Grid season ready for kickoff

BY BRAD EMONS AND DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITERS

Pigskin predictions are back with a slew of weekend action, primarily all non-league encounters.

The reigning champion is the smiling Irishman (O'Meara), who hit the century mark last year, correctly picking 100 of 131 games last season.

Meanwhile, the frowning Welshman (Emons) is looking for a quick start after going 94-37 a year ago.

The first week is always the most difficult, so it's time to wing it.

FRIDAY'S GAMES
(all 7:30 unless noted)

Westland Glenn at Det. Murray-Wright (3:30 p.m.): Glenn returns only three starters from last year's 7-2 squad, but some talented underclassmen are ready to step in. Murray-Wright, 2-7 a year ago, features one of the state's top college prospects in two-way back Kyle Taylor, who rushed for close to 1,000 yards last year. Quarterback William Messenger is also a threat to break the big one, while Jerry Jeter is a top-notch two-way tackle. Linebacker/guard Terry Parson is also tough. **PICKS** — The Rockets' '92 launch is a successful one.

Liv. Churchill at Dearborn (4 p.m.): Churchill coach Steve Naumcheff makes his debut with the Chargers (0-9) in a rare Friday afternoon encounter against the host Pioneers (6-3). This is a battle between pay-to-participate districts. **PICKS** — Dearborn gets its money's worth.

Liv. Franklin at Lake Orion (7 p.m.): The Dragons have a new coach in North Farmington High product Rich Burrell, who is taking over for Mike Berry. Quarterback Mason Robertson is also coming off knee surgery, while junior Kurt Dubowski returns at running back. Franklin, meanwhile, is optimistic that a big season is at hand. **PICKS** — O'Meara likes the Patriots, but Emons says Orion is tough to beat at home.

Bishop Borgess vs. Portland St. Patrick (7 p.m. at Garden City Junior High): Portland St. Pat's (12-1) went all the way to the Class D state championship game in 1991 before losing to Frankfort at the Silverdome. Only five starters return for the Shamrocks. Borgess (5-4), meanwhile, promises a wide-open offense under first-year coach Craig James, who guided Allen Park Cabrini to a 6-3 record last season. **PICKS** — O'Meara feels lucky with the Shamrocks, but Emons likes Borgess.

Garden City at Dbn. Hts. Crestwood: The Cougars are determined to do better than last year's 1-8 record with added size and strength up front. Crestwood (8-2), a Class BB playoff qualifier a year ago, will miss running back Chuck Reynolds, but fields a team with good size. **PICKS** — GC pulls the surprise, Emons says, but O'Meara sticks with Crestwood.

Redford Union at Liv. Stevenson: This long-standing season-opening rivalry has been dominated by Stevenson (4-5), but RU (5-4) is always within striking distance. Micah Lietzau is Stevenson's main offensive weapon, while RU hopes to make up for the loss of quarterback Brian Theis. **PICKS** — Both prognosticators like the host Spartans.

Adrian at Wayne Memorial: Word has it that Adrian may be the top teams in the state. The Maples reached the state Class AA semifinals before being spanked by Saginaw Arthur Hill, 29-0. Ironically, Adrian tests its season opener to Wayne (4-5), 20-19. **PICKS** — Adrian is tough to stop, both agree.

Ply. Salem at Trenton: The Rocks (7-3), a Class AA playoff qualifier a year ago, were hard hit by graduation. Only wingback Rob Shepley and linebacker Andy Sydlowski return for the Rocks. Trenton, meanwhile, is trying to avoid another 0-9 season, but word is the Trojans are much improved. **PICKS** — Emons says the Rocks are solid in their opener, but O'Meara tries Trenton.

PREDICTIONS

Monroe at Ply. Canton: The young Chiefs (3-6) are somewhat of a mystery squad, while Monroe (3-6), home of the Lazy-Boy chairs, unveils a new coaching staff. This battle could go down to the wire, perhaps even overtime. **PICKS** — It's a toss-up, but Emons votes for Canton, while O'Meara says Monroe will by sitting in the recliner.

SATURDAY'S GAMES
(all 1 p.m. unless noted

Dbn. Divine Child at Farm. Harrison: Is this supposed to be the year that Harrison, defending state Class BB champions, becomes human again? Word has it that only four seniors are starting for the Hawks, leaving the rebuilding task up to underclassmen. DC, meanwhile, is loaded for bear in the Catholic League's AA Division of tailback Joe Bourcher, who had 700 yards in six games last year. Quarterback Steve Guibord is a threat to pass, while other standouts include tight end/linebacker David Terski, a college prospect, and fullback/linebacker Kevin Babcock. **PICKS** — When was the last time two sports writers picked against Harrison?

W. Bloomfield at Farmington: The Falcons were improved last year under second-year coach Bernie Call, going 4-5. Farmington, however, lost a ton of starters, including All-Area linebacker Matt Siskosky. The Lakers went 7-2 last year, losing 19 starters. Coach Joe Brandell is rebuilding, but West Bloomfield owns a 5-0 record in the series against Farmington (since 1967), including a scoring margin of 126-24. **PICKS** — The Lakers will be sailing, both agree.

