

Title Magic?

Grid pickers unanimous: Hawks will roll

BY BRAD EMOUS
STAFF WRITER

It's getting down to the "Nitty Gritty time" this weekend in high school football.

The big game, of course, is Livonia Stevenson (6-1) at Farmington Hills Harrison (6-1) for the Western Lakes Activities Association championship. (Game time is 1 p.m. Saturday at Harrison.)

In the Metro Conference, Livonia Clarenceville (5-2, 5-1) is looking for help. Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook (7-0, 6-0) can win the title outright Saturday with a victory over Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest (2-5, 2-4).

The playoff picture is becoming a little more clear.

In Class AA-Region II, Stevenson needs to win one of its last two games to qualify. Westland John Glenn (4-3) and Wayne Memorial (5-2) could also be on a collision course for the fourth and final berth in that region. They meet the final week of the season at Glenn.

In Class A-Region III, Harrison is in the driver's seat to qualify if it can beat either Stevenson or unbeaten Oxford (7-0), but that's no easy task. Meanwhile, Farmington (5-2) is now in a dogfight with Novi (5-2) and Dearborn (6-1) for the fourth and final spot.

Despite two straight losses, Redford St. Agatha (5-2) is a virtual lock to earn a berth in Class D-Region IV.

Redford Catholic Central (4-3) is a longshot to make it in Class AA-Region III, along with

GRID PICKS

Clarenceville in Class CC-Region IV.

As for the prediction race, the gap has been narrowed once again.

• Yours truly correctly picked 14 of 16 games last week to run his season record to 80-25, only two games back of the lucky Irishman (Dan O'Meara).

• O'Meara went 13-3 and is 82-23 overall.

Here is a sneak preview at this weekend's action:

FRIDAY'S GAMES

(all at 7:30 p.m.)

Redford Union at Garden City: These old northwest suburban league foes have had parallel seasons. Both teams are 2-5 overall and 2-3 in the White Division of the Metro Conference. Both teams were shut out last week by decent opponents. PICKS: It's a lock-up in the battle of GC. O'Meara punts with the Cougars (GC). But Emons scratches the back of the Panthers (RU).

Westland Glenn at Northville: The Rockets (4-3) are fighting for a playoff spot after an 18-7 gut-check victory last week over Plymouth Salem. Brent Harrison is coming into his own at tailback for the Rockets. Northville (4-3) is busy without the services of top tailback Arel Kersey (injury), who missed last week's game against Livonia Franklin. PICKS: The Rockets are jet-propelled.

Farmington at Py. Carleton: The Falcons (5-2) have made great strides under second-year coach Jim Neikens, but need a healthy Jake Siklosky (torn knee) to stay in the playoff chase. Canton (3-4) stayed with mighty Harrison with a

half last week before the roof caved in. PICKS: Farmington makes it six out of eight in '94.

Py. Salem at W.L. Western: The Rocks (3-4) have been up and down all season. Last week, they were manhandled by Glenn Western (7-5), however, is nothing to shout about. The Warriors struggled last week with Livonia Churchill. PICKS: It's a lock-up in the battle of GC. O'Meara punts with the Cougars (GC). But Emons scratches the back of the Panthers (RU).

H. Farmington at Liv. Churchill: North (2-5) handed Lakes Division champ Stevenson its only defeat, but that's the only thing they can brag about so far in 1994. Churchill has now lost 42 of its last 43. The Chargers are due, especially after the way North played in a 13-12 loss last week to Walled Lake Central. PICKS: Both sides play with the Lakes Division team (North) in this Western Lakes crossover.

SATURDAY'S GAMES

(all 1 p.m., unless noted)

Liv. Stevenson at F.H. Harrison: Most preseason prognosticators predicted these two teams would meet for the championship, and it came true. Harrison has the edge at the skill positions with people like Nick Williams, Jason Granger and Kevin Bryant. Stevenson counters with big offensive and defensive fronts led by Jim Townsend, George Murphy, Ben Lewis and company. It's a Miami vs. Nebraska type of matchup — speed vs. strength. PICKS: Harrison repeats its championship magic.

W.L. Central at Liv. Franklin: The Vikings (3-4) snapped a four game losing streak last week with a one-point triumph over North. On the other side of the ledger, Franklin (1-6) must find a way to hold teams to two touchdowns or less, something the Patriots have done only once this season. PICKS: The Viking ship puts one out for the Lakes Division.

Clarenceville at Lathrup North: The Trojans (5-1) are on a roll with five straight victories. Last week, they defeated Macomb Lutheran North (4-3, 4-2) proved a point last week by upsetting first-place Hamtramck, 15-13. The Mustangs will most likely be keying on Clarenceville tailback Martino Seman. PICKS: O'Meara says Clarenceville

makes it six straight, but Emons sides with the Mustangs.

Det. Lathrup West at Lathrup East: Detroit Lathrup West (1-6, 1-5) is moved in the cellar of the Metro Conference. Lathrup East Westland got back on the winning track with a 21-0 shutout last week of Harper Woods. Mark Mashburn, better known as the "Motor Mouth," nabbed for 113 yards. PICKS: Coach Dennis Tuomei scores one over his old team. Lathrup Westland wins.

St. Agatha at East. St. Florian: The Aggies (5-2, 2-2) not only have lost two in a row, but also suffered a pair of shutouts in losses to Waterford Our Lady of Lakes (10-0) and Center Line St. Clement (18-0). Hamtramck St. Florian (1-3, 2-5) is coming off a 34-6 setback to Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes. PICKS: The opposition is just what the doctor ordered. Aggies roll.

