

Artificial Tartan Turf Expected To Add Thrills

U-M Has New Approach To Its Football

By W.W. EDGAR

Football fans who follow the fortunes of the University of Michigan team are due for a real surprise when the Wolverines open their new season on Saturday, Sept. 20, against Vanderbilt.

Not only will they get their first glimpse of the new Tartan Turf that covers the playing area, but they'll see a new coaching staff in action and an entirely new approach to the game. Even the terminology has been changed.

These things became evident Tuesday when the team posed for the annual picture and the new system was introduced to the members of the press.

ONE WAS THE serious atmosphere of "Do or Die For The Maize and Blue" that has been prevalent on the Wolverine campus for years. In its place is a spirit of eager anticipation sparked with a sense of humor and an emphasis on condition.

"We don't have a big team," Bo Schembechler, the new head coach explained in his first press conference of the year, "but we are going to play interesting football."

"We're giving our followers the best facilities and guaranteeing them suitable playing conditions for every game--now it will be up to our team to entertain them."

Then, with a sly wink, he said, "With the price they are

paying for tickets, they are entitled to something for their money."

He confided that he and his staff had reviewed 109 games in which this year's opponents had participated last fall, "so we have more than a fair idea of what we will be up against."

"I have no fear of the players being timid on the synthetic turf," he explained, "and I think you'll find that the game will be a bit more fascinating."

"I KNOW HOW IT feels to be out on that synthetic material. I tried it at both the University of Tennessee and the University of Wisconsin," he went on. "And by the time I was finished twisting and turning and cutting sharply I was

engaged in a battle for the tight-end starting job. It's the same way between DeWayne Olds and Eric Haaz at split end."

There are Clayton, Pale and Bob Kenworthy at the guards and a fine trio of center candidates in Dale Humberger, Greg Ash and Rob Blackmore.

Plymouth will open the season at Northville a week from Friday night then meet Farmington the following week at home before going to Bentley on Sept. 26 for the league opener.

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of having what amounts to an extra halfback," he said, "because I can make the necessary substitutions to give us two good runners when conditions warrant it."

To add to the new light touch to the approach of a season he was asked if he was looking ahead to the Michigan State game.

"Oh," he chuckled, "is that one of the big games this year?"

HE QUICKLY REVERSED his field and stated that from what he saw of the squad and the condition, it is in he had no fear of not making a good showing against any team.

"Until conditions prove otherwise," he said, "we will

go with much of the personnel "Bump" Elliott trained last season."

On offense this will be Mike Hankwitz and Jim Mandich, two-year letter winners who worked in Plymouth during the summer, at the end, Jack Harpling and Dan Dierdorf, 1968 letter winners at the tackles; Bob Baumgartner and Frank Titus, two more letter winners at guard; with Tim Kilian, a 1968 letter winner, at center.

Don Moorhead, who gave evidence of stardom a year ago, will be the quarterback, with Glenn Doughty, a newcomer from Indianapolis, and John Gahler, a two-time letter winner at the halfback positions, Garvie Crow, another two time

letter winner will be at fullback.

"Moorhead has been showing well," Schembechler pointed out, "and we are looking forward to having him enjoy a fine season."

Another for whom big things are expected is Jerry Inslund, a 1968 letter winner from Northville. He is the top replacement for Mike Hankwitz at the "quick" end position as the season starts, but, according to the coaches, he will see plenty of service before the season progresses far in the new scheme of things.

"I am a little concerned with depth," Schembechler confessed, "but as long as we can escape injuries, we'll have a very 'entertaining' season."

Plymouth High Star Back Breaks Foot In Workout

It was the first week of football practice at Plymouth High School.

There are so much that brought smiles to Coach Tom Moshimer and his staff.

The turnout of 55 was bigger than last year.

The attitudes of the players were something that made Moshimer declare:

"Seldom is a coach blessed with a group of kids like these--boys who want to work. And in the group there is NOT one boy who isn't coachable. That's a rare occurrence."

The added depth that Plymouth would enjoy on the gridiron this fall encouraged Moshimer and his staff.

SO DID the fact his charges were all intense, who didn't groan because the staff was through some stiff sessions--two a day--in the heat.

But, there was a gloomy side to the week's workouts.

Practice hardly had started when star back Bob Thornbladh suffered a broken right foot.

Thornbladh was one of the greatest prep backs in Overland last season. Losing him is comparable to the Red Wings losing Gordie Howe.

Bob will be out at least four weeks ... which means he'll miss the first two games on the Rocks' schedule.

"Hopefully he'll be ready for our Suburban Six League opener," says Moshimer as he stands with his fingers crossed.

ALL IN ALL, Moshimer is short on starters who have returned.

There are only four on the roster...and one is Thornbladh. Bob Clayton, who with Thornbladh serves as co-captain, returns to go both on offense and

defense at guard.

Charley Wolfe returns at defensive end and also as a slot back on offense. Barry Pale is an offensive guard who started in 1968.

"But we'll do okay, I'm sure," says Moshimer, "because we have some intense competitors at all of our positions for starting jobs."

THERE'S A three-man battle at quarterback involving Don Coderberg, Howie Schryer and Greg LaMirand.

However, LaMirand presently has been moved to a fullback where he'll contest with Doug Miller and Jeff Meek to determine which will start in Thornbladh's place.

Ed Scott is the top fullback, but Pete Childs and Rick Reus are right behind and should see service.

Ken Smith and Dave Egloff

are engaged in a battle for the tight-end starting job. It's the same way between DeWayne Olds and Eric Haaz at split end."

