



**MHSAA** 

# 8-Player Football

*The Finals*

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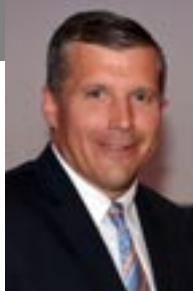
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# 2023 8-PLAYER FOOTBALL FINALS

**NOVEMBER 18**

## Welcome



**W**elcome to the MHSAA Championships! This is a classroom like no other, and now is the time for the final exam. Like the academic classroom, some have had good fortune and smooth sailing along the way in getting here while others have overcome adversity during the season. Even today, a good bounce or a bad bounce will occur.

Your athletic skills are put to the test, but more importantly, your discipline will be challenged, as well. The knack for making the right move at the right moment is often the difference between winning and coming up just short.

Discipline also means testing your self-control and people skills. To embrace our diverse opponents as equals, and to employ common decency – every – single – moment. Win or lose.

That’s the beauty of educational athletics. The takeaways today are not the trophies and medals, but the life lessons learned and applied over years of sports.

Congratulations for reaching the end of the tournament road. Good luck to all!

— *Mark Uyl*  
*MHSAA Executive Director*

## MHSAA Programs and Scope

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## Like Father, Like Son



**Martin's JR Hildebrand (2)** helped deliver the school's first gridiron title since his dad's 1987 team accomplished the feat, as the Clippers rolled to the 2022 Division 1 championship.

### INSIDE the mhsaa 8-player football finals

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*Cover Photo – Cara Kamps*



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# FATHER-SON SPAN MARTIN TITLES

**W**hen their playoff run ends, teams can normally find some consolation if their loss comes to the eventual state champion. But that got a little old for Martin. The Clippers fell to Adrian Lenawee Christian in Semifinals the past two seasons and then watched them go on to win two 8-Player Division 1 championships.

But 2022 was different; this was Martin's year. The Clippers (11-2) took care of Lenawee Christian in the Regional round of the playoffs with a convincing 56-14 victory. And it was the Clippers lifting the Finals championship trophy at the Superior Dome after a 74-24 victory over Merrill.

"This was our goal at the beginning of the year; it's been our goal the last couple of years," Martin coach Brad Blauvelt said.

The Clippers accomplished their mission with a star quarterback, JR Hildebrand, who ran for 191 yards and four touchdowns to lead the program to its first Finals title since his dad won one in 1987. They also made some big plays at big moments and relied on a stout run defense to contain Merrill, which made it closer than the score indicated.

"When I first found out what a state championship was, I knew that was our goal in the end," said running back Karter Ribble, who rushed for 142 yards and three touchdowns. "Then falling short the past couple years and then progressively getting better throughout the year, this year I knew it was coming. I knew we had what we needed to get to this moment."

And what a moment it was for them.

The Clippers took a 20-0 lead thanks to a pair of touchdown runs by Hildebrand and another by Ribble.

Merrill hung around throughout the first half.

Vandals quarterback Joel Tack, who threw for 328 yards and three touchdowns, found Kaleb Walker for a 90-yard score late in the first quarter. It was 20-8 heading into the second.

Ribble ran 42 yards for a score 4 minutes, 14 seconds into the second quarter, to answer, and Hildebrand added a 10-yard TD run to put Martin ahead 34-8.

Merrill (12-1) struck with another big play, a 68-yard TD pass from Tack to Denver Coty that seemed likely to give the Vandals some momentum.

But Taegan Harris had other ideas. The 5-foot-11, 155-pound junior ran the ensuing kickoff 94 yards for a touchdown, and Martin's lead was 40-16 with 1:35 left in the first half.

"That was huge," Blauvelt said. "The game was kind of teeter tottering right there. I know we still had the lead, but we didn't really feel comfortable after all that happened."

Merrill turned it over on downs before the half was over, and Martin added a 25-yard field goal by James Blackburn for a 43-16 halftime lead.

Merrill coach Christian Wiley called the kick return a back-breaker.

"If we don't give that up, we probably are able to do some different things," he said.

A tough schedule helped Martin go back downstate with a championship trophy. The Clippers defeated Division 2 runner-up Mendon to start the year and lost a pair of games to unbeaten teams, Grand Rapids NorthPointe Christian and Bridgman.

While it may not have prepared them for the awe of playing in the Superior Dome and the Final, it helped during their playoff run.

"Walking in the Dome the other day and seeing it for the first time, we knew it was a big moment," Blauvelt said. "However, playing some good teams... I think that totally helped us prevail, and the moment wasn't as big as it could have been."

And now they're finally state champions. Nothing much bigger than that.



Cara Kamps

JR Hildebrand (2) helped deliver Martin's first title since his dad's 1987 hardware.

## NORTH CENTRAL ROLLS AGAIN IN D2

**W**hat a run it's been for North Central. The Jets haven't lost a game in three years and very few, if any of those games, have been close. They've won them all by multiple touchdowns and just three games have finished with a margin under 30 points. Most have been won by a lot more.

Their opponent in the 2022 Division 2 championship game, Mendon, brought a strong tradition of its own, with 12 previous Finals appearances.

But this is North Central's era, and that's no secret. So imagine what it must do to a team's psyche when that juggernaut returns the opening kickoff and adds another touchdown before a full minute runs off the clock.

The Jets turned that 14-0 lead into a 66-26 win for their third consecutive – and fifth total – 8-player championship at the Superior Dome.

"It's gotta be part of the mystique and part of what these kids built," North Central coach Leo Gorzinski said. "You want to have a two-touchdown lead in their head before you get off that bus. When you come out and do that, it's going to get in their mind."

And North Central did it with standout quarterback Luke Gorzinski, playing through what the Jets suspect is an ACL injury.

It was Elijah Gorzinski who returned the opening kickoff 85 yards to put North Central on the board just 11 seconds into the contest. Mendon muffed the ensuing kickoff and North Central's kicker, Adrian Mercier, recovered. Two plays later, Lane Gorzinski caught a 14-yard Luke Gorzinski pass for a touchdown.

And North Central didn't let up.

Luke Gorzinski threw two TD passes in the second quarter as the Jets built a 41-6 lead at the half.



Cara Kamps

Lane Gorzinski (6) and Dylan Plunger (10) celebrate an early touchdown.

