

# Rice, St. Mary's to meet again in final

**BY CHRIS MAYER**  
**STAFF WRITER**

Birmingham Brother Rice and Orchard Lake St. Mary's are set to meet for the second time in three weeks on a football field Saturday night.

The rivalry shifts to the Pontiac Silverdome for a Prep Bowl matchup to determine the Catholic League A-B Division championship. Kickoff is scheduled for 7 p.m.

Brother Rice and St. Mary's last faced each other in the Prep Bowl in 1988. The Eagles pulled out a 9-7 win on a late field goal.

**FOOTBALL**

The Warriors are making their third straight Prep Bowl appearance — they defeated Radford Catholic Central, 24-7, last season and dropped a 31-12 decision to the Shamrocks in 1999 — while the Eagles are in the final for the first time since '98.

"It's going to be an exciting game for the kids, and it's a great game to play in," St. Mary's coach George Porritt said. "It's always special to play for the league championship."

Brother Rice (5-2) and St. Mary's (7-1), the Central Division co-champions, advanced to the A-B Division final after semifinal victories Saturday at Keyworth Stadium in Hamtramck.

The Warriors pulled away in the second half for a 23-2 win over Detroit DePorres, enabling Al Fracassa to secure his 809th career victory and become the state's winningest prep football coach. More importantly, the win put Rice in the state playoffs.

"(Qualifying for the playoffs) was a big incentive for us," Fracassa said. "The talk about the record is over with; now I can go and coach a few more games."

Brother Rice built a 7-0 halftime lead on Doug Pickens' 30-yard touchdown pass to Anthony Jackson and Ross Ryan's extra point in the second quarter.

The lead grew to 16-0 in the third quarter when Pickens connected with Jeff Allen on a 13-yard TD pass; Ryan kicked an extra point and Sean Williamson tackled a DePorres runner in the end zone for a safety.

Jackson, who accounted for 140 rushing-receiving yards, including 96 on the ground, scored on a 4-yard run in the fourth quarter.

Allen and Jeff Stachowiak also stopped DePorres drives with interceptions.

St. Mary's needed John Payne's 3-yard TD run on fourth-and-2 with 36 seconds left to subdue Dearborn Divine Child by a 12-7 score.

Brother Rice and St. Mary's played two weeks ago at Orchard Lake. The Eagles used two long scoring plays to gain a 17-3 win.

"Our kids have to play hard," Fracassa said. "St. Mary's has an awfully strong defense and a very explosive offense. They just kept coming at us the last game, but we have a good defense. We just need to be able to generate some offense this time."

"It's going to be hard to keep them down to three points again," Porritt said. "I don't think you can hold a team with that much firepower down too many times; so we're going to have to put some points on the board to win the game."

# Grid picks from page D1

Woodhaven (4-4) vs. Redford Union (3-5) at Kevit Field: The Warriors evaded their record with a 7-6 win over Ypsilanti; RU won by the same margin against River Rouge when Chris Rigley first hit Paul Gerritt with a 15-yard scoring pass, then batted the game-winning extra point. That may have been this season's high point for the Panthers. **PICKS:** Woodhaven — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

Redford CC (5-2) at Dearborn Fordson (3-4): The Shamrocks beat a couple of tough opponents in the last two weeks to put themselves on the verge of the playoffs, the latest a 34-17 triumph over Detroit County Day Saturday. For Fordson, which lost by a touchdown to playoff-bound Belleville last week, all this game can bring is a .500 record and the satisfaction of spoiling CC's plans. **PICKS:** CC — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

White Lake Lakeland (2-6) at N. Harrison (2-6): The Raiders gave Northville a bit of a scare last Saturday before succumbing, while Lakeland didn't score a 4-4 effort at, losing 42-0. Three Milford runners combined for 376 rushing yards in their win over the Eagles. North has played better in the last few weeks, although it hasn't shown too much in the win column. This one will. **PICKS:** North — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

Westland John Glenn (3-2) at Wayne Memorial (5-3): It's pretty much been said, hasn't it? John Glenn is just playing for playoff positioning; that result against Harrison, which included the humiliating running clock in the second half, did nothing for the Rockets' collective ego. The Zetros hoped to be in this position at the start of the season; Glenn expected to be. Can the home field be an advantage for Wayne? The Zetros are 5-3 at home this year? My guess is Chuck Gordon won't allow his Rockets to coast into the state playoffs. **PICKS:** Glenn — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

Livonia Stevenson (4-4) at Livonia Churchill (2-6): 7:30 p.m. It's been more than a decade since Churchill got the best of Stevenson. The Chargers' wins this year have come against two teams with a total of two wins between them. Stevenson had a chance to make the playoffs going into last Friday's WLAJ crossover against Walled Lake Western, but the Warriors squashed those hopes, 35-13. Now it's the Spartans' turn to do the squashing. **PICKS:** Stevenson — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

