

# AQ shoots for return trip to sectional playoffs

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

Was the 1991 season an overnight trip back to the glory days of Aquinas football, or will that glorious campaign evolve as the first part of an extended holiday?

The Little Irish lost some key starters from last year's standout squad, which produced an undefeated regular season and a final record of 8-1-0. But second-year head coach Joe Munno believes that his 1992 bunch is worthy of repeating its City-Catholic League championship and going back to the Section 5 playoffs.

"We have 16 returning players, and I'm real pleased about that," said Munno. "We actually had a relatively young team last year, so we're in decent shape now."

Aquinas begins its season this Saturday, Sept. 12, with a 1 p.m. road game against Wilson Magnet.

Elmira Notre Dame, meanwhile, embarks on its 1992 schedule with a Sept. 12 game at Tioga (1:30 p.m. start). The Crusaders finished with a 6-3 record last season after winning the Section 4 Division 4 title and state playoffs in 1990.

Bishop Kearney, coming off a final 1991 mark of 4-4, opens up on Sept. 11 with a 7:30 p.m. home game against Canandaigua. The Kings were Section 5 Class B champs in 1989.

After experiencing a 4-4-1 finish in 1991, McQuaid Jesuit should be a contender this year with an imposing roster that includes eight players weighing 210 pounds or more. The Knights host Pittsford in a 1:30 p.m. season opener on Sept. 12.

Geneva DeSales will obviously seek substantial improvement over last season, when the Saints suffered through an 0-8 campaign. The Saints' first game is Sept. 12 at home against Marcus Whitman in a 1 p.m. start.

Here's a summary of the teams and top players to keep an eye on over the next two months:

**AQUINAS** would like very badly to again qualify for Section 5 playoff competition, which the Little Irish entered as the No. 1 seed in 1991 but were unceremoniously knocked out by Irondequoit, 34-21.

"Enough kids played last year to know what (sectionals) is all about. One of their big goals in to get back to the tournament," said Munno.

Returning starters, all seniors, include tight ends/defensive ends Mark Johnson and Sam DiGaetano, running backs/linebackers Tony Bianchi and Phil Wegman, offensive guard Steve Spencer, quarterback/safety Tony Fanale, and offensive tackle/nose guard Shawn Dillon.

Among the top newcomers: seniors — flanker Nick Reisinger, center Vito Caracati, offensive tackle Tom Fenlon, and defensive back Brian Mastrella; juniors — running back Gabe Bauza, quarterback/defensive back Matt Dely, offensive guard Dennis Annechino, kicker/linebacker David Khuns, de-



Babette G. Augustin/Photo editor  
Aquinas Institute's Gabe Bauza (left) is tackled by a Gates-Chili player during a scrimmage at Irondequoit High School Sept 5.

fensive backs Ron Miner and Andy Wegman, and defensive tackles Carmen Indiano, Matt DiPaolo, and DiPaolo's twin brother Christian.

"We're versatile at the skill positions," said Munno. "We have two quarterbacks pushing each other and three above-decent running backs."

Munno predicted that a key factor for this club lies in the performance of his new players. "How good they are is how good the team is going to be," he commented.

Like Aquinas, **ELMIRA NOTRE DAME** is blessed with a solid crop of veterans (15) from a strong 1991 team.

"I like our chemistry and personality. There are some good teams in this division, but if we can cut down on turnovers and mental mistakes we can be in the thick of things at the end," said 12th-year head coach Mike D'Aloisio, whose Crusaders now compete in Division 5 of Section 4.

Projected starters for the Tioga game are: seniors — split end/cornerback/kicker Pat Palmer, fullback/linebacker Jason Cresswell, flanker/cornerback Luke Sheehan, tight end/defensive end Mike Cornacchio, offensive tackle/linebacker John Maio, offensive tackle/defensive tackle Tim Wilsoncroft, offensive guard Willie Cain, offensive guard/linebacker Brian Parmenter, linebacker Marc Della Salla, and defensive end Shawn Bennett; juniors — quarterback Tom McNamara, halfback/linebacker Dan Wilson, flanker John Violette, cornerback Matt Fo-

garty, and offensive guard/defensive tackle John Thatcher; sophomores — halfback/free safety Joel Stephens and center/defensive tackle Howard Hodder.

"We're experienced at the running back and receiver positions, but not at quarterback. We'll go along gradually until the quarterbacks can get some game experience," said D'Aloisio.