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# CHAMPIONSHIP BRACKETS

## DIVISION 1 ROAD TO THE DOME

**Inland Lakes (11-1)  
Championship  
Game**

**Nov. 18 - 11 am**

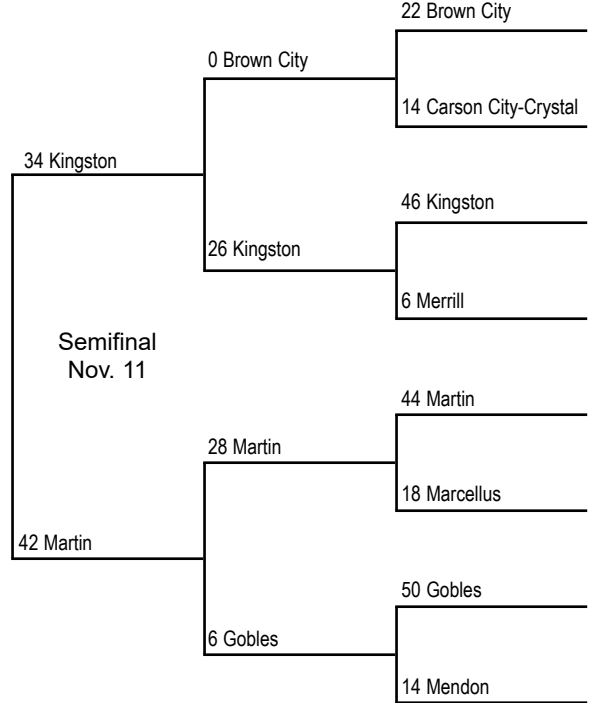
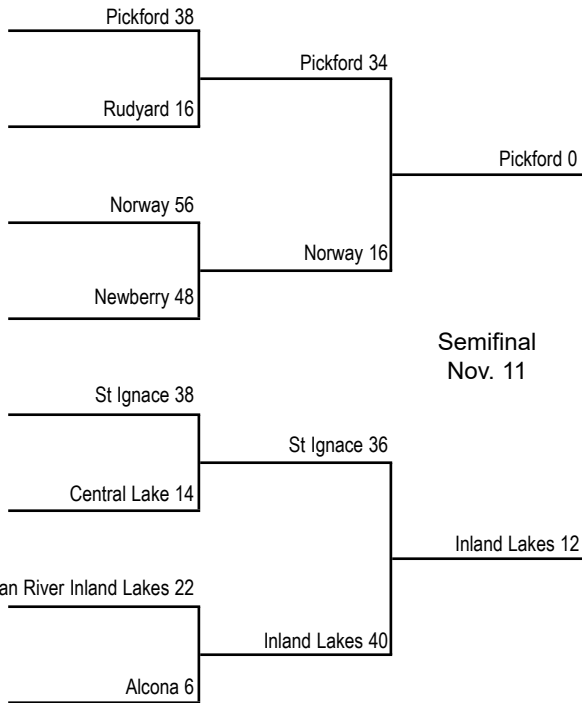
**Martin (10-2)**

**Regional Semis  
Oct. 27-28**

**Regional Finals  
Nov. 3-4**

**Regional Finals  
Nov. 3-4**

**Regional Semis  
Oct. 27-28**



## DIVISION 2 ROAD TO THE DOME

**Marion (11-0)  
Championship  
Game**

**Nov. 18 - 2 pm**

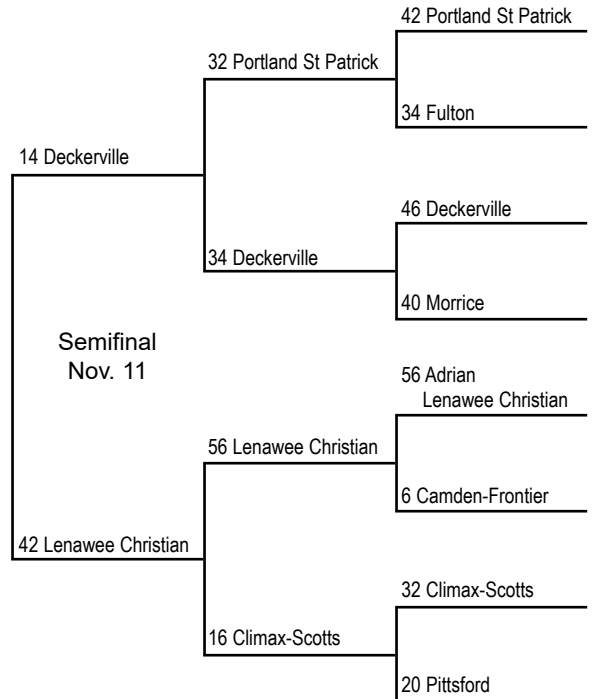
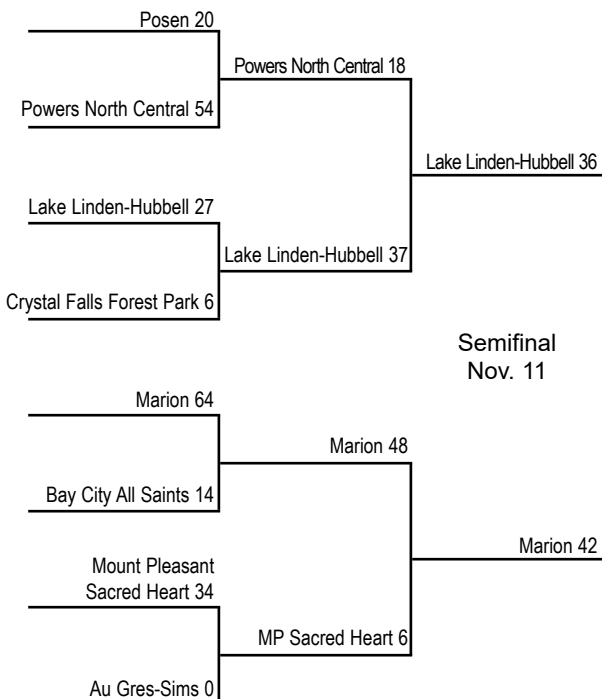
**Adrian Lenawee  
Christian (12-0)**

**Regional Semis  
Oct. 27-28**

**Regional Finals  
Nov. 3-4**

**Regional Finals  
Nov. 3-4**

**Regional Semis  
Oct. 27-28**





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# DIVISION 1 FINALS ROSTERS

## MARTIN

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Class
1	Taegan Harris	WR/DB	5-10	150	Sr.
2	Bryer Watson	WR/DB	5-9	140	So.
3	James Jager	TE/LB	6-2	190	Jr.
4	Abe Dykstra	TE/LB	5-10	195	Sr.
5	Jackson Robinson	OL/DL	6-0	190	Sr.
6	Bryce Robinson	RB/DB	6-0	185	Sr.
7	Gavin Meyers	QB/DB	6-2	170	Jr.
10	Anderson Keeler	TE/LB	6-2	170	So.
11	Logan Kent	WR/DB	6-2	140	Sr.
12	Logan Curry	WR/DB	5-10	125	Fr.
17	Mike Branch	WR/DB	5-6	121	Sr.
21	Matt Holmes	DL	5-9	140	Jr.
22	Weson Elkins	WR/LB	5-11	140	So.
24	Seth Toris	RB/LB	5-4	145	Fr.
33	Haylen Buell	RB/LB	5-8	150	So.
40	Jonathan Owen	OL/DL	5-10	195	Jr.
44	Isaac Suk	LB/RB	5-6	180	So.
50	Ben Jager	OL/DL	5-10	200	Sr.
52	James Gruber	OL/DL	5-9	240	So.
55	Jackson Andrews	OL/DL	6-1	200	So.
66	Lucas Totten	WR/DL	5-9	110	Fr.
68	Ben Romero	K/OL	5-7	240	So.
70	Braxton Mathis	DL	6-1	205	Sr.
72	Dan Armentrout	OL/DL	5-11	240	Sr.
78	Carson Cameruci	OL/DL	5-9	275	Jr.
99	Jackson Kennedy	WR/DB	6-3	120	So.

