

## Sports

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(F10)



## C.J. Risak

### Can playoffs extend into our life beyond?

I HAVE A DREAM. In it, my life on this planet has expired and I'm preparing myself for another world, that which exists beyond the pearly gates in the heavens above.

But before gaining admittance, I have my Purgatory to endure. This has nothing to do with gnashing of teeth or a ton of guilt to be reconciled before my soul is saved.

It's been said — I think I heard it on late-night religious TV — that the life you live on this world will be reflected in the Purgatory you serve in the next.

My fate? It's in my own hands, for to reach the sublime peace of afterlife I must first win in the Purgatory Playoffs. Of course, there are a few million other lost souls desperately attempting to do the same.

We're all there because, while on Earth, we spent our useful hours trying to figure out playoff formulas, chances for success, point spreads and ways to beat the odds. Instead of helping our fellow man, we dissected him, examining each part in an effort to determine his usefulness on the playing field.

The rules in the Purgatory Playoffs constantly change. So do the sports. That puts everyone on an even standing and keeps us busy figuring out angles.

BUT THE PRESSURE. . . can you imagine? I mean, talk about sudden-death! Fall in the finals and it could be 1,000 years before you get another chance. And if you think all the different playoffs seem endless in this world, you should try the next.

We're talking eternity. Of course, those fervently competing in the Purgatory Playoffs are buoyed by one redeeming thought. In the game of life, they didn't finish in the cellar, a domain reserved for losers, where the action is — ahem — really hot.

Now that's a first-class nightmare. And if you're one to analyze dreams, then you'll clearly see what's been on my mind the last few weeks.

In the 12 editions of the Observer & Eccentric, we have had dozens of teams involved in dozens of playoffs, so many that trying to keep them in some kind of logical order requires the intellect of a babbling idiot.

Since I already mutter nonsense to myself, I merely have nightmares.

Anyway, examine this if you will.

AMONG THE COLLEGE'S we cover, Oakland University soccer followers are fuming, and rightly so, after the Pioneers were left out of the NCAA Division II playoffs. Meanwhile, the OU volleyball team was a disappointing fifth in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) tournament, so as far as playoffs are concerned, there's no joy in Pioneerland.

But at Scholastic College, fans are goony-eyed. The volleyball and women's soccer teams are bound for NJCAA tournaments. Both, of course, will be Thanksgiving weekend. The men's soccer team reached the Inter-regional finals before losing to the top-ranked team in the country.

In high school sports, in case you've been visiting another solar system and missed the news, five teams qualified for the state football playoffs. Troy, which shocked No. 1-ranked Henry Ford 17-14, and Redford Catholic Central are still alive. Southfield, Detroit Country Day and Westland John Glenn lost in the opening round.

Livonia Stevenson won the Class A state soccer tournament, beating Birmingham Brother Rice in the finals. Rochester won the Class A state golf tournament and was second in the state in boys' cross country. Rice was third in golf.

BLOOMFIELD HILLS Lahser and Birmingham Marian tied for second at the Class A state tennis tournament. Plymouth Salem's Chris Gilles won the first singles title in tennis.

John Glenn defeated Farmington Harrison in the Western Lakes Activities Association (WLAA) football playoffs. Livonia Ladywood reached the Catholic League finals in girls basketball before falling. And Plymouth Canton and Salem will lock horns in the WLAA girls basketball finals Friday.

No doubt I've overlooked someone. I must have. But enough's enough, and at any rate the point is clear. All these afterworlds were held in the last four weeks, with a majority of them within the past 14 days.

Talk about a tight schedule. And yet to be determined are high school champs in football, girls basketball and girls swimming.

By the time those are over, I'll be ready for a rest. Or a rest home. But before I could be committed, another season would be under way. More basketball, volleyball, swimming. . . the list is endless.

APART FROM my own sanity, I have to believe the athletes involved suffer in this explosion of playoffs. There are so many, and they are so clogged together, that few athletes receive the recognition they deserve, no matter how outstanding their performance. It becomes so diluted.

