

# Prep squads strive to match Stevenson

By Brad Emora and Chris McCosky staff writers

Gary Mexicotte is gone. And that's good news for area teams. The Livonia Stevenson striker took his All-American staff to Bowling Green. But last season he left a path of destruction. He scored 48 goals to lead the Spartans, who beat rival Churchill in the Class A state final at Flint. Stevenson returns "nine to 10 regulars" from last year's undefeated team according to coach Pete Scerri and that could be more bad news for area contenders. Here is a pre-season look at area teams.

## LIVONIA STEVENSON

"I feel good about the team," said Scerri. "It was a pleasure coming back. I'm looking forward to it."

Scerri welcomed 40 players and will carry 22.

Defense is the team's strong suit with the return of veterans Chris Banyal, Chris Gembs and Dan Divens. They are joined by holdover Terry Harshfield, the goalie.

The team's second leading scorer from last season, Eric Pence, will move into Mexicotte's spot along with John Gelmsi. They are joined up front by Dave Barnes, Chris Wiegall and sophomore Jim Kimball, one of the few freshmen to make last year's varsity.

## LIVONIA CHURCHILL

Coach John Neff is rebuilding. Gone is leading scorer Erik Hansen, an exchange student from Denmark, and practically the entire defense. "We're young," said Neff, "and we'll make a lot of mistakes, but once we get our act together, we'll do all right."

The top returnees are center half-back Phil Lussler, fullback Mike Duckworth and halfback Scott Hilden. Others with experience include John Staccarotella, Doug Klucuek, John Neff, Ray Calasso, Scott Zarembski, Chris Rose and Terry Mills. Brothers Dave and Chris Gluth should also help. Sam Matovick is back in goal, where he alternated last season.

## LIVONIA BENTLEY

Tom Caranicolos moves over to Five

## soccer

Mile and Hubbard after a stint at cross-town Franklin.

"I wanted to coach," said Caranicolos. "At Franklin I was starting from scratch. I had to show them how to kick the ball."

The Bulldogs appear to have a strong midfield led by junior Dennis Patchetti, the team's leading scorer; senior Pete Lomas and sophomore Steve Hollar.

They will get support from veteran halfbacks Brian Schonfeld and Abe Vafal.

The defense is led by junior Jim Radzback and goalie Jeff Wilkinson.

"We're hoping for the stars," Caranicolos said. "We'll have a good team with no superstars. We'll have a well balanced team."

"Right now I'm trying to mix the right chemistry."

## CATHOLIC CENTRAL

The Shamrocks, eliminated in last year's regional by Churchill, return a veteran cast from last year's 18-3-1 squad and a Catholic League crown.

The main concern for coach Bill Thrasher is the health of goalie Bob Sinnaeve, who injured a knee during a summer tourney.

"His knee is about 35 percent," said the CC coach. "We hope to have him back by mid-September."

Pat Stocker, last year's reserve keeper, is the starter for now.

Thrasher returns his entire defense led by junior Bob Tartaglia, who is joined by teammates Don Guss, Jeff Haslem and Chris Tykocki.

The midfield is in good shape, according to Thrasher, with the return of seniors Tom Cornille and Steve DeMatos, along with newcomer Frank Bowler.

The forward line includes veterans Jim Moreau and Andy Rama, both juniors, and sophomore Chris Morano.

"I think we'll have better finishers and our scoring power should be up," Thrasher said. "As a coach I have no idea about the other schools, but we should be in contention for it."

## GARDEN CITY

The Cougars are still in their infancy, starting their second varsity season under a new coach, Steve Vakratsis. He takes over for Gary Prevot.

"They're learning and that's the thing," said Vakratsis, who coached the GC girls last spring. "We have four or five talented players and a lot of spirited guys who want to learn."

The captains are goalie Jeff Guido, center-halfback Brian Deal and right-midfielder Andy Moglia.

"Andy is talented player with a good head," Vakratsis said.

Vakratsis is also banking on defenders Mark Grigereti, Ramon Escobar, Mark Konopatzki and Jeff Early. The back-up goalie is Brian Hall.

The forwards are fast, according to Vakratsis. They include Billy Hyde, Jeff Feltz, Paul Pummill and Ron Kaspeck.

Garden City will be playing as an independent for the second straight year.

## LIVONIA FRANKLIN

The Patriots have eight returnees under first-year coach Doug Marks, a former player at Western Michigan University.

"We'll attempt to build up the middle with a 4-2-4 alignment — that's what the colleges use," said Marks. "We'll boost our offense with a triangle, short-passing scheme."

Midfielders Graham Crockford and Bill Carroll lead the midfield contingent, while brothers Dave and Dan Cummings anchor the forward line.

