

McQ is mammoth; ND seeks another bowl bid

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

It's going to be a big, big year for McQuaid Jesuit.

Without a doubt, that's as simple a prediction as you can make when discussing the upcoming high-school football season.

Jinx factor? No chance. This particular version of "big" revolves around the Knights' interior lineman, not wins and losses. Planning to take a group photo of these guys? Better bring a wide-angle lens.

"That's the heart of our team, what we're hoping to build everything around," said Coach Tom Sprague in reference to his starting line, which averages approximately 250 pounds per player.

McQuaid is hoping to maintain the momentum of its late-season run in 1992, which saw the Knights win their final four games and finish with a 6-3 record. Their 1993 season opener is this coming Saturday, Sept. 4, in a 2 p.m. City-Catholic League game at Franklin.

A team which enjoyed even greater 1992 success was Elmira Notre Dame, and this was a much lengthier streak: the Crusaders won their first nine games before falling to Windsor in the Section 4 Class C Bowl Game, finishing at 9-1. ND begins 1993 with a non-league road game against Seton Catholic of Binghamton on Saturday, Sept. 11, at 7:30 p.m.

Aquinas Institute is looking to bounce back from a rare sub-.500 season, which saw the Little Irish finish 2-6. AQ opens at home on Sept. 4 against Edison Tech, in a 2 p.m. City-Catholic League game.

Also hoping for improvement is Bishop Kearney, which finished 0-7-1 last year in its first season as a member of the Finger Lakes East league. The Kings' season-opening contest is Sept. 4 at Canandaigua, beginning at 2 p.m.

Geneva DeSales aims to significantly better its 1992 finish of 0-6. The Saints go for a long-awaited victory on Sept. 4 at Marcus Whitman, in a 1 p.m. Finger Lakes West encounter.

Here are capsules of the top impact players on each squad, along with comments from their head coaches:

Monsters of McQuaid

Sprague's Bulk-A-Mania cast includes offensive guard/linebacker Pat Derleth, center/nose guard Dave Tipple, offensive guard Matt Richards, offensive tackle James Brown, offensive/defensive tackle Aaron Medina, and tight end/defensive end Ben Wandtke. All are returning veterans, and all are seniors except Wandtke, a junior.

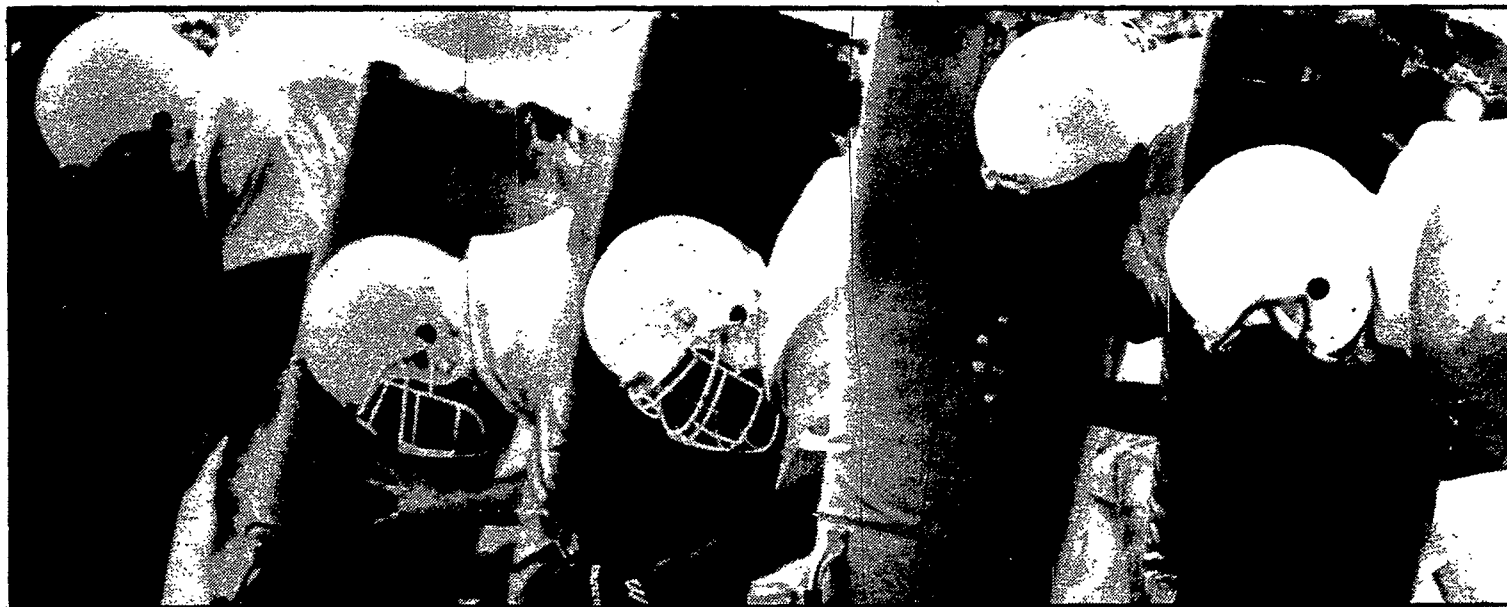
Top newcomers are senior quarterback Richi Mayewski, junior tailback/strong safety Chris Schiller, senior tailback/defensive back Matt Barbato, junior free safety Mike Kehoe, junior defensive back Jay Magee, senior fullback/defensive end John Pineau, sophomore fullback Dave Medina, junior wide receiver Tim Tyre, and senior linebacker Anthony Di-Marco.