**Head Coach:** Brad Blauvelt

**Assistant Coaches:** Keith Snyder, Randy Hunt, Zach Hettinger, Ben Page, Garrett Dill, Tanner Curry, Josh Gruber, Matt Blauvelt

**Captains:** Abe Dykstra, Jackson Robinson, Bryce Robinson, Taegan Harris

**Trainer:** Tina Keeler

**Managers:** Zaiden Buell, Jace Brinkhuis, Hunter Hettinger, Gavin Keeler

## INDIAN RIVER INLAND LAKES

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Class
0	Eli Foldenauer	OL/LB	5-11	150	So.
1	Aidan Fenstermaker	QB/DB	5-9	160	Jr.
2	Payton Teuthorn	RB/LB	6-0	190	Sr.
3	Cameron Kettel	TE/LB	5-11	145	Jr.
4	Jacob Willey	TE/DB	6-0	200	Sr.
5	Landon Fenstermaker	RB/LB	5-7	140	Fr.
6	Tyler Kolly	QB/DB	5-7	140	So.
7	Landon Perkins	TE/DB	5-8	135	Fr.
8	Mason Green	RB/DB	5-7	135	So.
9	Shane Crawford	TE/DE	6-1	180	Sr.
10	Dylan Zinke	TE/DB	5-10	165	Jr.
12	Fernando Cuesta	K/DB	5-9	135	Jr.
13	Mitchell Crawford	RB/LB	5-8	155	Jr.
15	Cash DePauw	TE/DB	6-1	180	So.
16	Noah Shugar	TE/DE	6-0	175	Sr.
19	Collin Maves	RB/LB	5-11	150	Fr.
20	Andre Bradford	RB/DB	5-10	180	So.
22	Avery Enos	OL/DL	5-8	180	So.
24	Grant Blumke	RB/LB	5-9	190	Sr.
25	Wyatt Hanel	RB/DB	5-7	130	So.
30	Jake Feagan	TE/DB	5-10	130	Fr.
44	Alyx Willis	OL/DL	5-10	180	Fr.
50	Matthew Crawford	OL/DL	5-9	175	Fr.
55	Tanner Howard	OL/DL	6-3	160	Fr.
64	Evan Milbourne	OL/DL	5-11	240	So.
67	Chris Foldenauer	OL/DL	6-1	245	Jr.
75	Damian Bradford	OL/DL	5-7	265	Fr.
77	Jack Wilson	OL/DL	6-0	260	Jr.
90	DJ Buhr	OL/DL	6-4	360	Jr.

**Head Coach:** Travis Meyer

**Assistant Coaches:** Adam Taglauer, Steve Irish, Dennis Renaud, Gavin Fenstermaker, James Fenstermaker, Jeff Hanel, David Kutz, Levi Ronk

**Captains:** Payton Teuthorn, Jake Willey, Grant Blumke

**Trainer:** Kaylyn Schiemann

**Managers:** Cash Hanel, Gunnar Hanel, Cam Kutz, Wyatt Meyer, Luke Ronk

# DIVISION 2 FINALS ROSTERS

## MARION

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Class
2	Tucker Sigafoose	TE	5-8	195	Sr.
4	Quinn Scott	SE	6-1	170	Sr.
10	Dominic Eling	LB	5-10	165	Sr.
11	Braden Prielipp	SE	6-3	180	Sr.
12	Collin McCrimmon	QB	5-8	180	So.
13	Cameron Prielipp	LB	5-9	170	Fr.
17	Hunter Adams	LB	5-9	145	Fr.
20	Gavin Prielipp	RB	5-10	180	Sr.
21	Dru VanEpps	RB	5-8	150	Jr.
27	Camden Powell	LB	5-11	165	Sr.
32	Peyton Wirick	LG	5-9	165	Fr.
33	Gage Baker	RB	5-9	160	Sr.
36	James Williams	RG	6-0	230	Jr.
38	Anthony Baker	DL	5-6	190	Sr.
41	Aaron Whitney	DE	6-0	200	Sr.
42	Cole Meyer	FB	6-2	210	Jr.
60	Hayden Ostrowski	C	5-10	240	Sr.
64	Logan Nobles	DL	5-9	240	Sr.
74	Cody Barron	C	5-10	250	Jr.
84	Dawson Troost	DE	6-1	185	Sr.

**Head Coach:** Chad Grundy

**Assistant Coaches:** Andrew Sikkema, Steve Yowell, Trevor Sikkema

**Captains:** James Williams, Cole Meyer, Hayden Ostrowski, Aaron Whitney

**Managers:** Alekz Radtke, Kristopher Johnson

## ADRIAN LENAWEE CHRISTIAN

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Class
2	Jesse Miller	WR/CB	6-0	175	Sr.
3	Sam Lutz	QB/S	5-7	165	Sr.
7	Blake Drogowski	RB/CB	6-0	175	Sr.
9	Keegan Raymond	RB/DE	5-9	155	So.
10	Easton Boggs	TE/DE	6-5	230	Sr.
12	Zane Cherfan	WR/S	6-1	165	Jr.
18	Brenner Powers	QB/WR/CB	6-0	165	Jr.
19	Paul Towler	WR/LB	6-2	185	Sr.
20	Elijah Lutz	RB/LB	5-8	170	So.
22	Colton Clymer	WR/DB	5-8	140	Fr.
24	Drew Kirkendall	WR/DB	5-9	145	Fr.
32	J.T. Reatherford	QB/LB	5-9	145	Fr.
33	Judah Marine	WR/DB	5-7	135	Fr.
35	Judah Penney	WR/FL	5-7	135	Fr.
42	Max Stamats	K/WR	5-6	140	So.
58	Noah Steinke	OG/DE	6-1	190	Fr.
66	Tyler Salenbien	C/DE	6-4	260	Sr.
75	Paul Navarre	OG/DT	5-11	250	Sr.
80	Seth Davis	TE/LB	6-6	200	Jr.
87	Parker Emrick	C/LB	5-10	225	So.
88	Levi Beach	OG/DE	6-0	210	Sr.
90	Eli Brainard	K	5-8	135	Jr.
99	Gage Hammang	OG/DE	6-1	215	Jr.

