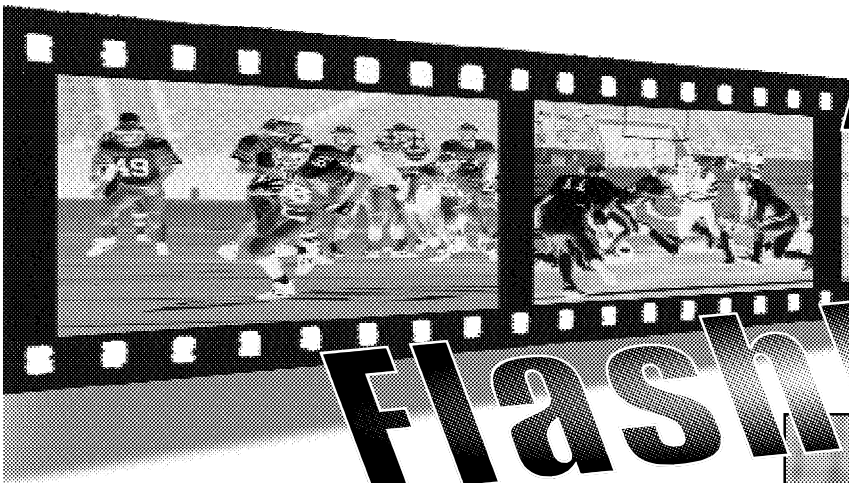


Finals

Flashbacks



1996

In **Class AA** action on Saturday, Walled Lake Western earned its first MHSAA football crown by defeating Sterling Heights Stevenson, 34-18. Quarterback Frank Stanford ran 12 times for 112 yards and two touchdowns, including a 50-yard ramble to open the scoring. Western opened up a 14-3 lead when Jason Brewer scooped up a blocked punt with 27 seconds remaining in the half, and dashed 17 yards for the TD.

Farmington Hills Harrison opened up an early 14-0 lead in Friday's **Class A** showdown with Grandville, but Grandville's defense took over after that in a surprising 24-17 upset over the Hawks. Grandville's stellar defense and Harrison's inability to stop fullback Chris Key was the difference in the contest. Key rushed for 140 yards and a pair of touchdowns in 29 carries as the team rolled to 303 yards in 56 attempts.

Trailing 13-7 with just over a minute to play in the game, Marshall quarterback Ryan VanDyke slipped in from a yard out and Joe

Cargo's point after conversion hit the crossbar and fell over as the Redskins snuck past Kingsford, 14-13, in **Class BB**. One of the state's top quarterbacks, VanDyke was held to five completions in 17 attempts for 37 yards, but racked up 98 yards on the ground against the Flivvers. The junior QB also scored Marshall's first touchdown following an 80 drive early in the second quarter.

Jackson Lumen Christi, returning to the finals for the first time since 1979, knocked off Belding, 17-11, in the **Class B** game. The Titans finished the year 13-0 as they led 17-0 before Brendan Albert scored a touchdown for Belding at the 4:32 mark of the fourth frame. The Titan defense caught Redskin back Brent Cummings in the end zone for a safety to open the scoring. Brendon Kewin added a touchdown late in the first for a 9-0 lead.

In **Class CC**, Martez Johnson rushed for 102 yards, while quarterback Kevin Glenn connected on six passes for 127 yards and two TD's as Detroit St.

