

# MIFC football

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kora also returns (90-of-182, 1,580 yards, 12 TDs, five interceptions). But can offense win a title? If defense is the difference, Ashland University — which has the added incentive of knowing this will be coach Fred Martinelli's final season (he retires after '95) — will be loaded, with nine defensive starters returning. Still, gone are seven offensive starters — that could make it tough for the Eagles.

The sleeper pick of the year is Wayne State. Sure, the Tartars have been hard-pressed to hit 500 (the last time they did it was 1984, when they were 6-5), but if everything breaks right, they could challenge for the title.

The defense is solid, returning nine players with starting experience, including senior defensive end Eric Ruth (6-2, 260, from Livonia Stevenson), senior cornerback Rob Zeno (6-0, 185, from North Farmington), and senior strong safety Ebber Herbert (6-0, 188, from Redford Bishop Burgess).

But the key for WSU could be how big a factor former star Tim Morris is. A senior outside linebacker (6-0, 230, from West Bloomfield/Birmingham Groves) who left the team after two seasons to try his hand at Eastern Michigan, he has returned to add strength to a powerful linebacking corps.

The Tartar offense will rely on junior Joe Gough, from Orchard Lake St. Mary, Gough (6-0, 215) switched from linebacker to fullback last season, and gained a team-record 1,340 yards; he'll be at tailback this year.

Here's a brief look at each team, in order of selection in the coaches' poll.

## Grand Valley State

Kelly's had opportunities to try all sorts of approaches to his No. 1 selections. This year, he gave thought to the Lou Holtz (of Notre Dame) approach: "We're terrible, we won't win a game." No-body bought it from Kelly, either. Still, the Lakers (6-3 overall, 8-2 in the MIFC in '92) must rely on the blending of junior college talent to fill holes. Besides Stover at quarterback, Ryan Johnson (6-4, 240, from Plymouth Salem and Grosse Pointe) could get playing time at tight end and Tim Wymes (6-3, 230, from Southfield and Grosse Pointe) may get in at linebacker. All three have junior eligibility.

## Ashland University

Martinez, who should know his stuff after 34 years, said eight or nine teams

could be in the MIFC title picture. His Eagles will be one after last year's 7-3 (6-3 overall) campaign, particularly with eight starters back on a defense that led the NCAA in the past two years. Defensive linemen Bill Royce (20 sacks in '92), a third-team NCAA All-American, leads the unit.

Still, scoring could be a problem.

## Hillsdale College

Dick Lowy, who has coached at Hillsdale for 13 years, said this about Schutte: "I've been coaching 25 years, and I have never coached anybody this elusive and good." High praise, indeed. But the Chargers (8-2, 8-2 in '92) return just nine of 22 starters and must rebuild the entire offensive line and line-backer corps. Junior Dutch Callison (6-3, 224, from St. Mary's) could see plenty of action at inside linebacker.

## Ferris State

Last year's surprise team (10-3, 8-2) will be hard-pressed to match that effort. Nine of 22 starters return, but key players are gone — like quarterback Doug Arnold (Rochester Adams) and line-backer Marlon Brown, both all-MIFC performers, and leading receiver Pat Pettit (John Glenn).

And yet, there are three first-team all-MIFC players back on defense in defensive back Rich Eash and line-man Ed Philon and Jim Lenz. Also back is outside linebacker Mike Brooks (5-11, 209, from Livonia Churchill), who started as a freshman, and senior defensive back Brian Cammody (6-2, 189, from Rochester Adams), who had two interceptions in '92.

The top three rushers, led by junior John Johnson (740 yards), are back, too. The Bulldogs will have something to say about the outcome of the MIFC race, to be sure.

## Saginaw Valley State

A strong offense will be needed, if the Cardinals (7-4, 6-4 in '92) are to contend. Six starters must be replaced on offense. Junior Desean Littlejohn (5-9, 165, from Adams) returns to cornerback after a year at tailback (422 yards rushing) and sophomore Larry Jones (6-2, 225, from Bishop Gorman) is expected to fill one of the openings at line-backer. There are a lot of strengths on this team. But several questions, too.

## Wayne State

If the Tartars (4-7, 3-7 in '92) are to challenge, the defense must sparkle. Ruth anchors an otherwise inexperienced line, but the rest of the defense is very tough. Morris, who set school records for tackles three years ago, will have to seem a starting spot at outside line-backer. Zeno led the team in interceptions with four.

Offense, however, will be a problem. Gough was a pleasant surprise in '92; he'll have to be even better this season. "He's going to be our go-to guy," said coach Brian VanGorder, a former pro standout at West Bloomfield HS. "He has to understand that going in."

The kicking game must improve. Junior Nick Palombi (Troy/Madison Heights Bishop Foley) is the placekicker (3-of-9 field goals, 19-of-21 extra points, 28 points); Junior Erik Burton (Livonia/Redford Catholic Central) is the punter (38.5 average).

