

Press Clippings - 10/27/2023

- Daily Herald -

Plenty of local ties as Diamondbacks-Rangers get set to meet in World Series

By: Scot Gregor

10/26/ 2023



Rick Short

The Cubs gave it a spirited go this season, improving from 53-53 on Aug. 1 to 72-62 a month later before running out of gas and dropping out of the playoff race.

The White Sox stumbled out to a 7-21 start and never recovered while losing 100 or more games for only the fifth time in the franchise's 123-year history.

When the World Series opens Friday, neither team will be wearing "Chicago" on the front of their

uniforms.

Instead, it will be a pair of surprises -- the Diamondbacks and Rangers -- squaring off in the Fall Classic.

Arizona (110) and Texas (102) both recorded triple-digit losses in 2021, so maybe there is some hope for the White Sox and every other bottom feeder moving forward.

The Diamondbacks and Rangers both feature players and staff that do have local ties.

Arizona

New White Sox general manager Chris Getz's biggest move so far was hiring Josh Barfield as assistant GM in late September.

Barfield was the Diamondbacks' director of player development the last four seasons and he also worked in scouting during his nine-year stay in Arizona.

Bolstered by a strong farm system that produced Corbin Carroll and much more, the Diamondbacks are still standing after taking down the Brewers, Dodgers and Phillies during the playoffs.

He's with the Sox now, but Barfield has a rooting interest as Arizona plays in the World Series for the first time since 2001.

"I'm on this side (White Sox) and obviously really excited about what we are doing here, but to see finished products on the field from guys I had when they were 15, 16, 17 years old and seeing where they were then to where they are now and where the organization kind of was a few years ago to where they are now, it's exciting and gives a lot of hope and optimism here," Barfield said.

Rick Short is the Diamondbacks' assistant hitting coach.

A **Larkin High School** graduate, Short played college baseball at Western Illinois and was with the Nationals for 11 games in 2005.

Joe Mather, Arizona's hitting coach, played in 103 games with the Cubs in 2012 and slashed .209/.256/.324 with 5 home runs and 19 RBI.

Alek Thomas has hit 4 homers in 12 postseason games.

The Diamondbacks' 23-year-old center fielder, a Mt. Carmel graduate, spent a lot of time in the White Sox's clubhouse when his dad, Allen, was director of strength and conditioning from 2004-21.

Texas

The White Sox could sure use a player like Marcus Semien as they try bouncing back from a season to forget.

Drafted by the Sox in 2011, Semien played on the South Side for two years before being traded to Oakland.

He became a star with the A's and is in his second year with the Rangers. Over his last four full seasons, Semien has 133 home runs and 377 RBI.

Dane Dunning made 7 starts for the White Sox in 2020, going 2-0 with a 3.97 ERA. After the season, the right-hander was traded to Texas for Lance Lynn.

The 28-year-old Dunning has been pitching out of the bullpen in the playoffs after spending most of the regular season in the Rangers' rotation.

Aroldis Chapman helped the Cubs win the 2016 World Series after coming over from the Yankees in a late July trade.

Chapman is trying to do the same thing in Texas after being acquired from the Royals in a late June deal. In 6½ playoff innings, the 35-year-old lefty has allowed 1 run on 5 hits and 4 walks and has 4 strikeouts.

Will Venable has an unusual title -- he's the Rangers' associate manager.

Venable joined the Cubs in 2017 as a special assistant in baseball operations and was first-base coach in 2018-19 and third-base coach in 2020.

- Chicago Tribune -

Scouting Fox first round playoff football games

By: Craig Brueske

10/26/ 2023



St. Charles North's Anthony Taormina runs the ball during last week's game against Geneva. The North Stars open the playoffs Saturday at Bradley Bourbonnais. (Sandy Bressner/Shaw Local)

Class 8A

No. 26 Lane Tech (6-3) at No. 7 **South Elgin** (8-1)

When: 1 p.m. Saturday.

About the Champions: Lane Tech is making its second straight postseason trip after a lengthy dry spell dating back to 2013. Last year, the Champions suffered a 37-0 first-round loss to Neuqua Valley. The Champions escaped with a 7-3 victory over Amundsen last week, as interceptions from Nolan Reynolds, Jacobi Thurmond, and Wesley Nunez paved the way. Junior quarterback Noah Mayra, who also serves as the Champions' kicker, can hurt you with his arm and legs. "We don't have any common opponents, so it is difficult to gauge them, but they have size, athleticism, and come from a conference filled with great athletes," said South Elgin coach Dragan Teonic. "It will be a challenge to play on a Saturday against a new opponent."

