

Harrison hopes for another fine grid season

By TOM BAEH

A successful football team usually represents a team effort, and that's been the case with Farmington Harrison High School's teams for the past couple of years.

But Harrison's success — a Western State League title in 1971 and a second-place finish to go with a 7-3 overall record last season — also can be defined by its prep representatives. And Harrison coach John Harrison has been fortunate to have two of the finest gridder ever to play in Michigan.

Two years ago, it was Sam Plink, an excellent quarterback. And a rugged line-backer, leading Harrison to the league crown and a shot at a state ranking. Plink is now a sophomore on Purdue University's team.

Last year, Paul Rogstad, a running back and place kicker, earned a scholarship to the University of Minnesota by playing superb offense and defense, and by seldom missing a field goal or extra point. Players like that are great to have, but almost impossible to replace when they graduate. Still, Harrison, with 17 returning lettermen from last season, feels his team can have yet another good year.

"We lost some real skilled people, but we have a lot of good ones coming back," said Harrison, who is preparing the Hawks for their Sept. 18 opener at home against district rival Farmington High.

"If the kids perform well, we could have an excellent football team. We're looking for some real good things. Our offense should be very strong this season. Almost our whole offensive line is back, plus most of the backfield except for Paul."

Two seniors, tailback Mike Bowden and quarterback Jeff Thorne, should provide lots of offensive punch for Harrison.

Bowden, a big (6-1, 197 pounds) blurring back, has been an important part of Harrison's offense since his sophomore year. He could be next in line for superstar status at the school.

"We think Mike is a blue-chip kid," Harrison said. "He's just a super runner. He gained 940 yards last year, and he's a little bit bigger and faster now."

Thorne, one of the team's smaller players at 5-10 and 136 pounds, is a fast runner and passer. He's experienced, having set most of Harrison's passing records last season.

Harrison should have one of the most experienced lines in the area with four seniors back. Returners include center John Hileman (6-1, 185), guard Jerry Philgren (5-9, 175), guard Steve Zimmerman (5-10, 175), tackle Bill Blackmer (6-1, 187), junior tackle Pete Lambert (5-10, 182), and junior tackle Matt McCarthy (5-10, 185).

"We don't have any 200 pounders, but we have a lot of good linemen in the 180-185-pound range," Harrison said. "Quite a few of these kids, almost all of them, will have to play both ways — offense and defense."

HARRISON'S RESERVE team won only one game last season, but one former jayvee with a variety chance is junior Brad Bacho, a 6-3, 175-pound split end. "He's the brightest surprise we've had up

from the reserve squad," Harrison said. "He's fast and he has real line hands."

Harrison called his defensive secondary the "most untired" part of the team. However, he has a returning all-league defensive halfback in senior Bob Thompson (5-11, 165 pounds).



Harrison's Jeff Thorne (with ball) is shown hard at work during a game against North Farmington last season. Thorne, who set most of Harrison's passing records last season, should help the Hawks this fall. Harrison opens its season on Sept. 18 at home against Farmington. North Farmington opens its season Sept. 17 at Pontiac Northern.

"Our linebacking should be real strong," Harrison said. "We'll have Lambert and Fred Blackmer (Bill's younger brother). They're both juniors, but they've both played very strong so far. They lost their defense coming along could determine our success this season."

Plink's place kicker to replace Rogstad will be another problem for Harrison. "We've never had to worry about that (place kicking) for the past three years," he said. "But suddenly we've got the same problem as every other team has: we have to find some kickers and teach them what to do."

Harrison's second outing this season will be at non-league Birmingham Groves at 8 p.m. on Sept. 24. Last year, Groves handed the Hawks one of their two losses. The other came against Livonia Churchill in what amounted to the WSL championship game.

HARRISON OPENS its WSL season on Oct. 2 at home against Churchill.

"For the first time I'm not really sure who'll be strong in the Western B," Harrison said. "Northville has the most people back next to us, so it should be tough."

Livonia Churchill is young, but they always seem to come up with a good team

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down there, I understand that Waterford Mitt is good through the first team. I don't know much about Walled Lake Western or Plymouth Canton, but I don't think they are stacked up against the rest."

Harrison's last two games of the season should be interesting ones. The Hawks entertain North Farmington on Nov. 6 and

Plymouth Salem one week later. North Farmington is much improved over last year, and Salem is usually a powerhouse in Class A.

Harrison assistant coaches are Bob Suter (line) and Bob Sallow (end and line backer).

North Farmington 11 looks for improvement

By TOM BAEH

Considering last year's record — 1-10 overall and 0-4 in the Northwest Suburban League — not many people would expect North Farmington High School to be much of a football threat this season.

Not only did coach Ron Holland's North Farmington squad suffer a losing season, but it also graduated 22 experienced players from that team. Still, most opposing coaches will have respect for any football team coached by Holland.

"I see North Farmington as a much improved team this season," said Don Riehl, who coaches Thurston High, an NSL foe. "They have a way of coming up with good teams there."

Holland himself isn't coming on that strong, but he's confident that his young team will give a respectable showing when it opens its season on Sept. 17 at non-league Pontiac Northern.

