

Fall Sports Bring New Conference, Coaches, and Excitement

By David Latva

The EUP fall sports season will mark a new football conference for St. Ignace and Rudyard, and welcome new coaches Heather Salmi for volleyball at Pickford and Ron Lounds for football at Brimley. The excitement and enthusiasm for high school sports is strong going into the season.

Area Football, Volleyball, X-Country, Cheerleading Coaches

St. Ignace: Marty Spencer-football; Gracia Marshall-volleyball; Emily Fullerton-cross country; Janet Warren-cheerleading.

Cedarville: Scott Barr-football; Kathy Trearrow-volleyball; Ryan Wilson-cross country; Julie Smith and Shelly Koster-cheerleading.

Engadine: Lester Livermore-football; Kathy Killer-volleyball.

Pickford: Josh Rader-football; Heather Salmi-volleyball.

DeTour: Sarah Galarowic-volleyball.

Mackinac Island: Terrie Armstrong-volleyball.

Rudyard: Pat Maloney-football; Ellen Perry-volleyball;



Heather Salmi
Pickford Volleyball

Alan Jarvie-cross country.

Brimley: Ron Lounds-football; Rhonda Amble-volleyball.

Mackinaw City: Scott Mills-cross country.

Pellston/Mackinaw City/Anson: Dave Brines-football.

St. Ignace and Rudyard will join the new Straits Football League, along with Rogers City and Newberry, after the Straits Area Conference folded for football. The conference will continue with the other sports.



Ron Lounds
Brimley Football

Cedarville defended its Mid-Eastern Football League championship with a 7-0 mark and 10-1 overall last year. The league will be a balanced conference in 2009.

Last season, the Saints and Trojans met in the second round of the Division 8 playoffs after St. Ignace defeated Bark River-Harris and Cedarville downed Gaylord St. Mary. In the battle between the two standout teams, the Saints upended the Trojans

at Saints Field.

In the Straits Area Conference for volleyball this season, Cheboygan and Sault Ste. Marie will be the teams to beat -- but don't count out St. Ignace and Rudyard.

The volleyball race in the Eastern Upper Peninsula Conference will be a toss up as all the teams have balanced programs returning this fall.

MHSAA Tournament Schedule

Cross Country: The Upper Peninsula finals will be held at Escanaba Saturday, October 24. Times will be announced.

Football: District semifinals will be Friday, October 30, or Saturday, October 31; district finals Friday, November 6, or Saturday, November 7; regionals Friday, November 13, or Saturday, November 14; semifinals Saturday, November 21; state finals Divisions 2-4-6-8 Friday, November 27, and Divisions 1-3-5-7 Saturday, November 28.

Volleyball: Districts Thursday, November 5, Friday, November 6, and Saturday, November 7; regional semifinals Tuesday, November 10, and

regionals finals Thursday, November 12; quarterfinals Tuesday, November 17; semifinals Thursday, November 19, and Friday, November 20; state finals Saturday, November 21.

Good luck to all the area teams during the 2009 season.

Looking Back:

Head Football Teams, Coaches Covered by The St. Ignace News In 1989 and 1999

1989 Football:

St. Ignace/Bob Dilday;
Cedarville/Gil Trearrow;
Pickford/Barry O'Connor;
Engadine/Brian Adams;
Rudyard/Ken Bickel;
DeTour/Red Adams;
Brimley/Dick Amble;
Newberry/Bob Cameron.

1999 Football:

St. Ignace/Marty Spencer;
Cedarville/Randy Schaedig;
Pickford/Keith MacDonald;
Engadine/Howard Hood;
Rudyard/Tim Rader;
DeTour/Melvin Bennett;
Brimley Leon Derusha;
Sault Ste. Marie/Barry Pierson.

Engadine, Cedarville, Brimley To Play Eight-man Football Games

By David Latva

The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) has put its stamp of approval on eight-man football, which could kick off in the fall of 2010.

The Engadine Eagles, Cedarville Trojans, and Brimley Bays will play one contest off their schedule with the eight-man format. The Eagles will play Carsonville-Port Sanilac and the Trojans and Bays will play Posen.

The MHSAA has classified Class D schools with enrollments of 223 or fewer during the 2009-2010 school year eligible for eight-man competition.

Eastern Upper Peninsula schools Cedarville, Pickford, Engadine, and Brimley could qualify and DeTour, which hasn't had an 11-man football team

since 2005, could be part of the new format unless the school remains with Cedarville in the co-op program.

There are 656 schools that sponsor football programs in Michigan, and survey response was strong for the eight-man team proposal, said Nate Hampton of the MHSAA.

Declining enrollment and reduced budgets were the two main reasons for the change that could keep the sport of football going, by accepting an eight-man team instead of only the traditional 11-player team.