The team's top sweeper back is Tom Wagnitz. Eric Bucht, meanwhile, handles the goalkeeping chores. "We're working hard on conditioning," Marks added. "As far as I could tell, that was a problem last year. We hope to beat people to the ball."

What are the chances to reach 500 marks a coach? "Realistically we're not going to the state playoffs," answered the new coach. "We'll use the surprise factor."

## BISHOP BORGESS

The Spartans, members of the Catholic League, will rely on freshman according to reports from the camp of Rich Madsen, now in his second season of coaching.



Borgess will try to improve from last season's dismal showing, which saw the team win just one game.

## PLYMOUTH CANTON

Pre-season is the time for undying optimism, especially for third-year Canton coach Tony Lonigro.

"The team is much stronger this year. Last year we lacked depth. This year we are much stronger through the ranks," Lonigro said.

Returning from last year's team that finished third in the Western division of the Western Lakes Conference is leading goal scorer Tom Wright. Wright, along with transfer student Tim Mueller and Steve Morrell, both sophomores, make up an exceptionally fast and powerful front line.

Senior Eddie Hintz, and sophomores Brian Whitley and Dave Liuzzo are being counted on heavily by Lonigro. Rob Opaterny, John Luca and Pat Arella anchor a young defense.

"I don't think we have any weaknesses," Lonigro said. "Maybe we lack some speed at halfback. But I think we are ready to give good competition this year."

## PLYMOUTH SALEM

How to replace graduated goalie and team MVP Tom Chapman?

That's the question facing third-year Rocks coach Ken Johnson and sophomores Curtis Clarke and Joe Knoero,

and junior Jamie Graser hope to supply the answer.

Those three young goalies are engaged in a pre-season war to win the net-minders job with Johnson.

Aside from that troubling question, Johnson thinks his team will improve on last year's 11-5-1 mark.

"I think we are stronger overall — except at goalie. But, then again, the rest of the league is stronger, too," he said.

Johnson returns four seniors who have started since their sophomore years: Bob Bowling, Matt Crook, Jeff Reschick (captain), and Randy Johnson. Juniors Steve Moran, Mark Flowers, and Kevin Sultana are expected to contribute, as are sophomores twins Eldon and Ebon Nias.

## FARMINGTON

A better team attitude and a higher skill level leads Farmington coach Dennis Place to believe his team will be much better than its 7-9-1 showing a year ago.

Mario Said, Johnny Gregory, Randy Gallinger, Mark Pingree and Ed Pickens, all seniors will be counted on to lead the otherwise young team.

"We are young, but we have a good crew of sophomores," Place said.

Among those sophomores players from the Villa team in the Bonanza Soccer League that traveled to Eng-

land this summer are Jerry Potter, Chris Hackman, Jason DeForge, and Jimmy Mesaros. Sophomore Chris Nichols will also be a key member of the team.

Place hopes his team will play .600 soccer this season, but he adds, "If we can beat Stevenson or Churchill I'll have died and gone to heaven," he said.

## NORTH FARMINGTON

Coach Abdul Mohammad says his team will be improved, but still a cut below the likes of Stevenson and Churchill.

"We are just not in the same type of league with those teams. They are the best teams in the state," he said. Still, Mohammad is impressed with the progress of his team. Todd Prey and Steve Osment, along with Craig Mattoon and Jeff Keller are experienced and capable performers. Sophomore Joe Juliano will help bolster the defense.

The Raiders are not yet ready to contest for the Western Lakes title, but Mohammad is gradually building a solid soccer program at NFHS.

Farmington Harrison coach Harry Swystun was apparently out of town and could not be reached. A preview of the 1983 Hawks will appear in a subsequent issue of the Observer.

# Tall oaks no joke for golfers

By C.J. Risak staff writer

As a smirking Robin Hood once said to distraught captive Sir Guy of Gisborne as they teemed through Sherwood Forest, "I'll take tenner men than you've got to mark their way in these woods, Sir Guy."

It can only happen in the movies, you say? Well, Observer & Eccentric golfers, beware! Sometimes during the tournament you'll be convinced that hiding somewhere behind one of those trees is the Merry Man himself, snickering at your futile attempts to find your way clear of the woods.

For, if you plan on playing in the journey — the women's event is Wednesday, the men's Oct. 1-2 — you may as well make reservations now for a trip into the forest. If there is a single hazard to prepare yourself to overcome at Whispering Willows Golf Course in Livonia (site of the O&E tourney), it's trees.

"It's not bunkers or water," said Gary Whitener, Whispering Willows golf pro. The course is dotted with both but "The most trouble is the woods."

THE COURSE ITSELF, the topic of this final segment in a three-part series on preparing for tournament golf, is tricky. There certainly are holes Whitener called "birdie-able," but there are an equal number that many golfers would be satisfied with a bogey.