"We're really pleased with our progress at this point," Holland said. "Our players are in great condition and they're really enthusiastic. They really want to improve on last year's record."

"I know they all want to win, but I think that nucleus of experience won't be there until next fall."

The football turnout at North Farmington has always been good and this year is no exception. At this point, North is carrying 48 players, including 13 sophomores, in its varsity.

"TEAMWISE, I THINK we'll be strong on defense, at least as strong as we were last year," Holland said. "We have four kids back with defensive experience."

Some standouts are Greg Miller (5-10, 210 pounds), a linebacker and offensive guard who moved to the line from fullback; Mark Schulte (5-10, 180), a line backer and tackle; Steve Schulte (5-9,

170), a defensive end; and Mark Thompson (5-8, 150), a halfback.

"We think that Miller and Mark Schulte have been looking real good lately," Holland said. "Miller looks like a real quick, hard-nosed type of guard at 210 pounds."

Holland will have to rebuild his offense, but one man he can count on is senior tailback Paul Patch, a 6-0, 195-pounder who also plays defensive end. Patch is beginning his third season as a NFHS starter.

"He's a strong and shifty runner," Holland said. "He doesn't have great speed, but he has a knack of getting open and breaking through. He also understands the offense, and he knows exactly what's going on at all times."

North Farmington graduated Larry Lichtman, last season's starting quarterback. But senior Mike Thomas (6-2, 190) looks like an adequate replacement at QB. Thomas played offensive end last year.

"He's a real good thrower and a strong runner besides," Holland said. "He's also very intelligent and has a lot of good leadership qualities."

SOME NEW players on the team are senior Dan Lorenz (5-10, 180), who didn't play football last season; junior Chris Rutz (5-8, 160), a guard; and sophomore Tim Quinn, who will handle the team's kicking chores.

Walled Lake Central, the only team North Farmington could beat last year, will be the Raiders' second opponent this fall. The game will be played on Sept. 25 on North's field. Then the Raiders will meet non-league Bloomfield Hills Lahser at home on Oct. 2.

North begins its NSL season at home on Oct. 9 against Livonia Franklin, the defending Class A state champion. Coach Armando Vigna's Franklin team has 18 lettermen back, but only two were starters last season.

"The Northwest Suburban should be more balanced this season," Holland said. "Last year, everybody in the league except us had one of the best football teams they've ever had."

"But now, everybody has graduated so many people that you have to look at how the reserve teams did last year. And I would say that Garden City East looks very strong based on that. I know East will have five or six kids over 200 pounds. Franklin graduated quite a few players, but that school has a lot of numbers. It's the largest school in the conference. Last season, it had a good jayvee team, which played good, sound, solid football."

The Northwest Suburban has been a five-team league ever since Oak Park High dropped out at the end of the 1974-75 school year. To fill the void, North Farmington scheduled the non-leagues with Lahser on Oct. 2.

North Farmington ends its season with traditional games against district rivals Farmington Harrison and Farmington High. The Raiders play at Harrison on Nov. 6 and entertain Farmington on Nov. 13.

Ralph Temby and Jim O'Leary will help Harrison as varsity assistant coaches. Ron Shortt and Grady Wilcox will coach North's reserve team.

NORTH FARMINGTON FOOTBALL
VARSITY — Sept. 17 at Pontiac Northern, 8 p.m.; Sept. 24 at Walled Lake Central, 8 p.m.; Oct. 2 at Bloomfield Hills Lahser, 8 p.m.; Oct. 9 at Livonia Franklin, 8 p.m.; Oct. 16 at Walled Lake Central, 8 p.m.; Oct. 23 at Garden City East, 8 p.m.; Oct. 30 at Bloomfield Hills Lahser, 8 p.m.; Nov. 6 at Farmington Harrison, 8 p.m.; Nov. 13 at Farmington High, 8 p.m.

RESERVE — Sept. 25 at Pontiac Northern, 8 p.m.; Sept. 30 at Walled Lake Central, 8 p.m.; Oct. 7 at Bloomfield Hills Lahser, 8 p.m.; Oct. 14 at Livonia Franklin, 8 p.m.; Oct. 21 at Walled Lake Central, 8 p.m.; Oct. 28 at Garden City East, 8 p.m.; Nov. 4 at Bloomfield Hills Lahser, 8 p.m.; Nov. 11 at Farmington High, 8 p.m.

Men's play begins Saturday

O&E golf tourney nears

After several months of concentrated practice, golfers will finally discover who the area's best shooters are this weekend at the eighth annual Observer & Eccentric Open Golf Tournament.

Livonia's Whispering Willows, described in excellent shape by both Gary Whisner, club pro and tournament director, and Tom Sheldon, assistant pro, will be the site of play Saturday and Sunday.

Over the years, the O & E Tournament, organized into flights based on handicaps, has blossomed into one of the largest, most competitive for amateur golfers in southeastern Michigan.

Most of last year's champions will be back to defend their titles. A host of former winners along with several outstanding challengers are also expected to

complete and make the tourney one of the most hotly-contested in years.

