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RECRUITING

In-state quarterbacks battle for supremacy at Midwest Elite Camp

By Josh Helmholdt
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George Yarberry and his team from MichiganPreps.com hosted the Midwest Elite Camp at the Total Sports Complex in Wixom on Saturday and the event featured some of the top players in the state. Center stage, however, belonged to three quarterbacks who have all earned more than a dozen scholarship offers thus far in the process.

Orchard Lake St. Mary's Robert Bolden (6-4, 195 pounds), Saline's Joe Boisture (6-6, 220) and Inkster's Devin Gardner (6-4, 210) are each ranked four stars by Rivals.com. Bolden and Gardner had competed against each other at various camps the last couple years, but never had all three elite state of Michigan quarterbacks competed together on the same stage ... until Saturday.

"It definitely gave the camp an atmosphere of elite competition," Jim Kielbaso, one of the camp's organizers, said of the quarterback competition. "I thought it was really interesting to see those quarterbacks interact and at least act like they were friends and were there to have a good time and play football."

Scouts and recruiting analysts from around the country came to see the talent on display in Wixom on Saturday, and as expected, a lot of the post-event chatter centered on the performances of the quarterbacks.

The consensus was that Boisture, a pro-style quarterback, showed the best overall passing ability on the day, but all three quarterbacks had their moments. Bolden and Gardner are of the dual-threat variety, so a camp setting does not showcase all of their abilities. Both have great arm strength, but still need to continue to develop their mechanics.

Rivals.com ranks Boisture as the top quarterback in the state of Michigan. TheWolverine.com and SpartanMag.com both list Gardner and Bolden 1-2 in the state. Who ultimately reigns supreme as the state's top quarterback, though, is a discussion that is sure to continue right through this fall.

While the trio of four-star quarterbacks garnered most of the attention heading into the camp, Montague's Cody Kater (6-4, 200) made a case for his name to be on equal footing with the three more recognizable quarterbacks. Kater plays in a run-oriented offense at Montague, a smaller division school near Muskegon, but he also impressed observers Saturday with his arm strength, accuracy and mechanics.

Other position groups on Saturday also featured top talent. Livonia Stevenson's Austin White, who boasts double-digit Division 1 offers, ran mostly with the wide receivers – a group that also featured standouts Baquer Sayed of Dearborn Fordson and Vorheese Zanders on Inkster.

"There were probably a couple kids at each position that jumped out at me," Kielbaso said. "I thought

the best energy was during the o-line/d-line 1-on-1s. They were really fired up and there were kids going hard and competing their butts off.”

Highland Park offensive guard Kenneth Woodget (6-4, 360) and Plymouth Salem offensive guard Ed Merhi (6-4, 295) were two linemen who made names for themselves at the Midwest Elite Camp. Among the defensive linemen, Detroit Cody's Kurtis Hawkins (6-2, 220), Cass Tech's Christopher Devezin (6-2, 305) and Ypsilanti Willow Run's Garret Davis (6-3, 269) all had strong performances.

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