Pontiac Northern at N. Farmington: This could be a high-scoring affair featuring two of the top backs in Oakland County. All-American Charles Tabey (1,490 yards) leads the Huskies, while Todd Anderson (1,175) counters for North. Remember, Pontiac Northern (6-3) beat the Raiders (6-4) in last year's opener. **Picks** — North avenges last year's loss, both concur.

St. Agatha at Red. Thurston: A unique and rare matchup between two area schools. The Aggies (8-2) went to the Class C state playoffs last season, but lost top backs Cardell Davis and Pete Mulka to graduation. Thurston (2-7) returns quarterback John Adams and receiver Jeff Lance. **PICKS** — The Aggies have the edge, O'Meara says, but Emons flies with the Eagles.

Lutheran Westland at Cardinal Mooney: The Warriors (4-5) have a lot of untested varsity players while the Cardinals (2-7) will run a varied Wing-T offense and a 4-4 defense under first-year coach Phil Coles, who returns 15 seniors on his 30-player roster, led by fullback/linebacker Mark Bajis, tackle Chris Fraley and quarterback/defensive end Mike Ward. **PICKS** — The Warriors do a dance, O'Meara says, but Emons likes the Cards he's been dealt.

Redford CC vs. Toledo St. John's (7 p.m. at Silverdome): The Shamrocks (11-2) are loaded up front, led by Dan Liebau and Aaron Babiez, but Toledo St. John's, 8-3 a year ago, is predicted by the experts to win the city championship. St. John's has 32 seniors, including 17 returning letter winners and eight returning starters. Ryan Daniels, 6-foot-5, 255 pounds, is a preseason All-American. The quarterback is converted wide receiver Chad Maxon. **PICKS** — The Silverdome is home-sweet-home for CC.

Clarenceville at C.L. St. Clement (7:30 p.m.): The Trojans (1-8) are going with the Wing-T under first-year coach Russ McKenzie, who went 1-4 last year as interim coach. St. Clement (6-4), which made the Class D state playoffs last year, will miss tight end Mike Sakalas (Iowa State), but return tailback/defensive back Ray Henke (1,200 yards rushing and 400 receiving) and quarterback Phil Doherty (1,300 yards passing). **PICKS** — St. Clement's Crusaders cannot be stopped, both agree.

Gavie Invitational starts bowling year

10-PIN ALLEY

AL HARRISON

It's bowling's equivalent of opening day at Tiger Stadium.

In bowling, the 56th annual John P. Gavie Invitational Tournament traditionally launches the season.

The Gavie, however, is more than just competition, it's a chance for old friends to reacquaint themselves and receive awards for past contributions to the bowling community.

Entry to the event is by invitation, and only the top teams in our area are able to compete.

The men's order of finish was Bowl One (first place), State Farm Bowlers Paddock (second) and Ansara's No. 2 team (third).

Metro Staff and Jay's Pro Shop finished one-two in the ladies.

Meanwhile, the bowling writers fared well against the Stroh's management team, winning all three games handily.

And by the way, who is John P. Gavie?

The answer would take much more space than this entire sports section could contain.

He started his career in Detroit in 1920, earning more awards, honors and accolades than any other individual. He was noted for his bowling feats against the highest levels of competition. He was also a "mover and doer," always getting the job done.

Gavie originated and organized tourneys, while serving city government for over 44 years.

He was instrumental in bringing a pair of American Bowling Congress tournaments to Detroit. Gavie also initiated the Judge John D. Watts Award.

In 1964 he was elected to the Detroit Bowling Hall of Fame, and was honored as Bowlers Man of the Year in 1967.

Today's bowlers can thank people like Gavie for making the sport what it is today.

- To report information for the Honor Roll, check with your league secretary or bowling center manager.

Normally the scores from each league should be turned in at the bowling center control counter before being forwarded to me.

It is not necessary to bowl a perfect game, or even come close. Scores are relative. Who, what and where are taken into consideration, along with the individual average or age category.

- There are some very good league spots still available, and if you're looking for just the right one, try some of these:

Merri-Bowl (Livonia): One full team needed for 8 p.m. Wednesday Senior House League. Call Carl Hansen at 459-4117.

Other openings occur in the Weekend Mixed and Thursday Scratch Trio. Call 427-2900.

Country Lanes (Farmington Hills): Openings for teams or individuals are still available for the 9:30 a.m. Sunday Inter-Lodge League. Call Jack Cole at 569-7004.

There are also ladies leagues at 9:30 a.m. each day (free baby-sitting on site).

Prize money of $5,000 awaits the first-place winner in the 9:15 p.m. Tuesday Men's Trio, while the Ladies Trio rolls during the same time slot.

For Mixed Leagues, openings include: 9:15 p.m. Thursday; 6 p.m., 8:45 p.m. and 9:15 p.m. Fridays.

