FOOTBALL

Prognosticators disagree on Boys Bowl

BRAD EMONS

We're entering the home stretch of the high school football season with several area schools still entertaining playoff possibilities.

The ranks of the unbeaten, however, has shrunk to two teams at 4-0 _ neighborhood rivals Westland John Glenn and Wayne Memorial.

Five other teams have only one defeat _ Redford Catholic Central, Farmington Hills Harrison, Livonia Franklin, Plymouth Salem and Lutheran High Westland _ all still retain post-season playoff aspirations.

One game also separates your *friendly prognosticators.*

Figures, Dan O'Meara, is taking the week off after correctly picking 14 of 15 games correctly raising his season total to 50-12. An impressive week none-theless for the Irishman, who nearly went 15-0 had not Detroit St. Martin DePorres rallied in the final seconds to beat Catholic Central in a battle for state bragging rights, 8-7.

Yours truly went 13-2, playing a hunch that Canton would beat Harrison, but to no avail as the Hawks won 20-6.

No more hunches, please, but the good news is that the defending champion still maintains a slim lead with a 51-11 mark.

As for this week's slate, the big game is Sunday at Pontiac Wisner Stadium, between CC and unbeaten Birmingham Brother Rice.

Here is a sneak preview of the upcoming weekend action.

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

Chelsea at Redford Union (7 p.m.): This is a non-leaguer. RU (0-4) is searching for its first win, but the Panthers did ruin Dearborn's 13-game regular season shutout string in a 41-7 loss. Chelsea (2-2) is coming off a 20-12 win over Southeastern Conference foe Ypsilanti Lincoln as quarterback Dustin White threw for 149 yards (17 for 30) and Jay Schick rushed for 110 yards (on 22 carries). But the Bulldogs did give up 205 yards on the ground to Lincoln's Jaquan Wright. **PICKS:** Chelsea Clinton all the way.

Lutheran Westland at Clarenceville: Metro Conference bragging rights in Observerland are at stake in this one. If the Warriors (3-1, 3-1) win, it will be their best start in school history. Second-year coach Scott Wismer, should get a boost this week when senior tight end Joe Pruchnik (elbow injury) returns to the lineup for the first time. Clarenceville (1-3, 1-3) lost to 4-0 Harper Woods last week, 28-13, but gave up 263 yards to Andrew Ciccorella. Can they stop the Warriors' Albert Cook. **PICKS:** The Warriors make it two straight against Clarenceville.

F.H. Harrison at Liv. Churchill: *The* Hawks (3-1, 1-1) are still very much alive in the Western Division race in the Western Lakes after stopping Plymouth Canton quarterback Rob Johnson in a 20-7 win. Churchill (0-4, 0-2) put 19 points on the board last week in a loss to Walled Lake Western, but the Chargers (1-57 for the 1990s) haven't beaten the Hawks since John Stoltsfoldis quarterbacked Churchill to a shocking upset in 1984. **PICKS:** It's all Harrison.

Liv. Franklin at Ply. Canton: This game pits two of the WLAA's premier athletes in Franklin wide receiver Paul Terek and Canton QB Rob Johnson. Canton won last year's game in triple overtime. Franklin (3-1, 2-0) has won three straight and given up only 13 points since losing to No. 1-ranked Sterling Heights Stevenson in the season opener. Canton (2-2, 1-1) must find some offense from other people than Johnson. **PICKS:** Both like the Patriots in this one.

Liv. Stevenson at W.L. Central: A key battle in the Lakes Division of the WLAA. Central (3-1, 2-0), one of the state's largest teams, only beat winless North Farmington by a 16-0 count. Stevenson (2-2, 1-1) is coming off a 34-13 win over Farmington as senior Gade Clark had 228 yards in a school-record 38 carries. **PICKS:** Central keeps pace for first place.

N. Farmington at Westland John Glenn: The state-ranked Rockets (4-0, 3-0) took care of previously unbeaten Plymouth Salem last week, scoring 31 unanswered points in a 31-14 victory. North (0-4, 0-2) has struggled in all four games to generate any kind of offense and the odds of that happening this week appear to be remote. But the Raiders did play Glenn tough a year ago, losing 14-0. **PICKS:** Glenn keeps it going with its fifth straight win.

