

Presenting: All-Area grid squad

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

THE TWO GREATEST constraints in Oberlinland football are the successful programs at Farmington Hills Harrison and Redford Catholic Central.

The 1991 season was like so many others in recent years for those two. Both reached the state finals again, with Harrison winning the Class BB crown and the Shamrocks taking runner-up honors in AA.

And once more, the All-Area team reflects the personal strength of those programs. Harrison has six players on the 24-man squad, CC seven with the inclusion of kicking specialist Kerry Zavagnin.

It was a good year for Plymouth Salem, North Farmington and Redford St. Agatha, too. They also made the playoffs and have representation on the All-Area team — Salem with three first-team players, North and St. Agatha two each.

Westland John Glenn, which had another fine season and just missed the playoffs, also put two players on the team, and Redford Bishop Borgess and Farmington Union put the elite unit with one selection apiece.

John Herrington of Harrison was named Coach of The Year after leading the Hawks to their third state championship in four years and fifth overall. Harrison also won the Western Lakes Activities Association title for the fourth consecutive year. Herrington is 188-43-1 in 22 seasons.

"The thing that separates this team (from others at Harrison) is its toughness and its meanness," Herrington said. "This is the most physical team I've coached."

"Frank is probably the best offensive player we've ever had at CC," Mach said. "He did a little bit of everything but did everything very well. It seemed he always gave us the big play when we needed it. He still managed to turn heads and make the big play in a conservative offense."

Duante Anderson (WR), Harrison: Anderson, playing only his second year of organized football, used his 4.5 speed in the 40-yard dash to catch 20 passes for 403 yards and five TDs. His 60-yard reception against Allen Park broke a scoreless tie in the regional final.

Anderson had five interceptions, 32 tackles and an in-jumble receives on offense. He also returned fumbles and punts. Western Michigan is very interested.

"He always challenged opponents going deep, and he put a lot of fear into the opposing secondary," Herrington said. "He helped make our running game, and he made some awfully big catches."

Jason Hagelthorne (OL), John Glenn: Hagelthorne started for two years at offensive tackle and this year led the Glenn defense as an inside linebacker.

"Jason got better and better as the year went on," Glenn coach Chuck Gordon said. "He had an excellent year at offensive tackle, and much of our yardage came over him. He is one of the top linemen we've ever had at Glenn. He moves extremely well for a big guy and became a very solid linebacker."

Vern Ratliff (OL), N. Farmington: Ratliff used a low center of gravity to hold his ground and even dominate on the line. He played guard and was an excellent trap blocker. As a defensive tackle, Ratliff had 22 solos, 70 total tackles, nine sacks and nine tackles for losses.

"(Longtime assistant coach) Ralph Temby thought he was the best lineman he has coached," O'Leary said. "I think that says it all. He has tremendous balance and initial movement off the ball. He's so short and strong he's hard to block. He has a great base on him."

Jason Gloetznir (LB), Harrison: A two-way tackle, Gloetznir is one reason the Hawks usually dominated opponents on the line of scrimmage.

Harrison ran behind him most of the time on offense, and opponents tried to avoid him when he was on defense. Gloetznir had 48 tackles and one fumble recovery. He would like to play at Eastern Michigan along with twin brother Mike, an inside linebacker for the Hawks.

"He's the most physically dominating player we've ever had at Harrison," Herrington said. "He's the meanest and most aggressive. He's one of our best offensive linemen ever — probably the best at pouncing the opposition."

Joe Hayes (OL), Salem: Hayes, who moved from tackle to center, was part of a solid line that made the Rocks successful at running their I-bone offense. He never had a mishandled snap and was the most dependable lineman.

"Joe became a very consistent blocker, and his blocking proficiency was very high," Mozhmiser said. "He was particularly effective when the linebacker was playing over him. We try to put one of our best linemen at center, and Joe was most effective at center."

Kerry Zavagnin (SP), Redford CC: Possibly the best kicker in school history, Zavagnin kicked 16 field goals — his longest being 47 yards — and converted all two of 26 extra points. He also punted 20 times for a 36.1 average and had 57 kickoffs for a 50.7 average. Ten kicks went in the end zone, and some deliberately squibbed kicks brought his average down.