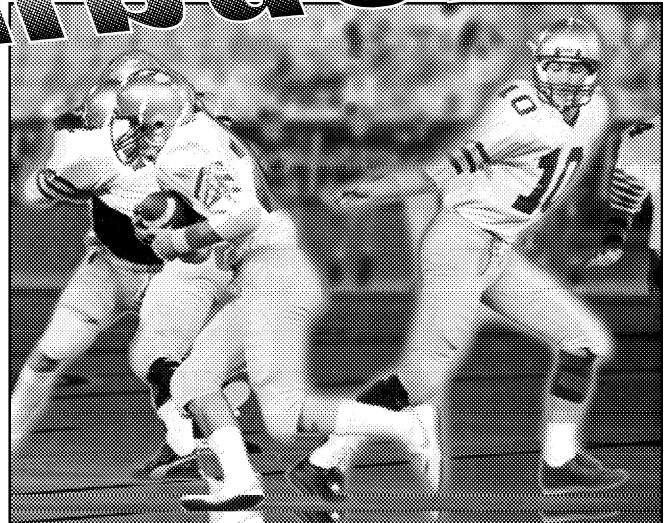
Martin dePorres downed Iron Mountain, 30-14. Johnson scored twice in the contest, the first on a 26-yard scamper to open the scoring.

Johnson's second TD, a 95-yard kickoff return late in the third quarter gave the Eagles an 18-14 lead.

Ravenna's Benny Clark scored three times and racked up 207 yards on a finals record 49 carries in his team's 30-14 victory over Morenci in **Class C**. The rushing performance boosted Clark's career total to 7,212 yards - tops in MHSAA history at the time. The Ravenna defense held Morenci to 91 yards in total offense.

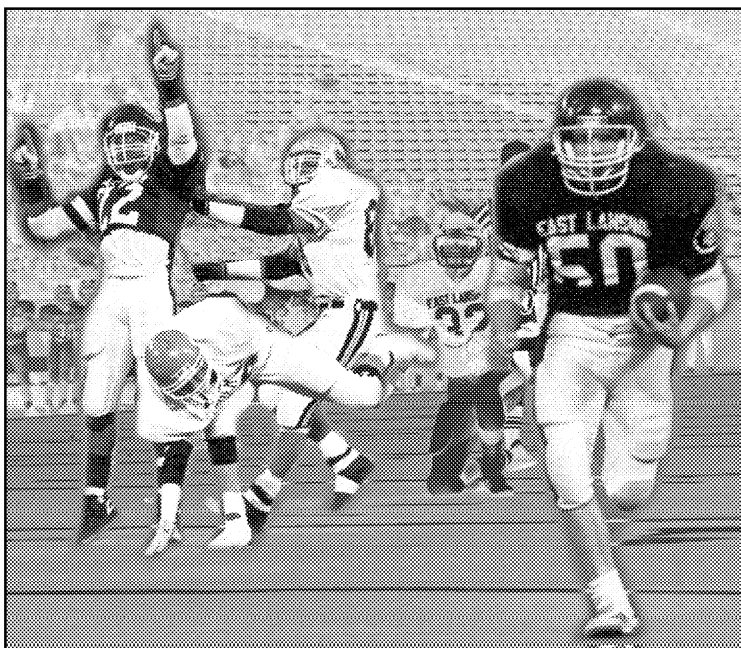
Nick Salazar scored three TDs as Pittsford pounded Maple City Glen Lake 47-7 for the **Class DD** title. Salazar picked up 170 yards in 23 totes as the Wildcats led 33-0 at the half. Teammate Nick Grabowski collected a pair of touchdowns on scoring strikes of 56 and 29 yards from quarterback Rob Draper. Grabowski ended with 154 yards receiving.

Fowler picked up its third MHSAA title in four years with a 10-0 shutout of Lake Linden-Hubbell in **Class D**. The crown was the first for Coach Neal Hoffman, who replaced former head coach Steve Spicer, the man he assisted for nine years as Fowler. Bernard Simons 22-yard field goal midway through the first quarter was the highlight for three quarters of action. Glenn Weber rushed for 148 yards and the game's only touchdown.



McCarthy (10) directs Country Day comeback in 1986

Garry Shook, Okeago



East Lansing's Langkos stuns Rice in 1991

Garry Shook, Okeago

1991

With 46 seconds to play in the game, Saginaw Arthur Hill's Howard Foster grabbed his second pass interception of the day to preserve a 13-12 victory over defending **Class AA** champion Detroit Catholic Central. Arthur Hill put together a dramatic 12-play, 72-yard drive in the closing minutes of the fourth quarter to earn the victory. Capped by quarterback Marvin Wright's 2-yard run with 1:43 to play.

