

# Chippewa Valley vs. Dakota getting national spotlight



Perry A. Farrell, Detroit Free Press 1:23 p.m. EDT September 1, 2015



Clinton Township Chippewa Valley's Doug Roberts, left, evades Macomb Dakota's Josh Burnham on Oct. 18, 2013. (Photo: Timothy Galloway Special to the DFP)

The football rivalry between Macomb Dakota and Clinton Township Chippewa Valley has made national news.

The neighboring schools face off Thursday at Dakota, and the Great American Rivalry Series announced that it will feature "The Backyard Brawl," though it will not be broadcast.

The winning team will take home the Great American Rivalry Series champions trophy, presented by the Marines, and the game's Most Valuable Player also will be honored. Along with these awards and a "giant football blowup" on site, an alumnus from each school will be inducted into the 12th class of the Great American Rivalry Series Hall of Fame, and Marines will be on hand to interact with the crowd.

The Kentucky-based Great American Rivalry Series will feature 100 games nationwide this season, including Grosse Pointe South vs. Grosse Pointe North.

Dakota won 15 straight games in the series before the Big Reds [managed a 28-27 upset in the state playoffs](#) last season, when Stefan Claiborne blocked an extra point in the waning seconds.

## No. 5 Chippewa Valley's Claiborne a special-teams star

"When I was at U of D (Jesuit) and we played (Brother) Rice, they wanted that to be their rival," Chippewa Valley coach Scott Merchant said. "I said, 'Hey, I'm just telling you guys, I went to Brother Rice, and they never considered U of D as a rival. You have to beat them to be a rival. I think it's a little different in this situation because we're two miles apart and we're in the same district. I think, if you ask Dakota, and I can't speak for them, probably before the last two years, the last five years, it has been Eisenhower, Romeo and Stevenson when they had their run."

"I think the rivalry is in full effect again. It's amped up again because we're holding up our end of the bargain."

Dakota took home the Division I state title in 2006 and 2007; Chippewa Valley won in 2001.

Both teams are 1-0 this season, with Dakota [beating two-time defending state champion Clarkston](#) and Chippewa Valley [knocking off Lake Orion](#).