



WESTMICHIGANOKSPORTS.COM & 96.1
HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL WEST MICHIGAN AREA TOP TEN: Week #2

BRET BAKITA

1. **ROCKFORD:** Impressive opening win for the Rams with two Pick 6s against Cass Tech to hang on (30-23)! Host Muskegon this Friday night in a rematch from last year won by Rockford (27-7).
2. **ZEELAND WEST:** Monster win for John Shilito and the Dux at Hackley Stadium on Friday night (28-13)! Keaton Hendricks with 2 long TD runs for ZW...all he needs is a crease and he will be gone!!
3. **MUSKEGON:** The Big Reds will get it going with new QB - James Young and company, but they might be looking at another 0-2 start to the season traveling to Rockford this Friday night. That contest will be our Lakeshore Game of the Week on 107.9 WMUS - The Moose w/ Jason Hutton and Tom Kendra on the call!
4. **CATHOLIC CENTRAL:** Very nice win for a young Cougars squad, beating a good Lake Central - St. John squad out of Indiana (17-10). What a confidence boost in his debut start for Frosh QB - Odin Spencer for GRCC!
5. **GRANDVILLE:** What a shootout in Week #1 as the Dawgs fall at Pickerington North in Ohio but Tank Terry rushed for over 200+ yards and 5 TD's! The Dawgs are going to be really good this year, and I cannot wait for their OK RED Showdown @ Rockford in Week #3: 96.1's GAME OF THE WEEK!
6. **MONA SHORES:** Very nice win for Jonathan Pittman & the Sailors on the road at a tough Grand Blanc (28-26). Can they do it again on the road this week @ River Rouge!?
7. **BYRON CENTER:** The Bulldogs made it look easy on Friday night, rolling at BC Central, 42-6! This Friday night it will be tougher at home against East Kentwood out of the OK Red, but the Bulldogs did win this game last year @ EK, 33-16.
8. **SOUTH CHRISTIAN:** Carson Vis to Tyler Brinks.....get used to hearing that a lot this season like we did with Vis to VerMaas last season for the Sailors! SC travels to EGR for our 96.1 GAME OF THE WEEK this Friday night, and I will be on the call with Buck Geno....coverage starts @ 6 p.m.
9. **COOPERSVILLE:** The Broncos shutout Otsego (41-0) @ home to celebrate the 100th season of high school football at Coopersville High School. Now, rival West Catholic comes to town on Military Appreciation Night this Friday in a MONSTER non-league matchup!
10. **CALEDONIA:** Easy season opening W at home for the Fighting Scots (48-7) over Windsor Holy Name (ONT) led by their outstanding QB - Brody Betser, who scored 5 TD's. The Scots visit Muskegon Reeths-Puffer this Friday night.

JASON HUTTON

- 1. ROCKFORD (1-0):** Rams come out of the gates strong and hold off Cass Tech in week 1. Another big game awaits this week with Muskegon coming to Carslon-Munger Stadium.
- 2. MONA SHORES (1-0):** Senior quarterback Jonathan Pittman's big night led the Sailors to a win at Grand Blanc in the opener, another big road test this week against River Rouge (1-0)
- 3. GRANDVILLE (0-1):** Not going to punish the Bulldogs for going all the way to Columbus to play powerful Pickerington North, falling on a late field goal. Tank Terry ran for 209 yds. and 5 TD'S.
- 4. BYRON CENTER (1-0):** Bulldogs roll in the opener at Battle Creek Central and get set to host East Kentwood (1-0) Friday in a very intriguing game.
- 5. CALEDONIA (1-0):** Fighting Scots made quick work of Holy Names from Canada, Brody Betser tossed 4 TD passes. Cal travels to Reeths-Puffer (0-1) Friday night.
- 6. ZEELAND WEST (1-0):** The Dux won at Muskegon behind senior quarterback Trey Sloohtaak who threw for a score, ran for a score, and led the team defensively with 7 tackles. Zeeland West will be at West Ottawa on Friday.
- 7. MUSKEGON (0-1):** The Big Reds dropped their season opener at home for the 2nd straight season falling to Zeeland West 28-13, it worked out OK for Muskegon last season, it plays at Rockford (1-0) this week.
- 8. GR CATHOLIC CENTRAL (1-0):** The Cougars beat Lake Central (IN) 17-10, freshman quarterback Odin Spencer completed 8 of 15 passes for 77 yards and a touchdown to Jami Williams. CC hosts St. Thomas More from Canada on Friday.
- 9. WEST CATHOLIC (0-1):** The Falcons led at the half before falling in Ohio to Cincinnati Elder last week 20-13, It was the first regular season loss for West since week 7 of 2022. The Falcons will be at Coopersville on Friday for another big showdown.
- 10 - COOPERSVILLE (1-0):** The Broncos looked sharp in their throwback uniforms in a 41-0 win over Otsego as they celebrated 100 years of football. A big one this week hosting West Catholic who beat Coop on a last-second field goal in 2023.

TOM KENDRA

1. Rockford - The Rams were very impressive, then things got a little too close for comfort in the second half as they held on for the win.. This week's showdown against Muskegon could be similar.

2. Zeeland West - Any opponent that wins in Hackley Stadium gets my attention. With Trey Sloothaak and Keaton Hendricks, this Dux team has a chance to finish what they started last season in D3.

3. Caledonia - Rockford and Grandville are most people's 1-2 in the O-K Red, but something tells me the Scots are going to beat at least one of those two.