Zavagnin is an all-state soccer player and might kick in college if he can arrange a situation whereby he can play both sports, according to Mach. He does all phases and he's good at all of them," Mach said. "He gave us great consistency in the kicking game, which comes down to winning a lot of games in the long haul."

Leon Hister (RB), Salem: Coach Tom Mozhmiser believes Hister is "the most underplayed player in the state of Michigan." Hister had an outstanding career for the Rocks, rushing for 2,494 yards and 37 touchdowns in the last two years.

"He was a career leader, with 23 times for 1,507 yards and 19 TDs. He also returned a kickoff for a touchdown against Harrison and led the Rocks with 122 points. He was voted Salem's most valuable player as a junior and senior."

"As far as pure running back ability, he's the best we've ever had," Mozhmiser said. "Winners before the game, but never a running back like Leon. The kids all looked up to him, and everybody respected his ability. He was a quiet leader, also. (He was never loud, but the other players) listened when he said something."

Todd Anderson (RB), N. Farmington: Anderson was the workhorse in the North offense, rushing for 1,175 yards and 12 touchdowns. He also caught seven passes for 150 yards and one TD, and he returned 15 kickoffs and four punts for a total of 430 yards.

Anderson was a durable runner and never missed a game because of injury despite carrying the ball a school-record 239 times. Scott Selter had the record of 235.

"As the game went on, the stronger he got," North coach Jim O'Leary said. "The more he carried the ball the better he was, and he had great games against the great teams. He always makes the cut to the hole, finds the seams and gets into them."

Jeff Tibaldi (RB), Redford CC: Tibaldi was the leading rusher in CC's successful ground-oriented attack, rushing for 1,236 yards on 246 attempts for a 5.0 yard average. He also scored 10 touchdowns.

"Jeff did everything we could have hoped for," Mach said. "He got us the real tough yards every week, and we played against a tough schedule, defensively. Many of his yards were between the tackles where he had to battle somebody."

Frank Yoakam (WR), Redford CC: Yoakam, possessing great speed and athletic ability, is one of the finest all-purpose players in the state, accumulating 1,110 total yards.

He rushed 42 times for 335 yards and five TDs, and he caught 12 passes for 313 yards and one TD. Yoakam also returned 10 punts for 162 yards and one TD, 12 kickoffs for 300 yards and one TD. A two-way player, Yoakam had 70 tackles and one interception on defense.

Joe Suhajda (DL), Redford CC: Suhajda



Andy Fitzpatrick Harrison



Roy Granger Harrison



Leon Hister Salem



Todd Anderson N. Farmington



Jeff Tibaldi Redford CC



Frank Yoakam Redford CC



Duante Anderson Harrison



Jason Hagelthorne John Glenn



Vern Ratliff N. Farmington



Jason Gloetznir Harrison



Joe Hayes Salem



Kerry Zavagnin Redford CC



Justin Gugala Borgess



Leon Jefferson Harrison



Dan Gusoff Redford CC



Joe Suhajda Redford CC



Allen August Salem



James Pierce St. Agatha



Mike Pesci Harrison



Gary Stegall Farmington



Matt Siskosky Farmington



John Ward John Glenn



Brett Walter Redford CC



Cardell Davis St. Agatha

FIRST TEAM OFFENSE

QB — Andy Fitzpatrick, 6-4, 205, senior Farm, Hills Harrison
RB — Roy Granger, 5-8, 155, senior Farm, Hills Harrison
RB — Leon Hister, 5-9, 185, senior Plymouth Salem
RB — Todd Anderson, 5-11, 165, junior North Farmington
RB — Jeff Tibaldi, 5-7, 170, senior Catholic Central
WR — Frank Yoakam, 5-10, 175, senior Catholic Central
WR — Duante Anderson, 6-2, 165, senior Farm, Hills Harrison
OL — Jason Hagelthorne, 6-3, 236, senior Westland John Glenn
OL — Vern Ratliff, 5-10, 225, senior North Farmington
OL — Jason Gloetznir, 6-3, 252, senior Farm, Hills Harrison
OL — Joe Hayes, 6-2, 210, senior Plymouth Salem
SP — Kerry Zavagnin, 5-10, 165, senior Catholic Central