About the Storm: The playoffs are nothing new for South Elgin, which is making its sixth consecutive postseason appearance. The Storm is young but talented, led by junior tight end Ishmael George, junior linebacker London Leflore, junior linebacker Brandon Berrios, sophomore defensive lineman Frankie Macaluso, and senior linebacker Mikey Urso. Offensively, junior quarterback Kevon Brooks, Jr., has filled in admirably for injured junior starter Jack Ginnan. Senior tailback Ari Kravis has bounced back from an early season injury to lead the ground game. "All of these kids were up with us in the playoffs last year, so that experience has really helped," said Teonic. "We're going to have to be extremely physical because in 8A there is nowhere to hide. Our skill players must make plays in crucial situations." Teonic has enjoyed his team's determination on the way to its fifth straight Upstate Eight Conference title. "I love this team and its character, work ethic, and grit," said the coach. "They're a fun team to work with, and our small group of seniors have done a great job growing into leaders this season." The winner will face either No. 10 Warren or No. 23 Oswego in the second round.

No. 29 West Aurora (5-4) at No. 4 Edwardsville (8-1)

When: 2 p.m. Saturday.

About the Blackhawks: West Aurora football is one of the top turnaround stories in the state this season. Following a 1-win campaign last year, the Blackhawks posted a winning record and reached the playoffs for the first time since 2018. "We were 1-8 last year and not very competitive in a lot of games to close out the season," said Blackhawks coach Nate Eimer. "We just went 5-4 in a very tough conference and competed all year. I'm so proud of these coaches and kids for what they accomplished in just one year." Many of the Blackhawks' skilled players are young, including sophomore quarterback Mason Atkins and junior receivers Reece Powers and Terrence Smith. While Edwardsville is making its 12th consecutive playoff appearance, West Aurora players will be experiencing postseason play for the first time. What will Eimer tell his players? "Enjoy it," said the coach. "I think it's something like 46% of the teams in the state get to the point we are at. The intensity level will be high, but the SPC West has prepared us for this, so I don't think that will be as much of an issue this time around." The winner will advance to second-round action against either No. 13 Glenbard West or No. 20 Naperville North.

About the Tigers: Edwardsville can put points on the board. Led by senior quarterback Jake Curry, who has thrown for 19 touchdowns and completed 63% of his pass attempts, the Tigers average 40 points per game. They have topped the 40-point mark 6 times. Curry has plenty of help from receivers Kaylon Bursey, Michael Hedge, and junior 2-way standout Iose Epenesa. The 6-foot-4, 255-pound Epenesa, whose older brother, AJ, plays for the Buffalo Bills, is the team's sacks leader from his defensive end spot while also playing tight end. The lone blemish on Edwardsville's schedule was a 27-15 Week 8 loss to Southwestern Conference champion East St. Louis.

"Edwardsville is one of the top teams in 8A," said Eimer. "They are going to be explosive and play fast. We need to match that intensity."

Class 7A

No. 26 Brother Rice (5-4) at No. 7 Batavia (8-1)

When: 7 p.m., Friday

About the Crusaders: Brother Rice is back in the postseason for a fifth straight season and second under coach Casey Quedenfeld. The Crusaders reached the Class 8A state title game in 2018, the state semifinals the following two playoffs and the quarterfinals last year. Brother Rice qualified for the playoffs after winning its last two games against Montini and St. Rita to reach five wins. Two of Brother Rice's losses came against Loyola and Mount Carmel, the top-ranked teams in the 8A and 7A Associated Press polls, respectively. Nazareth, another team the Crusaders lost to, received votes in the latest 5A poll. Navy commit Randall Nauden is an explosive running back who can burst for a long run or pick up critical yards. His pass-catching abilities also are hard to stop. Brother Rice had to revamp its defense without junior linebacker Christian Pierce, who is out for the season with an injury and holds offers from Ohio State, Michigan, Texas and Illinois. The Crusaders also have been without two defensive line starters and have a young secondary.