4. Mona Shores - The Sailors had to sweat out a win at Grand Blanc, and this week's game at River Rouge is just as challenging. The 1-2 punch of QB Jonathan Pittman (6-3, 210) and RB Ike Steward (5-11, 205) might be the best in the state.

5. Muskegon - Rome wasn't built in a day, and the Big Reds aren't going to go from 86 percent running to a blended offense overnight. Defense will carry them early in the year.

6. Grandville - Hard to imagine a tougher three-game stretch to open the season than the Bulldogs face. Look for the defense to play much better at home against Davison.

7. Byron Center - After a convincing opening win, excitement is sky-high for BC's home showdown against East Kentwood this week.

8. Forest Hills Eastern - There was a buzz surrounding the Hawks coming into the season, and they validated it by flattening a good Montague team last week.

9. GR South Christian - Senior QB Carson Vis is for real. We'll see if the rest of the Sailors are as well in this Friday night's showdown at East Grand Rapids.

10. GR Catholic Central - Odin Spencer has got to be special to be the starting quarterback for one of the state's top programs as a freshman.

Honorable Mention

GR West Catholic - The Falcons traveled more than 350 miles for a rock 'em, sock 'em game against Cincinnati Elder. This week's trip to Coopersville is short, but the game could be every bit as good.

Coopersville - What an opportunity for Coach Ed Kaman and the Broncos when West Catholic rolls in. A victory Friday could lead to an undefeated regular season for Coops.

BUCK GENO

1. Rockford - The Rams get an impressive win over Cass Tech in their season opener. Two defensive TD's fueled the victory over the Technicians, including Kade Friesen's pick-6. Now they get ready for a wounded Muskegon team to come into "The Ted" ("The Ralph"? "The Ted-Ralph?") who lost at home and are trying to avoid their second consecutive 0-2 start.

2. Byron Center - A convincing win over Battle Creek Central in Week 1 should boost the Bulldogs' confidence heading into a big matchup against East Kentwood this Friday. Landon Tungate and Isaac Lee look to continue to lead the high-scoring attack that the Bulldogs possess.

3. Muskegon Mona Shores - the Sailors won a nailbiter over host Grand Blanc in the Vehicle City Classic last week - a failed 2-Pt conversion was the difference in a hotly contested affair. No rest for the weary as the Sailors pull into port for some shore time with three consecutive home games, starting on Friday as River Rouge comes calling.

4. Forest Hills Eastern - the Hawks open the season in impressive fashion with a 48-7 dismantling of Lakeshore power Montague. Sophomore tailback Jordan Shabazz rushed for 129 yards & 2 TD's while senior HB Max Ferrick found paydirt twice as well. FHE looks to have found their rhythm early, and look to continue their winning ways against Greenville at Legacy Field this Friday.

5. Zeeland West - in hindsight, it was silly of me to doubt a John Shillito-coached team. With performances like Friday's against Muskegon at Hackley Stadium, it will be a long time before they drop out of the list again. Trey Sloothaak had 1 passing TD, 1 rushing TD, and Keaton Hendricks had 2 rushing scores including the clincher with 1:31 left. The Dux travel up US 31 again this week as they go to W. Ottawa to meet Pat Collins' Panthers, coming off a crushing week 1 loss to Grand Ledge.

6. South Christian - the Sailors stay put at #6 after a spirited contest with Grand Rapids Christian where the Sailors pulled away late after trailing late in the 1st half. The 96.1 Game Of The Week will feature South Christian as they go on the road to historic Memorial Field in East GR to meet up with the Pioneers for another installment in a high-profile series that is of recent vintage.

7. Muskegon - As mentioned earlier, the Big Reds dropped their home opener against Zeeland West and do not get any reprieve as they travel to Carlson-Munger Stadium for a test against the #1 team, the Rockford Rams. Coach Shane Fairfield will be back in the lab to find the winning formula for his squad, as they look to avoid starting 0-2 for the second consecutive year.

8 Grand Rapids Catholic Central - the Cougars open their season with a narrow 17-10 win over Lake Central HS (IN) and get ready to host Hamilton St. Thomas More (ONT-CA) in Week 2 in another cross-border affair. The Cougar faithful were brought to their feet at the C.A.T. with Kamall Hillard's 95 yard kickoff return that sparked the home team to the win.

9. Caledonia - the Scots enjoyed a large margin of victory (48-7) over visiting Holy Names Catholic from Windsor, ON last Thursday - coach Derek Pennington hopes to continue the scoring barrage when they visit the Rockets of Reeths-Puffer. Brody Betser had 4 passing TD's of 25+ yards as Reed Vogeler and Aaron Collins split those trips to paydirt at 2 each.

10. Coopersville - "Coop" started their 100th season of football in style with the debut of a new video board at Meerman Field and an open invitation to any Coopersville football alumnus to attend the lidlifter of the 2024 season. Ed Kaman's Broncos were fired up by all the pomp and circumstance as they broke the bridle and romped to a 41-0 decision over Otsego. Next up, a meeting with #11 West Catholic that has been one of the best local matchups in the past few years.

Honorable Mention - Grand Rapids West Catholic - the Falcons met the challenge of Cincinnati Elder (OH) head on last week on Elder's home turf, only to come up just short in a 20-13 loss. They now get ready for a much shorter road trip into Coopersville where a familiar foe awaits them for another possible instant classic in a game that rarely disappoints. Will we see another last-second decision out of these two well-coached teams?