**Head Coach:** Bill Wilhams

**Assistant Coaches:** Jake Baker, Casey Opsal, Josh Powers, Keith Covey, Jon Willett, Tony Aiken, John Schuler, Kirk Brackelman, Justin Vance, Eric Roback

**Captains:** Paul Towler, Sam Lutz, Tyler Salenbien, Jesse Miller, Easton Boggs, Levi Beach

**Trainer:** Heather Strong

**Managers:** Karoline Wilhams, Bri Aiken, Bryce Opsal, Cameron Brackelman

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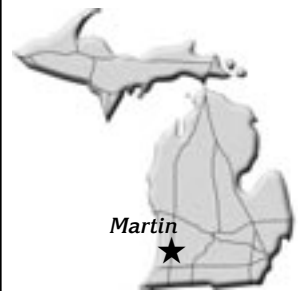


# MARTIN (10-2)

## CLIPPERS

School Colors: Maroon & White  
 Superintendent: Samantha Ball  
 Principal: Rebecca Lynema

Athletic Director: Mitchell Gabriele  
 Conference: Southwest Michigan 8-Man  
 Football League - White (3-2, 3rd)



**First Row:** Taegan Harris, Bryer Watson, James Jager, Abe Dykstra, Jackson Robinson, Bryce Robinson. **Second Row:** Gavin Meyers, Anderson Keeler, Logan Kent, Logan Curry, Mikey Branch, Matt Holmes. **Third Row:** Weson Elkins, Seth Toris, Haylen Buell, Jon Owen, Isaac Suk, Ben Jager. **Fourth Row:** James Gruber, Jackson Andrews, Lucas Totten, Ben Romero, Braxton Mathis, Dan Armentrout. **Fifth Row:** Carson Cameruci, Jackson Kennedy.

### TEAM STATS

M		OPP
383	Points Scored	169
—	First Downs	—
407	Rushing Att	--
2,848	Rushing Yards	--
39	Rushing TDs	--
815	Passing Yards	--
76	Passes Att	--
46	Passes Comp	--
8	Passing TDs	--
—	Intercepted	--
—	Punting Avg	--
—	Penalties	--
—	Penalty Yards	--
—	Fumbles- Lost	--
—	Third Down%	--

Stats Through Regional Games

### PROBABLE STARTERS

#### Offense

LG 72 Dan Armentrout      SE 1 Taegan Harris  
 C 50 Ben Jager            QB 7 Gavin Meyers  
 RG 78 Carson Cameruci    RB 33 Haylen Buell  
 TE 4 Abe Dykstra          FL 17 Mike Branch

#### Defense

DT 40 Jon Owen            LB 22 Weson Elkins  
 DT 55 Jackson Andrews    LB 44 Isaac Suk  
 LB 4 Abe Dykstra          DB 1 Taegan Harris  
 LB 33 Haylen Buell        DB 7 Gavin Meyers

#### Specialists

Punt Returns: 33 Haylen Buell, 1 Taegan Harris  
 Kickoff Returns: 1 Taegan Harris and 2 Bryer Watson  
 Punters: 7 Gavin Meyers, 55 Jackson Andrews, 33 Haylen Buell  
 PAT-FG Kicker: 68 Ben Romero  
 Holder: 33 Haylen Buell  
 Long Snapper: 50 Ben Jager

**Head Coach: Brad Blauvelt (56-11, 6 years)**

### RESULTS

M		OPP
62	Colon	6
55	Lawrence	0
12	Bridgman	14
16	Gobles	53
2	Fennville	0
46	GR NorthPointe Christian	30
50	Britton-Deerfield	6
28	Marcellus	14
40	Vermontville Maple Valley	22
<b>MHSAA REGIONALS</b>		
44	Marcellus	18
28	Gobles	6
<b>MHSAA SEMIFINAL</b>		
42	Kingston	34



# INDIAN RIVER INLAND LAKES (11-1)

## BULLDOGS

School Colors: Royal Blue & White  
 Superintendent: Elizabeth Fairbanks  
 Principal: Lewis Robinson

Athletic Director: Lee Nash  
 Conference: Ski-Valley Conference (5-0, 1st)



**First Row:** Mgr Cash Hanel, Mgr Gunnar Hanel, Grant Blumke, Aidan Fenstermaker, Payton Teuthorn, Avery Enos, Jacob Willey, Fernando Cuesta, Mgr Luke Ronk, Mgr Cameron Kutz, Mgr Wyatt Meyer. **Second Row:** Coach Jeff Hanel, Coach Adam Taglauer, Mitchell Crawford, Shane Crawford, Noah Shugar, Chris Foldenauer, DJ Buhr, Cash DePauw, Cameron Kettel, Andre Bradford, Dylan Zinke, Coach David Kutz, Coach Travis Meyer.

### PROBABLE STARTERS

#### Offense

LG 67 Chris Foldenauer	SE 4 Jacob Willey
C 22 Avery Enos	QB 1 Aidan Fenstermaker
RG 77 Jack Wilson	RB 2 Payton Teuthorn
TE 16 Noah Shugar	FB 24 Grant Blumke

#### Defense

9 Shane Crawford	13 Mitchell Crawford
90 DJ Buhr	4 Jacob Willey
24 Grant Blumke	1 Aidan Fenstermaker
2 Payton Teuthorn	20 Andre Bradford

#### Specialists

Punt Returns: 1 Aidan Fenstermaker, 20 Andre Bradford  
 Kickoff Returns: 1 Aidan Fenstermaker, 20 Andre Bradford  
 Punter: 1 Aidan Fenstermaker  
 PAT-FG Kickers: 12 Fernando Cuesta, 90 DJ Buhr  
 Holder: 20 Andre Bradford  
 Long Snapper: 22 Avery Enos

**Head Coach: Travis Meyer (35-17, 5 years)**

### RESULTS

IL		OPP
1	Onaway (Forfeit)	0
54	Lake Linden-Hubbell	46
44	Central Lake	30
28	St. Ignace	30
26	Munising	24
49	Morenci	6
48	Pellston	0
52	Bellaire	6
36	Gaylord St. Mary	30
<b>MHSAA REGIONALS</b>		
22	Alcona	6
40	St. Ignace	36
<b>MHSAA SEMIFINAL</b>		
12	Pickford	0

### TEAM STATS

IL		OPP
401	Points Scored	204
170	First Downs	137
388	Rushing Att	347
3287	Rushing Yards	1473
39	Rushing TDs	20
1013	Passing Yards	933
109	Passes Att	187
67	Passes Comp	98
15	Passing TDs	8
3	Intercepted	21
38	Punting Avg	--
--	Penalties	--
--	Penalty Yards	--
-7	Fumbles- Lost	-7
33.3%	Third Down%	34%

*Stats Through Regional Games*



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# MARION (11-0)

## EAGLES

School Colors: Maroon & White  
 Superintendent: Danyel Prielipp  
 Principal: Stacie Suttten

Athletic Director: Stacie Suttten  
 Conference: West Michigan D League (5-0, 1st)



**First Row:** Anthony Baker, Collin McCrimmon, Hunter Adams, Peyton Wirick, Cameron Prielipp, Dru VanEpps, Alekz Radtke.  
**Second Row:** Coach: Steve Yowell, Dominic Eling, Cody Barron, Tucker Sigafoose, James Williams, Logan Nobles, Gage Baker, Coach: Jon Barron.  
**Third Row:** Coach Trevor Sikkema, Coach Andrew Sikkema, Aaron Whitney, Hayden Ostrowski, Camden Powell, Gavin Prielipp, Cole Meyer, Quinn Scott, Dawson Troost, Coach Chad Grundy, Coach Ethan Sikkema.