About the Bulldogs: Batavia ran through the DuKane Conference with an undefeated 7-0 record. Their lone loss was a one point nail-biter to Lincoln-Way East back in Week 2. This Bulldogs team

has plenty of firepower on both sides of the ball to make a run to Normal. Senior quarterback Ryan Boe put a bow on a phenomenal regular season with a six-touchdown effort against Glenbard North on Oct. 20. The Bulldogs have depth at running back with Charlie Whelpley (516 yards, 7 TDs), Nathan Whitwell (349 yards, 7 TDs) and Zach Granberg (434 yards). Pat McNamara, Luke Alwin, CJ Valente and Isaiah Brown also are capable of explosive plays. Defensively, the Bulldogs' front seven is arguably the best in the conference with Jordan Buckley, Cody Heeringa and Malachi Smith anchoring the defensive line and SIU commit Ben Fiegel (67 tackles), RJ Bohr (41 tackles) and Ben Brown (36 tackles) headlining the linebacker corps. Add in a secondary that is led by Kyle Porter (49 tackles) and Chase Osborne (61 tackles) and the Bulldogs are primed for a deep run.

Up next: The winner plays either Lincoln-Way Central (8-1) or Jacobs (6-3) in the second round.

Class 6A

No. 9 Kaneland (6-3) at No. 8 Riverside-Brookfield (7-2)

When: 7 p.m. Friday

About Riverside-Brookfield: The Bulldogs as an independent played an unusual schedule this season, its last seven games against teams from the Southland Conference before R-B joins the Upstate Eight Conference next year. R-B won its last four games, including a Week 9 35-20 win over Rich Township. This is the Bulldogs' fourth straight playoff appearance and the program's eighth since 2014 but they seek their first playoff win since reaching the 2015 Class 6A quarterfinals. Senior QB Diego Gutierrez is a three-year starter, but injured an ankle in a Week 7 win over Thornridge. R-B has scored 298 points in its seven wins, just 13 combined in losses to Kankakee and Crete-Monee -- the only teams with winning records the Bulldogs have played. The teams met in last season's playoffs, with Kaneland winning 35-14 before losing to Prairie Ridge in the second round. About Kaneland: Kaneland's three losses this year have come to three teams that are a combined 25-2 heading into the postseason. They led in the fourth quarter in each of those games against Washington, Morris and Sycamore. The Knights have qualified for six straight postseason and have only missed the playoffs three times since 1995. The Knights have proved explosive on offense even against the best defenses. Sycamore gave up more than seven points this year twice -- once was to the Knights. Morris gave up more than 20 points once -- it was in a 43-33 win over Kaneland.

Up next: The winner faces No. 16 Crystal Lake Central (5-4) or No. 1 Lake Zurich (8-1).

No. 10 Chicago Senn (6-3) at No. 7 Geneva (7-2)

When: 7:30 p.m., Friday

About the Bulldogs: This is the second consecutive postseason appearance for Senn of the Chicago Public League. The Bulldogs ended the regular season on a two-game winning streak after a three-game skid. Junior quarterback Thijs Fosco is their standout on offense, but the program has apparently struggled with maintaining numbers for their varsity roster.

About the Vikings: Geneva was a handful of plays from possibly being 8-1, if not undefeated. The Vikings' two losses to Wheaton North and Batavia were by a combined four points. Offensively, quarterback Nate Stempowski has been extremely reliable and effective as both a passer and a

runner. Standout wide receiver Talyn Taylor apparently has been hobbled by an injury and has missed the last few weeks and his availability moving forward is uncertain. Troy Velez (348 yards) and Michael Rumoro (392 yards) have found success in the rushing attack and tight end Michael Loberg has been productive. Defensively, Rocco DiLeonardi (34 tackles, three sacks) headlines the group up front. Standout linebacker Tommy Diamond (42 tackles), when healthy, has gotten the job done. Senior defensive back Charlie Winterhalter (65 tackles) led the defense in tackles during the regular season.

No. 17 St. Charles North (6-3) at No. 16 Bradley Bourbonnais (6-3)

When: 6 p.m., Saturday

About the North Stars: St. Charles North closed the regular season with a 20-10 loss to Geneva on Oct. 20, but the North Stars have shown the ability to put together solid stretches of winning football. Led by junior quarterback Ethan Plumb, the offense can put points up in a hurry with an experienced wideout corps led by Jake Mettetal, Anthony Taormina, Aedan Hayes and tight end Jake Furtney. The rushing attack has been steady with Joell Holloman. Defensively, Furtney is the standout as a linebacker/edge rusher. He is complemented by Jesse Moreno and Angelo Bradley. Julio Sanchez also has flashed in the past few weeks. Jaden Harmon is a reliable and athletic safety on the back end of the defense. Keep an eye on linebacker Aidan McClure, who had three interceptions in Week 8.

