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Football Forecasts Say Aquinas to Lead Pack

By JOHN DOSER

The New York State Sports Writers Association, the perpetrator of the weekly state high school football poll, is already impressed with the potential of the 1978 edition of the Aquinas Institute Little Irish.

In the writers' group's fall grid forecast, Aquinas is described as not only No. 1 in Section 5, the Greater Rochester Area, but "perhaps No. 1 in New York (State)."

Behind Aquinas locally, the writers select East Rochester, Fairport, Gates-Chili, McQuaid, Sperry, Athena, Schroeder, East Irondequoit, Monroe and Mooney.

When informed, Aquinas head coach Nick Teta just chuckled.

"They pick a lot of the teams on past records," Teta says. "You know how those things are. Somebody always throws the Jonas on somebody else."

The distinction is flattering, Teta admits, and he says Aquinas will have a good ball team.

"Whether or not you're the best ballteam in New York State or Section 5 — those are the things you don't really know."

"We have a lot of questions marks, just like everybody else. We're not like colleges, we don't build a program by recruiting — you take what you have. We have some inexperience in certain places and you never really know about those things."

This season will be unlike any other season in Section 5 grid history because championship playoffs are scheduled for the first time.

The playoff dates are Nov.

18-19 with the top two finishers, (based on a point system) in Classes AAA, AA, A, B and C meeting for sectional titles.

Title games will be played at Fauver (U of R) and Holleder Stadiums with the AAA clash scheduled for 1 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 19 at Holleder.

Ironically, when the writers checked out the top heavyweights in other sections in the state, the Little Irish popped up there too.

For example — Syracuse Nottingham, Bishop Ludden and Auburn are among the top teams rated in Section 3 — but the writers point out that Auburn "must open with Aquinas" in an "interesting non-league" game.

The writers like Elmira Free Academy in Section 4 along with Ithaca but point out that both teams must face Aquinas of Section 5 in "fascinating non-leaguers."

The Irish open at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Sept. 15, at Auburn, a team which was out-played by Aquinas last year in the mud and rain but managed to squeeze out a 6-0 win — Aquinas' only loss of the season.

The Irish then face Franklin and Madison on successive Saturdays, host Elmira Southside, and then tackle the three rival Catholic schools in order, Kearney, McQuaid and Mooney.

Teta's troops close out the season against Elmira Free and R-H Sperry.

Teta approves of the playoff concept, but doesn't like the lateness of the games in the schedule.

"I don't like to play games — I don't mind the coaching — that late. I don't think it's

fair to the teams to play in sloppy snow. It's not a true test when two teams get together like that.

"I'd just as soon like to see the season moved up like (in) Pennsylvania. They've probably already played one or two games. They start the first of August and school starts maybe in the second week of August.

"They play 10 games down there by November — when you get into those dates you're facing snow and rain and it's not a fair test between two teams," Teta explains.

Teta says he hates to see teams win because the ball slips out of one back's hand and falls into your tackle's hand and you get it on the five yard line.

"It becomes a matter of breaks and things like that. Normally, these things might not happen; good teams don't fumble too much. And these things wouldn't happen between the two teams if the weather was nice."

If the season jells the way many area fans think it will, does Teta think it will be Aquinas vs. Fairport in the first official Section 5 Class AAA football championship?

"That's hard to say," Teta replies. "We have a tough one to get by in our first one."

"We had a good team last year — we ran them (Auburn) up and down the field, but we just couldn't put a score across."

Teta agrees there doesn't seem to be a softie on the Aquinas grid schedule this Fall.

"We have all Triple A schools and if we were to go something like 8-1, or maybe even better, we'd probably be in the playoff," Teta adds.

Sports Who's Who

Editor's note — Readers are invited to mail brief news items for this column to Who's Who, 51 Boxwood Lane, Fairport, N. Y. 14450.

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Aquinas Institute, picked by the New York State Sports Writers Association as a solid candidate for Number one in high school football in New York State, has a solid number of performers back for the 1978 season.

Quarterback Mark Magliocco, running back Bob Paternico (the City-Catholic League's leading scorer last year), linebacker John Cocilova, center Dominic DelVecchio, linebacker Frank Angelone (his dad Hank played for AQ back in the 1950s), and tackle-defensive end Steve DiLaura are all back with three years of varsity experience in most cases, says head coach Nick Teta.

