

Hawkbusters?

Harrison will face more challengers

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

IN ITS FIRST three seasons, the football game in the Western Lakes Activities Association has been, "Who can beat Farmington Harrison?"

Nobody ever did.

But, my, how things have changed.

The Western Lakes is no longer a 10-team conference. It is now, thanks to the additions of North Farmington, Westland John Glenn and Livonia Franklin, and the deletion of Livonia Bentley, a 12-team league.

This is not to say Farmington Harrison can't win it all again — but, it's going to be mighty tough.

Consider first the new Lakes Division alignment. North Farmington was 8-1 last year and the Northwest Suburban League's final champion. John Glenn was 6-3 last year.

ADD THOSE two traditional powers to last year's Lakes Division champ Farmington (6-3), Livonia Stevenson (7-2), Walled Lake Central (4-5) and Plymouth Salem (2-7) and you have what Stevenson coach Jack Reardon unabashedly calls the "toughest division in the state."

Glenn, North, Farmington, Central and Salem, according to pre-season scouting reports, are all improved teams.

The Western Division is no slouch ei-

Western Lakes

ther. Harrison (11-1) has lost a ton of blue-chip talent but will again field a competitive squad. Northville (7-2) is the team most are picking to win the division.

Livonia Churchill (2-7), with an influx of talent from now-closed Livonia Bentley, looks to be greatly improved. Plymouth Canton (4-5), Livonia Franklin (3-6) and Walled Lake Western (2-7) could also challenge.

The season's eighth week will feature the Western Lakes title game, as well as position crossover games throughout the league (second place Lakes vs. second place Western, etc.).

But with the division races as intense as they promise to be, the championship game might be anti-climactic.

Here's a quick pre-season glance at the Observerland teams in the Western Lakes:

LAKES DIVISION

JOHN GLENN: Coach Chuck Gordon. In addition to playing in the awesome Lakes Division, will have the headache that accompanies being the pre-season favorite to win the division.

The reason his Rockets will wear the "favorites" label is Tony Boles. Boles, despite an injury in the middle of

last season, gained 1,012 yards and scored 12 TDs. He is the best back in the area this year, without argument. Adding to Boles' effectiveness is a wall of 200-pound linemen that will help clear his path: Paul Pomorski (220), Rick McCurdy (205), Don Croft (205) and Matt Bennett (231).

"Because of the new league, it's really hard for me to size up the season," Gordon said. "We will playing so many new people. We're going to be good, but how good, I just can't say right now."

NORTH FARMINGTON: North Farmington and John Glenn have staged some serious battles over the years for supremacy in the old Northwest Suburban League. Looks as if the battle will continue in the Western Lakes.

Jim O'Leary's Raiders put together a banner season last year and look to be even better this year.

North will field one of the strongest teams in the area. Six players can bench-press in excess of 300 pounds. Among the bigger, stronger Raiders are two-way tackle Wes Pringle (6-4, 240), center Derek Cribble (6-0, 190), Brian Haack (6-0, 195) and Steve Brown (only 155 pounds but bench-presses 320 pounds).

Marc Brown proved to be a dangerous back last year. He will be running with fullback Steve Goss. North's Chris Cristman and Mike Rudin are players with game-breaking potential.

"We have as good a team as we had last year," O'Leary said. "Two things have to happen, though. We have to find a quarterback and we're going to have to get some leadership from our seniors."

Seniors Cory O'Asenno and Todd Shepard are battling for the quarterback spot.

FARMINGTON: The Falcons earned a reputation last season for being a rough, bruising backlot. They also found out how to win, something that had eluded Falcon teams in the past.

Coach Don Kuick hopes for a repeat of 1984, and he has the talent to do it.

"We're big and strong again and we have good depth in the backfield," he said. "My concerns are that the quarterback holds up and whether the kids can learn to handle the defense."

"This is the cream division in the whole state so it's tough to predict how well we'll do."

Farmington has a blue-chip linemen in senior Craig Petersmark. He's big (6-3, 225) and mobile and he likes to hit. Others up front for the Falcons are Jim Laird (a strong 175), Dan Parlo (215), John Augustin (200), John Purdon (240), Andy Boden (6-3, 197) and Bill Clicher (295).