About the Boilermakers: Bradley ended the regular season with a tough 42-41 loss to Lincoln-Way Central in overtime. This is the second consecutive season that the Boilermakers have qualified for the postseason. Bradley has scored at least 38 points in all but two of its games.

Up next: The winner faces either Normal (9-0) or Argo (5-4) in the second round.

Libertyville (5-4) at Cary-Grove (7-2)

When: Friday, 6:30 p.m.

Seeds: Libertyville is the No. 14 seed in the top half of the 6A bracket; Cary-Grove is the No. 3 seed

Outlook: The Wildcats have some work to do here on the road against a perennial state power. Libertyville is 2-2 in its last four games, but those losses were by a point to North Suburban runner-up Lake Zurich and by a touchdown to Stevenson. Cary-Grove, coming off an uncharacteristic 3-6 mark last year, finished third in the Fox Valley Conference. Of note with the Trojans, both of their losses came to the teams that finished higher than them in the conference. Cary-Grove lost by a point (21-20) to FVC champion Prairie Ridge and by a point to runner-up Huntley (29-28). The Trojans played all conference games during the regular season.

Up next: Winner gets either No. 11 Highland Park (6-3) or No. 6 Chicago Mather (7-2)

Class 1A

No. 11 Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley (6-3) at No. 6 Aurora Christian (7-2)

When: 7 p.m. Friday.

About the Falcons: A playoff qualifier for the first time since 2019, Falcons coach Mike Allen is no stranger to postseason play. Allen guided the team to back-to-back Class 2A state championships in 2017 and 2018. This year's squad features junior quarterback Brayden Elliott, senior tailback Aiden Sancken, junior wide receiver Austin Kasper, junior tight end Ryker Grauer, and sophomore wideout Conner Kinzinger. Defensively, the Falcons allow 12 points per game. Class 1A playoff qualifier Forreston scored the most points against the Falcons -- 22 during a 1-point victory in Week 7. "Gibson City is a very good team," said Aurora Christian coach David Beebe. "They are fast to the ball and physical on defense, and they have shown that they can run and throw the ball. It will be a great challenge for us."

About the Eagles: Aurora Christian is making its fifth consecutive postseason trip but hasn't won a playoff game since 2018 -- a 41-0 second-round victory over Princeville. Three straight postseason appearances were ended by perennial powerhouse Lena-Winslow (2018, 2019, 2021). This year's group, led by sophomore quarterback Jalen Carter, is battle-tested, having faced Class 4A playoff qualifier Wheaton Academy, 2A qualifier Chicago Christian, and 1A qualifier Hope Academy. Last weekend, the Eagles finished their regular season with a 36-7 win over Chicago Christian. The Eagles have topped the 40-point mark 5 times, while their defense has recorded 3 shutouts. The defense features linebacker Rudy Griffing, Owen Hampton, Donnie Meyer, Jonan Miceli, Sal Delgado, and Brodin Pesek. Sophomore Zach Zappia handles the kicking. "It has been a great year on so many levels," said Beebe. "I just love this team. They play hard and unselfishly. We've all had a lot of fun and grown a lot this year." Now, the Eagles prepare for their first home playoff game in 6 seasons. "It means a lot to our kids to have a home playoff game," added the coach. "But we are 0-0 now, and our mindset must be that. To win playoff games, we must play great defense and take care of the ball. We must stay calm and disciplined." The winner will face either No. 3 Hope Academy or No. 14 Peru St. Bede in next weekend's second round.

- Chicago Tribune -

High school football pairings and local scores for the Southland, Aurora, Elgin, Naperville and Lake County

By: From Staff Reports

Oct 25, 2023



St. Laurence's Clark Herrera (7) dribbles the ball against St. Ignatius during a Class 2A De La Salle Sectional semifinal in Chicago on Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023. (Troy Stolt/Daily Southtown)

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BOYS SOCCER

CLASS 3A SECTIONAL SEMIFINALS

PLAINFIELD NORTH

Naperville Central 1, Oswego 0

Naperville Central (11-5-7): Patrick Bohan goal.

Naperville North 3, Romeoville 1

Naperville North (20-1-3): Noah Radeke goal, 2 assists.

WEST CHICAGO

St. Charles East 2, West Chicago 1 (OT)

St. Charles East (18-7): Giuseppe Avendano 2 goals.

