

Taking the next step

TC Central looks to ascend Big North Conference ladder

By **MARK URBAN**

Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — For the first time since the Traverse City schools split, TC Central embarks on a football season having won the last game of the previous campaign.

For the first time since Kelly Clark took over as coach, the Trojans aren't starting from scratch.

Now it's time to take the next step.

"I've been playing for three years in coach Clark's spread offense," senior quarterback Tyler Mills said. "We're just trying to focus and get everybody else on track, as well as keeping myself in check with what the defense is doing on the field. It progresses each year."

"This is our third season coming

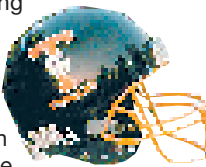
up," Clark said. "So far we're off to our best start. It's due to getting consistency in the coaching staff. The staff's learning curve isn't as sharp.

"We know the things we want to accomplish. The kids are also at that level. They're coming back and not starting from scratch like we have in the past."

In fact the Trojans, who have gone 3-6 each of the previous four seasons, want to remember the past.

TC Central closed out the 2001 season with a thrilling 31-28 victory over TC West. It was the first victory over the Titans and the win by the Trojans knocked West out of the playoffs.

"It gave our kids — and our school in general — some confidence, some belief in each other, the system and the staff," Clark said. "It was one of those games that you come into it and the only people that believe you're going to win are the



TROJANS PREVIEW

Record-Eagle/Elizabeth Conley
After four straight 3-6 seasons, but coming off a 31-28 victory over TC West in the 2001 season finale, the Traverse City Central seniors are ready to take the next step in 2002.

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