FIRST TEAM DEFENSE

DL — Justin Gugala, 6-2, 235, senior Bishop Borgess
DL — Leon Jefferson, 6-1, 270, senior Farm, Hills Harrison
DL — Dan Gusoff, 6-0, 230, senior Catholic Central
DL — Allen August, 6-3, 185, senior Livonia Franklin
DL — Joe Suhajda, 6-2, 215, junior Catholic Central
DL — James Pierce, 6-2, 227, senior Redford St. Agatha
LB — Mike Pesci, 6-2, 205, senior Catholic Central
LB — Gary Stegall, 6-1, 205, senior Farmington
LB — Matt Siskosky, 6-0, 215, senior Westland John Glenn
DB — John Ward, 6-1, 188, senior Catholic Central
DB — Brett Walter, 5-10, 180, senior Catholic Central
DB — Cardell Davis, 6-1, 184, senior Redford St. Agatha

SECOND TEAM OFFENSE

QB — Brian Theis, 6-1, 190, senior Redford Union
RB — Tad Quattlander, 5-7, 171, senior Westland John Glenn
RB — Chris Marting, 5-10, 170, senior Farmington
RB — Aaron Shukarian, 5-9, 172, senior Livonia Franklin
RB — John Valentine, 5-11, 180, senior Bishop Borgess
RB — Rob Wright, 6-1, 166, senior Garden City
RB — Jason Fackore, 6-2, 185, junior Livonia Franklin
OL — Brad Pawlowski, 6-3, 240, senior North Farmington
OL — Dan Cretu, 6-1, 240, senior Catholic Central
OL — Brian Brewer, 6-3, 245, senior Catholic Central
OL — Carl Brooks, 6-1, 208, senior Westland John Glenn
OL — Brian Osterland, 5-9, 181, senior Livonia Stevenson
SP — Adam Chalmers, 5-10, 190, senior North Farmington

SECOND TEAM DEFENSE

DL — Shane Beatty, 6-3, 220, senior Plymouth Canton
DL — Tim Gadda, 6-4, 226, senior Plymouth Salem
DL — John Styler, 5-10, 200, senior Farm, Hills Harrison
DE — Andy Szydlowski, 6-0, 181, junior Plymouth Salem
LB — Mike Gloetznir, 6-3, 240, senior Farm, Hills Harrison
LB — Jamie Henry, 6-0, 190, senior Westland John Glenn
LB — Jason Boddin, 6-4, 220, senior Wayne Memorial
LB — Chad Myers, 5-10, 177, senior Livonia Stevenson
LB — Pete Mulka, 6-0, 175, senior Redford St. Agatha
DB — Matt Roney, 5-11, 180, senior Catholic Central
DB — Jason Howler, 5-10, 165, senior North Farmington
DB — Brian Lee, 6-1, 175, senior North Farmington

COACH OF THE YEAR

John Herrington Farmington Hills Harrison

HONORABLE MENTION

Farmington Hills Harrison: Greg Pickens, Dan Wright, Rob Wright, Mickey Gray, Frank Awan, Fred Smith, Matt Gorman, Redford Catholic Central: Clint Grooms, Joe Herman, Dan Hays, Jason Hager, North Farmington: Sean Tencer, Matt Quattlander, Mike Jones, Jason Wiles, Guy Morrison, Mike Hays, Jr., St. Agatha: Paul Hays, Redford Union: Mike Jones, Dan Hays, Jr., Garden City: Dan Hays, Jr., Farmington: Paul Hays, Jr., Westland John Glenn: Dan Hays, Jr., Livonia Franklin: Dan Hays, Jr., Bishop Borgess: Dan Hays, Jr., Redford St. Agatha: Dan Hays, Jr., North Farmington: Dan Hays, Jr., Catholic Central: Dan Hays, Jr., Farm, Hills Harrison: Dan Hays, Jr., Plymouth Salem: Dan Hays, Jr., Livonia Stevenson: Dan Hays, Jr., Wayne Memorial: Dan Hays, Jr., Redford Union: Dan Hays, Jr., Livonia Stevenson: Dan Hays, Jr., Redford St. Agatha: Dan Hays, Jr., Catholic Central: Dan Hays, Jr., North Farmington: Dan Hays, Jr., North Farmington: Dan Hays, Jr.

da (Shah-hay-das) was another key player who helped to continue a CC tradition for good defense. He was one of the team's top tacklers with 68½, a big number for a tackle. Suhajda also had two sacks.