## College of St. Francis

One of two new teams in the MIFC (the other is Northwood University), the Fighting Saints from Joliet, Ill., were 4-5 in '92 and have 18 starters back — eight on both offense and defense.

The biggest holes to fill will be at running back, where starters Tyrone Isaac and Mike Seneor are gone, and in the secondary, with three starters missing. Then there's the transition from NAIA to NCAA II.

## Northern Michigan University

Without doubt, this is one of the MIFC's most puzzling teams. The Super-Dome, where the Wildcats play, is the best of them. But since moving in, the team has struggled; Northern was 1-9 in '92.

With 10 starters back (eight offensive, eight defensive), maybe things will change. The top three rushers are gone, however, including Nelson Edmonds (899 yards rushing, from Kalamazoo/Battle Creek Garden City), who transferred from Michigan State, will challenge for the place-kicking job.

## Saint Joseph's College

Ten of 22 starters from a team that went just 1-6-1 in '92 are gone. Maybe that's good.

The Pumas' fate will rest on the knee of Henry Vinegar. An all-MIFC running back in '91 (882 yards), Vinegar suffered a knee injury before the start of the '92 campaign. He joins running back Brent Eastwood (219 yards) and quarterback Dave Jordy as key offensive returnees.

But even with a healthy Vinegar in '91, Saint Joseph's was just 4-6. With two winning seasons in the last 11, the Pumas will be hard-pressed.

## University of Indianapolis

Fourteen starters return, but this is a team that surrendered a league-worst 311 points in its 1-8-1 campaign. Replacing quarterback Greg Sasmannshausen is the biggest question mark; freshman Matt Kneel is the favorite.

Leading rusher Deon Harding (370 yards) and top pass receiver Josh Wething (30 catches) are also gone. It could be another long year for the Grayhounds.

## Northwood University

— better results?

The Northmen hope so. But Pat Riepma, who served at Hillsdale as an assistant for eight years, is making no victory promises: "We do have some talent. The thing we need to accomplish is for the kids to experience some success on the football field."

Northwood was 0-9 last year as an independent.

# DeWolf captures national title.

By STEVE KOWALSKI  
STAFF WRITER

Scott DeWolf and his grandparents are spending this week vacationing in California's Yellowstone Mountains.

After months of rigorous training and a gold-medal finish Aug. 7 at the U.S. Junior Nationals Swimming Championships, DeWolf secured the title.

The 1992 Livonia Stevenson graduate capped a busy summer with a first-place finish in the 200-meter butterfly.

DeWolf, who placed sixth at last year's Junior Nationals, finished the race in 2 minutes, 42.5 seconds, which was 14 ahead of his nearest competitor.

DeWolf, who will be a sophomore at Texas A & M after transferring from Michigan State University, has qualified for next year's U.S. Senior Nationals where he'll have an opportunity to make the World Championships. The first-place showing made the five-hour of daily training since spring with the Novi-Livonia Spartan Aquatic Club and on his own worthwhile.

"The whole thing I was training for was to win and make the Senior Nationals and it's great to get everything you wanted to do," said DeWolf, reached Monday at his grandparents' home in San Diego. "I haven't had a break in a while but five days will be enough."

DeWolf is known for his tireless work ethic and strong finishes so he wasn't worried about being in third place half-way through the finals. DeWolf was tied for first place with about 25 meters remaining.

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## SWIMMING

wanted to stay close the first 100 meters and beat them on the second 200 because they were dying so bad. I knew I could compete with them because in the Big Ten I swam against Olympians every week. After that you start not to be intimidated. You've just got to race them."

After winning the gold, DeWolf got on the winner's stand and pointed a bouquet of flowers at his mother who was sitting in the stands.

Livonia-Spartan Aquatic coach Dave Segreaver said DeWolf's win was the best effort by a club member at the Junior Nationals since Canton's Nicole Drake took the silver medal in the 800 free-style several years ago. Canton's Ron Orvis placed third in the 100 butterfly at last year's Senior Nationals.

"We talked about swimming the last part of the race just before he went onto the block," Segreaver

said. "I said 'When you get down to the last 25 meters, finish real strong at the end, feel like you can pop right out of the water.' He's the hardest trainer I've ever coached. There's no quit in him, he just keeps coming at you."

DeWolf scored in every dual meet as a freshman at MSU where he was the Spartans' second-leading 200 butterfly competitor behind Chris Carol Bremer, a German who placed ninth in the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona.

DeWolf said he chose to transfer from MSU to Texas A & M to continue his degree in political science and improve his chances at gaining All-American status.

"I want to be an All-American and make the NCAA and I can't get that at MSU," DeWolf said. "MSU doesn't have the facilities (that Texas A & M does) and the athletic department is more interested in a healthy bottom line and gender equality. They don't care about men's minor sports (at MSU)."

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