## It's time for kickoff in grid-picks contest

One game separated your fear-less high school football prognos-

leas high school football prognos-ticators last year.
My victorious counterpart, the lucky Irishman, Dan O'Mears, has a 7-3 record against me dur-ing the past 10 years.
That was almost as good as Lou Holtz's won-lost percentage during his term at Notre Dame. But Lou is gone and now it's time for the Bob Davie era. So my hopes are up substan-tially as we enter the 1998 sen-son.

son.
Who knows, Mr. O'Meara may suddenly go into the tank and pull a Gerry Faust.
You know, these things run in

cycles.

I'm not going to apologize for going 107-27 last year, but when your partner goes 108-26, then it's definitely the luck of the ...
Here is a sneak preview of this weekend's action.

weekend's action.
And just remember, when it's
Friday night, it's high school
football time (not soccer, not
girls basketball, as some athletic
directors insist it's becoming).
And from 10-11 p.m. each Fri-

day, your knowledgeable Observer sports staff will talk prep football, reporting and analyzing weekly action, with the lke Griffin, the "Mega Man," on WXYT-1270 (AM).

FRIDAY'S GAMES (all 7:30 p.m, unless noted)

Borgese (4-5) at Ecorse (2-6), 4:30

Borges (4-8) at Ecorse (2-8), 4:30 p.m.; The Spartans have a new head coach in Werner Blakely, who was a defensive coordinator at Detroit Hangy games hast year against independent Red Raiders, PICKS Ecorse needs more than Arche Clerk to win this one.

Liv., Chuschill (0-9) at Redford Union (0-9), 7 p.m.; This is the first encounter ever between the two schools, RU is bankling on a underfeated by team to improve things, while Churchill, under new coach John Fillatraut, hopes the PICKS. The Western and Economic Commission (1-1) and the PICKS. The Western and Economic Commission (1-1) and the PICKS. The Western and Economic Commission (1-1) and the Market (1-1) and the much improved in the Mega Conference's White Devision, Frankla, which played a braid's schedule last year, is banking on the sidented backfield the of quarterback Brian Facilone, taiback Anthony deth also recommended.

PICKS: The lights warm up for Franklin.
Dearborn (7-2) at Liv. Stevenson (6-3): Could be the best matchup of the night. Stevenson has a young teem, while Dearborn is bankling on a tough delens and the quarterbacking of lason Kreger. PICKS: Emons and O'Meara take Dearborn wins this one.

Det. Mackenzie (3-6) at Westland Olann (12-3): Jerome, Edits, Popper Johnson, Cilbert Brown L. hely used to play the state of the state to QGB. PICKS: No cracks in the Mir, Clenn is rendy to orbit.

QBs. PICKS: No cracks in the Mir, Glenn is ready to oxide.

Ply. Canton (4-5) at Monroe (7-3):

The Canton Chiefs lost quarterback Rob Johnson (Northwestern), while the Monroe Trojnas will miss brustleg 245 pound fullback Jovan Johnson (Toledo). But Monroe is a farorite to win the Red Division in the Mega after making the playfis last year. PICKS: No shocks here, General Custer and Monroe are ridding high.

General Custer and Monroe are name night.

Balleville (4-5) at Ply, Salam (5-3).

Bulleville (4-5) at Ply, Salam (5-4).

Rumars are running rampant that Belleville's Tigers have a powerhouse team this year and should be the team to beat in the Mega-Red. Last year, Salem stunned the Tigers, 20-7, but where is quarterback Nate Gray (Hope Cellege) when you need him? PICKS: Salem coach Tom Moshimer did it with

mirors last year, but don't ask him to do it again in this one. Belleville wins.