Do I have any suggestions? Hey, I already explained where my mind is these days. I mistook the Twilight Zone for the six o'clock news last night.

I love playoffs. I've already learned to appreciate them for what they are — a momentary occurrence, to be savored for a short time like a holiday feast. Then on to the next.

I have to believe — that my effort — which amounts to about half that expended by my O&E sports cohorts — isn't being wasted. At least it should be good training for what lies ahead, in my next life.

## 1985 All-Area football team



## CC, Glenn flood area grid squad

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Observerland's football season was marked by a changing of the guard — of sorts. Farmington Harrison fielded another strong team, winning the Western Division of the Western Lakes Activities Association (WLAA).

But Westland John Glenn unseated the two-time



Craig Petersmark battled injury and opposing linemen this season, but managed to land a spot on the area's elite team.

WLAA champs and went on to post a perfect regular season. The Rockets also qualified for the state Class A playoffs where they lost a high scoring 33-20 pre-regional game to defending state champion Arbor Pioneers.

Although Glenn was knocked out of the playoffs Friday, Observerland still has a representative in the state tournament — Redford Catholic Central.

CC's season looked grim after Harper Woods Notre Dame knocked off the previously unbeaten Shamrocks, 7-6.

But CC clawed its way back, beating a pair of No. 1-ranked teams, Warren De La Salle and Dearborn Divine Child, en route to the Catholic League title.

The Shamrocks then won their playoff opener last week against Dearborn Fordson, 7-2, and face Grosse Pointe North Saturday for the Region IV championship.

CC and Glenn lead this year's All-Observer contingent, picked recently by the coaches. The two schools combined to gain 12 of the 28 first-team spots.

Here is a look at the 1985 All-Area football team.

### OFFENSE

STEVE IRWIN, JOHN GLENN, QUARTERBACK: A two-year starter for the Rockets, Irwin tossed 17 career TD passes, including nine this season.

The All-Western Lakes pick "was a real key to our team," Glenn coach Chuck Gordon said.

"Steve has a great arm, he's smart, and best of all he's a team player," Gordon added.

Grove, an outstanding pitcher, made last year's All-Area baseball team.

TONY BOLES, JOHN GLENN, RUNNING BACK: Observerland fans never see a back like him again.

The 6-foot-2, 190-pound senior established himself this season as one of the state's premier backs, rushing for 1,331 yards and 14 TDs during his three-year career. Boles rushed for 2,044 yards and scored 35 TDs.

"Tony is the finest athlete I've ever been around," Gordon said. "And he has all the attributes you look for. He works hard, he's a leader and a gentleman. He's a team player and he has a great future."

MIKE STEWART, BISHOP GORGES, RUNNING BACK: The 6-2, 210-pound fullback/webber looks a Borgese motion of line running backs that also includes Chuck Gregory (Benton College) and Fred Owens (Wisconsin).

The All-Catholic pick rushed for 962 yards and 11 TDs this season. His career totals are 1,835 yards and 21 TDs.

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## North bows to the valley girls

A good basketball team from the Western Lakes met up with a good team from the Kemin Valley Conference Tuesday night — score one for the Valley.

Millford (13-3) knocked off North Farmington (11-8) 51-42 with more than a little help from Lori Montane.

"She just took it to us," Raider coach Greg Grodzicki said.

Montane scored 17 points to lead all scorers. Teammate Angie Sheffler chipped in 14.

But the story was free throws: Millford got some, North didn't.

"We just couldn't get to the foul line," Grodzicki said. "Millford is a good hustling team."

North hit 8-of-13 from the line. Millford hit on 17 of its 29 free throw tries. That, for all the mathematically, was the margin of victory.

Heather McPhillips and Ann Howard led North with 10 points apiece.

REDFORD UNION 47, HARRISON 16: Marie Becker announced prior to the game that she would be signing a letter of intent to play basketball at Saginaw Valley next year.

Afterward, the RU senior went out and destroyed Farmington Harrison. She scored 16 points, grabbed 15 rebounds and dished out six assists in 24 quarters of basketball.

## girls basketball

A 19-0 third quarter erased any hopes Harrison had of ending its 59-game losing streak.