Eight-man football requires five players on the line of scrimmage and three in the backfield, and in certain formations, the center and one guard could be eligible. I-formation and T-formation are the favorite offensive

formations for eight-man football. Other possible changes are penalties from 15 to 10 yards and touchbacks begin at the 15- instead of the 20-yard line.

The old EUPC and Wolverine Conference joined forces to begin the 2006 season to form the Mid-Eastern Football League (MEFL). Still in question is what will become of the MEFL if eight-man football does happen.

In another test case, Akron-Fairgrove High School will play two eight-man football games during the 2009 season against Owen-Gage and Carsonville-Port Sanilac.

Eleven-man football has been played in the EUP since the early 1950s. The St. Ignace team played six-man football for its final year in 1951 and changed

to an 11-man format for the 1952 season.

"Each team had three linemen and three players in the back-field and everyone was eligible except the center," said Pat Wyers, who was a sophomore playing on the last six-man team. "If you kicked the conversion, it counted for two points, and one point if you ran. Our schedule for six-man included Rudyard, Cedarville, Pickford, DeTour, and Sault Loretto."

Sixteen states sponsored eight-man football during the

2008 season, including Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, and Washington.

Idaho, Oregon, and Washington play on regulation field of 100 yards long and 53 yards wide, while the remaining teams played on 80-yard-by-40-yard fields. The Engadine/Carsonville game will be played on a field measuring 100 yards by 40.

Four Class C High Schools To Form SFL

Saints, Bulldogs, Indians, Hurons To Form Straits Football League

The St. Ignace Saints football program will participate in their fifth football conference since 1950 with the newly formed Straits Football League (SFL) for the 2009 season.

The Straits Area Conference (SAC) for football folded following the 2008 campaign, leaving the Saints, Rudyard, Newberry, Sault Ste. Marie, and Cheboygan without a football league.

"We needed to do something different as our enrollment is declining," said Saints coach and athletic director Marty Spencer. "For Class C schools St. Ignace, Rudyard, and Newberry, it was tough competing against Sault Ste. Marie and Cheboygan.

St. Ignace belonged to the Little 8 Conference from 1950 to 1954, was independent from 1955 to 1958, joined the Huron Shores League (HSL) from 1959 to 1967, Michigan Huron Shores Conference

(MHSC) from 1968 to 1996, and the SAC from 1997 to 2008. This fall, the team will play in the SFL.

"The players will still have all-league honors and that is important," said Spencer. "The formation of the new league was easy, as the four Class C teams were playing each other."

The Saints schedule for 2009 includes parents night in the season opener against Charlevoix Rayders, road games with East Jordan Red Devils, McBain Ramblers, and Rogers City Hurons, home contests with Rudyard, Cedarville (homecoming), Newberry, and Maple City Glen Lakes (LHS Hall of Fame weekend). The team will close out the regular season with a road game against Manistique.

This is the first year that St. Ignace and Cedarville will play during the regular season since 1951. The teams battled in the second round of the playoffs in 2008.

The St. Ignace/McBain

match-up will be the first athletic competition for the Saints and Ramblers. McBain, a Class C school, is a member of the Highland Conference along with Beal City, Evart, Lake City, Marion, and Pine River.

Rudyard Joins Sixth League

The Rudyard Bulldogs will join their sixth football conference with the formation of the Straits Football League (SFL).

The Bulldogs have belonged to the Little 8, Great Lakes Conference, Easter Upper Peninsula Conference, Michigan Huron Shores Conference, Straits Area Conference, and the SFL.

Rudyard's schedule for 2009 will feature the Bulldogs playing at home in the season opener with St. Basil of Ontario, road games against Hillman and Pickford, home with Newberry, road contests with St. Ignace, Rogers City, and Gwinn, and close out the regular season with home games with Benzie Central and Munising.

Former Saints Football Coach Begins 15th Season at Haslett



Charlie and Wendy Otlewski with children (from left): Nathan, Mariah, and Breyanna. (Otlewski family photograph)

Charlie Otlewski, former St. Ignace Saints' football coach for four years (1990 to 1993), is beginning his 15th season with the Haslett varsity program.

The Vikings, members of the Capital Area Activities Gold Conference, have made the Michigan High School Athletic Association playoffs for 12 consecutive years. The league that Haslett plays in consists of archrival DeWitt, Charlotte, Eaton Rapids, Fowlerville, and Ionia and non-conference match-ups with

Okemos, Corunna, Williams-ton, and East Lansing.

"The DeWitt game is a rivalry like the St. Ignace and Cheboygan game was," said Coach Otlewski. "We will have a young team with few seniors, but the underclassmen are a talented group of players."

Otlewski has taught American history, government, freshmen history, and weight training and also is the girls and boys track coach.

He and his wife, Wendy, have three children, Breyanna, Mariah, and Nathan.