

Shamrocks stop Pioneers, post-game traffic



DAN O'MEARA

GRID PICKS
 Yours truly was leaving the Silverdome Saturday night when he was suddenly confronted by a large group of young men wearing their colors.
 A street gang, you say? Oh, no it was the Catholic Central High School marching band.
 No need to be afraid for Danny O. Besides, I was safely inside my ride, trying to make a quick dash for the nearest exit, or so I thought.

Neither was there any danger for the boys in the band. I had wisely applied the brakes moments earlier and given way to the CC football team.
 Now a collision with those guys definitely would have meant a visit to the bump shop for me and my vehicle.
 The average for a CC offensive lineman is 6-foot-3 and 260 pounds, and there's little variance in that average. I mean, they're all 6-3 and 260!

Twenty-five years ago not even St. Schembichler's University of Michigan offensive line was that big.

So, the Shamrocks in pads (as if they needed them) had barely cleared a lane when here comes the CC band, turning in formation from the tunnel exit right into a set of headlights. Mine.

The band major thought he would direct traffic, too, and motioned for Danny O to cut outside and around right end.

But I'm no Barry Sanders behind the wheel; I couldn't do that without putting a few band members on the DL and you know who in court.

I had no choice but to stay put while the band was forced to part on both sides of me. Sorry for the inconvenience, guys.

Anyway, I was impressed (and pleased) at how the band was able to improvise and maneuver in limited space without so much as putting a scratch on the new Jeep. Thanks, guys.

And, to show my appreciation, next year, I'll just go around the

other side of the Silverdome and use a different exit.

Now, we have this matter of grid predictions to address.
 How was the season? 11-6? Yeah, it's a winning record but, gosh, how long have these guys been doing this?

Yours truly and colleague Brad Emons were wrong on all three of our involving Livonia teams. Churchill, Franklin and Clarenceville — to their credit — pulled off some surprising wins.

We'll try to sort things out and do a better job in Week 2. Here goes:

FRIDAY GAMES

(all times 7:30 p.m. unless noted)

Divine Child (2-0) at Bishop Borgess (11-5 yards on 19 carries) as Borgess opened with a 24-0 win over East Catholic, but the Spartans have a bigger challenge this week. The Falcons, who defeated Grand last year in their opener, 41-14. They have a potent running game. Brent Scheffer rushed for 165 yards and four touchdowns and Royce McKinley 125 yards. PICKS: The Spartans need divine intervention; the Falcons soar to victory.

Clarenceville at Lutheran N'west, 8: How about those Trojans? Just when you think they've slipped after losing all-time leading rusher Walter Ragland off last year's playoff team, they start by thumping defending Metro Conference champ Harper Woods, 23-6. The Crusaders faced pretty well in their opener, too, even if they didn't win. Northwest lost in overtime to always-tough Lutheran North, 20-14. PICKS: Clarenceville made quick believers of the Observer's stats staff.

Sis staff (0-1) vs. St. Agatha (1-0) at Kraft Field, 7: The Aggies had another big start, amassing 632 yards in total offense and blasting Carsonville-Port Sanilac again, 30-0. Maurice Payne rushed for 199 yards and Dan Boutler 164. Both backs scored two touchdowns each. St. Agatha routed St. Florian last year, 35-6. The Lancers opened with an 8-0 loss to Ecorse, never known for its gridiron prowess. PICKS: The Aggies stay undefeated.

Dearborn Fordson (0-1) at Wayne (0-1), 7: In one of the biggest surprises anywhere in the state last week, mighty Fordson was upset by Detroit, 23-6. The Tractors, who gave CC a good game in the playoffs last year, were supposed to be one of the state's

best teams and still might before it's all done. The Zebras will try to rebound from a 21-12 loss to Romulus, a playoff team last year. PICKS: The Tractors get back on track.

Allen Park (1-0) at Garden City (1-0), 7: The Cougars had another good start when they whipped Greatwood in its 17-6 opener, 35-14, behind the running of junior Mike Sparks, who had 210 yards and two touchdowns. But Garden City's second opponent is perennial power Allen Park, which crushed Southgate Anderson, 42-12, as junior quarterback Bobby Marten passed for 132 yards and two touchdowns. PICKS: The Jaguars win the battle of the big cats.

Redford Union (0-1) at Eased Ford (0-1), 7: The Panthers, coming off a playoff appearance last year, were stunned by Churchill in the opener, 15-13, despite All-Observer back Mike Macek having 200-plus yards in total offense and catching two touchdown passes. The Thunderbirds are looking to even their record, too, after losing to Madison Heights Bishop Foley, 21-17. PICKS: No need to invoke the lemon law, Edsel make a comeback.

