jack Hull (2,152 yards passing, 19 touchdowns and just five interceptions) and senior running back Eric Lynch (977 yards rushing, 20 TDs).

Controlling the line will be an experienced group, said Kelly. "We return a lot of veterans on a very talented offensive line," he noted. Included is starting senior guard Doug Strub (6-2, 250), from John Glenn.

Mitchell's return (48 catches in '89) strengthens the receiving. Top pass-catcher Michael Short is gone, but seniors Ted Monken and John Sandars are back. So is junior-Todd Gerund (6-0, 185), from North Farmington. Gerund caught 13 passes for 249 yards and one TD last season.

IT MAY BE tough to repeat, however, as Hillsdale College will finish second, with Hillsdale College third and Saginaw Valley State fourth. Ferris State and Northern Michigan tied for fifth in the poll; any of them could challenge for the championship.

At Hillsdale, a strong offensive line and tough defense could propel the Chargers (7-4 overall, 7-3 in the MFC last season) into contention. The offensive line is anchored by senior center Kurt Urban (6-2, 240), from Plymouth Salem. Urban started every game last season.

"Our offensive line is going to be as strong as it's ever been," said coach Dick Lowry as he prepared for his 35th season. "The question mark will be at quarterback."

Lowry hasn't found a suitable replacement for graduated Craig Como at quarterback, and hints a freshman may even fill the position. Another notable loss to graduation

Please turn to Page 2

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O&amp;E/10