CLASS 2 SECTIONAL SEMIFINAL

DE LA SALLE

St. Laurence 4, St. Ignatius 2

St. Laurence (12-7-2): Diego Lugo 2 goals.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

CLASS 1A REGIONAL SEMIFINALS

ALDEN-HEBRON

Harvest Christian d. Woodlands 25-7, 25-13

ASHTON-FRANKLIN CENTER

Aurora Christian d. Polo 25-23, 25-20

EARLVILLE

Newark d. Somonauk 25-14, 25-11

Newark (32-4): Adrianna Larsen 7 kills. Kodi Rizzo 6 kills, 5 blocks. Lauren Ulrich 13 assists.
Earlville d. Hinckley-Big Rock 25-8, 25-16
ELLISON
Morgan Park Academy d. Aqsa 25-17, 25-9

TUESDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BOYS SOCCER

CLASS 3A SECTIONAL SEMIFINALS

FREMD

Palatine 2, Stevenson 1 (OT)

JOLIET WEST

Bloom 4, Andrew 1

Stagg 2, Lincoln-Way Central 1 (SO)

Stagg (17-3-1): Kacper Dziubek goal in regulation; GW winning goal in shootout.

ROUND LAKE

Elgin 4, Huntley 1

Round Lake 1, **Streamwood** 0

CLASS 2A SECTIONAL SEMIFINALS

DE LA SALLE

Solorio 1, De La Salle 0

GRAYSLAKE CENTRAL

Crystal Lake South 2, Grayslake North 1

LEMONT

Brother Rice 2, Washington 1

Brother Rice (18-3-2): Cristian Morales goal.

Kankakee 7, Lemont 0

WHEATON ST. FRANCIS

Benet 4, Belvidere North 0

CLASS 1A SECTIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

HERSCHER

Herscher 3, Beecher 2

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

CLASS 4A REGIONAL SEMIFINALS

ADDISON TRAIL

Geneva d. Wheaton North 25-10, 25-16

BARRINGTON

Lake Zurich d. Conant 25-20, 25-15

Barrington d. Elgin 25-5, 25-8

BENET

Benet d. Batavia 25-19, 25-10

Naperville North d. West Chicago 25-22, 25-13

Naperville North (21-15): Liz Rossi 7 kills. Leah Norris 7 kills. Cate Thompson 7 kills.

EISENHOWER

Lincoln-Way East d. Eisenhower 25-9, 25-6

Oak Lawn d. Andrew 25-14, 25-12

GRANT

Libertyville d. Waukegan 25-9, 25-13

Libertyville (27-9): Hannah Fleming 7 kills. Avery Maddux 7 kills. Kylie Hughes 7 kills. Jaimie Marquardt 19 assists, 6 aces.

McHenry d. Grant 25-17, 25-13

HONONEGAH

Hampshire d. Rockford Auburn 25-14, 25-7

JACOBS

Jacobs d. Mundelein 25-23, 25-13

Jacobs (19-16): Jordan Miller 7 kills, 13 digs. Meghan Retzler 9 assists. Gracie Breeze 20 digs.

Warren d. Round Lake 25-7, 25-6

LARKIN

Stevenson d. **South Elgin** 26-24, 25-14

Stevenson (29-7): Mija Jegers 13 kills, 9 digs. Kyra Costabile 11 assists.

LINCOLN-WAY CENTRAL

Lockport d. Plainfield Central 25-13, 25-10

Lockport (27-9): Kylee Schurig 7 kills. Lainey Green 22 assists.

Neuqua Valley d. Lincoln-Way Central 25-20, 25-19

METEA VALLEY

Metea Valley d. West Aurora 26-24, 25-14

St. Charles North d. St. Charles East 25-12, 25-22

NAPERVILLE CENTRAL

Naperville Central d. Lake Park 23-25, 25-20, 25-11

Glenbard West d. Bartlett 25-14, 25-10

NEW TRIER

New Trier d. Highland Park 25-7, 25-7

OSWEGO EAST

Lincoln-Way West d. Waubonsie Valley 25-23, 23-25, 25-23

Romeoville d. Oswego East 25-20, 25-13

PLAINFIELD NORTH

Oswego d. Yorkville 26-24, 25-12

Yorkville (13-23): Joelle Pye-Blacknard 9 kills, 5 digs. Charlee Young 5 kills.