### TEAM STATS

M		OPP
454	Points Scored	40
--	First Downs	--
273	Rushing Att	--
2647	Rushing Yards	--
41	Rushing TDs	--
940	Passing Yards	--
46	Passes Att	--
27	Passes Comp	--
17	Passing TDs	--
0	Intercepted	--
52.5	Punting Avg	--
40	Penalties	--
240	Penalty Yards	--
1	Fumbles- Lost	--
85%	Third Down%	--

Stats Through Semifinal Game

### PROBABLE STARTERS

#### Offense

LG	74 Cody Barron	SE	4 Quinn Scott
C	60 Hayden Ostrowski	QB	12 Collin McCrimmon
RG	36 James Williams	RB	20 Gavin Prielipp
TE	2 Tucker Sigafoose	FB	42 Cole Meyer

#### Defense

DE	41 Aaron Whitney	LB	27 Camden Powell
NG	60 Hayden Ostrowski	LB	12 Collin McCrimmon
DE	36 James Williams	DB	4 Quinn Scott
LB	42 Cole Meyer	DB	20 Gavin Prielipp

#### Specialists

Punt Returns: 20 Gavin Prielipp  
 Kickoff Returns: 20 Gavin Prielipp  
 Punter: 11 Braden Prielipp  
 Long Snapper: 2 Tucker Sigafoose

**Head Coach: Chad Grundy (102-45, 14 years)**

### RESULTS

M		OPP
66	Bear Lake	0
62	Mesick	0
62	Baldwin	0
42	Rudyard	8
58	Manistee Catholic Central	0
1	Suttons Bay (Forfeit)	0
68	Brethren	12
1	Bellaire (Forfeit)	0
<b>MHSAA REGIONALS</b>		
64	Bay City All Saints	14
48	Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart	6
<b>MHSAA SEMIFINAL</b>		
42	Lake Linden-Hubbell	36



# ADRIAN LENAWEE CHRISTIAN (12-0)

## COUGARS

School Colors: Royal Blue, White & Red  
 Superintendent: Tom Durbin  
 Principal: Robert Wright - Interim

Athletic Director: Craig Anderson  
 Conference: Southern Central Athletic  
 Association – East (7-0, 1st)



**First Row:** Judah Marine, Judah Penney JT Reatherford, Noah Steinke. **Second Row:** Colton Clymer, Parker Emrick, Keegan Raymond, Elijah Lutz, Drew Kirkendall, Max Stamats, Heather Strong (AT). **Third Row:** Josh Powers (Coach), Seth Davis, Jesse Miller, Zane Cherfan, Gage Hammang, Brenner Powers, Eli Brainard. **Fourth Row:** Jacob Baker (Coach), Levi Beach, Easton Boggs, Tyler Salenbien, Paul Towler, Blake Drogowski, Sam Lutz, Bill Wilharms (Head Coach).

### TEAM STATS

LCS	OPP
601 Points Scored	108
155 First Downs	105
279 Rushing Att	306
2704 Rushing Yards	1237
48 Rushing TDs	7
1987 Passing Yards	437
175 Passes Att	112
117 Passes Comp	49
32 Passing TDs	5
4 Intercepted	10
41 Punting Avg	32.4
14 Penalties	24
95 Penalty Yards	173
6 Fumbles- Lost	12
40% Third Down%	30%

Stats Through Semifinal Game

### PROBABLE STARTERS

#### Offense

LG 99 Gage Hammang	SE 19 Paul Towler
C 66 Tyler Salenbien	QB 3 Sam Lutz
RG 88 Levi Beach	RB 7 Blake Drogowski
TE 10 Easton Boggs	FL 2 Jesse Miller

#### Defense

DE 10 Easton Boggs	LB 80 Seth Davis
DE 66 Tyler Salenbien	DB 19 Brenner Powers
LB 19 Paul Towler	DB 2 Jesse Miller
LB 20 Elijah Lutz	DB 3 Sam Lutz

#### Specialists

Punt Returns: 2 Jesse Miller, 7 Blake Drogowski  
 Kickoff Returns: 2 Jesse Miller, 3 Sam Lutz, 19 Paul Towler, 18 Brenner Powers  
 Punters: 10 Easton Boggs, 3 Sam Lutz  
 PAT-FG Kickers: 90 Eli Brainard, 42 Max Stamats  
 Holders: 2 Jesse Miller, 20 Elijah Lutz  
 Long Snappers: 80 Seth Davis, 12 Zane Cherfan, 10 Easton Boggs

**Head Coach: Bill Wilharms (91-24, 10 years)**

### RESULTS

#### LCS

48 Britton-Deerfield	6
65 Litchfield	12
44 Camden-Frontier	8
56 Waldron	6
56 Tekonsha	0
73 Mendon	20
58 North Adams-Jerome	6
41 Pittsford	0
48 Kingston	28

#### MHSAA REGIONALS

56 Camden-Frontier	6
56 Climax-Scotts	16

#### MHSAA SEMIFINAL

42 Deckerville	14
----------------	----

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Orthopedics

# School Activity Important for Middle Schools

**T**he positive life lessons learned through education-based athletics and performing arts within our nation's high schools have been documented time and time again: Teamwork . . . Fair Play . . . Self-Discipline . . . Self-Confidence . . . Hard Work.

Studies have also shown that students involved in school-based activity programs have better attendance records and lower dropout rates than students not involved in sports and performing arts. And the necessity of these programs became even more apparent when many schools were forced to implement virtual learning during the pandemic.

The message that has not been shared as frequently is that these same activity programs – sports, music, speech, debate, theater and other activities – are just as crucial to be in place in our nation's junior high schools and middle schools. In addition to the 19,500-plus high schools in the United States, it is estimated that there are another 15,000 middle schools and junior high schools.

Unfortunately, the infrastructure for sports and arts programs at the middle school level is not as organized as it is in grades 9-12. And before kids move from elementary to middle school and opt for non-school sports exclusively in order to play and travel more, efforts should be made by school districts to provide funds and personnel to establish education-based activities in middle schools that are aligned with high school programs.

And the need today is perhaps greater than ever to have these opportunities in place at the middle school level as students leave elementary school and begin the process of becoming teenagers and then adults. Sports and arts programs, along with teacher-coaches who develop and lead these activities, can be stable and positive influences for students at this crucial stage in life.

In the process of developing activity programs in middle schools, alignment with their high school's sports and performing arts programs is important. In the May 2023 issue of *High School Today*, Rhonda Farney, the nation's winningest high school girls basketball coach in the country from Georgetown, Texas, shared a few strategies for aligning a district's middle school and high school programs.

"A successful sports program from middle school through high school requires a cohesive approach that focuses on skill development, teamwork and the creation of a positive culture," Farney said. "The program must be sustainable, requiring the buy-in of multiple people. By creating a program that is integrated, sustainable and successful, students can develop their physical abilities and social skills, and achieve their full potential."

