

# Sports

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## Military service matures Sinclair

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

**I**T'S ONLY FITTING that an Army veteran like Jim Sinclair has done an about-face.

Today, the 6-foot, 229-pound fullback/linebacker is a second-year walk-on with the University of Michigan football team, pursuing a degree in business and scheduled to graduate this year. Ultimately he may wind up in one of U-M's graduate programs, preferably pre-law.

Those who knew Sinclair during his high school days at Plymouth Salem may find that hard to swallow.

"People may not believe how I've changed," said Sinclair. "Back then I had a lot of problems."

The 1983 graduate was a good all-around athlete, but couldn't avoid trouble in school. He was constantly at odds with coaches and teachers.

During his senior year, Sinclair was a member of the Rocks' 8-1 team, which lost only to Farmington Harrison in the Western Lakes Activities Association championship game.

HE PLAYED both linebacker and fullback, but was overshadowed by some of his high school teammates including Dave Houle, who later went on to start and was a member of Michigan State's Rose Bowl team (Houle was also drafted by the New

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York Jets), Dave Slavin, who played baseball at the University of Missouri and is now in the minor leagues; and Scott Jurek, a fifth-year linebacker on Eastern Michigan's defending California Bowl championship squad.

With little academic ground to stand on, Sinclair's only alternative was to enlist in the Army where he spent three years with the 82nd Airborne Division, based in Fort Bragg, N.C.

"I worked for the Adjutant General's Company," Sinclair said. "It was a good experience."

During his enlistment, Sinclair went to school. When he was honorably discharged, he applied to go to Michigan and contacted U-M recruiting coordinator Fritz Seyferth about walking on the football team.

"I was getting good grades and I was looking for something close to home," said Sinclair. "I almost went to Hillsdale (College), but I got accepted to Michigan and I told myself whatever happens, it was going to be exciting. I knew I was going to meet a lot of good people no matter what happened."

WEIGHING ONLY 170 pounds in high school, Sinclair built himself up during his stint in the army.

"I was a persistent lifter and that gave me confidence I could play," he said.

U-M defensive coordinator Lloyd Carr calls Sinclair "one tough nut." "He's done a nice job for us," Carr said. "He's not afraid to stick his nose in there."

His teammates refer to him as the "Sarge."

"The other day Bo (Schembechler) was calling me 'the Colonel' and I got a big kick out of that," Sinclair said. "He didn't know I was in the service until somebody had told him."

Last season, his first as a Wolverine, Sinclair did not get any playing time, but was named Rookie of the Week for his work on the scout team in preparation for the Northwestern game. He also played on both sides of the ball during U-M's 1988 Spring Game.

"When I won Rookie of the Week that helped me out a lot," he said. "Right now I'm just going to go out with a good attitude and do whatever I can for the team."

SINCLAIR admitted that playing in a game is a longshot, but he's not ruling out the possibility.

"I'm like the turtle," he said. "I'm always there, popping my head out



STEVE FECHT/staff photographer

Observerland will be will represented on the gridiron this season at the University of Michigan. Among the players suiting up (clockwise, top left) are All-American defensive tackle Mark Messner (Redford Catholic Central High), outside linebacker Alex Marshall (Redford

Bishop Borgess), tailback Tony Boles (Westland John Glenn), middle guard Erik Knuth (Redford CC) and senior walk-on fullback/linebacker Jim Sinclair (Plymouth Salem). U-M opens Saturday, Sept. 10, at Notre Dame.

to see what's going on."

And if it wasn't for the Army, Sinclair admits things may have

turned out differently.

"It was the best thing I ever did," he said. "Sometimes I didn't like it,

but looking back it was a great experience. It taught me a lot of discipline."

## Boles a new man, eyes starting position

**W**HAT A DIFFERENCE a year makes, Tony Boles can attest to that.

A year ago at this time a cloud of uncertainty hung over the promising tailback from the University of Michigan.

Boles was struggling academically and fell into disfavor with Bo Schembechler, who refused to let him practice until he got things straightened out with a Latin class, one of two required language courses for his major (kinesiology). As a result, he played sparingly in 1987.

"It was kind of depressing," said Boles. "I wished I could have played more."

But the former Westland John Glenn High All-Stater has become a new man, a more mature player who

is on the verge of succeeding Jamie Morris as the starting tailback.

The vacancy left by the All-American created plenty of competition at tailback with the return of two other promising red-shirt juniors, including Warren DeLaSalle product Allen Jefferson and Tracy Williams of Sarasota, Fla.

But Schembechler told a press gathering Friday that all three will play a role in the Wolverines' 1988 season.