Plainfield North d. Joliet Catholic 25-15, 25-20

REAVIS

Marist d. Argo 25-5, 25-6

Reavis d. Richards 25-15, 25-17

ROCKFORD EAST

Dundee-Crown d. Rockford Guilford 25-22, 25-19

SANDBURG

Homewood-Flossmoor d. Bloom 25-13, 25-14

H-F (25-7): LaDonna Trantham 7 kills. Skylar Skinner 18 assists.

Sandburg d. T.F. South 25-14, 25-7

Sandburg (23-13): Kate Walsh 6 kills. Keira Fitzgerald 10 assists.

THORNWOOD

Mother McAuley d. Rich Township 25-6, 25-7

Shepard d. Stagg 25-13, 17-25, 25-23

CLASS 3A REGIONAL SEMIFINALS

BACK OF THE YARDS

Back of the Yards 25-25, Lemont 0-0 (forfeit)

Kennedy d. Plano 25-22, 26-24

BURLINGTON CENTRAL

Burlington Central d. Resurrection 25-9, 25-13

Burlington Central (20-15): Ashli Bonds 6 kills, 3 aces.

Sycamore d. Lake Forest 25-21, 25-16

CARMEL

Carmel d. Wauconda 25-16, 25-19

Carmel: Bella Lucero 6 kills, 8 digs, 2 assists. Claire Parker 15 assists.

Lakes d. Cary-Grove 25-9, 25-17

DE LA SALLE

De La Salle d. Clemente 25-3, 25-4

De La Salle (26-7): Haley Chavez 5 kills. Giuliana Graczyk 12 assists, 4 aces.

DEERFIELD

Deerfield d. Intrinsic 25-3, 25-4

GRAYSLAKE NORTH

Grayslake Central d. Grayslake North 25-14, 24-26, 25-22

Prairie Ridge d. Antioch 25-15, 25-15

HANCOCK

St. Laurence d. Mansueto 25-5, 25-3

MARIAN CATHOLIC

Marian Catholic d. Brooks 25-10, 25-12

Marian: Olivia Helfen 9 kills. Kaitlyn Nichols 15 assists.

Oak Forest d. Perspectives-Leadership 25-8, 25-15

MONTINI

Kaneland d. Solorio 25-5, 25-2

Montini d. IMSA 25-10, 25-8

PROVIDENCE

Providence d. Hillcrest 25-10, 25-7

Crete-Monee d. T.F. North 26-28, 28-26, 25-21

RIDGEWOOD

Vernon Hills d. Amundsen 25-17, 25-21

TINLEY PARK

Tinley Park d. Thornton 25-9, 25-8

Washington d. Ag. Science 28-26, 25-21

CLASS 2A REGIONAL SEMIFINALS

CHICAGO CHRISTIAN

Chicago Christian d. Herscher 25-17, 25-19

LISLE

Rosary d. Westmont 25-5, 25-18

PEOTONE

Beecher d. Manteno 25-18, 16-25, 25-23

CLASS 1A REGIONAL QUARTERFINALS

ALDEN-HEBRON

Hiawatha d. Rochelle Zell 25-8, 25-5

ASHTON-FRANKLIN CENTER

Aurora Christian d. Amboy co-op 25-19, 25-18

EARLVILLE

Hinckley-Big Rock d. Leland 25-23, 25-22

SOUTH BELOIT

St. Edward d. Holy Family 25-21, 25-18

To read the full article please click [here](#).

- Daily Herald -

Breaking down this week's Top 10 football teams

By: John Lemon

10/25/ 2023



St. Francis' DeShaun Williams breaks a tackle against Nazareth during the Spartans' win last Friday in La Grange Park. St. Francis hosts Rochelle Friday in its playoff opener. (Photo by Tony Gadomski/Shaw Local News Network)

First and 10

Team (record) This week's opponent

1. Hersey (9-0) WW South, Saturday

Comment: The Huskies start the Class 7A playoffs against one of the state's most storied programs, one fresh off another gauntlet of a schedule in the DuKane Conference. Hersey sophomore Brandon Jenkins had 2 INTs in last week's 63-14 win over Elk Grove, a victory that wrapped up the Huskies' second straight 9-0 regular season.

2. Batavia (8-1) Brother Rice, Friday

Comment: Last year the Bulldogs went 6-3 in the regular season and might have caught a break in the first round playing at Rockford Guilford, who Batavia dominated 42-0 on the way to a run to the Class 7A state championship game. No such break this year during an 8-1 season against Brother Rice, who beat Maine South, and has losses to defending state champions Loyola, Mt. Carmel and Nazareth.