Wayne (6-4) at Adrian (2-7): The Mapres slipped last season, but don't expect them to be down for long. Bill Kohn, who was 30-5 in three seasons at Morenci, including a Class C runner-up finish last year, replaces A Romano as head coach. Weyne, meanwhile, can't be come to be compared to the coach of the coach of

SATURDAY'S GAMES (all at 1 p.m. unless noted)

(all at 1 p.m. unloss noted)

Taylor Kennedy (4-5) at Thurston (5-3), noom With Taylor Center closing its door, Kennedy should pick up some decent footboal players. Thurston will miss tight end Matt Kuksa, but veteran quartenback Nick Dedeulx etrums, We'll see which division is better, the White or the Blue. PICRS: Emons goes with Kennedy, but O'Mears likes Thurston. Lutheran Westland (6-1) and Harper Woods (6-2): in last year's opener, Harper Woods (6-2): in last year's opener, Harper Woods and on un make the Class & March 1998 (1-1). The Charles of the

with Novi.

Hartland (4-5) at N. Farmington (1-8):
North's Raiders hope to reverse four.
streight losing seasons (3-6, 4-5, 27,
and 1-8). North has a telented tire tallback Kirk Moundros, tight end Carter
Campbell and linebacker Soan Clark.
Hartland won test year's meeting, 35-6.
PICRS: Hartland makes it two straight
for the street of the street of the street of the street
go, appear to be bigger and stronger,
this year. They are led by two telented
lineman in Biran Lewis and Mike Fisher.
Jared Hopkins tokes over as the starting
quarterback for the departed Revin Barnbenek, Harrison has won the last three
meetings against the Wildcats, who
have been to the playciff 15 times, winning seven state
crowns and three runner-up finishes,
PICRS Hartison rocks and rolls.

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PICRS Hartison rocks and rolls.

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p.m. at Silveridame: Remomber last year's momentous meeting? Pershing, ranked No. 16 in the nation by USA foday, went down to a 246 loss. CC; which earned its eighth playoff beth lost year, has another telented club led by captains Adam Tubaro. Joe Sgrot, Chris Dueweke and Ben Herman. Pershing will rely on one of the state's top wide receivers and detensive backs, Carry Foote. PICKS: Pershing gets the beat.

## Shamrocks ready to defend Catholic League crown

BY STEVE KOWALSKI

Detroit Catholic Central senior
Adam Tubaro started at safety
last season and will remain
there despite also carning the
starting quarterback job during
the 1997 preseason.
CC coach Tom Mnch jokes that
playing both sides of the ball
wort be much of a burden on the
6-foot-2, 1989-pound Tubaro.
With the offehse we run, all
he has to do is hand the ball off
most of the time, "Mach said.
With the running game their
strength, the Shamrocks have
won four state championships,
including the Class AA tile
three of the last seven season.
They lost a great deal to graduation from a team that finished 7-3 and lost to Westland John
Clans in the first round of the
Class AA playoffs.

But could this be the year Mach dumps his "three-yards and-a-cloud-of dust" playbook?
Tubaro, who possesses a strong arm and escapability, says he'll do whatever it takes to get the Shamrocks back to the Pontiac Silverdome.

He replaces Greg Call, a three-year starter who passed for 384 yards and rushed for 278 more.

The had two years to prepare myself," said Tubaro, a three-your varsity member. "It was just a matter of getting in there, gotting the starting nod. We run pretty basic stuff, go with whatever work. It running works, we'll go with that, if passing works, we'll go with that, if passing works, we'll go with that, if passing works, we'll go with that. "Greg was great. I knew I was

"Greg was great. I knew I was behind him and now it's my

chance. All of us just want to win
the state. That's what it's all
about. We're going to be just as
good as the last two varaity
Evense I've played on.

Only five starters return, but
the Shamrocks also add players
from an undefeated junior varsity
team.

This is an exciting group that
works hard and listens well,"
Mach said. "We're young but
best of all we're not ranked as
high and have great incentive to
move up."

When the Shamrocks have
thrown in the past, they've usually been passes of the safe variety. What else would explain
senior fullback Chris Duewske
being the leading pass receiver
last season with 10?

The Shamrocks have a pair of
bookend tight ends in 6-foot-4,
225-pound senior Don Slankster

and 6.4, 210-pound junior Nick Brzezinski, who are formidable blockers and capable receivers. Speedy Joe Saah (5-10, 170) returns for his senior year at

"We like Adam's leadership; he brings a real positive attitude to the team," Much said. "He has a







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