Redford Thurston (1-0) at Gibraltar Carlson (1-0): The Thurston Eagles blanked Willow Run in their first game, 10-0, while the Carlson Marauders defeated Taylor Truman, 27-21. Senior Silvio Barile did all the scoring and was a standout on defense for the Eagles. These teams didn't play last year as Thurston put together a 6-2 season. PICKS: Neither team defeated a gridiron power last week, so it's a tough call. We give the edge to Carlson.

Westland John Glenn (2-0) at Liv. Churchill (1-0): The Chargers have some momentum going into the Western Lakes crossover week, and they'll need it against another good Glenn ball club. Senior Rob Wilson scored both touchdowns in the 15-13 win over RU. Glenn didn't score many points in its 17-6 defeat of Detroit Cooley, but senior Eric Jones had 155 yards and two touchdowns. PICKS: The Rockets rock and roll for a second week.

Liv. Stevenson (1-0) at Ft. Franklin Anderson, 4: Both teams were impressive in their openers. The Spartans pounded an always-tough Dearborn team, a Class A regional finalist last year, 26-7. Dan Wilson and John Vanduren scored two touchdowns each. The Patriots had one of the first-week upsets when they trumped Lincoln Park, 28-13. Joe Meier was the big gun for Franklin, rushing for 210 yards and a pair of TDs. PICKS: Franklin's win means it should be a better game than we expected, but look for Stevenson to still win the game.

Farmington (0-1) at Pqr. Canton (1-0): The Chiefs won their opener for the first time since 1991 by defeating Ypsilanti, 14-8, as quarterback Oliver Wolcott passed for both touchdowns and Nick Stonebrook rushed for more than 200 yards. The Falcons suffered a disappointing, 20-17 loss to their debut, a game they might just as easily have won if they could've stopped Novi quarterback Mitch Moe's option runs. Grant Weber had a good game at quarterback for Farmington, too. The last time these teams played Canton won 42-0 in 1996. PICKS: Either way, don't

look for a lopsided score like that this time. In fact, the Falcons will rebound with a victory.

Ply. Salem (0-1) at W.L. Westam (1-0): After absorbing a 40-13 loss to Port Huron Northern, the Rocks must face the Western Lakes preseason favorite at Walled Lake. The Warriors, who blanked Lakeland 47-0, are coached by former defensive coordinator Mike Zdebski, who replaces longtime coach Chuck Appa. Defense is still the key word for Westam, which was 8-1 last year but failed to make the playoffs. The Warriors have nine starters back on defense and a lot of speed on offense, led by quarterback, Chris Payton, Cody Cargill and Lorenzo Parker. PICKS: The Warriors make life difficult for the pilgrims.

North Farmington (1-0) at Northville (0-1): Hooray for the Raiders! We couldn't be happier to see North and coach Rich Burrell win last week over Roseville, 31-30. It was the first actual win for the Raiders since the end of the 1997 season. North found a quarterback in Blair Weiss to replace injured Eric Wilder, and running back Todd Weiss is a bonafide offensive threat. Can the Raiders remain the only unbeaten team in Farmington when they meet the Mustangs, who lost to state-ranked Brighton, 31-37. PICKS: There's a big difference between the Roseville and Brighton programs. The coin, please! Northville ekes out a victory.

W.L. Central (0-1) at Harrison (0-1): The Hawks had their 26-game winning streak broken in a 17-14, overtime loss to Oxford. It might have been 27 in a row if not for a controversial call on a

goal-line fumble in OT. Senior back Kevin Woods picked up where he left off last season, and Harrison, while not the juggernaut of recent years, should be in contention for a playoff berth. The Vikings, who were 3-6 last year, lost their first game to Milford, 28-13. PICKS: The Hawks begin a new win streak.

SATURDAY GAMES

G.P. Ligezzis (1-0) at Lathrop Metro-Land (0-1), 11: It looks as if the Metro Conference title could be up for grabs based on first-week results. Some of the middle-of-the-road teams won impressively while some of the usual powers struggled. Ligezzis, one of the former, crushed Harper Woods Lutheran East, 41-12. The Warriors lost to Wyandotte Mount Carmel, 28-16. PICKS: The Knights' armor continues to shine.

Redford CC (1-0) vs. London (Ontario) CC at Kraft Field, 7: We just hope the Shamrocks are good hosts to their Canadian visitors. CC was idle for a week last season when Windsor Holy Name backed out due to a teachers strike. We all know the Shamrocks don't like it when they don't get to play! They did that very well in the second half Saturday at the Silverdome against Ann Arbor Pioneer. CC trailed at half-time, 15-12, but ended up winning, 32-15. Danny O has been to London several times. His great aunt lived there during her 95 years. But, hey, those connections can't help the Canadian club! PICKS: It's do or die for CC High, and it's the home team that has the do part.