Sheldon, in fact, said that he believes a score of 143 will be needed to win the Championship Flight of the 36-hole medal-play event.

Dave Wall, a Plymouth resident, captured the Championship Flight title last year with an actual score of 147.

Par on Whispering Willows' 6285-yard layout is 71. The course's seemingly short length belies its difficulty, as narrow fairways on several holes put a premium on accurate placement.

Trophies and gift certificates will be awarded to the top several finishers in each flight.

While Whispering Willows will be closed to non-tourney golfers until everyone in

the tournament has teed-off, both days, spectators may watch the proceedings without charge. Championship Flight competitors will be first off the tee both days at approximately 7:30 a.m.

The Women's O & E Tournament, for which registrations will be accepted through Monday, will get underway at approximately 9 a.m. Sept. 18, also at Whispering Willows. The women's tourney will consist of 18 holes of medal play.

Constants in the men's tournament were reminded by Whisner to call Whispering Willows after 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday) to obtain their starting times.

The course is located at the intersection of Newburgh and Eight Mile roads in Livonia.

Pontiac squad wins tournament

Pontiac Met Club won the Michigan Recreation and Parks Association Women's Slow Pitch Class B state tournament by defeating Grand Blanc, 13-0, last Sunday at Farmington's Drake Park.

Manager Butch Trapper's Met Club team pounded out 17 hits in the championship game, which was scoreless until the top of the third inning when the visitors scored five runs. Pat Garcia and Lynn Schank each doubled to drive in two runs. Schank, Debbie Allen and Jackie Price each had three hits.

Winning pitcher Marty Heller worked the entire game, allowing just six Grand Blanc singles.

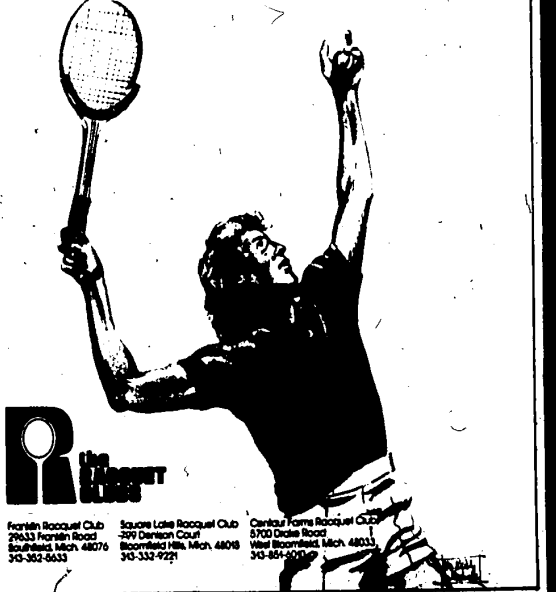
Met Club compiled a 6-0 record in the state tournament, 10 earlier tourney games. Met Club stopped Grand Blanc, 7-3; Fraser, 4-2 in 11 innings; Troslen, 18-4; Mt. Pleasant, 7-4; and Allen Park, 16-0.

Farmington's Bryn-Oleie Centage House, managed by Butch Ross, bowed out in the third round. Farmington opened its tournament bid by dropping a 5-4 decision to Detroit. Then Farmington won a forfeit decision over Portage. East Detroit finally eliminated Farmington, 13-4.

C'mon In and Join Us!

The indoor tennis season begins September 20 and with a little help from the Racquet Clubs you'll be playing like a pro. Now is the time to sign up for a fall clinic at one of our three beautiful clubs.

Clinics begin September 20 at all levels of play for men, women, and children — non-members welcome too. Don't be left out in the cold... C'mon in.



North Racquet Club
3943 Farmington Road
Southfield, Mich. 48070
313-352-5533

Squire Lake Racquet Club
299 Denison Court
Bloomfield Hills, Mich. 48304
313-332-9271

Centaur Tennis Racquet Club
5700 Dixie Road
West Bloomfield, Mich. 48313
313-461-5500

Men's, Women's Open Golf Tournaments
Sponsored by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and Whispering Willows Municipal Golf Course

MEN'S
36 holes medal play Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 11 and 12. Entry fee \$22 (greens fees, trophies and prizes).

WOMEN'S
18 holes medal play Thursday, Sept. 16. Entry fee \$8 (greens fees and trophies). Make checks payable to Gary Whisner, tournament director and enclose with entry blank.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ HANDICAP _____

Men's entries close Wednesday, Sept. 8 at 6 p.m. Call for starting times on Friday, Sept. 10 at 10 a.m.
Women's entries close Monday, Sept. 13 at 5 p.m. Call for starting times Wednesday, Sept. 15 at 10 a.m.

Open to all residents of Livonia, Plymouth, Canton, Garden City, Westland, Redford Township, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Birmingham, West Bloomfield, Bloomfield Township, Bloomfield Hills, Troy, Rochester and Avon Townships.

Entries may be mailed to Tournament Director Gary Whisner, Whispering Willows Golf Course, 2080 Newburgh, Livonia.