About one-half of the NFHS member state associations offer some level of services for middle school programs, and the NFHS continues to provide more resources for state associations and schools.

The NFHS Middle School Committee, chaired by Bill Faflick, executive director of the Kansas State High School Activities Association, was started a couple of years ago and meets annually. In April, the NFHS launched "Middle School Coaching" as an online course on the NFHS Learning Center: NFHSLearn.com.

"Middle School Coaching" is designed as a counterpart to "Fundamentals of Coaching" – the flagship course for high school coaches that was first course ever launched through the Learning Center in 2007. Coaches focused on the true mission of education-based school activities is even more crucial at the middle school level, and this course helps individuals balance the numerous factors in running an efficient middle school activities program.

While much of the messaging the past few years has focused on the need for more officials in middle school and high school sports, that need for human resources extends to coaches as well – coaches who are committed to developing "task-involved" students rather than those who are "ego-involved."

Another tool to help schools initiate middle school activities is the NFHS Middle School Newsletter, which was launched last April and conveys our hope for developing life-changing programs in middle schools nationwide:

"The NFHS believes that an understanding of the unique physical, psychological, emotional and developmental needs of all middle-level age student participants should drive all aspects of middle-level interscholastic activities. We believe middle-level education-based activity programs exist to connect students to the fabric and culture of the school which leads to academic and lifelong success."

The first issue contains tools for dealing with unsportsmanlike behavior, resources for Unified Sports tools at the middle school level, videos to share at parents meetings and resources for Performing Arts at the middle level.

Students in middle schools are entering a challenging time in life and they need positive outlets such as sports and performing arts in an educational setting. We encourage more school districts to allocate the necessary funds to make these programs available.



KARISSA NIEHOFF



— Karissa Niehoff, NFHS Executive Director



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# Scholar-Athlete Award in 35th Year Awarding Scholarships to Students

Thousands of students voluntarily extend their classroom day by taking part in extracurricular activities, often improving their academic achievements in the process. The value that such programs play in the total education of a high school student is highlighted through the MHSAA/Farm Bureau Insurance Scholar-Athlete Award, which will award \$2,000 scholarships to 32 top student-athletes and recognize over 2,000 other outstanding individuals in 2023-24.

Underwritten by Farm Bureau Insurance, the Scholar-Athlete Award is now in its 35th year, and presents scholarships to students in every MHSAA enrollment classification. The scholarships may be used at any institution of higher learning.

“It is amazing to see the number of young people who are proven achievers in academics and activities,” said Mark Uyl, executive director of the MHSAA. “At a time when our educational system is coming under fire, the Scholar-Athlete

Award is something that proves how important athletics are to the development of a well-rounded person.”

Students applying for the Scholar-Athlete Award must be graduating during the 2023-24 school year, carry a 3.5 grade-point average, and have previously won a letter in a varsity sport that the MHSAA sponsors postseason competition.



Applicants will also be required to show involvement in other school/community activities and submit an essay on the importance of sportsmanship in educational athletics.

Application materials can be found on [MHSAA.com](http://MHSAA.com). Scan the code below to access the page.

Each MHSAA member school is allowed to nominate a number of student-athletes based on the size of the school. Class A schools can nominate six boys and six girls, Class B four boys and four girls, Class C three boys and three girls and Class D two boys and two girls. The first 30 scholarships will be awarded based on this graduated scale, with two additional scholarships intended for minority applicants.

A committee composed of school administrators from across the state will select regional and statewide winners.

Farm Bureau Insurance, a long-time supporter of MHSAA activities, also sponsors other educationally oriented programs.

The 32 scholarship recipients will be recognized at the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing in March 2024.



The annual scholar-athlete ceremony is one of the highlights of the winter season. More information about the awards may be obtained by contacting your local school principal, athletic director or guidance counselor. The online application form can be found at [MHSAA.com/scholarship](http://MHSAA.com/scholarship).





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# Student Advisory Council Aids MHSAA

**E**ight student-athletes who will be juniors at their schools during the 2023-24 academic year have been selected to serve two-year terms on the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Student Advisory Council.

The Student Advisory Council is a 16-member group which provides feedback on issues impacting educational athletics from a student's perspective, and also is involved in the operation of Association championship events and other programming. Members of the Student Advisory Council serve for two years, beginning as juniors. Eight new members are selected annually to serve on the SAC, with nominations made by MHSAA member schools. The incoming juniors will join the group of eight seniors-to-be appointed a year ago.

Selected to begin serving on the Student Advisory Council in 2023-24 are: **Cale Bell**, Sault Ste. Marie; **Drew Cady**, Oxford; **Macy Jenkins**, Milford; **Isaiah Kabban**, Harbor Beach; **Ella Knudsen**, Leland; **Kaylee Kranz**, Clinton; **Joey Spada**, Kalamazoo Central; and **Anna Zoet**, Grandville Calvin Christian.

Those eight new members were selected from 105 applicants. That number of applicants was the fourth-most ever, with the last four years featuring the four highest totals.

The first Student Advisory Council was formed for the 2006-07 school year. With the addition of this class, members will have represented 137 schools from 50 leagues plus independent schools that do not play in a league. Combined, the new appointees have participated in 16 MHSAA sports, and all eight will be the first SAC members from their respective schools.

The Student Advisory Council generally meets seven times each school year, and once more for a 24-hour leadership camp. In addition to assisting in the promotion of the educational value of interscholastic athletics, the Council discusses issues dealing with the 4 S's of educational athletics: scholarship, sportsmanship, safety (including health and nutrition) and the sensible scope of athletic programs. There also is a fifth S discussed by the group – student leadership.

This school year, the Council will hand out championship trophies at Finals events, deliver a message about sports-



## 2023-24 Student Advisory Council

**First Row:** Macy Jenkins, Milford; Ella Knudsen, Leland; M'Khi Guy, Muskegon; Isaiah Kabban, Harbor Beach; DaNia Womack, Dearborn Advanced Tech Academy. **Second Row:** Madie Werner, Bay City All Saints; Anna Zoet, Grandville Calvin Christian; Christian Sanders, Detroit Renaissance; Kaylee Kranz, Clinton; Cale Bell, Sault Ste Marie; Drew Cady, Oxford; Dawsen Lehew, Marcellus; Ben Sytsma, Grand Rapids Christian; Kannon Duffing, Manchester; Claire Gorno, Gaylord; Joey Spada, Kalamazoo Central.

## Student Advisory Council Belief Statement

*As the voice of Michigan's student-athletes, the Student Advisory Council's role is to convey the message of how high school sports are supposed to be played. We are responsible for helping the MHSAA maintain a positive and healthy atmosphere in which interscholastic athletes can thrive.*

*We believe **athletes** should be competitive, sportsmanlike and excel academically. We believe **students** in the stands should have fun, but not take the focus away from the game. We believe **coaches** should act as teachers, helping student-athletes develop while still keeping high school sports in perspective. We believe that **parents** should always be positive role models and be supportive of their child's decisions. We believe **officials** commit their own time to high school sports and respect should always be shown and given to them.*

*The most important goal for student-athletes is to enjoy high school sports while keeping a high level of respect between all those involved in the games.*

manship during Summits, and provide feedback to the MHSAA Representative Council on proposed rule changes.