The Kings of **BISHOP KEARNEY**, former City-Catholic League participants who now play an independent schedule, only face one team from within Monroe County (Wilson Magnet) this season. The rest of their schedule comprises mostly schools from the Finger Lakes area.

The foremost returning Kearney players are: seniors — fullback/linebacker Steve Canali, offensive tackle/defensive tackle Bob Hilburger, and center/defensive tackle Andy Valvassori; and junior offensive guard/defensive end Tom Valvassori.

Other top Kings include: seniors — quarterback/safety Chad Gunerra, offensive tackle/defensive tackle Martino Centi, split end/linebacker Jason Randall, and defensive backs Curtis Woods and Sam Lopez; juniors — tight end/defensive end Akin Ross, tailback/cornerback Sherrard Sloan, and linebacker Pat Branch; and sophomores — offensive guard Chris Ashton

and tailback/defensive back Vernon Banks.

"We have good overall team speed," said eighth-year head coach Nick Teta. "We need to gain experience on the line. I think we can have a pretty good season if we get something out of the line and don't lose key personnel."

Last year's rebuilding effort could pay big dividends for McQUAID in 1992.

The Knights feature three juniors who were full-time starters as sophomores last season: linebacker/kicker Pat Derleth, offensive tackle/defensive tackle Aaron Medina, and offensive guard/defensive tackle Matt Richards.

Also expected to figure prominently for McQ are: seniors — quarterback/defensive back Kelly Scanlon, quarterback Jim Malvaso, fullback/linebacker Ben DeLuca, tailback/safety Josh Sharer, tight end/safety Tim Whelehan, offensive guard D.R. Salerno, split ends Dave Kollar and Craig Cypher; flankers Casey Sanderson and Pat Robinson, defensive end Anthony Archbald, and nose guard Pat Sadler; juniors — center Dave Tipple, offensive tackle Jim Brown, and defensive back Jamie DeLuca; and sophomore tight end/defensive end Ben Wandtke.

"We definitely have high hopes," said 11th-year coach Tom Sprague. "Physically, we can match up with anybody. We have a very good line and a good kicking game, and we plan to throw a lot."

Head coach Mark Mccheyne has emphasized conditioning in an effort to reverse fortunes at **GENEVA DESALES**.

"Football teams usually have seven or eight double sessions, and I had 12. We're ready to play football," said Mccheyne, in his third season as the Saints' mentor.

DeSales should be strong across the line, with seniors Ted Brown, Pete Mooney, Jeff Shipley, Kris Smaldone, Andy Conley and Pat Taney all seeing duty in the trenches. Another top Saint senior is halfback/defensive back/kicker David Casasanta, who was the team's leading rusher in 1991.

Other leading DeSales players are: juniors — quarterback Kris Friday, fullback B.J. Carter, halfback/linebacker D.J. Cass, center/linebacker Pat Guard, tight end/linebacker Bob Mungo, and defensive back Eric Colton; and sophomore tight end/safety Jay Lamson.

"We'll have a decent running game if the senior linemen can open up holes for Casasanta," said Mccheyne.

Due to his team's rebuilding situation, Mccheyne is approaching the 1992 season game-by-game. "Our goal right now is just to win one game; then we'll start talking about winning two," he remarked.

## IF YOU LIVE IN THE FINGER LAKES REGION ...

Here's a Chance for you to Earn Extra Money In Your Spare Time!

Work as much or as little as you want! Be your own boss and earn generous commissions. The Catholic Courier seeks to engage motivated individuals to sell advertising throughout the Finger Lakes Region. Ideal for housewives, part-timers, or retirees who want to supplement Social Security or just for some extra spending money.

For More details, call or write:  
Bernie Puglisi, (716) 328-4340  
Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road  
Rochester, NY 14624

## Walk-a-thon fundraiser set for Sept. 20 at Village Gate

**ROCHESTER** — A charity "rocking walk-a-thon" will be held on Sunday, Sept. 20, at the Village Gate Square, 274 N. Goodman St.

The five-mile walk-a-thon will benefit the American Parkinson's Disease Association. Registration begins at 12:30 p.m., and walking is scheduled to start at 1 p.m.

The day's festivities will include music from Nik and the Nice Guys,

with entertainment beginning at 2:30 p.m. Walk-A-Thon participants will be admitted free with completed pledge sheets, and non-walkers may buy advance tickets for \$5 (tickets are \$7 at the gate).

Tickets are available at Rochester-area Mr. Shoes Pizza locations as well as Eastman Kodak Company recreation clubs.