

Son of Swami: Lots of competitive matchups in Round 1

1:42 AM, Oct. 24, 2011

Offensive line coach Chuck White, left, and T.J. O'Bryan, 18, William Russell, 16, and Tanner Brewer, 17, celebrate a playoff berth. / Photos by KATHLEEN GALLIGAN/Detroit Free Press

Well, this is interesting.

Warren De La Salle, a perennial Division 2 contender, is in Division 1 and eventually might face some of the big east-side powers like Utica Eisenhower and Macomb Dakota.

Canton and Plymouth, which staged one of the best games in the regular season, will meet in the first round of the state playoffs.

And what are those teams with only eight players doing running around on the field?

Welcome to the 2011 high school football state playoffs, also known as: When will Farmington Harrison play Birmingham Brother Rice? Or: Can East Grand Rapids win a sixth straight Division 3 championship?

In addition to the 256-team playoff field, the Michigan High School Athletic Association released the pairings for the first 16-team, eight-player football playoff, which will begin this weekend and conclude Nov. 19 in the Yooper Dome in Marquette.

The regular 256-team playoff will have its eight state championship games Nov. 25-26 at Ford Field, but instead of making you wait so long to know who will win the titles, our Son of Swami is here with his Playoff Primer.

FAVORITE: Novi Detroit Catholic Central.

CHALLENGER: Rockford.

SLEEPER: Warren De La Salle.

THE BUZZ: There are no unbeaten teams in this division, but CC will be difficult to beat.