"He was our overall best defensive lineman," Mach said, adding he was a unanimous All-Catholic choice of the league coaches. "Everyone asked who that No. 71 was. He seemed to be everywhere on the field. He's great when the play comes at him, but he does an equally good job of pursuing."

Allen August (DL), Salem: August was a three-year letterman and, playing defense and one quarter of what Mozhmiser considers the best group of four down defensive linemen in the WLAA. He had 44 tackles, five sacks and two fumble recoveries.

"He led the defensive line that was one of the best in recent history at Salem," Mozhmiser said. "He brought enough heat as a sophomore to bring him up to the varsity, and we had an 8-1 team that year. In fact he was a captain as a junior."

James Pierce (DL), St. Agatha: Pierce has been a two-way starter for three years, and has continued at St. Agatha tradition for outstanding linemen. Pierce rates with former standouts Kevin Rich (CMU), Joe Churches (CMU) and Mike Boyce (CMU), according to coach John Goddard.

"We've been blessed with linemen for a small school, and he's right there with them," Goddard said. "He was an other one who never said anything. He just gets the job done. When we ran at Carl, Cardell (Davis) got it and we ran it over James."

Mike Pesci (LB), Harrison: Pesci was the leader on another outstanding Harrison defense, making 159 total tackles, including 88 last hits. He also intercepted two passes and recovered two fumbles.

the backup, on offense, he mostly blocked for Granger, but he did rush for five TDs and catch one TD pass. Herrington believes Pesci has the frame to carry 230 pounds and play in the Mid-American Conference, but he is an excellent student and might opt to play for an Ivy League school.

Mach has the most savvy of any player on the team," Herrington said. "He could go from sideline to sideline, and he was soundly out of position. He was a good pass defender, and he took on the back real well."

Gary Stegall (LB), Redford CC: Stegall was to the CC defense what Pesci was to the Harrison team. A two-year starter and the defensive signal caller, he made the most tackles (109) for the Shamrocks and also recovered two fumbles. He was a blocker in the power-lineup and was hitting somebody on every play, according to Mach.

Gary was the heart and soul of our defense," Mach said. "The other kids looked to him for toughness and leader-

ship — and he delivered. You could count on him in tough situations, and he was an inspiration to the other players."

Matt Siskosky (LB), Farmington: Siskosky had a lot to do with Farmington being an improved team this year. A four-year varsity player, he doubled as an offensive tackle. Siskosky had 117 tackles, including a season-high 29 against Salem, and more than 200 in the last two years. He also recovered two fumbles.

Siskosky, a straight-A student and tops in his class, has drawn the interest of Ivy League schools as well as a number of Division II schools in Michigan.

He was there at the time, during the season and the off season," coach Bernie Carl said. "He gave us everything he had. He never got down no matter what the situation. I never had to worry about Matt getting up for a game. He was always ready."

John Ward (DB), John Glenn: Ward split time with Tad Quattlander at tailback and used his fine athletic skills to excel at free safety on defense. He was a team captain along with Hagelthorne.

"He ran very hard with the ball, and he was a good hider on defense," Gordon said, citing Ward's usefulness on offense. "He was one of those guys who always did what was best for the team. He probably would have been an outstanding tailback, but we needed him to do other things (play defense), and he responded very well."

Brett Walter (DB), Redford CC: Walter was another solid CC defender. He made 44 tackles from his secondary position, intercepted three passes and returned a punt for a TD against Brother Rice. He also played some offense and averaged 10½ yards per carry on seven attempts.

He played a great job of covering people who were much faster than him," Mach said. "He had great instinct for hitting on the corner and going to the ball when it was thrown."

"Over the last two years, he made key plays that kept us in ballgames. We never worried about Brett (even when playing against speed teams like King, DePue and Pontiac) because of his savvy and instinct."

Cardell Davis (DB), St. Agatha: Davis was a fine two-way player for the Aggies, rushing for 1,374 yards (18½ average) and 17 touchdowns. His lone pass reception went 42 yards for a TD. He also returned one kickoff and one punt for scores.

On defense, he had seven interceptions and 41 St. Agatha had kept track of tackles, probably would have led the team in that, too, according to Goddard.

"He was our best overall football player," Goddard said. "But he was a team kid first. He doesn't get wrapped up in individual stuff. You can't give him any more credit than to say he was a team player in tough games against Shrine and St. Clement, he brought us from behind to win."