Whitener's advice, to championship and third flight golfers alike: "If your timing is off, don't try to force your long shots. Just lay it up."

"You can't spray the ball all over this course."

Here's what to expect, O&E golfers, when you take to the course for your tournament: a blow-by-blow, hole-by-hole description provided by Whitener.

White's a few facts and figures for women: Whispering Willows is 5,871 yards; par 71. Front nine, 3,861 yards; par 35; back nine, 3,710 yards; par 36. For men, 6,208 yards, par 71. Front

nine, 3,136 yards, par 35; back nine, 3,069 yards, par 36. Course record — 64 by Bill Wakeham. O&E tournament record — John Van Vleet, 67.

No. 1: 460 yards (women), 475 yards (men), par 5 — "This is a routine par five. Use a driver, fairway wood and then perhaps a seven iron to the green. This is a birdie hole."

No. 2: 354 yards (women), 403 yards (men), par 4 — "Play for a bogey. There's trouble all over the place. You have to use a direction club off the tee. It's a dog-leg left, bounded by trees on both sides. And there's water about 50 yards in front of the green."

"If, after your first shot, you can see the green, hit at it. Probably have to use a low iron or five wood. If you don't see the green, consider playing up short of the water and chip from there."

No. 3: 403 yards (women), 443 yards (men), par 4 — "This is our longest par four. It's just long. There's no trouble either side. Still it probably won't be reached by many in two. Use a driver, then a fairway wood, then chip to the green. Could be a bogey hole for third-flighters."

No. 4: 336 yards (women), 346 yards (men), par 4 — "This is a short dog-leg left. Second-shot placement is the key shot because the green has a big hump in it. You don't want to putt over that hump, or you may three-putt. Hit a driver off the tee, then a seven or nine iron to the green."

No. 5: 178 yards (women), 206 yards (men), par 3 — "This is an excellent three. You have to shoot through a narrow opening through the trees uphill to the green. It's also well-bunkered. There will be a lot of bogeys here."

No. 6: 340 yards (women), 386 yards (men), par 4 — "Slight dog-leg left. There's no trouble left, but trouble



right. Drive to the left, then use anything from a four to seven iron to the green."

No. 7: 120 yards (women), 135 yards (men), par 3 — "It looks like you can throw your ball onto the green. You shoot down to a big green. It's a birdie hole, but there's a lot of green and three-putting is a possibility."

No. 8: 344 yards (women), 374 yards (men), par 4 — "There's out of bounds to the left, so play right. A driver, then five to seven iron to the green. A birdie hole."

No. 9: 326 yards (women), 390 yards (men), par 4 — "An easy driving hole, but a good par four. There's a creek and pond at about 240 yards, so play short of that. There's a premium on driving here. Your second shot will be off a downslope to a well-bunkered, elevated green. Key here is to have a good drive. Then anything from a five wood to a five or seven iron."

No. 10: 430 yards (women), 460 yards (men), par 5 — "This is the most birdie-able hole on the golf course. It's a short five with no-trouble either side. The only problem is the sloping green."

No. 11: 306 yards (women), 356 yards (men), par 4 — "The premium here is the tee shot. It's a short four, with trees right and left and behind the green. The green is a big target, but this is a layup hole. There's no room for error. Hit a two iron or four wood off the tee for accuracy, then chip or pitch to the green."

No. 12: 295 yards (women), 317 yards (men), par 4 — "This is the same as 11, only a sharp dog-leg left at about 190 yards. Best bet is a two or three iron off tee, then a seven or nine iron to the green. Distance-wise, this should be a birdie hole, but it isn't. No traps here."

No. 13: 297 yards (women), 305 yards (men), par 4 — "This is as easy to birdie as No. 10. There's no trouble anywhere. You can drive and then use a seven or nine to the green. Only problems are the two bunkers."

No. 14: 331 yards (women), 370 yards (men), par 4 — "This is a good par four. There's out of bounds left, but it's wide open right. Drive to the right, then hit a three or four iron, or a seven for long drivers, to the green. There's bunkers right and left of the green and fairway bunkers 200-210 yards out."

No. 15: 183 yards (women), 219 yards (men), par 3 — "An excellent par three. There's woods right and a creek on the left with more trees. It's a big green, so hit right at it. Use a driver, then pitch to the green. This hole is easy to bogey, tough to get a two."

No. 16: 391 yards (women), 494 yards (men), par 5 — "It's out of bounds on the left, wide open to the right. The green is well-bunkered and slopes back to front. There won't be too many fouls; this is our best par five. Use a driver, then a fairway wood and a short iron to the green."



DAN DEAM/staff photographer

Getting out from behind tall trees is a technique golfers must master if they are to tackle woody Whispering Willows.