"WHEN THEY have the ball under their arms they all can do the job," said Schembechler. "There's no question about their running ability, but what each has to do is develop into an all-around running back like Morris was. They have to do the other things like blocking, faking and



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picking up blitzes in the backfield." Boles will tell you that the adjustment to playing football at U-M was never a problem, but feeling comfortable in the classroom was a different story.

"I knew the system, but school-wise everything had to fall into place," he said. "My attitude toward school has now changed. I'm getting the grades and I'm better situated than I was last year."

shoes and that's going to be hard to do."

WHILE BOLES was turning the corner academically, he also made the grade during the 1988 Spring Game when he rushed for 135 yards and two touchdowns, his longest run being a 63-yarder.

The performance put him in position to challenge for playing time. And it didn't hurt that Boles reportedly clocked a sizzling 4.2 in the 40-yard dash.

His speed may be unmatched on a football team loaded with "burners."

But it takes more than running fast to gain PT (playing time) at Michigan.

"You have to know how to block and if you can't block, you can't play," Boles said. "You have to get

the little things done."

The 6-foot-1, 193-pounder said he is comfortable about sharing the tailback role with Jefferson and Williams.

"If I'm No. 1 — fine. But if not, that's fine, too," he said. "It doesn't matter if I start, it's how I play the game. I'd be happy just to play a little key role. If all three backs played, that's OK with me. That way it'll keep everybody fresh."

DURING HIS freshman year, a hand injury kept Boles out most of the season. But this year he feels completely healthy and is "very excited" about U-M's season opener Saturday, Sept. 10 at Notre Dame.

"This fall things are going very well," he said. "What a difference a year makes."

## Line play keys Borgess

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

"Hold that line" may be an old football cliché, but the term has plenty of meaning for Redford Bishop Borgess High in 1988.

The Spartans may be low in numbers (32 on the varsity roster), but they won't be short of talent along the interior lines against their rough and tough Catholic League Central Division foes.

"This is the best interior front I've had in my three years," said Borgess coach Dan Henry, who is coming off successive 5-4 seasons.

Fred Mushinski, the Spartans' athletic director, is back as the team's defensive coordinator after a year's leave of absence.

The Spartans, who have been sticklers defensively under Henry, will take a slightly different approach in 1988.

Borgess will stay with its Michigan-style attack, but will toss in a few wrinkles from Michigan State's successful 4-2 defense.

"You have to have big people to control the line of scrimmage to run 'State's 42," Mushinski said. "And the middle linebacker has to be the ace."

THE LINE PLAY starts with two massive senior returnees, 6-foot-2, 275-pound Andre Cade and 6-1, 250-pound Dorian Marshall.

"Cade is very strong and quick," Henry said. "He benches 400 pounds and runs a 4.6 (40-yard dash). What he has to do is make a decision on how good he wants to be."

"Marshall is working real hard. He's stronger and more mature. He's become more of a leader."

The Spartans' steamrolling duo will get plenty of support from a

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trio of returning senior linebackers including Kevin Davis (5-10, 190), Andre Newman (5-10, 210) and Mario Araquill (5-8, 225).

"They have good instincts," said Mushinski. "And they're tremendous hitters with a nose for the football. They don't have as much range, but have enormous size. It's all up to them if they want to reach their potential. The challenge is there."

The defensive secondary, which lost standouts Eric Emanuel (now Illinois State) and Jimmy Bailey to graduation, will be led by senior Ebbie Herbert (6-0, 175), senior Willis Jackson (5-11, 180), junior Ramone Mills (6-2, 170) and senior Jamill Martin (6-0, 165).

HERBERT ALSO replaces Emanuel at quarterback after playing wide receiver last season.

"Eric just had great feet and was a great leader," Henry said. "He was mechanically sound. Right now Ebbie has good feet, is a good leader and a good runner."

The Spartans will most likely add a few new twists offensively with the addition of former Garden City East coach Gary Humphrey as the team's offensive coordinator.

But it may be too early to predict what the Spartans might unveil.

Herbert, however, will have plenty of help in the backfield with the return of Arquill at fullback, who complemented All-Area tailback Corey Ivey (University of Toledo) well last season.

"We're looking for a good year from him," Henry said. "He's a bull."

Jackson, meanwhile, is an unproven back with good speed (4.6 in the 40). Henry hopes to have Jackson keep opposing defenses honest as Araquill did for Ivey last year.

IF HERBERT is able to pass the ball, the primary targets will be juniors Kareem Carpenter (6-4, 190) and Mills.

"We're working on getting them the ball every day," Henry said.

