

# New Rules Make Football More Interesting

Many high school football fans in Observerland, and elsewhere in Michigan, will see something different when they make their first visit to a prep gridiron this fall.

For one thing they'll discover wider goal posts — 23 feet, 4 inches, to be exact.

The rule was adopted three years ago, but schools were given 36 month periods to make the changeover. Now the rule is official.

The idea behind the change is to put more kick into prep football, in short, to encourage teams to attempt more field goals.

**NOT TOO MANY** preps have gone in for the field goal art over the years. There has been an occasional team, but for the most part schools have tried to score touchdowns instead of field goals.

In another step, the State Association has acted to limit the size of cleats on shoes to a half inch. It's felt that such cleats will help cut down on injuries.

The game referees this year will have the right to suspend play before the full four quarters have been completed if the weather gets bad, or some other situation demands.

Heretofore, there was no specific rule and the officials often were confused.

In such situations, the officials could talk it over with the team captains and make the move to cut down on the playing time.

**ANOTHER CHANGE** in the rules this year calls for a penalty being dispatched if it's the third one in a series where previously offsetting violations would have nullified the play.

Now the third penalty will be called with the hope it will stop some cheating among the players who previously knew even if they fouled, nothing probably would happen.

Prep passing rules always have said that for a pass to be complete a player must first have control and step with both feet inbounds.

A new interpretation provides that if a defensive player knocks a receiver out-of-bounds before he touches inbounds, the official may rule the pass complete, if in the official's judgment the player would have come down inbounds had he not been hit.

Officials also have been instructed to enforce the rule against spearing, which is using one's helmet as a battering ram.

## Farmington OKs 'Save Football' Move

The decisions of a citizen's group to save schoolboy sports in Farmington has now reached effects.

On the one side, it means that hundreds of teenagers in the Farmington system can perform for their schools in activities ranging from football to cross country to swimming to tennis to basketball to baseball to wrestling to gymnastics to tennis, etc.

Few school systems have boasted a more complete interscholastic varsity program than the Farmington schools.

**IT MEANS, TOO**, that North Farmington can defend its coveted state Class A football title this fall, plus its Northwest Suburban League crown...plus the No. 1 Observerland-area rating the Raiders achieved last season.

It means that the crack Farmington cross country and track teams can go forth again to add more laurels...that Harrison High will get its chance to blossom out in its second year in existence on the sports scene.

It'll mean headlines in the various papers for Farmington, Harrison and North Farmington. It'll mean All-League, All-Area and All-State honors for some boys.

It'll mean that the individual schools will have that special magnet, that sports seems to bring, to pull the student body, the faculty and the parents together.

It'll mean some big Friday and Saturday in the fall, some happy Fridays in the winter, and so on down the line.

But, just as important, keeping sports alive in Farmington stretches into other communities, like Livonia, Pontiac, Southfield and elsewhere.

**ATHLETIC DIRECTOR** Jack Cottol of Farmington noted the other day that the three Farmington high schools had booked events in sports with representatives of 44 other schools during the coming school year.

In some cases, as many as 10 contracts had been signed with a single non-Farmington school.

"What a spot we'd be in,"

said a Livonia athletic director whose school is in the same league with a Farmington school. "Look at the number of games and meets we'd suddenly lose. And replacing such events, especially in basketball and football, would be almost impossible at this late date."

"Something else, too. We'd be down to just a five-team league and we'd also be minus one of our top schools, since out of Farmington always have come major contenders in every sport."

North Farmington is a

member of the Northwest Suburban League which includes Westland-John Glenn, Thurston, Livonia Franklin, Oak Park and Birmingham Groves. All but Oak Park are Observerland teams.

Farmington plays in the Inter-Lakes Conference along with Livonia Stevenson, Lathrup, Pontiac Northern, Walled Lake Central and Waterford.

Harrison is in the new Western Six League which has Livonia Franklin, Northville and Waterford Mott, among others.

In addition, the Farmington schools also have numerous non-league opponents on their schedules.

**IN FOOTBALL**, Farmington and North Farmington have three outside rivals each, with their fourth non-leaguer being against each other.

The annual Northwest Holiday basketball tournament, which long has starred Farmington and North Farmington, would suffer.

The newly created Observer Relays in track would hardly

take on the proper look minus a powerhouse like Farmington.

Still another aspect of what might have happened had Farmington dropped its sports intrigues coaches in other neighboring communities.

"If they stopped sports in Farmington, maybe our own residents would say: 'Maybe we should, too,'" one coach said.

"These things can be catching, especially now when everybody is more concerned than ever about millage, extra costs and things like that."

## Prep Footballers Settle Down To Drills For Openers

The preliminaries are over! A week devoted chiefly to conditioning behind them, area high school football players this week started "knocking each other around."

