

Here's what happened to local prep football summaries

With apologies to Simon, Garfunkel, Mrs. Robinson and Joe DiMaggio.

Where have you gone, John Moskwa?

The sports department turns its weary eyes to you.

Woo, woo, woo.

What's that you say, Mr. Montri

Jottin' John has left and gone away.

I refer to Moskwa as Jottin' John because he kept flawless statistics for the Dundee football team for more than three decades.

It's hard to find that dedication these days and it is one of the reasons football summaries in The Evening News have a different look.

You may have seen Doug Donnelly's Editorial Page thoughts last weekend when he wondered what happened to the old-fashioned box score.

Doug asked some legitimate questions. Maybe you have wondered the same thing.

There are two major reasons why football summaries have changed. One is a lack of reliable stat-keepers. The other is high school football has entered an era where offense is king.

Consider Jefferson 75, Grosse Ile 56; Ida 63, Erie Mason 33, and Bedford 54, Jefferson 34. All of those games were played last season.

The way high school teams are rolling up points, we don't have room to squeeze all of the scoring onto Page 2. We could make more room, but it would be at the expense of the list of state football scores, the Major League baseball standings, the weekend TV listings and everything else we try to shoehorn onto Page 2B.



Ron Montri

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We are faced with the age-old newspaper sports section problem of trying to stuff an elephant into a Volkswagen.

There was a time when the football motto was, "defense wins championships." Now it's more like, "Let's see if we can score on every possession."

St. Mary Catholic Central won the state championship in 1991. It had six shutouts and allowed 4.3 points per game. Jefferson was the only team to score more than one TD against the Falcons. It managed 14 points.

The 1991 Falcons had a scoring average of 22.6 points per game. When SMCC went to the state finals last season, its offense averaged 43.3.

Remember Dundee's 35-game undefeated streak in the 1960s? It had 16 shutouts in those 35 games.

Remember Bedford's game with Fostoria in 1974? It was played in the days before overtime and ended in a 0-0 tie.

Can you image a scoreless battle at the end of regulation these days?

There was a time when we published every player who scored every touchdown in every game involving our teams and the summaries would fill three-fourths of a column. Now we could fill 1½ columns.

So we decided to omit some of the scoring for teams outside of our coverage area.

This decision also was dictated by statisticians. It isn't unusual for a coach to call and say, "I've got a new stat guy and he's still learning. I don't know who scored for them."

Summerfield has a great stat man in Sam Ladd. Whiteford has a technological wizard in Chuck Tabbert. But not all coaches are so fortunate when they hunt for a reliable stat-keeper.

Where have you gone, John Moskwa?

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