Another in a series of superlative efforts from senior Jennifer Hughes was wanted. She scored 12 of the Hawks' 18 points.

The Hawks laid realistic chance of snapping the skid this season comes Thursday. The Hawks will host Farmington. The Falcons' only win of the season came against Harrison.

WATERFORD MOTT 45, FARMINGTON 33: Same old story for the Falcons: one bad stretch of play in an otherwise good effort.

The Falcons (11-18) trailed by one after the first quarter, but "were outscored 15-2 in the second. The Falcons won the second half 21-18.

Docky Philip led Farmington with nine points.

## Videogate?

### CC-GPN battle over swapping game films

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Tom Mach's job as Redford Catholic Central's football coach hasn't been easy this season.

It's tough enough playing the likes of Rice, De La Salle, Divine Child and Fordson, but it's even tougher when your next opponent doesn't want to exchange game films.

"I've never exchanged films, and I've been in the (school) system since 1989," said Grosse Pointe North coach Frank Sumner, whose team battles CC Saturday at Lincoln Park in the second round of the playoffs. "It doesn't really matter to me. I try to scout and see teams whenever I can."

When Mach called Sumner Monday morning, he was surprised to hear of his policy.

"He told me it's his policy that he doesn't exchange with anybody," Mach said. "We (CC) always exchange. The only team that didn't exchange with us this year was Ypsilanti, and that's because they had a new coach."

"It hasn't happened in a long time, but it's his option."

WITHOUT GAME FILMS, Sumner could be at an advantage. He saw down the road that he was going to play CC in the playoffs, so he scouted the Shamrocks a couple of times.

Mach, meanwhile, has never seen unbeaten North play. He has to go on the word of his scouts, namely freshman coach Dan Fortune.

"Grosse Pointe North is a passing team," Mach said. "And I think the last four games they've been throwing more. They have a good quarterback (Craig Como)."

"And they have a good defense. They play a 4-4 (alignment), and I understand they hit and pursue well."

Quarterback Craig Como, a 6-foot-1, 170-pound senior, has hit 63 of 139 passes for 1,399 yards. His favorite receivers are seniors Jon Palazzo and Steve Pochman. Last week in the first round of the playoffs, Como directed a last-minute touchdown drive to beat Detroit Murray-Wright, 10-18.

"We usually throw about 15 or 20 times a game," Sumner said. "We throw more against Murray-Wright because we were behind."

"But we're not afraid to throw."

EVEN THOUGH North's offensive line averages 210 pounds per man, Sumner calls the CC game "a great challenge."

"When you get to the ugly (final) eight, you're going to play line quality games," he said. "Actually, I don't see any weaknesses that they have."

## football

"Their defensive front five people are outstanding. And their two linebackers, especially (Kevin) Tulley, are good, as well as their monster man (Jeff Brand). They have a sound defense, and people have had trouble moving the ball on them."

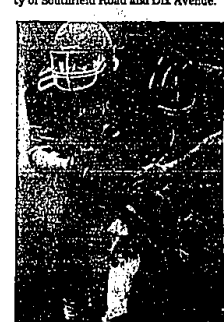
"CC can move the ball on the ground because their whole offensive line is good. And they've settled on a quarterback (Mark Steve), and he's solidified that position. They haven't thrown a lot, but that doesn't mean they can't throw. They have a good receiver in that (Wendell) (Ken)."

Mach said he wouldn't be surprised to see North, like many opponents throughout the season, come up with a few new defensive wrinkles.

"THE IDEA of exchanging films gives you that opportunity to change your defense," he said. "We never seem to see the same defense that our scouts see. They only team we played this year that stayed with the same defense was De La Salle."

"It's becoming more of an in-the-game job instead of a during-the-week job. You've got to make more adjustments during the game, it seems."

Saturday's starting time is 1:30 p.m. at Lincoln Park. The high school is located on 1701 Champaign in the vicinity of Southfield Road and Dix Avenue.



JERRY ZOBYNSKI/staff photographer

Chris Kasas hopes to ignite the CC offense Saturday.

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