Joe Bob Wenson should provide an experienced hand at quarterback. He shared time there the past two seasons. Kuick is high on backs Eric Green, a speedy junior, John Buchanan, Darrell Tharnish and Ed Sudzina.

Bruce Kraft returns to handle the kicking chores as well as play split end.

PLYMOUTH SALEM: "Oh, we're going to be a better team. Cripe, we couldn't be any worse," said veteran Salem coach Tom Moshimer. "But the problem is, the rest of our league is tougher, too."

Such is the plight of the Rocks this season. Salem has adopted "Back alive in '65" as their theme this season and, indeed, there's a reason to suspect the Rocks will quite lively.

Paul Makara is a dangerous young man with the football. He's fast and strong. Moshimer will use him at either half back or quarterback this season.

Brian Johnson has the tools to become a major college prospect. He's 6-4, 230 with extremely good hands and good speed. He will play defensive and offensive end for the Rocks and maybe some fullback.

John Storm and Chris Hill are also getting a shot at the quarterback job.

The biggest question mark for Salem is a young core of linemen. Seniors Bill Juchartz and Jamie Woodchuck will be counted on for leadership. Sophomores John Swisher, Adam Aldrin and Dave Filgerio may also win starting jobs.

"The success of our team will depend on how fast our young people come around," Moshimer said.

LIVONIA STEVENSON: On paper, you want to say that it could be a long season for Jack Reardon's team. The Spartans graduated 19 starters and have a very small-size team returning.

But to count a Jack Reardon football team out in August is foolish. The veteran has managed to win 115 games in his 29 seasons, not always with All-American talent.

The top returnee for Stevenson will be 230-pound senior tackle Joe Conway. He'll anchor the line with Dan Cosgrove (175), John Skuka (170) and Paul Dober (6-4, 215).

It appears that David Rososchacki, a senior, will handle the quarterback chores. Brother Don Rososchacki will start at fullback.

Other key Spartans are likely to be Greg Burrell, Paul Miller and Frank Williams.

WESTERN DIVISION

FARMINGTON HARRISON: Nineteen starters are gone including two-time All-American John Miller, quarterback Vince Enright and all-state linemen Dave Diekita and George Sarceovich.

"I really can't judge this team, yet," said Harrison coach John Harrington. "There've been some surprises, but last year we had our best team ever. It's hard to compare the two."

Returning is all-state receiver Brian Smolinski who caught 55 passes last year — he is a legitimate game-breaker. Scott Blazett, a starter last season, is also back. A key for the Hawks will be the development of back Mark Mockenborg. His physical stature and raw talent are impressive.

Another key will be the development of quarterback Mike Mack. As the third-string quarterback last year, Mack saw more playing time than most third-stringers, but not nearly enough to be considered experienced.

Seniors Todd Marshke and Rod Sarceovich, both starters last year, are being counted on to supply leadership.

"Sure we can win it," Harrington said. "In fact, I'm planning on us winning it. But, it's a different team. Our linemen aren't real big, we don't have much experience — but we've been in this position before and won."

LIVONIA CHURCHILL: Last year, Herb Osterland was concerned that only 30-some kids showed up for football practice. This year, 65 showed up.

The reason for the population explosion is the merging of more than 20 ex-Bentley kids.

"Numbers-wise, we're getting real good vibes. The kids are very coachable. The linemen aren't huge, but we have depth," Osterland said. "Our concerns are at the skill positions. We've lost John Stollis (quarterback) so we won't have the same type of offense."

Key returnees from Churchill are Bob Pensari, Mike Thompson, Kirk Stachurski, Andy Oliver and Tim Drey. Key players coming in from Bentley are Joe Payne, Ken Percin, Jim Maddox and Tracy Scott.

Osterland is also high on a pair of junior running backs: Jim Hall and Keith McGorka.

PLYMOUTH CANTON: With the nucleus of a varsity team that went 4-5 and a junior varsity team that went 7-

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