

Catholic high schools gear up for exciting sport season

By Richard A. Kiley

With the beginning of the fall sports season just weeks away, athletic programs at Catholic high schools throughout the diocese are gearing up for what coaches hope will be successful campaigns.

And why not? Last fall, several athletic programs, including the football Knights of McQuaid, dueled it out with the best of the city schools in reaching sectional finals.

This fall, other coaches will try and assert their teams' athletic prowess.

At Aquinas, second-year football coach Chris Battaglia will try and improve on last year's 3-5 season with a good core of starters returning this season.

On offense, Battaglia will look to junior quarterback Mark Chapman and fullback Joe Altobelli Jr. to put some points on the scoreboard. Battaglia admits his team was not exactly "offensively explosive last year," but hopes that will change this year.

"We lost a couple of games last year that could have gone either way. We'll find out early in the season how good we are." The Little Irish's first two games are against area titans East and Fairport.

Emilio Monti heads the varsity boys' soccer program, while Mary Beth Moore, who coaches softball in the spring, will coach girls' soccer. Pat Connelly will coach Aquinas cross-country, which will have four of last year's top seven runners returning, according to Gigliotti. Co-captains Ned Blodgett and Mark Tondryk will combine with Chris Marion, Gordie Malthaner and Eric Setzer to try and topple such perennial area powers as McQuaid, Pittsford, Penfield and Irondequoit.

John Heck, who recently coached the West all-stars in the fourth annual Eddie Meath football game, will again coach the Cardinal Mooney Cardinals this fall.

At DeSales High School in Geneva, Jim McNicholas hopes to carry on the winning tradition he inherited from Harry Furman, who compiled an overall record of 87-42-7 with the Saints. McNicholas said he has a good nucleus of players returning from last year's 8-2 squad, and that no drastic changes will be made in the Saints' playing style of the past.

Notre Dame High School in Elmira, a Class C school that frequently battles both Class A and B schools over in Section IV, appears to be ready to slay some of the area's giants, according to 12th-year athletic director Mike Johnston.

Mike D'Aloisio, along with assistants Ron Norman and Dick Craft, have some tough players to replace the team that staged last year's late-season heroics. The Crusaders fell 2-0 in the Section IV final to Newark Valley in arctic-like conditions. D'Aloisio will have to fill the void for Jim Polcyn, who set the Twin Tier passing record with over 1,000 yards in each of his three seasons on-varsity. One of



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

Polcyn's favorite receivers, Dan Gizzi, was also lost to graduation.

Henry Ferguson returns for a second year as head coach of the boys' varsity soccer team. Ferguson hopes to improve on last year's 10-10-1 record, with the unenviable task of replacing Mike Dimon (35 goals), Chris Donaher (four goals, seven assists), and Mark Palinkas (11 goals, 16 assists).

Ferguson will depend on goalkeeper Andy Garman, who recorded 306 saves for the Crusaders last year, as well as Jason Breeman, James Smith (defenseman), Mike Brabham (possible midfielder) and Chris Leljedal (defenseman) for their leadership and athletic ability.

Ferguson said a win over one of the area's titans — Corning, Southside, EFA or Hornell — could set the tone for the season.

"Hopefully we can get over the hump, by beating one or two of those teams."

Remaining Notre Dame fall sports are girls' soccer, which will be coached by Steve Weber, and cross-country and tennis. Dan Hurley will be returning after one year's absence to coach the runners while Jack Lowman heads the tennis team.

Nazareth Academy should prove a force to be reckoned with in girls' soccer this fall. Dick Hendrick's girls finished 7-6 last year, "one of their best years ever," according to the third-year coach.

Hendrick will need to have big performances from returning players such as Paula Short, Lesley Salladin and Margaret Sowyo, who Hendrick said is questionable after a serious injury sustained while playing basketball last winter.

"This team has a lot of potential," Hendrick said. "Even though there are not many seniors, I really think things could come together."

Richard Myers, athletic director at Our Lady of Mercy High School, is looking for the traditional strong seasons from Lady Monarch teams this fall. This fall, Mercy should make its presence known in cross-country competition. Myers said "the spirit and desire of the Mercy teams is what helps them succeed," illustrated by the school's three-time Section V basketball championships and six-time championships in track.

The athletic department is excited about off-season expansions at Bishop Kearney. The football field will now have lights, a press box and a concession stand for the 1986 football and soccer seasons and the new roof of the gymnasium/auditorium marks the final phase of the major renovation plan. Other outdoor facilities include new fields for lacrosse, baseball, softball, track and tennis. The indoor gymnasium serves the basketball, cheerleading, volleyball and wrestling teams.

Catholic schools offer academic excellence, opportunity to meet Jesus 'on the high ground'

By Sister Virginia Steinwachs, SSJ
Assistant Superintendent of Schools

The oft-quoted research by James Coleman indicates that:

- On the average, Catholic schools are more effective than public schools are, while spending about half as much per pupil;
- Catholic school students score about two grade levels higher than public school students do in math, reading and vocabulary;
- Catholic school students are much less likely to be absent or cut classes than public school students are, and discipline problems are reported much less often in Catholic schools; and
- Catholic school students do about 50 percent more homework than their public-school counterparts do.

Do Catholic schools excel in these areas

because they cater to wealthy and bright students? No, this is a myth slow to die. Research shows that 60 percent of Catholic school parents earn less than \$20,000. Seventy-two percent of parents whose children attend Catholic schools in the inner city earn less than \$15,000. Many students are below level in reading and math when they enroll in Catholic schools.

Research, however, cannot easily measure the most important part of Catholic education — the moral development of students. In the very young, personality, ideas, goals and habits begin to form as the children view the adults in their lives. Parents and teachers reveal who they are by living what they believe. This is the lesson that tends to last the longest. "We wish to see Jesus" (John 12:21). Jesus is to be found on high ground.

where solid and enduring values can give meaning and purpose to life. Parents and teachers are on that high ground if they are striving for a mature spirituality in their own lives. Pope John Paul II, in a 1984 address to Catholic educators in Canada, stated: "Catholic schools must never forget that their ultimate purpose is to prepare young people to take up, in Christian freedom, their

personal and social responsibilities for the pilgrimage of all humanity to eternal life." Students listen to witnesses more than they listen to teachers.

Academic excellence in Catholic schools is very important, but reaching Jesus on the high ground is the only effective way of touching the future with love, justice and compassion.

Mooney renovations coincide with twenty-fifth anniversary

Twenty-five years ago this fall, Cardinal Mooney High School opened its doors for the first time. As Mooney marks its silver-anniversary year, it has undergone a dynamic change during the summer months.

With the removal of asbestos in the halls, stairwells, offices, cafeteria and band room, a facelift has come about.

A resource program has been established to help students experiencing difficulty in math, reading and writing.

Beginning this fall, all ninth graders will study earth science. Junior Achievement will co-sponsor the three-section applied economics course, and provide an IBM computer, a consultant to assist and advise teachers, and textbooks.

The Forensics Club has been re-established after a long absence. The club was an award winner in the '60s and '70s.

A capital campaign has been established to coincide with Mooney's silver anniversary.



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