The offensive line will be anchored by Cade and Marshall at the tackles, along with senior guard LeRoy Wynn (6-1, 185), one of four Spartan captains who played linebacker last year; senior center William Partee (6-1, 250) and Davis (another captain), who will be the other guard.

"All I can say is that we'll run some different offensive sets," Henry said. "I don't think we'll ever catch anybody by surprise anymore."

"It's going to come down to your typical Central Division dogfights. Right now the division is the same old story — Catholic Central, Brother Rice and DeLaSalle, then you mention the teams dying to get in that group — Borgess, Notre Dame and Bishop Gallagher."

Borgess will open its season Saturday, Sept. 3, at the Pontiac Silverdome as part of a triple-header.

The first game pits the Spartans against Orchard Lake St. Mary's at 3 p.m. followed by Redford CC and Toledo Central Catholic at 5:30 p.m. and Birmingham Brother Rice and Flint Powers at 8 p.m.

General admission tickets are \$5 (for all three games).

## International experience valuable to Redford icer

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Patrick Neaton will become a bit more worldly during the next year.

The 17-year-old from Redford is embarking on a hockey odyssey that will take him beyond the Iron Curtain, as well as living in another country.

"It's going to be hard leaving all my friends because I've had a great three years at Catholic Central (High)," Neaton said. "That's going to be the tough part."

Today, Neaton, a defenseman from the U.S. National Midget Champion Little Caesars team, will travel to Boston and then onto Prague, Czechoslovakia, to represent the U.S. team in an eight-day Select 17 tournament.

When he returns, Neaton will spend only a week at home before heading for Thornhill, Ontario, to play in the Metro Toronto Junior B League.

Neaton, who carried a 3.7 GPA at CC, opted for Junior B in favor of Major Junior A in Canada to retain his college eligibility.

"Going to college and getting my degree is one of my goals," he said. "And right now this is the best for my career because I'm going to a good organization and I'll be getting good coaching."

"Both Hull and Verdun (Major Junior A teams) contacted me, but I told them I wanted to play in college. My mom (Karen) insists all of our kids to go to college."

NEATON was one of 68 players invited to the Olympic Training Center (July 17-24) in Colorado Springs,

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Colo., to vie for a berth on the Select 17 squad.

Following the first game at the tryout camp, Neaton was confident he would be among the 20 survivors. As it turned out he was the only player from Michigan selected.

Neaton's only previous international experience was last year in Montreal when he played in the World Midget Tournament.

"I learned that it was wide-open skating, a faster tempo," he said. "The rinks in Europe are bigger, so you have to move the puck quickly. There's a lot of quick passing."

"The whole thing is sort of exciting. It's going to be different, but I think we have a good team. I'm looking forward to it."

The Redford defenseman will be tutored by Doug Woog, who also happens to be the head coach at the University of Minnesota.

Undoubtedly Woog and other college coaches have been keeping a close eye on the soft-spoken, 5-foot-11, 185-pound defenseman.

AMONG THE SCHOOLS that have expressed interest include: Colorado College, Michigan Tech, NCAA champion Lake Superior State, St. Lawrence (N.Y.), Michigan and Michigan State.

Michigan Tech, however, may have a slight advantage.

Assistant coach Bruce Horsch made the preliminary arrangements for Neaton to play in Thornhill.

Meanwhile, Neaton spent most of the summer working at Tech's hockey schools as a counselor.

"It was the first summer I spent away from home," Neaton said. "I did a lot of water skiing and 'tubing' on Portage Lake."

Neaton's sister Mary also attends Tech.

The youngest of four children, Patrick also has a sister Theresa, who just graduated from UM-Dearborn with a teaching degree. Another sister, Sherrie, recently graduated from Livonia Franklin High. Patrick lives with his mother in Redford, while his father Pete resides in Livonia.

PATRICK WAS FIRST exposed to hockey at age 7 by his uncle who took him to a Red Wings game.

"I really like it so I borrowed my cousin Danny's skates and that's how I got started," he said.

Neaton first played in a Dearborn house league and gradually worked his way into the Caesars' organization, which has produced the likes of several outstanding pro players, the most recent and notable being Westland's Mike Modano, the NHL's top overall pick (by the Minnesota North Stars) in the June 1988 draft.

Neaton has become what he calls himself "a solid defenseman."

"Nothing flashy," he said. "I'll move the puck up when there's an opportunity. Right now my coach (Woog) likes the defense to play up a lot."

And with the international experience, Neaton should find himself closer to his ultimate goal.

"Someday I'd like to play on the Olympic team," he said.