3. Barrington (9-0) Glenbrook South, Friday

Comment: Like Batavia, the Broncos didn't get an easy draw even though Glenbrook South is 4-5. These teams already played once with Barrington winning 27-19 in Week 3. The Broncos wrapped up a perfect regular season with a 45-19 win over Conant last week behind QB Nick Peipert's 4 TD passes and 198 rushing yards from Dillon Fitzpatrick.

4. York (8-1) Homewood-Flossmoor

Comment: The Dukes reached the Class 8A semifinals last year before a 30-3 loss to eventual state champion Loyola. York has the pieces to make another long run this year. Only a Week 7 loss to Glenbard West stands between the Dukes and a second straight undefeated regular season, and they rebounded from that defeat with wins over Lyons and Proviso West.

5. Maine South (8-1) Lockport, Friday

Comment: Quarterback Constantine Coines shook off a pair of early interceptions in last week's 35-11 win over Evanston to throw for 214 yards. Michael Dellumo rushed for 105 yards and 3 touchdowns. The Hawks won playoff games over Bolingbrook and South Elgin last year before a 37-34 loss to Glenbard West.

6. Warren (7-2) Oswego, Friday

Comment: The North Suburban Conference champions enter the playoffs on a 7-game winning streak. They haven't allowed a point since a 54-7 win over Mundelein in Week 6, closing the regular season with 46-0, 34-0 and 42-0 shutouts. Next comes a 6-3 Oswego team that has lost three of its last five after a 4-0 start.

7. Lake Zurich (8-1) Crystal Lake Central, Friday

Comment: Only a 21-17 loss to Warren stands between the Bears and a perfect regular season. They tuned up for the playoffs with a 41-0 shutout over Waukegan, and now get the playoffs started with a Fox Valley Conference opponent. Crystal Lake Central pulled out a 27-24 win over 2-7 Hampshire last week to qualify for the playoffs.

8. Downers North (7-2) Kenwood, Friday

Comment: No doubt the West Suburban Silver teams will come into the playoffs battle tested. That goes for the Trojans, who beat Glenbard West and took a couple hard-fought losses to York and Lyons. Downers Grove North also beat a pair of teams in the nonconference slate that both ended up as playoff teams, St. Francis and Downers Grove South.

9. Glenbard West (7-2) Naperville North, Saturday

Comment: The Hilltoppers open the playoffs with a matchup of two proud DuPage County programs. This is the third straight trip for the Huskies, who won the 2007 state title during a stretch of 17 straight playoff appearances. The Hilltoppers haven't missed since 2006 and won 2012 and 2015 state championships.

10. St. Francis (7-2) Rochelle, Friday

Comment: The Spartans begin postseason play probably feeling like they already have played nine playoff games. They capped that challenge with another impressive win last week, beating Nazareth 35-17. Ball State-bound QB Alessio Milivojevic threw for 273 yards and a pair of second-half TDs. St. Francis beat Rochelle in last year's quarterfinals before losing to Providence Catholic.

Second and 10

11. Prospect 7-2 Beat Rolling M. 44-7; Buffalo Grove

12. Palatine 6-3 Beat Schaumburg 42-14; at Neuqua V.

13. Naperville Central 7-2 Lost to Neuqua Valley 26-14; Downers S.

14. Neuqua Valley 6-3 Beat Naperville Central 26-14; Palatine

15. Glenbard East 8-1 Beat **Bartlett** 41-7; Harlem

16. Geneva 7-2 Beat St. Charles North 20-10; Senn

17. Huntley 8-1 Beat Burlington C. 20-10; Maine West

18. IC Catholic Prep 7-2 Beat Fenwick 42-9; Geneseo

19. Antioch 9-0 Beat Round Lake 70-0; Englewood Stem

20. Carmel 8-1 Beat St. Patrick 42-0; Lindblom

- Daily Herald -

Boys soccer: Eduardo Nava's hat trick carries Elgin past Huntley 4-1

By: John Bumbales

October 25, 2023



Huntley's Talon Sargent, left, takes the header in front of Elgin's Oliver Garcia (12) during Tuesday's IHSA class 3A sectional semifinal boys soccer game in Round Lake. (Paul Valade pvalade@dailyherald.)