Greenfield Mixed can use a couple of good men to fill spots. Call Mildred Weed at 348-2096 or Country Lanes at 476-3201 for other openings.

Beech Lanes (Redford): Choice spots are open in the 6:30 p.m. Monday Ladies. Call Nancy Cunn at 531-9473.

The Senior Mixed at noon Friday has openings. Call Cheryl Null at 532-5541.

Youth leagues, which run 4 p.m. weekdays; 10:30 a.m. (juniors) and 1 p.m. Saturday, remain open.

Plaza Lanes (Plymouth): Five-person teams are needed for 7 p.m. Monday Nite Ladies, while the 7 p.m. Monday Nite Men's also needs one five-man squad. The 6:45 p.m. Friday Nite Mixed can also use individuals or teams, along with 6:45 p.m. Thursday Men's (five-person). Call 453-4880.

Bel-Aire Lanes (Farmington): Several daytime spots for openings for ladies, including the new Kegerettes, 9:15 p.m. Wednesday (60 percent handicap in the format); and 9:15 p.m. Thursday Nite Owls (three to a team, home by 11 p.m.). Call 476-1550.

Redford Lanes (Redford Township): Full-team or individual openings include 9:15 a.m. Monday; 9:30 a.m. Tuesday; 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Thursdays (free nursery at lanes). Call 535-8300.

Falcons *from page 1B*

Senior Matt April (6-2, 175) won the starting job at quarterback. Senior Todd Frush (6-1, 180) was injured last year but steps into the fullback slot this year.

Senior speedster Corby Laverty (6-1, 170) moves from wingback to tailback where he will split time with senior Jeff Miller (5-11, 166) and sophomore Nigel Whitt (5-7, 138).

"We'll alternate three until one decides he wants to do it the best," said Call, adding he also wants to guard against injuries due to overuse. "We're not going to have one carry 30 times and not be able to play the next game. I'd rather have them average 10 each and still be able to play."

Junior Mike Tokar (6-3, 190), who battled April for the quarterback job, was too good an athlete to leave out of the lineup, according to Call, and will play wingback.

Senior Mike Giese (6-0, 154), an all-state soccer player and outstanding kicker, has "great speed and hands" and will play wide receiver. Junior Stanley Lewis (6-2, 185), a transfer from New York, practiced for the first time Monday and was impressive.

The tight end is senior Dave Liszewski (6-1, 162), and sophomore John Economy (5-5, 130) and junior Harvey Hicks (5-8, 140) can play wingback or wide receiver if a second one is needed.

"We based the whole offense on fooling people and outflanking them in the past," Call said. "This year we feel we're big enough and strong enough that we can go right at them."

On the defensive side, Holliday returns at noseguard and will "cause people problems," Call said. Vulaj and Mykolaitis are the tackles, and sophomore Lance Lugo (5-10, 164) is "not a big kid, but is he aggressive," said Call, adding he can play any of the three spots. Sophomore Corey Minous (6-0, 182) could help at tackle.

Liszewski, sophomore Ryan Lewis (5-11, 192) and senior Dave Stylianou (5-11, 167), a transfer from Dearborn, will rotate at the ends.

Senior Jon Siskosky (6-3, 180) is a veteran linebacker and "has turned into a quality ballplayer." Either Frush or Raffle will be the other linebacker in the 5-2 defense.

The secondary is solid, according to Call, with Tokar and Laverty at the safeties, April and Miller at the cornerbacks.

"If we can stop people from running and force them to throw, we'll be in good shape because we have some of our best athletes in the secondary," Call said.

"We had 12 interceptions last year, and April and Laverty made the majority of them. Tokar goes to the ball well and is a good sticker. Laverty can cover anybody. I think Corby is a college-caliber defensive back."

The Falcons begin the season Saturday afternoon at home against West Bloomfield. They play Walled Lake Western and Westland John Glenn, the divisional favorites in the Western Lakes Activities Association, in their next two games.

"It's not the year we wanted two tough teams, because we're breaking in a lot of young kids," Call said.

Basketball *from page 1B*

The loss dropped Harrison to 0-2 overall. RU is 2-1.

Markham did the damage while the Hawks were concentrating their defensive efforts on stopping RU's top player, senior Wendy Malecki. Malecki scored 14 of her team-high 15 points in the second and third quarters but was held in check in the fourth.

RU enjoyed a 28-25 advantage after three quarters.

"We were into a box-and-one defense against Wendy and she (Markham) knocked three, four perimeter shots," Harrison coach Pete Mantyla said. "I didn't think she'd step up like that. We overplayed on the other girl but she stepped up and beat us."

Harrison's senior center Heather Hopkins finished with a team-high 15 points and 11 rebounds. Krista Snow added 12 points and teammate Becky Macek contributed 10 for the Hawks.

Harrison led 11-6 after one quarter but RU rallied to tie the game at halftime, 17-17.

"They zoned us a lot, collapsed on Heather," Mantyla said. "We need to rebound harder."

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