

'New' grid coach at DeSales to stress same winning ways

By Richard A. Kiley

A "new" head football coach will be pacing the sidelines for the Saints of DeSales this fall.

But fans of the playing style of the football Saints under former head coach Harry Furman — who recently relocated in Atlanta, Ga., for business reasons — need not worry.

Jim McNicholas, assistant to Furman for 14 years, does not intend to make any drastic changes in the program.

"Harry built up the program, and it's hard to change when you've been winning," said McNicholas, a 1966 graduate of DeSales. Furman compiled an overall record of 87-42-7 in 16 years, guiding his teams to two sectional titles in 1977 and 1979, in addition to three league championships. "Even though the coach has changed, it doesn't mean I'll change what we've done in the past. The last five or six years, he (Furman) has spent a lot more time with me at clinics and reviewing games. It's pretty hard to change when someone has drilled things into your mind."

Referring to himself as a student of Furman's, McNicholas said he will be quick to reestablish his mentor's coaching philosophy this year.

"Harry's teams were primarily defense-minded and very aggressive," McNicholas said. "And our offense has always been quick and hard-hitting. We'll continue with that. I've got a good nucleus to work with and solid players coming back."

McNicholas considers himself fortunate that he "only" lost eight starters from last year's 8-2 squad, which lost a one-point contest to Red Jacket before eventually losing to a powerful Clyde team in the sectionals.

Losing that number of players might give some coaches nightmares in these summer months before the season begins. McNicholas

said, however, that because it is common to see DeSales players starting on both offense and defense, the number of players he lost is somewhat deceiving.

Most hurt by graduation was the Saints' offense. McNicholas will have to find a competent replacement for last year's starting quarterback Tag Daniels, who will be slinging the pigskin for Hobart this fall.

Also missing from this year's team will be Mike Bucklan, an All-Conference linebacker who also led Section 5 Class C in scoring as a fullback. Bucklan will display his athletic prowess for the Red Dragons of Cortland State this year.

"Harry left me pretty decent," said McNicholas, who has scheduled his first practice as head coach for August 20. "A lot of young people that played a year of ball last year will see action again this year."

McNicholas will look to tri-captains Kevin Powers, Scott Guerreri and Bill Sindoni to fill the void caused by the graduation of players like Daniels and Bucklan. Powers was fierce as a linebacker and offensive left guard for the Saints last year, while Guerreri proved he was tough as a fast-food steak at offensive and defensive end. Sindoni will be used primarily as a running back.

"They are three super guys," McNicholas said. "They will be leaned on heavily to help us in both leadership and football (ability)."

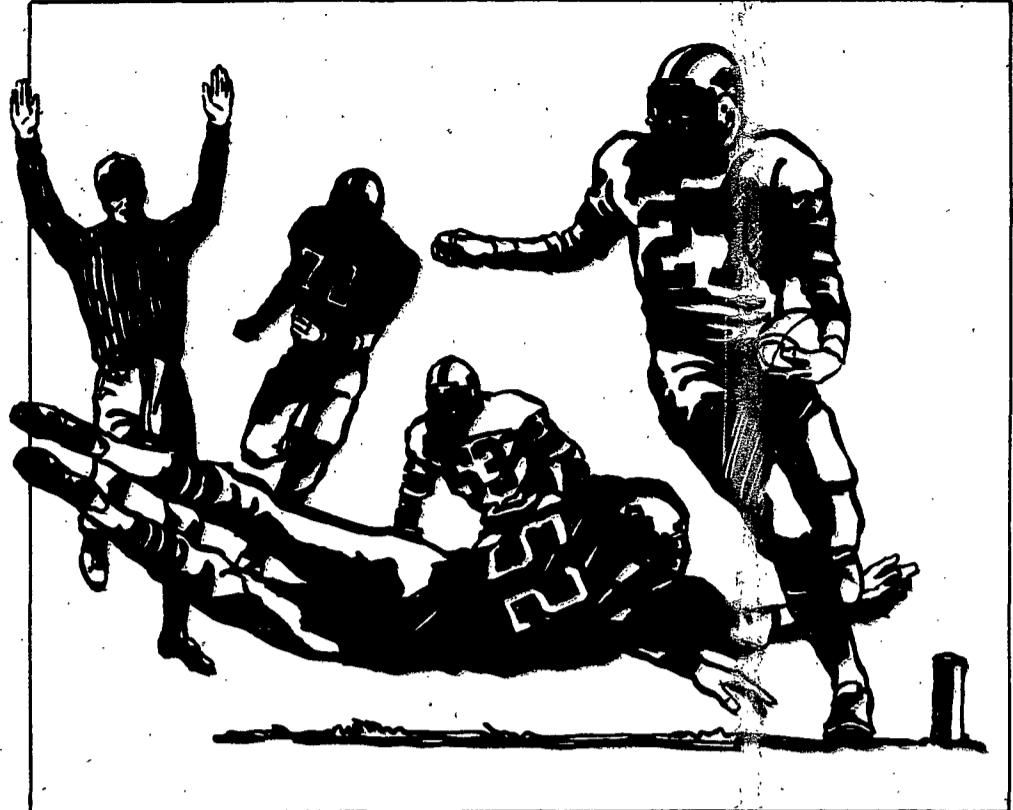
In trying to enhance the program on a larger scale, McNicholas hopes to see a junior varsity football team at DeSales within three years.