ROUND LAKE – Getting out to a fast start proved to be a good omen for top-seeded **Elgin** on Tuesday night at the Class 3A Round Lake Sectional semifinals against No. 4 Huntley.

Senior forward Eduardo Nava's shot from about 25 yards out deflected off a Red Raiders defender and past Huntley goalkeeper Jeremiah Reynolds for a 1-0 lead 11 minutes into the contest.

From there, Nava recorded a natural hat trick with three goals in a row as the Maroons (15-3-3) posted a convincing 4-1 victory over Huntley (16-6-1) to advance to the sectional finals Friday at 6 p.m. against No. 6-seeded host Round Lake.

It looked like the game was headed into halftime with the same 1-0 score, but **Elgin's** offense struck again just 1:28 before the intermission. This time, Nava took a groundball pass from captain Aaron Saldana off a corner kick and booted home a close-range goal for a 2-0 lead at the half.

"You need a team effort. You can't do it all by yourself, so I thank my teammates a lot," said Nava, who recorded his 11th hat trick of the season.

“Starting the game (Friday against Round Lake) we’re going to go full speed like we did this game. And every game we come out we come out even stronger.”

Nava’s third goal came on a penalty kick with 26:33 to play to boost the lead to 3-0.

Then with 17:27 remaining, senior Hudson Neilsen booted home a penalty shot past Elgin reserve goalie David Castaneda to cut the gap to 4-1. Carlos Benitez started in goal for the Maroons before exiting the game in the second half.

“That guy (Nava) is a goal-scorer. He’s had a great season, and he knows how to put the ball in the net,” said Huntley coach Matt Lewandowski. “It was tough with a 20 mile-an-hour wind to start the game, and we couldn’t get anything going.”

Elgin’s Alberto Gayten put the finishing touches on the win via a goal with 3:57 to go to account for the final score.

“The defense did very well. We shut (Nielsen) down, and we were trying to limit how much time and space he had on the ball,” said **Elgin** coach Jimmy Romano. “He (Nava) is a brilliant player. If you give him a little space, he’s going to find the back of the net.”

- Daily Herald -

Boys soccer: Elgin, Round Lake advance to sectional final

By: John Bumbales

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Elgin's Eduardo Nava (25) moves the ball past Huntley's Brandon Foster (4) and goalkeeper Jeremmiah Reynolds before making his second goal during Tuesday's IHSA class 3A sectional semifinal boys soccer game in Round Lake.

(Paul Valade | Staff Photographer)

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Round Lake 1, **Streamwood** 0:

After defeating No. 3 Larkin for the regional championship, No. 6-seeded host Round Lake was hoping to pull off another upset when it faced No. 2 **Streamwood** in the boys soccer sectional

semifinals Tuesday night.

And while there were some nervous moments throughout the contest, the Panthers worked their magic again with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over the Sabres in a defensive struggle.

With the win, Round Lake (16-5-1) advances to the sectional title game Friday against No. 1 **Elgin** at 6 p.m. while **Streamwood** closed its season with a 15-5-4 record.

The Sabres almost got on the scoreboard about 17 minutes into the game, but freshman goalie Gio Ayala came up with a big save on Max Galvan's strong shot on goal to preserve the scoreless deadlock.

The relentless Panthers came out aggressively in the second half and that paid off when junior Alex Corona's shot 4:09 into the half deflected off a Sabres defender and past goalie Issac Morales for a 1-0 lead.

Despite numerous solid scoring opportunities for both teams the rest of the way, that proved to be the game-winning goal as Ayala recorded a shutout with some big saves down the stretch.

"We just keep on moving really. I just take this game like any other game and I've got to stay composed and get ready for the next game," said Ayala. "I'm looking forward to that game more than this one so we just keep on moving forward and keep pushing."

Streamwood's best chances to tie the game came on a free kick by Jairo Sanchez early in the second half, a shot by Sergio Barrera that came close to the left post, and a shot on goal by A.J. Sabanovic with 21:15 left.

"Number 11 (Oscar Martinez) is a fantastic player for them," said **Streamwood** coach Matt Polovin. "Their goalie was standing on his head, and we just couldn't get the goals in."

Round Lake coach Hugo Tellez is optimistic that his team can pull off yet another upset on Friday.

"We adjusted in the second half and we got a goal," Tellez said. "A lot of teams doubted us after losing our all-state goalie last year. We just have to get Jorgie (Morales) and Oscar (Martinez) back into their rhythm and get their goals."