For all practical purposes, Monday was the day when coaches could send their charges through tackling, blocking and scrimmaging sessions.

Most coaches felt their boys were ready for the tougher stuff.

"That extra week of conditioning (it went into effect for the first time for Michigan prep) year ago certainly helps to make certain our boys are in top shape when we begin the major phases of football drills," said veteran coach Bob Atkins at Redford Union.

Atkins, like most of the other area coaches, was pleased that most of his players showed up in good shape.

He held conditioning workouts beginning in early August helped make certain that players were down to their playing weights and had their legs and wind in shape.

"The football athlete in the high school program today is a pretty serious young man," Atkins explained. "He gives up a lot of his free time in the summer to make sure he is ready for football practice."

"We have them come out for conditioning sessions at a time when the other students are vacationing and taking it easy. The fact that these kids respond the way they do is a tribute to them and to their desire to do well in football."

With the conditioning sessions history, the coaches now face the important job of separating the men from the boys, as it were.

**MOST COACHES**, like Atkins, admit they have had an idea for sometime about certain boys, on how well they might do...or how well they might not do.

"But really, you never can make an official judgment, nor should you as a coach," declared Atkins, "until you have worked a boy in scrimmage sessions and seen for yourself how well he does."

Most of the knocking around for the athletes at Southfield, Lathrup, Garden City West, Redford Union, Thurston, etc., must be done against their own pals until after the first regularly scheduled games are played on the weekend of Sept. 12-13.

Under the state high school rules, a school such as Thurston is permitted one outside scrimmage before the first official game.

Such a scrimmage actually may involve two or three other schools, but once it's concluded, a coach can't scrimmage outside until after his first game. Then such scrimmages can be held as frequently as a coach desires in between games.

Where schools have small squads, the need for outside scrimmages becomes far more important. Many coaches have asked that the outside scrimmage rule be extended to two or three sessions before the first games.

The coaches had to agree after last week's work that the weather was on our side.

There have been years in which the preps have had to drill in 90 degree weather. Such heat obviously cramped the style of everybody concerned. A coach could get as much done as he wished.

**AT AND NOW**, is the way Coach Ron Holland put it to the four holdovers from his state championship team at North Farmington as the squad held its first drill. The practice came after the school board accepted a proposal from a citizens' group to raise enough cash to finance

extra curricular activities in the Farmington school system. Surrounding Holland are: (from left) Marty Raymond, Holland, Craig Gow, Ron Crowe and Mark Daubenmeyer. (Observer photo by Harry Mauthe)

recreational plans, including the possible acquisition of a second golf course.

While declining to publicly name the course, McNamara said "it is privately owned and it's on Five Mile Rd."

The mayor also said he hoped to make public soon detailed plans for the development of a 120-acre park site in the Wayne-Seven Mile Rd. area. The city's third indoor ice rink is contemplated for the area, the mayor said.

Trophies were presented to the following:

**NEW OFFICERS** are: Kay Copolla, who was re-elected to her third term; Pat Anderson, vice president; Jackie Stocks, secretary and Helen Davies, treasurer.

Named to the rules committee were Alice Game, Joan Carney and Thelma Ziegler. Clare Caprillon will be in charge of prizes for next year.

Dufour also announced the five member team, all from A flight, who will represent the city in the state tournament at Ellis State Park in Jackson next month.

They are: Kay Copolla, Fay Reinardy, Jackie Archer, Jackie Stocks and Clare Caprillon. Joan Carney will be the alternate.

**1971 Livonia City Golf Championship** (At Whispering Willows Muni Golf Course)

**Women** — 18 holes medal play, Friday, Sept. 10  
**Men** — 36 holes medal play, Sat. Sept. 11 and Sunday, Sept. 12

**ENTRY FEE**—\$6 for women and \$17.50 for men (includes green fees, prizes and trophies)

Make check payable to Gary Whitener, tournament director and enclose with application blank

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Entries close Wednesday, Sept. 8 at 5 p.m.

## Gal Teams To Decide State Title

Make way for the gals. The female softball players will take over Livonia's Ford Field starting Friday for the state Class B tournament.

Teams from all parts of Michigan, headed by the host Mic Mac team of Livonia, will square off beginning at 6:30 p.m. Friday and continuing until the championship game is played next Monday at noon if one team goes through unbeaten.

But if there is no all-winning titlist, the final game will be played at 3 p.m. Monday.

It'll be a double elimination tournament, meaning that a team stays alive until it has lost two games.

**THE LIVONIA** Mic Macs have drawn Sling Rays as their first opponents on Friday 9:30 p.m. to cap the opening day's action which will feature games at 6:30, 8 and 9:30 p.m.

Livonia also will be represented by the Livoniaettes who have drawn Ovid Merchant as their first opponent in another 9:30 p.m. game Friday.

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