On Friday, East Lansing's defense held Birmingham Brother Rice to a net 9 yards rushing en route to a 14-0 win in **Class A**. Junior running back Randy Kinder racked up 150 yards on 27 carries and scored once. Offensive guard Mark Langkos scored the first Trojan touchdown from 5 yards out, on a fake sweep to Kinder.

Farmington Hills Harrison downed Cheboygan, 34-7, in **Class BB**. Roy Granger rushed for 295 yards (a MHSAA Final game record), including touchdown runs of 50 yards – on the first play from scrimmage – and 73-yards.

Backup fullback Chris Lipford scored on an 83-yard run early in the fourth quarter to break a 7-7 tie as Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central defeated Coopersville, 16-7, for the **Class B** trophy. Lipford replaced Brian Bellino, the Falcons top rusher, who was injured on the first quarter kickoff following Coopersville's touchdown. St. Mary opened the scoring with a 68-yard scoring run by quarterback Nick Calkins.

Battle Creek Pennfield overcame three first-half turnovers and a never-say-die Negaunee squad to post a 14-8 victory in the **Class CC** title contest. Trailing 2-0 in the first quarter, Pennfield defender Jason Livengood picked off Ron Logan's fourth-down pass in the end zone. Livengood broke a tackle at the five, and raced the remaining 95-yards for a 6-2 Panther lead, setting the MHSAA Final record for longest interception return. Pennfield scored the game-winning points on the opening drive of the second half. Jim Martens swept five yards around left end to cap a 19-play, 63-yard march.

Muskegon Catholic Central rolled to its second consecutive **Class C** crown with a 34-0 trouncing of Harbor Beach. Senior quarterback Paul Siembida led the Crusaders with three TD's and three extra points, while Jason Eichorst scored once. Defensively, Nate Cierlak added a 56-yard fumble return for a touchdown.

Mendon's Don Riley rushed for 108 yards and two touchdowns, while backfield mate Randy Monroe added 115 yards and a TD as the Hornets downed Lake Linden-Hubbell, 30-14, for the **Class DD** crown. Mendon fell behind, 14-0, before Hornet quarterback Mike Smith began the comeback with a 10-yard run in the second quarter.

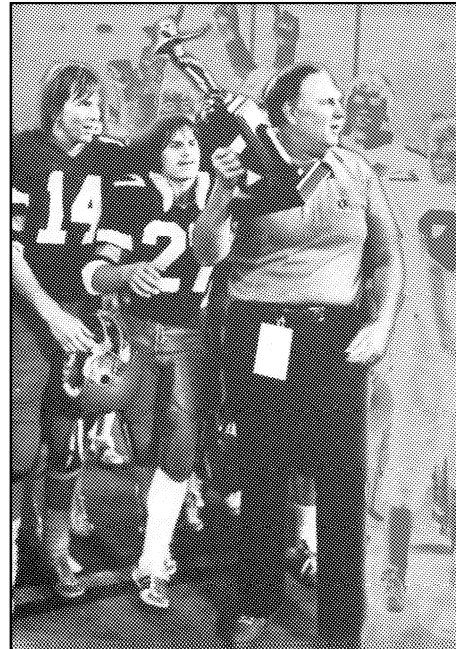
Frankfort repeated as MHSAA champion in **Class D**, downing Portland St. Patrick, 21-7. J.J. Lamerson scored on a pair of 1-yard runs, while quarterback Derek Klein

added a 43-yard touchdown dash. St. Patrick's score - a five-yard run by QB Jim Leik - marked the first time in 10 games and 38 quarters of football, that a team scored against the tough Panther defense.