Trenton at Garden City: This is a Mega-White Division game. Trenton (4-0, 2-0) is looking for state recognition after pounding Taylor Kennedy last week, 27-6, as quarterback Ryan Szokola scored three TDs and rushed for 147 yards. GC (0-4, 0-2) has been shut out in three of its first four starts. **PICKS:** Trenton rolls.

Red. Thurston at Melvindale: The quicker the Eagles (2-2, 1-2) can forget last week's 55-7 homecoming loss to Allen Park the better. Melvindale (2-2, 2-1) is coming off a 21-0 win over Dearborn Heights Crestwood as quarterback Tony Trejo hit 12 of 20 passes for 120 yards. His favorite target is Ben Striz (five catches for 106 yards). Thurston, however, also owns a 36-19 win over Crestwood. **PICKS:** Give the home team, Melvindale, the edge.

Wayne at Wyandotte: The Zebras (4-0, 3-0) can't afford to be looking ahead to upcoming games with Belleville and Dearborn Fordson. Wyandotte (2-2, 2-1), coming off a 24-8 loss to Fordson, is a quality opponent, led by offensive tackle Jason Ptak (6-3, 270) considered one of the top linemen in the state. Wayne, however, can match any team in the state when it comes to beef. **PICKS:** Wayne eludes the Bears.

SATURDAY'S GAMES

Ply. Salem at Farmington (1 p.m.): Salem (3-1, 1-1) came down to earth last week after getting thumped by Glenn. Farmington, meanwhile, is trying to pick up the pieces from a 34-13 loss to Stevenson. It could boil down to who has the better offense, not defense.**PICKS:** Take the Rocks in a tougher-than-expected game.

Bishop Borgess vs. Riverview Gabriel Richard (2 p.m. at Garden City Jr. High): Borgess opened Tri-Sectional play last week with a 28-6 loss to Detroit East Catholic. The Spartans face an unbeaten Richard (4-0, 1-0) team that edged Allen Park Cabrini, 17-14, as John Romane kicked the game-winning field goal. **PICKS:** King Richard lives to be 5-0.

Red. St. Agatha vs. R.O. Shaine (7:30 p.m. at R.O. Kimball): The winless Aggies (0-4, 0-1) are having tackling problems. Although down by only two, 14-12, at the half last week to Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard, Agatha fell apart in the second half. Former Aggie coach John Goodard's Knights (3-1, 1-0) opened C-Section play last week by rallying from a 14-11 halftime deficit to beat Pontiac Notre Dame Prep, 27-14. **PICKS:** There's no lake or pool nearby for Goodard to do a victory dip, but how about a Gatorade drenching? Take Shaine in this one.

SUNDAY'S GAME

Redford CC vs. Blm. Brother Rice (2 p.m. at Pontiac's Wisner Stadium): It's the Boys Bowl meeting with much at stake. CC (3-1), stung by last week's 8-7 loss to Detroit St. Martin DePorres, needs a win to stay in the playoff hunt in Class AA-Region III. The Shamrocks have won 10 of the 12 meetings (since 1986), including two victories over the Warriors last year. Rice is led by All-State running back Brian Marshall, who racked up 169 yards in 32 carries in a 6-0 win last week over winless Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher. **PICKS:** CC continues to have the Warriors' number Emons says, but O'Meara likes Rice.

PLAYOFF POINTS

MHSAA FOOTBALL PLAYOFF COMPUTER RANKINGS

Class AA (Region II): 1. Battle Creek Central (4-0), 92.000; 2. Brighton (4-0), 88.000; 3. Monroe (3-1), 70.750; 4. Walled Lake Western (3-1), 68.750; **5. Plymouth Salem (3-1), 64.750;** 6. Jackson (3-1), 62.750; 7. Flint Carman-Ainsworth (3-1), 62.500; 8. Walled Lake Central (3-1), 62.250; 9. Ann Arbor Huron (3-1), 58.500; 10. Howell (2-2), 47.500.