Plymouth Salem (3-7) vs. Plymouth Canton (7-1), 7:30 p.m.: Two weeks ago, Salem gave Walled Lake Central a tremendous battle before losing by a field goal with nine seconds left. It seemed progress had been made. Then came last Friday's game against Livonia Franklin, and the progress regressed in a 20-0 loss. Got to score to win. Canton scored, putting four TDs on the board after Central took a 14-0 first-quarter lead. The Chiefs are among the best in the state; their ground game will wear down the Rocks. **PICKS:** Canton — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

Livonia Franklin (3-5) at Dearborn (7-1), 7:30 p.m.: Whichever way you end your season, going against one of the area's best teams, a team that buried Edsel Ford, 28-0, last week. The Patriots beat Salem with Andy Stierga's 30-yard field goal and a lot of strong defense. They'll need the same kind of defensive effort against Dearborn, and a lot more offense. **PICKS:** Dearborn — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

Farmington Harrison (5-0) at Detroit Country Day (16-1), 7:30 p.m.: What more can be said about this Grey Star-ton-Agim Shabazz-Marcus Woods-or-a-half-dozen other-guys powerhouse? A guy who seems to know his prep football (the now guru, Mr. Emmons) called Harrison the greatest offensive team he's seen. Maps to the Silverdome are already on sale at Harrison (as if they need them). Indeed, the rumor is the Hawks will prove in the Dome once the Lions' move out. Why not? They play there enough. **PICKS:** Harrison — Risk, Beaudry, O'Meara, Emmons.

Farmington (9-0) at Pinckney (5-3), 7:30 p.m.: Hot touch has gone right for Farmington this season. In fact, nothing has, as evidenced in last Friday's 6-3 loss in overtime to Churchill. Now the Falcons play at Pinckney, a team that can qualify for the playoffs with a win. It doesn't look too optimistic for Farmington. **PICKS:** Pinckney — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.


**SATURDAY GAMES**

Redford Thurston (4-4) at D.H. Annapolis (3-7), noon: Talk about upsets. Thurston recorded one of the biggest of the season when it knocked off previously-unbeaten Highland Park 19-0, on the strength of two Corey Reid touchdowns passes. Now the Eagles can finish their season on a winning note and with a lot of pride, and — who knows? — some 5-4 teams make the playoffs every year. **PICKS:** Thurston — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

Livonia Clarenceville (5-0, 7-0) at B.H. Cranbrook (5-3, 6-2), 3 p.m.: Talk about bad luck. The Cranes come into this game knowing a win could clinch them a spot in the playoffs, and who do they have to beat to earn it? Just one of the biggest powerhouse in the state, the Tim Shawled Trojans, who routed University-Liggett 47-0 last week behind Shaw's five TDs. Tough luck, Cranbrook. **PICKS:** Clarenceville — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.


Lutheran Westland (3-5, 3-4) at Lutheran Northwest (2-6, 2-5), 5 p.m.: Both teams lost last weekend, but Lutheran Westland was beaten by Harper Woods 23-16 while Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest was pummeled by Cranbrook 51-6. Northwest has the home-field advantage, Westland has a bit more talent. **PICKS:** Westland — Beaudry, Risk, O'Meara, Emmons.

(Risk is the Plymouth-Canton sports editor for the Observer and can be reached at (734) 953-2108 or by e-mail at [gridpick@homecomm.net](mailto:gridpick@homecomm.net).)



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## Football from page D1

they had to make a big play they did it."

Smith was 12-of-20 passing for 229 yards. McComb caught seven passes for 138 yards and Johns three for 86.

Cook rushed for 80 yards on 16 carries, Smith 37 on 12. The Raiders outgained the Mustangs in total yardage, 383-321.

Herpich completed 12 of 19 passes for 194 yards. Matt Cornelius had 21 carries for 88 rushing yards, and Adkins caught four passes for a team-high 67 yards.

Justin Kasgorgis led the North defense with 15 tackles. Steve Kahn and Moll had nine apiece, Brian Sinar and Sean Waits eight each.

"From the big-picture perspective, our senior leadership and this team has really turned the status of the program around 180 degrees from where we were last year," Burrell said.

"The frustrating part is we don't have more to show for it in the win-loss category. We've had a lot of moral victories the last six weeks."

"I just feel bad for our players, because they've been playing much better than the record shows. We're one of the best 2-6 teams in the county."

"We've played John Glenn tough, Stevenson tough and Walled Lake Central tough, and we had Northville beat. There's four games that could have gone either direction and taken us from 2-6 to 6-2."


"We're going to build on this. The juniors know what it takes to win, and the seniors put us in that position."

The Raiders end the season Friday with a home game versus another 2-6 team, White Lake Lakeland, which has wins over Holly and Hartland.

"We're looking forward to Friday, and I think the kids want to redeem themselves from Saturday," Burrell said. "We want to put all four quarters together, and that would be a great way to go out."


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