1986

Defense was the name of the game as Muskegon downed Sterling Heights Stevenson, 10-0, for the **Class A** crown. The "Smurfs" - Muskegon's nickname for their small, quick defensemen - limited the Titans to four yards rushing and 73 yards of total offense, while scoring eight points in the contest on a safety in the second quarter and Mario Hoffman's 25-yard interception return for a touchdown with 6:34 remaining in the game.

Marysville quarterback Randy Socha scored twice on runs of 9 and 7 yards, and



Escanaba Daily Press

Escanaba and Coach Jerry Cvengros reign in 1981

passed for another as veteran coach Walt Braun's squad defeated Grand Rapids South Christian, 38-15, in **Class B**. Socha ended the day 11-of-17 for 161 yards including a 20-yard TD toss to Ross Pleiness. Tim Werkema thrilled fans with a beautiful 86-yard scoring run to open the scoring for South Christian.

In one of the most spectacular finishes in MHSAA Final history, Detroit Country Day defeated Muskegon Catholic Central, 18-14, in **Class C**. Late in the fourth quarter, the Crusaders of MCC ended a 74-yard, 14-play drive with a 6-yard scoring strike from Brent McCarthy to Mark Martinez. Tom Walunas added the kick and MCC was up by two, 14-12, with just over two minutes left. Running a no-huddle offense, the Yellowjackets marched back. On the final play of the game, quarterback Charlie Johnson hit Steve Mann in the back of the end zone to cap a 66-yard

drive, and the Yellowjackets were **Class C** champs.

In **Class D**, Saginaw Michigan Lutheran Seminary beat Fowler, 36-24. Bill Wilson led the victorious Cardinals on the ground with 91 yards, while teammate Todd Dillon added 87 yards and two touchdowns. Matt Hufnagel scored twice for the Eagles.

1981

Strong defense coupled with two pass interceptions and a fumble recovery gave Escanaba a 16-6 win in the **Class A** title game with Fraser. Kevin Tapani's second quarter interception set up Dick Olsen's 21-yard field goal, to put the Eskymos on the scoreboard. Tailback Dean Altobelli scored with 40 seconds left in the half, following the recovery of a Rambler fumble. Olsen's conversion put Escanaba up 10-0 at the intermission. Early in the fourth quarter, Altobelli picked off a Fraser pass, to set up Mike Growdon's 2-yard touchdown.

A 1-yard touchdown run by John Miller, and a Dave Blackmer extra point gave Farmington Hills Harrison the only points it needed as the Hawks defeated defending **Class B** champion Muskegon Catholic 7-0 in a defensive battle. It was the Crusaders' first loss in 20 games.

Elkton-Pigeon-Bay Port slipped past North Muskegon, 15-6, in **Class C**. Leading 8-6 late in the contest, the Lakers Mark Manial recovered a fumble in the end zone to seal the victory.

In **Class D**, Detroit St. Martin de Porres racked up 532 yards of total offense – all of it on the ground – in a 34-0 shutout of Crystal Falls Forest Park. Clint Childs paced the attack, finishing with 203 yards on 13 carries and a touchdown. Kevin Bozeman also scored once, and ended the day with 156 yards on 20 attempts.

1976

A total of 29,423 fans turned out for the first year of MHSAA Finals at the Pontiac Silverdome. In **Class A**, Scott Alexander racked up 169 yards and two touchdowns in leading the Chargers of Midland Dow to a 36-27 win over Farmington Hills Harrison. East Grand Rapids defeated Okemos, 26-7, in **Class B** as Andy Cole, Doug VerMeulen, Greg Yeakey and Mark Zabrofske all scored touchdowns for the victors. The Flat Rock Rams ended an 11-0 season with the **Class C** crown by downing Onaway, 30-8, as Al Summers led the team with 177 yards rushing. In a rematch of the 1975 **Class D** title game, Crystal Falls Forest Park again defeated Flint Holy Rosary, this time by a margin of 14-6.

— Ron Pesch

Ron Pesch is the historian for the MHSAA.

To submit story ideas and potential statistical records, write to Pesch at 1317 Lakeshore Drive, Muskegon, MI 49441