Class AA (Region III): 1. Westland John Glenn (4-0), 98.000; 2. (tie) Clarkston (4-0) and Troy (9-0), 90.000 each; **4. Wayne Memorial (4-0), 86.000; 5. Redford Catholic Central (3-1), 74.750;** 6. Dearborn Fordson (3-1), 68.500; 7. Detroit Redford (3-1), 68.000; 8. (tie) Detroit Henry Ford (3-1) and **Livonia Franklin (3-1), 64.750 each;** 10. Detroit Murray-Wright (3-1), 62.750.

Class A (Region III): 1. Detroit Chadsey (4-0), 102.000; 2. Trenton (4-0), 92.000; 3. South Lyon (4-0), 90.000; 4. Dearborn (4-0), 84.000; 5. Novi (3-1), 68.750; **6. Farmington Hills Harrison (3-1), 64.500;** 7. Saline (3-1), 64.250; 8. Dearborn Edsel Ford (3-1), 58.250; 9. Southgate Anderson (2-2), 47.500; 10. Wyandotte Roosevelt (2-2), 45.250.

Class C (Region IV): 1. Southgate Aquinas (4-0), 70.000; 2. Almont (4-0), 64.000; 3. Harper Woods (4-0), 54.000; **4. Lutheran High Westland (3-1), 40.750;** 5. Deckerville (3-1), 40.250; 6. Royal Oak Shrine (3-1), 38.750; 7. Unionville-Sebewaing (2-2), 33.250; 8. Burton Bendle (2-2), 32.750; 9. Detroit Benedictine (2-2), 31.000; 10. Burton Bentley (2-2), 28.500.

Class D (Region IV): 1. Morrice (4-0), 44.000; 2. Detroit East Catholic (3-1), 38.750; 3. Center Line St. Clement (2-2), 38.750; 4. Peck (3-1), 30.750; 5. Adrian Madison (2-2), 21.417; 6. Wyandotte Mount Carmel (2-2), 10.250; 7. Hamtramck St. Florian (1-3), 13.250; 8. Marine City Cardinal Mooney (1-3), 9.250; 9. Waldron (1-3), 8.250; **10. Redford St. Agatha (0-4), 1.589.**

SOCCER

North gamble pays off

North Farmington soccer coach Ron Meteyer is not one to shy away from a challenge -- even if it could come back and bite him in the face.

Meteyer had the courage of his convictions Monday and it paid off with a 2-1 victory over Walled Lake Central. Host North Farmington improved to 4-3-2.

Dan Gabriel scored for North Farmington, giving the Raiders a 2-0 lead at 14:26 of the second half. He took a corner kick from Victor Juncaj and headed it in.

At that point, Walled Lake Central juggled its lineup.

The Vikings took over and wound up with a 12-9 shots advantage, nine of which came late in the second half.

Goalie Jeff Ibbetson was handling the shots, most of which came from long range, but Meteyer's defenders were beginning to tire. North Farmington had one player sitting out a red card plus another injured.

So Meteyer gambled and pulled Ibbetson, who also plays a solid defense, and replaced him with Tony Munaco.

"Sometimes that kind of a move will cost you," Meteyer said, "but Ibbetson was our only fresh legs so I pulled him."

Central got a corner kick North Farmington was unable to clear and the Vikings did indeed return a goal that narrowed the margin to 2-1 at 29:49.

"But our defense jelled," Meteyer said. "Our kids got out of their sluggishness and were able to hold on for the win."

Meteyer credited midfielders Benji Salter and Amit Klatchko plus defenders David Beaver and Eugene Zolotarwzsky with really solidifying the midfield defense and keeping Walled Lake Central out of the net during the final 10 minutes of play.

"We're in the winning column," Meteyer said. "And we're playing a lot of the giants. We've won two in a row. If we can hang on and win a few more, we're in good shape."

It was a physical encounter but one kept under control by the officials. Central did lose a player to a broken nose during the opening minutes of the match following a collision with a teammate. He was taken to a hospital with a severely broken nose.

North Farmington scored 13:33 into the game when sophomore Craig Hearn got the ball, dribbled past two players, forced the goalie to commit and blasted a shot past the goalie's right side. Juncaj fed Justin Street, who fed Hearn for the goal.

It stayed 1-0 into the second half with the Raiders applying most of the pressure until Gabriel scored.

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