"We have some inexperience on the offensive and defensive lines, but a lot of our kids played in back-up positions last year," Teta adds.

Aquinas faced East Rochester, Webster Thomas, Geneva, Hornell, Brighton, and Madison in scrimmages last Saturday at East Rochester.

John Evans, a Notre Dame of Elmira graduate from the Class of 1971, was a member earlier this season of the Denver Broncos. He was drafted out of the University of South Dakota and remained with the team until the last cut.

He's currently awaiting word from the Canadian Football League according to Timothy J. Hewitt of the Notre Dame Alumni Association.

Marty Mahoney, McQuaid senior, was a member of the Region 6 200-meter medley relay team which won a bronze medal at the recent Empire Games at Syracuse University.

Other team members included Kurt Keber of Rush-Henrietta Sperry, Doug Peel of Fairport and Tim Hawkins of Buffalo.

Mahoney says the Empire Games are a wonderful opportunity for amateur athletes in New York State and every athlete should try to compete in some phase of the games next year.

Mike Cotton and Vince Stigliano of Victor, both members of St. Patrick's Parish, Victor, were members of the Region 6 basketball team which competed in the Empire Games.

Linda D'Onofrio, associate chairman of the physical education department at Bishop Kearney High School, has been named assistant women's volleyball and basketball coach at St. John Fisher College.

She continues to teach physical education and coach girls' soccer and softball at Kearney.

D'Onofrio is also an active member and past chairman of the Central Western New York Women's Board of Officials.

She was graduated from Irondequoit High and earned her physical education degree from Brockport State. She's also a candidate for an MS in Education from Nazareth College.

Larry Lays of Pittsford was named head women's

tennis coach at Fisher; he's also moving into his third year as head coach of the Fisher men's tennis team.

Lays was graduated from Rochester's East High; he has a BA in business administration from Ohio Wesleyan.

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FOOTNOTES — New Rochelle won last year's NYSSWA large school football poll with a 9-0 record; Fairport, also 9-0, was No. 2, and Aquinas, 8-1, was No. 8.

Lyons holds the longest current grid winning streak in Section 5 with 16 victories in a row. Aquinas is best in the City-Catholic circuit with eight wins in a row.

The longest win streak in New York State grid history is 55 straight by Massena Central, Section 10, which ended in 1957.

Longest local grid victory streak is 24 by McQuaid which ended in 1977.

Lou Alexander Jr., former athletic director at RIT, has been chosen for induction into the RIT Sports Hall of Fame. Alexander is also former head baseball and basketball coach at RIT and is currently coordinator of student recruitment and alumni relations in RIT's department of athletics.

Gene Baker, former head baseball and basketball coach at Livonia Central and Section 5 baseball chairman for many years, was named Baseball Coach of the Year for 1977 by the National High School Athletic Coaches Association. He's now head baseball coach on a part-time basis at RIT.



Winners Circle

RapAround weekly will run a photo of a group of students taken somewhere in the diocese. One person will be circled and if that person brings the clipping to the Courier-Journal before noon of the Tuesday following our publication date, he or she will receive \$5. This week's photo was taken at Aquinas during assembly. The person circled above should bring the clipping to Joan M. Smith, Courier-Journal, by noon, Tuesday, Sept. 19 to receive \$5.

Student Senate Busy

As the opening of school comes around again, so does the chance of new learning and of sharing new experiences. Over at St. Agnes High School, the Student Senate officers have been planning activities for the coming year. The first event on their calendar is Shareholder's Day, Sept. 29. Included in this special event is a dance featuring the WBBF Disco to be held that evening.

Student Senate representative elections will be held the last week of September for upperclassmen and the first week of October for freshman.

This year's Student Senate officers are: Jacki Smith, president; Cheryl Sanfilippo, vice president; Eileen

Naughton, Donna Preston, co-treasurers; Colleen Jones, Theresa Lauth, co-secretaries.

Grads Win Awards

Five 1978 St. Agnes High School graduates were awarded Ralph Bunche scholarships. They were: Mary Rausch, Yolanda Johnson, Claudette Anderson, Tracy Miller and Nannette Nocon.

The awards were presented at the Scholarship Awards Program in August by James Prettyman, chairman of the event. The scholarship fund named after the man who was the 1950 Nobel Peace Prize winner and who also served as a United Nations mediator in Palestine is presently under the chairmanship of Robert Young, with money from local industry.