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Trojans from page C1

run with 32 seconds left in the half.

Quarterback Tim Riedl then ran for the two-pointer to make it 8-0.

Clarenceville took the second-half kickoff and marched 78 yards in 11 plays, capped by Shaw's 10-yard TD run. Riedl's 31-yard pass to Corey McKendry set up the score.

Battering ram Scott Wion, a 6-4, 226-pound junior wingback, scored on the two-pointer with 6:01 left in the third period to give the Trojans a 16-0 advantage.

Clarenceville's defense held Harper Woods on its third-quarter possession, but the Trojans' only turnover of the game (off a fumbled punt return) set up the Pioneers' lone score, a 28-yard TD run by Justin Dattilio with 1:19 left in the period to make it 16-8.

Clarenceville put it away with 7:17 left in the fourth on Riedl's 27-yard scoring pass to Wion, who wrestled the ball away from two Harper Woods defenders in the end zone. Wion added the extra point to give Clarenceville a 17-point cushion.

Meanwhile, Harper Woods quarterback Ryan Wise did not complete a pass in seven attempts and was intercepted by Fillingier with 6:01 remaining.

"We're weak at tailback this year, and that's been a staple of

our offense," Moher said. "We just couldn't run the plays we normally like to run."

Clarenceville, meanwhile, had 219 total yards.

The abbreviated preseason practice schedule limited Hudkins' playbook.

"We spent half of our time on fundamentals," he said. "It was probably the best thing for us, because we ended up playing a pretty sound game. We worked hard on cutting down our mistakes."

"I probably used only half of our plays."

The win was certainly an eye opener in the Metro. Harper Woods, the odds-on favorite, had won the title three of the past four years.

"After seeing some of the results the first week, I'd say the league is in a lot of turmoil; it's up for grabs," Moher said.

As for Clarenceville, coming off a 7-3 playoff season with a new coach, the Trojans couldn't be more pleased.

"I don't think it's kicked in yet," Hudkins said. "Those kids came out so hard. We're trying to instill 'Trojan Pride' and we've got the kids believing in it."

"We sold our kids on believing they could win this game. They've done everything I've asked, and they just kept going hard. It was a good win."

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PREVIOUSLY REFLECTED MERCHANDISE NOT INCLUDED

THE WEEK AHEAD

PIEP FOOTBALL
 Friday, Sept. 3
 Divine Child at Borgess, 4 p.m.
 Clarenceville at Luth. N'west, 5 p.m.
 St. Florian vs. St. Agatha at RU's Kraft Field, 7 p.m.
 Fordson at Wayne, 7 p.m.
 Allen Park at Garden City, 7 p.m.
 Redford Union at Eased Ford, 7 p.m.
 Thurston at Gb. Carlson, 7:30 p.m.
 John Glenn at Churchill, 7:30 p.m.
 Stevenson at Franklin, 7:30 p.m.
 Farmington at Canton, 7:30 p.m.
 Green at W.L. Westam, 7:30 p.m.
 Farmington at Northville, 7:30 p.m.
 W.L. Central at Harrison, 7:30 p.m.
 Saturday, Sept. 4
 Ligezzis at Luth. Westland, 1 p.m.
 Redford CC vs. London (Ont.) CC at RU's Kraft Field, 7 p.m.
BASEBALL
 Thursday, Sept. 2
 Shrine Tourney, 5:30 & 7:30 p.m.
 Clarenceville at Danboro, 6 p.m.
 Monroe, Concord, St. Agatha, 7 p.m.
 O.P. North at Ledywood, 7 p.m.

A.A. Pioneer at Mercy, 7 p.m.
Ply. Christian at Flat Rock, 7 p.m.
Redford Union at Chrysler, 7 p.m.
Thurston at Stevenson, 7 p.m.
John Glenn at Belleville, 7 p.m.
Wayne at Romulus, 7 p.m.
Garden at Marston, 7 p.m.
Anderson at Ft. Farmington, 7 p.m.
Harrison at Novi, 7 p.m.
Friday
Huron Valley vs. Inter-City at Marshall H.S., 7:30 p.m.
Bellowsy, Reg. 4
PCA English Classics, 8 & 8 p.m.
BOYS SOCCER
Thursday, Sept. 2
Churchill at Redford CC, 4 p.m.
John Glenn at Addison, 4:30 p.m.
Clarenceville at Luth. East, 7 p.m.
Friday
Huron Valley at Taylor Park, 4:30 p.m.
Farmington at RU (Kraft), 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 4
MEDIC'S COLLEGE KICKOFF
Friday, Sept. 3
Madocrae at Tn-State (Hd.), 5 p.m.