The new additions to the SAC will join the Class of 2024 members who were selected a year ago: **Kannon Duffing**, Manchester; **Claire Gorno**, Gaylord; **M'Khi Guy**, Muskegon; **Dawsen Lehew**, Marcellus; **Christian Sanders**, Detroit

Renaissance; **Ben Sytsma**, Grand Rapids Christian; **Madie Werner**, Bay City All Saints; and **DaNia Womack**, Dearborn Advanced Tech Academy.



michigan high school athletic association

help wanted. just whistle.

## Get in the Games

Visit the Officials page of [MHSAA.com](http://MHSAA.com) for  
more information or scan this code.





# The MHSAA Representative Council

The Representative Council of the Michigan High School Athletic Association is the body assembled to carry out the wishes of member schools. The Council meets several times annually to discuss and pass legislation concerning interscholastic athletics in Michigan.

The Representative Council is made up of 19 members, with all but five elected by a vote of MHSAA-member schools to represent different geographic regions, different sizes of schools, nonpublic schools, and junior and middle schools. Two members are elected to statewide at-large positions. Four members are appointed by the Council to facilitate representation of females and minorities, and the 19th position is occupied by the Superintendent of Public Instruction or his/her designee.

The officers and two other representatives form the MHSAA's Executive Committee, which meets on a monthly basis during the school year to review eligibility appeals and other current business.



## Representative Council Members

**Chris Adams\***

Superintendent  
Camden-Frontier High School  
Class C-D — Southeastern Michigan

**Eric Albright\*\***

Athletic Director  
Midland High School  
Class A-B — Northern Lower Peninsula

**Jay Alexander\***

Executive Director of Athletics  
Detroit Public Schools  
Detroit Public Schools Position

**Judy Cox\*\***

Principal  
Auburn-Bay City Western High School  
Appointee

**Scott Grimes\*\*, President**

Superintendent, Grand Haven Public Schools  
Statewide At-Large

**Kyle Guerrant (ex-officio)**

Deputy Superintendent, Finance Operations  
Michigan Dept. of Education, Lansing  
Designee

**Kris Isom\***

Athletic Director  
Adrian Madison High School  
Appointee

**Sean Jacques\*\***

Assistant Principal/Athletic Director  
Calumet High School  
Class C-D — Upper Peninsula

**Jeff Kline\***

Athletic Director  
Mt. Morris High School  
Statewide At-Large

**Jason Malloy\*\***

Athletic Director  
Westland John Glenn High School  
Appointee

**Vic Michaels\*\*, Secretary-Treasurer**

Director of Physical Education & Athletics  
Archdiocese of Detroit  
Private and Parochial Schools

**Chris Miller\***

Athletic Director/Director of Operations  
Gobles High School  
Class C-D — Southwestern Michigan

**Anna Rigby\*\***

Athletic Director  
Harbor Springs High School  
Class C-D — Northern Michigan

**Chris Riker\*\***

Athletic Director  
Portage Northern High School  
Class A-B — Southwestern Michigan

**Meg Seng\*\***

Athletic Director  
Ann Arbor Greenhills High School  
Appointee

**Fred Smith\*\***

Athletic Director  
Bangor Middle School  
Junior High/Middle Schools

**Adam Stefanski\***

Principal  
Boyne City High School  
Junior High/Middle Schools

**John Thompson\*\***

Athletic Director  
Brighton High School  
Class A-B — Southeastern Michigan

**Alex Tiseo\***

Athletic Director  
Marquette High School  
Class A-B — Upper Peninsula

\*Term Expires December 2023

\*\*Term Expires December 2024

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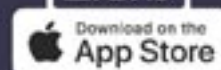
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## YEARLY CHAMPIONS

### MARTIN — 2022 Division 1 Champion



### Division 1 Yearly Champions

Year	Champion (Coach)	Runner-Up	Score
2022	Martin (Brad Blauvelt)	Merrill	74-24
2021	Adrian Lenawee Christian (Bill Wilharms)	Suttons Bay	31-20
2020	Adrian Lenawee Christian (Bill Wilharms)	Suttons Bay	47-0
2019	Colon (Robbie Hattan)	Suttons Bay	26-14
2018	Morrice (Kendall Crockett)	Pickford	44-16
2017	Central Lake (Robert Heeke)	Deckerville	32-30

### POWERS NORTH CENTRAL — 2022 Division 2 Champion



### Division 2 Yearly Champions

Year	Champion (Coach)	Runner-Up	Score
2022	Powers North Central (Leo Gorzinski)	Mendon	66-26
2021	Powers North Central (Leo Gorzinski)	Colon	63-0
2020	Powers North Central (Leo Gorzinski)	Portland St. Patrick	70-48
2019	Pickford (Joshua Rader)	Portland St. Patrick	48-15
2018	Rapid River (Steve Ostrenga)	Onokama	30-18
2017	Crystal Falls Forest Park (Dave Graff)	Portland St. Patrick	54-12

### Single-Division Yearly Champions

Year	Champion (Coach)	Runner-Up	Score	Year	Champion (Coach)	Runner-Up	Score
2016	Powers North Central (Kevin Bellefeuille)	Deckerville	58-22	2013	Peck (Rob McDaniel)	Rapid River	67-32
2015	Powers North Central (Kevin Bellefeuille)	Battle Creek St. Philip	58-33	2012	Deckerville (Bill Brown)	Bellaire	14-12
2014	Lawrence (Cody Caswell)	Cedarville	56-12	2011	Carsonville-Port Sanilac (Tim Brabant)	Rapid River	49-13





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# 8-PLAYER FINALS RECORDS

## INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

---

### Rushing Yards

352 - Jason Whitens, Powers North Central vs. Deckerville (17 attempts), 2016  
299 - Luke Gorzinski, Powers North Central vs. Portland St. Patrick (32 attempts), 2020 Division 2

### Rushing Touchdowns

6 - Jason Whitens, Powers North Central vs. Deckerville, 2016  
5 - Bobby Kleiman, Powers North Central vs. Battle Creek St. Philip, 2015

### Passing Yards

379 - Tristen Haener, Peck vs. Rapid River, 2013 (12 of 16, 7 TDs, 0 interceptions)  
374 - Connor Cross, Portland St. Patrick vs. Powers North Central (25 of 38, 6 TDs, 1 interception), 2020 Division 2

### Passing Touchdowns

7 - Tristen Haener, Peck vs. Rapid River, 2013  
6 - Connor Cross, Portland St. Patrick vs. Powers North Central, 2020 Division 2

### Receiving Yards

236 - Kyle Abrego, Peck vs. Rapid River, 2013 (6 receptions)  
170 - Jacob Berglund, Rapid River vs. Carsonville-Port Sanilac, 2011 (4 receptions)

