

# Cranbrook is improved Avondale seeks 2nd straight crown



DAVID FRANK/staff photographer  
Derek Woodmore is a solid player for Avondale.

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tridge Gamble, running back/defensive back, senior; Jim DeClerk, guard, junior; Rob Miller, defensive back, senior; Travis Moore, linebacker, senior.

**TEAM STRENGTHS:** Quickness and speed. Six running backs can run a 4.9 second or better 40-yard dash, the fastest of which is Woodmore (6-foot-1, 190 who has been clocked at 4.5).

**TEAM WEAKNESSES:** Lack of experience and size in the line positions. Nearly all starters from last year's team have graduated. This year's tackles weigh in at only about 180 pounds.

**KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL SEASON:** Sound performance from the linemen and senior quarterback Mark Pilarski. Although Pilarski didn't start last year, he has seven years experience handling Brewer's Houston Veer offense.

**TEAMS TO BEAT:** Avondale is the class of the NOAC. The team missed the 1980 state playoffs because of a weak schedule. That has changed this year. Rochester, a traditional rival, is the opening game at the Pontiac Silverdome. Lakeview has been added to the schedule, as has Farmington Harrison, a Class B state title contender last year.

**TEAM:** Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook

**COACH:** Mike Leu, starting second year as head coach.

**CAREER RECORD:** 4-5

**LAST YEAR'S RECORD:** 4-5

**KEY RETURNING PLAYERS:** Mark LaFontaine, quarterback, senior; Elijah Jones, tailback/safety, junior; Adam Murphy, center/defensive end, junior; John Ziegelman, halfback/defensive back,

senior; Jim Toner, tight end/defensive end, senior.

**TEAM STRENGTHS:** Good athletes in skill positions (quarterback, running backs, receivers). Bigger line than last year — averages 195 pounds. Addition of Eddie Conniff, a senior who returns to Cranbrook after a one year's absence. Conniff will be the team's kicker, flanker and weak safety.

## What's in a team's nickname?

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Birmingham Seaholm is the Maples — is that a reference to a deep-rooted commitment to excellence?

Detroit Catholic Central apparently thrives on luck, so their sports teams carry the name of Shamrocks.

Lakers? What the heck is a Laker, anyway — someone who lives in a lake? Hopefully, someone at West Bloomfield knows.

Others are confusing — like the Livonia Ladywood Blazers. Does it mean a trailblazer, a blazing flame, or a jacket?

Southfield Lathrup and Livonia Churchill use the nickname Chargers, which is, I suppose, a horse.

But why do I envision hordes of people armed with credit cards swarming over a check-out counter?

Whoever invented the first sports team nickname could never have foreseen that.

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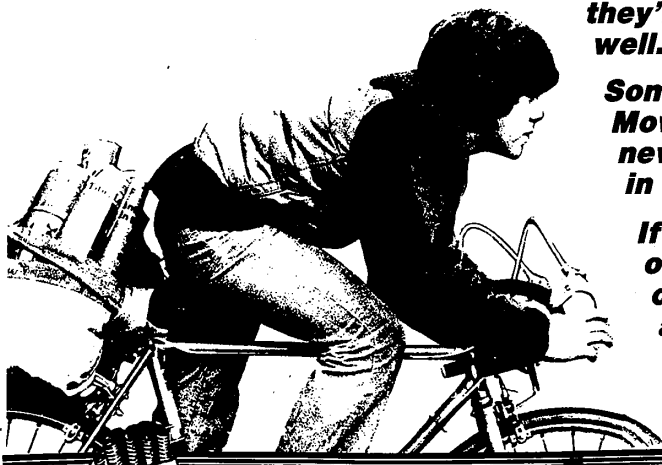
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