D.J. Annapolis at Red. Thurston: In a Mega-Blue matchup, Redford Thurston (4-3, 4-2) has the upper hand against Detroit Heights Annapolis (1-6, 1-5). The Aggies can guarantee them a win with a victory. PICKS: Lee M. Thurston is proud of his Eagles.

Redford CC vs. U-D Jesuit (7:30 p.m. at Liv. Clarenceville): Catholic Central sophomore quarterback Greg Call went down in last week's 21-14 Boys Bowl loss to Birmingham Brother Rice. Call means senior Gary Galvin is back in the saddle again for the Shamrocks (4-3, 1-2). University of Detroit Jesuit (4-3, 0-3) looked great last week in their Blue Op Gallagher, rolling up 400 total yards as Jason Jones rushed for 142 yards and three TDs. PICKS: U-D keeps its winning streak intact in the Central Division. CC rebounds for a win.

SUNDAY'S GAME

Bishop Borgoes at Allen Park Cabrini (1 p.m.): It hasn't been a great season for the Fighting Irish or former Notre Dame quarterback Terry Andrzejak, now the Cabrini coach. The Monarchs (2-5, 1-3) are coming off a 28-6 loss to Detroit East Catholic. Meanwhile, Borgoes (0-4) is trying to make something out of an already bad season. PICKS: Cabrini does something the Lions can't do on Sunday.

Hawks from page 1C

"And Bryant is so darn quick, he just runs by people. There's not too many defensive backs who can stay with him."

"Williams just lines up eight or nine yards back and just pounds you out of their 'iso' or 'belly' series. He's very, very good."

Breakaway threats

Could the Miller-type nightmares occur all over again?

"Any one of the three can make things happen," Reardon said. "They just make the big, big plays all the time."

"You can't key on anybody. We're going to have to play good, solid defense. We've been playing well, but we haven't faced anybody with that kind of foot speed. And we haven't seen anybody as quick as Granger."

"I didn't see their senior quarterback (Jake Lawson) before he got hurt, but their sophomore quarterback (Kevin Barmenack) is a nice quarterback, too."

Harrison, however, also has some major concerns of its own.

The Hawks are going up against a huge offensive and defensive line.

Beef up front

Stevenson rotates three giants at the tackle spots — Jim Townsend, a 6-4, 250-pound senior; Eric Hines, a 6-1, 261-pound senior; and George Murphy, a 6-4, 250-pound junior. Senior Tony

Jankowski (6-0, 239) also sees action at tackle.

"They're a different team (as opposed to Glenn every year)," Harrison said. "But it doesn't get any easier. They have great size and have played excellent defense all year. Their offense looks like it could explode on someone. I just hope it's not us."

Reardon knows he must counter Harrison by using a ball control attack.

"What we've got to do is keep our offense on the field," he said. "We cannot go one, two, three and punt."

"But the kids know what they have to do and we're healthy."

Hawks gain momentum

Harrison has been on a roll since falling 28-21 to Birmingham Brother Rice at the Pontiac Silverdome.

"After losing the opener, it's been a long fight," Harrison said. "But we feel we're playing good ball now. We didn't get any one hurt (Saturday) so we're looking forward to the next two games."

"The Hawks" have been putting plenty of points on the board this season.

"I think our offense has really stepped up," Bryant said, "but we need to step up defensively because we're going against a big team."

Dan O'Meara contributed to this preview.

Happy homecoming for Eagles gridders

Redford Thurston football star Brian Siriani uses so much energy as a linebacker that he normally doesn't carry the ball much on offense.

But Saturday, with the Eagles' starting fullback Steve Davanzo turning an ankle on the first possession, Siriani's name was called the most.

The 5-foot-9, 185-pound senior responded with 97 yards on 14 carries and three touchdowns in the Eagles' 19-10 homecoming victory against Taylor Center.

Siriani had his usual steady defensive game with 12 tackles, but he was happiest crossing the goal line for a change.

"We're happy to see Brian score points," Thurston coach Bob Snell said. "Anybody who watches us play always knows who he is the way he plays defense."

Tailback Rob Laho added 77 yards on 13 carries and quarterback John Wojcik completed five of 11 passes for 73 yards and one TD.

The victory moves Thurston above .500 at 4-3 overall, 4-2 in the Mega Conference Blue Division. Center is 1-6 overall, 1-5 in the Blue.

Snell is pleasantly surprised the way his young team has responded this season.

"We're getting the most out of our talent," he said. "They're trying to do exactly what the coaches are telling them to do and

it makes it fun when they respond to that."

Thurston took a 7-0 lead with a 16-yard pass from quarterback Wojcik to Dan Ochso to cap a 65-yard drive. Laho's 23-yard run helped set up the score.

But Center scored next on a 65-yard drive of its own, capped by Tim Simons' 2-yard run. The two-point conversion failed and Thurston was up 7-6.

The Eagles went up 14-6 at halftime, scoring on Siriani's 3-yard run. The score came several plays after Thurston stopped Center on a fake punt attempt on fourth down at the Eagles' 45-yard line.

Center put a scare into Thurston early in the third quarter when Simons returned a kickoff 75 yards for a TD. The two-point conversion failed and Thurston led 14-12.

Center was threatening to go ahead in the third quarter, but the Eagles' Jim Freer forced a fumble and Ryan Doherty recovered the ball at Thurston's 10.

The Eagles went ahead 21-12 early in the fourth quarter after Siriani raced 50 yards for a score. Ryan Doherty later intercepted a Center pass at midfield and nine plays later, Siriani punched the ball in from the 1 to end Thurston's scoring.

Center added a 10-yard scoring pass from quarterback Kevin Uzarski to Mike Moore in the last minute to end the scoring.

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