### Total Offense Yards

455 - Luke Gorzinski, Powers North Central vs. Portland St. Patrick (299 rushing, 156 passing), 2020 Division 2  
454 - Hayden Adams, Carsonville-Port Sanilac vs. Rapid River (130 rushing, 324 passing), 2011  
452 - Jason Whitens, Powers North Central vs. Deckerville (352 rushing, 100 passing), 2016

### Touchdown Receptions

4 - Kyle Abrego, Peck vs. Rapid River, 2013  
3 - Trevor Adams, Carsonville-Port Sanilac vs. Rapid River, 2011

### Touchdowns

6 - Jason Whitens, Powers North Central vs. Deckerville (6 rushing), 2016  
6 - Bobby Kleiman, Powers North Central vs. Battle Creek St. Philip (5 rushing/1 receiving), 2015

### Points Scored

46 - Bobby Kleiman, Powers North Central vs. Battle Creek St. Philip (6 touchdowns/5 2-point conversions), 2015  
40 - Jason Whitens, Powers North Central vs. Deckerville (6 touchdowns, 2 2-point conversions), 2016

### Points After Touchdown - Kicking

7 - Jaden Walters, Powers North Central vs. Colon (7 of 7), 2021 Division 2

## TEAM RECORDS

---

### Rushing Offense

481 - Crystal Falls Forest Park vs. Portland St. Patrick (52 attempts), 2017 Division 2

### Rushing Touchdowns

8 - Martin vs. Merrill, 2022 Division 1  
8 - Crystal Falls Forest Park vs. Portland St. Patrick, 2017 Division 2

### Passing Offense

379 - Peck vs. Rapid River, 2013 (12 of 16, 7 TDs, 0 interceptions)

### Passing Touchdowns

7 - Peck vs. Rapid River, 2013

### Total Offense

597 - Lawrence vs. Cedarville, 2014 (341 rushing, 256 passing)  
584 - Carsonville-Port Sanilac vs. Rapid River, 2011 (260 rushing, 324 passing)

### Total Offense - Two Teams

971 - Powers North Central (569) vs. Deckerville (402), 2016

### First Downs

24 - Adrian Lenawee Christian vs. Suttons Bay, 2021 Division 1

### Most Points Scored - Team

74 - Martin vs. Merrill (24), 2022 Division 1  
70 - Powers North Central vs. Portland St. Patrick, 2020 Division 2

### Most Points Scored - Two Teams

118 - Powers North Central (70) vs. Portland St. Patrick (48), 2020 Division 2  
99 - Peck (67) vs. Rapid River (32), 2013

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# FINALS NOTES

## WELCOME TO THE SUPERIOR DOME

**T**he Superior Dome on the campus of Northern Michigan University in Marquette is the perfect host for the MHSAA 8-Player Football Finals.

The Superior Dome has been a favorite spot on the MHSAA Football Playoff trail for years, from Semifinal weekends of the 11-player game, to the inaugural 8-Player title game in 2011, and the two inaugural divisional title games in 2017. Today, the 8-Player game again takes center stage beneath the roof, with a pair of championship tilts.

The Superior Dome has been home to the Wildcat football team since its construction in 1991 and is now also home to the Wildcat soccer teams, lacrosse teams and track teams. The Dome stands 14 stories high and encompasses 5.1 acres under its roof. Constructed of 781 Douglas Fir beams and 108.5 miles of fir decking, the Dome has a permanent seating capacity of 8,000, although the building can hold as many as 16,000 people.

In the *Book of World Records-2010*, the Superior Dome is listed as the fifth-largest dome structure in the world (largest being measured by diameter). The four other structures that are larger are made of steel, making it the largest wooden dome structure. The facility has a diameter of 536 feet. It has the ability to withstand 60 pounds per square foot of snow and 80 mile per hour winds.

The Superior Dome is also home of the NMU Olympic Training Site offices, as well as special training areas for the NMU-OTS boxing, weightlifting and wrestling teams.



### Your Officials Today

Just as the participants on the teams at this year's Finals are realizing a dream of vying for top honors, another group of individuals are also reaching a goal for the hard work they have put in by being assigned to officiate the action.

Officials for MHSAA Finals are selected based on the recommendations and ratings by schools, as well as from input from local officials associations.

These officials believe that interscholastic athletics are truly educational in nature, and work to uphold that standard. Like the athletes in the Finals, officials come from all corners of Michigan.

Selected to work the Finals are: **Ben Rubick**, Gladstone; **Greg Rubick**, Gladstone; **Kevin Ayotte**, Escanaba; **Jack Miles**, Drummond Island; **Dustin Stempki**, Gladstone; **Michael Brown**, Battle Creek; **Harley Franks**, Portage; **Jeff Hartel**, Caro; **Bryan Travis**, Traverse City; **Adam Miller**, DeWitt.

Congratulations to this year's Finals officials. If you are interested in becoming a registered game official in any sport, contact the MHSAA at 1661 Ramblewood Drive, East Lansing, MI 48823, or register online at [mhsaa.com](http://mhsaa.com).

### Behind The Scenes

The hallmark of a strong association is its ability to work together for the common good. Every year, over 8,000 game officials and 50,000-plus administrators and coaches at over 1,300 middle, junior and senior high schools voluntarily pool their efforts daily for the operations of the MHSAA's competitive extracurricular interscholastic athletic program.

An important responsibility of membership in the Association is the operation of the hundreds of District, Regional and Final level tournaments by school administrators who serve as the site managers for these games. The behind-the-scenes work of these individuals ensures a memorable experience for the participants.

The MHSAA would like to thank the tournament manager for the 2023 8-Player Football Finals, Northern Michigan University Events Manager **Joanna Emigh**.

Coordinating the Finals from the MHSAA office are Assistant Director **Brad Bush**; Senior Assistant Director **Andy Frushour**, and Director of Communications **Geoff Kimmerly**.

The MHSAA would like to recognize the efforts of these individuals and others who have donated their time and talents to make the Finals a success.

### Thank You

The MHSAA would like to thank **Wilson Sporting Goods** for providing the teams participating in today's Finals with commemorative autographable footballs.

### Awards Presentors

At the completion of each championship game, trophies and medals will be awarded to the competing teams. Making the awards presentations will be MHSAA Representative Council Members **Fred Smith**, Bangor, and **Alex Tiseo**, Marquette.

### Finals on the Air

The Finals can be watched live on the NFHSNetwork. Archived video can be found following the event on MHSAA.tv. Live and archived audio of the Final can be heard at MHSAANetwork.com. Consult MHSAA.com for further details and playback schedules.

### Results on the Web

Statistical summaries of the Finals may be found on MHSAA Website, [MHSAA.com](http://MHSAA.com).

### Motor City for the Holiday

Today's MHSAA 8-Player Football Final kicks off the holiday season and a feast of football. Make plans to travel to Detroit for the 11-Player extravaganza next weekend, Nov. 25-26, for eight games in two days at Ford Field. Tickets are \$20 per day, good for all four games each day!

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