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JUST LIKE CARPET in the living room at home, Coach Bob Schembechler sits down on the new Tartan Turf that covers the football field at University of Michigan's stadium and finds it soft and comfortable and excellent for the players.

(Observer photo by W.W. Edgar)

Thurston's Mutch Certain Bet To Gain All-State Honors

To single out one high school player above hundreds, maybe thousands, of others is something most coaches don't like to do.

The reason is simple. Why build up a young schoolboy. But in the case of Craig Mutch of Thurston High's football team, it's a much different story.

If Thurston had a professional-type publicity department, the words would be going out in abundance touting him as an All-Star.

But since Thurston has no publicity department, Coach Bill McDonald merely has to let the interest that numerous college coaches, like Michigan's Bo Schembechler, have in Mutch,

"IF WE EVER had an All-State candidate around Thurston, it has to be Mutch," McDonald said as the Thurston team completed its first week of practice.

Mutch drew a flock of attention in his junior year when he ran for 14 touchdowns and two extra points and totaled 1,034 yards.

He's 210 and stands 6-2. What's more, his coach points out that Mutch is fast and quick and he shouldn't have any trouble academically.

Mutch is a B-plus student at Thurston.

He's the BKG reason McDonald thinks that Thurston has an excellent chance to improve on its 6-2 record of a year ago when it wound up sharing the Northwest Suburban League title with Franklin and North Farmington.

"We just have to escape serious injuries and we'll be okay," says McDonald.

MUTCH ISN'T the only standout returning to the Thurston varsity.

There's 205, 6-2 Paul Sersen who was voted All-League and All-Area guard last season.

Jim Johnson, who was named all league at wide receiver, moved to the backfield to handle the fullback chores.

Don Kneller, another tackle who goes 220 and stands 6-4, also is being given a shot at fullback.

Jon Lindh is still another tackle who has returned and he will stay up front. Jon checks in at 250 pounds and stands 6-3.

Jerry Falst is a veteran at guard who goes 180 pounds.

THEN THERE'S Gordon Estes, a three-sport star at Thurston. He's a 185-pounder being counted upon at the other halfback. Gordon also has starred in basketball and baseball for the Townshippers.

Mark Pouch is back at end and then there's Ron Barringer, who tops the quarterbacks.

Ron's brother, Steve, starred for Thurston in football and baseball.

More than 70 candidates have turned out at Thurston this season, which is encouraging.

"We have an excellent senior group and some standout sophomores," says McDonald.

In between, the junior class isn't as strong as it was last year, football speaking.

Thurston will engage in a four-way scrimmage Saturday in the school's final tuneup for the season's opener at Cherry Hill on Sept. 13.

Famed Ump Comes Out With Disc

A new album is about to hit the market.

But out by Motown Records, the long-playing disc has nothing to do with rock or roll music. Or sweet or even symphonic music.

It features stories by ex-American League umpire Red Jones, who is one of the best when it comes to spinning funny yarns about baseball.

The LP is entitled: "Red Jones Steerkes Back" with Al Ackerman.

Ackerman is the Channel 4 sportscaster who is featured with Jones in the weekly 30-minute program that precedes the "Game of the Week" on Channel 4.

Jones relates comical confrontations with ex-Tiger catcher Paul Richards; Hal Newhouse, Satchel Paige, Bob Newsome, Bob Feller and others.

The album is slated to be on sale throughout metropolitan Detroit this weekend.

Sports Briefs

Michigan State sophomore Steve Piro is the son of former Syracuse griddle and Iowa assistant coach Whitey Piro. Dad Piro and State head coach Duffy Daugherty were teammates at Syracuse.

Sorrows Coach Must Replace 10 Standouts

There are some gaping holes on Our Lady of Sorrows football team.

Coach Bob Kelley must find replacements for 10 regulars who played a vital role on the Sorrows' success story a year ago.

Gone are such standouts as all-leaguers Greg Main, a four-letterman in football, and Tom Impellizzeri, who played on the Sorrows for three seasons.

But on the brighter side, Kelley has 14 returning lettermen, helped by the team's three captains -- Barry Walsh, Don Valenti and Ross Gattib.

Walsh, 225-pounder, plays tackle. Valenti is a 165-pound guard while Patton is a 160-pound flanker.

IN ADDITION Sorrows has quarterback Don McGrath on deck. He flipped five touchdowns last season and he has his pot receiver on deck again in Mike Hart.

Other seniors are halfback Greg Hurst, tackle Randy Berger, and ends Brian Van Dusen and Mike Dielmeier. Berger and Dielmeier are seniors.

Juniors expected to start include center Don Blugin, linebacker Dave Urban, and guard Rick Hoffness.

OTHER JUNIORS who'll see considerable action are guard Dave Beaudon, quarterback Marc Thibodeau, flankerback New Hurst, and halfback Steve Thelsen.

Kelley also expects a few of his sophomores to make the grade including fullback Pat Van Dusen, tackle Ross Bergeron and defensive ends Chris Carter and Jeff Dullack.

EMU Accepts California Tourney Bid

Eastern Michigan University Athletic Director F.L. Ferras and head basketball coach Ron Ostertke have announced the Husons acceptance of a bid to play in the Second Annual Orange County Invitational Baseball Tournament March 23-28 in Anaheim, California.

The eight team round robin tournament will be played at LaPalma Park in the California city.

Other teams participating in the six day tourney are Brigham Young, University of Oregon, University of Wyoming, Chapman College, University of California Irvine, California State - Fullerton and California State Long Beach.

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NOT EVEN a dent as a player makes a quick pivot on the Tartan Turf during the recent picture day at U-M. The artificial covering will eliminate muddy fields and assure gridders of firm, fast footing at all times.

(Observer photo)