According to the new head coach, DeSales dropped the junior varsity program when declining enrollment made it necessary.

"DeSales almost had to close down eight or nine teams ago (because of declining enrollment), and in the course of losing students, the

for the Little Irish in 1977-78 before embarking on a four-year career as a defensive back at Cortland State — the program will emphasize flexibility and conditioning as well as offensive and defensive skills.

The cost for the program is \$50. Boys interested in participating in the camp should contact Battaglia at (716)254-2020 or 227-7547.



football program was forced to go to one team. Enrollment is growing now, so we might have a chance to get a team going. There's enough people there," McNicholas said.

McNicholas had already scheduled two exhibition games ahead of Honeoye Falls and Romulus, hoping to get freshman who have been shying away from the football program because there is not a junior varsity team.

Assisting McNicholas will be Bob Taney Jr., Bill Maher, Mike Martin and Mark McCheyne. McNicholas believes that the four coaches' familiarity with the program — each has at least three years experience with DeSales — will make the transition an even easier one.

"I think it's going to be a good season because the assistant coaches are really standing behind me," McNicholas said. "That means a lot to you as a head coach. I didn't have to waste time looking for assistant coaches."

McNicholas added that the school's enthusiasm has rubbed off on him and his staff, all of whom are volunteers.

"I jumped at the opportunity to coach here. The whole school has such an unbelievable amount of pride that half the job of a coach is done because the kids want to play so much. They (the students) know we are volunteer coaches, and they can really appreciate that."

A testament to what McNicholas referred to is the success of the athletic program at DeSales, which competes against mostly larger schools.

Steve Muzzi, who will begin his 10th year as DeSales' athletic director this fall, is confident McNicholas can aptly take over for Furman.

"Jim will stress the same system, the same fundamentals," said Muzzi. "I'm confident he can do the job; he's had a good teacher."

Football Camp on tap

Aquinas Institute, 1127 Dewey Ave., Rochester, is sponsoring a Little Irish Football Camp for all interested grid players who will be in the eighth through 12th grades.

The camp will be offered from 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. during the week of Aug. 11 to 15.

According to the camp's first-year coordinator, Chris Battaglia — who played

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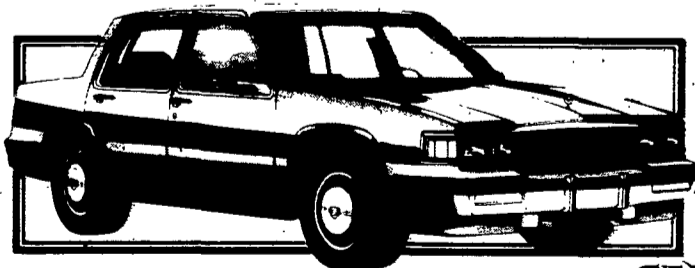
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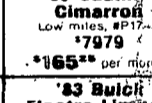
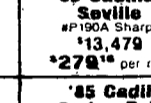
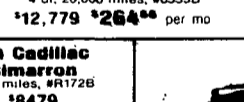
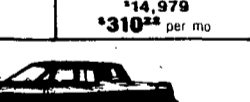
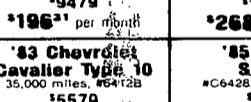
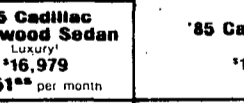
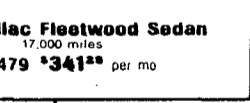
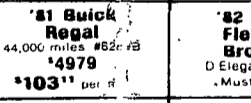
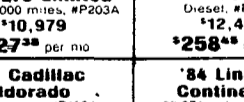
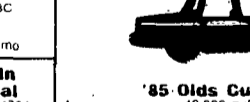
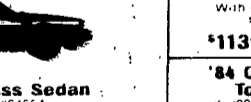
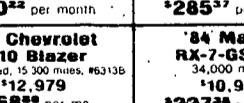
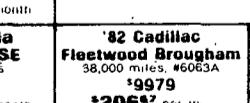

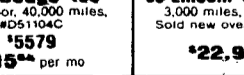
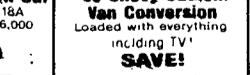
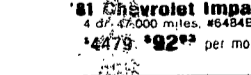



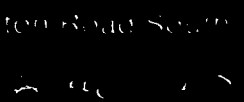
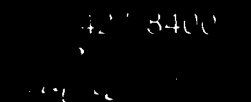




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