McQuaid's demanding schedule includes non-league games against Monroe County powers Fairport, the defending Section 5 Class A champion; and Gates-Chili.

Yet Sprague, beginning his 12th year as Knights' head coach, predicts "we're going to be very competitive."

ND to go bowling?

Enough talent remains from last year's standout squad to give Notre



Aquinas Institute varsity football players run through a strength exercise during practice Aug. 26. The Little Irish open their season at home against Edison Tech this Saturday, Sept. 4.

Dame a good chance at another bowl appearance — not to mention a potential state Class C title in this, the inaugural year of the state championship playoffs.

Much of ND's offensive duties will go to junior running back Joel Stephens, who also serves as strong safety. Stephens rushed for 1,196 yards last season.

Yet 13th-year Coach Mike D'Aloisio acknowledges that senior quarterback Tom McNamara, senior running back/linebacker Dan Wilson and senior running back/linebacker Eric Shelling are also quite capable on offense.

"Stephens is so dangerous anytime he touches the ball. But if a team gears its defense to stop only Stephens, that could be a mistake," D'Aloisio acknowledged.

Other key vets are senior wide receiver/defensive back Matt Fogarty, senior offensive lineman/linebacker John Thatcher and junior offensive lineman/linebacker Howard Hodder.

Top new Crusaders are senior offensive/defensive lineman Paul Tomkins, junior offensive guard/defensive tackle Brian McCort, junior offensive/defensive tackles Rob Fisher and Eric Byland, senior receivers/defensive backs Chris Tuite and Dennis Coseo, junior receiver/defensive end Matt Cornachio, and junior tight ends/defensive ends Mike Berrettini and Shawn Golden.

Improvement for Irish?

Despite last year's struggles, third-year Aquinas Coach Joe Munno has high hopes in '93.

"We're shooting for sectionals, to be honest with you," said Munno, who guided the 1991 Little Irish into the Class BB sectional playoffs.

Returning senior starters include tight end/defensive end Andy Wegman, quarterback Matt Delly, running back Gabe Bauza, offensive guard/linebacker David Khuns, offensive/defensive tackle Christian DiPaolo, offensive tackle/defensive end Matthew DiPaolo (Christian's twin brother), and defensive tackle Carmen Indiano.

Newcomers adding depth for AQ are junior running back/defensive back Jim Miner, senior tight end/defensive end Thad Brown, junior wide receiver/safety Brian Natale, senior wide receiver/safety Ryan Hayes, senior running back/linebacker Reggie Royston, senior center Dennis Anichino, and senior defensive tackle Ramon Sanchez.

BK takes on the big boys

Perennial powerhouse Canandaigua



Vinny Valerie cools off with a water break during the Aug. 26 practice.

typifies the long list of tough opponents for Bishop Kearney. Yet eighth-year Coach Nick Teta says that he welcomes the challenge presented by quality foes.

"I think good competition is important; I like to play a hard schedule. You can't get too bogged down in winning and losing," Teta commented.

Veterans leading BK into battle will be junior tailback/defensive back Vernon Banks, senior tailback/linebacker Sherrard Sloan, senior offensive guard/linebacker Tom Valvassori, junior offensive guard/defensive end Chris Ashton, senior halfback/defensive end Richard Cannon, senior quarterback Bob Pellegrino, senior halfback/linebacker Colin Ribble,

and senior defensive back Jay Derleth.

Four newcomers, all juniors, should make a quick impact at the varsity level: offensive/defensive tackle Joe Wesley, halfback/defensive back Pat Goode, offensive tackle/linebacker Brendan Murray, and tight end Adam Randall.

Developing at DeSales

Forty-two bodies on the JV and varsity combined may not seem like a windfall for many programs, but at Geneva DeSales it's the largest turnout "since the mid-'70s," according to fourth-year Coach Mark Mccheyne.

Mccheyne predicts substantial improvement for a team that not only lost all six of its games last year, but was also forced to cancel one contest due to a lack of available players.

"We're looking pretty good. If we can get a win early, we could be tough all year," said Mccheyne.

Six returning Saints will determine much of the Saints' fate: senior quarterback/defensive back Kris Friday, senior center/linebacker Bob Mungo, senior halfback/defensive back Eric Colton, junior tailback/linebacker Jayson Lamson, sophomore tight end/linebacker Bob Peters, and junior tight end/defensive lineman Kyle Perillo.

Mccheyne refused to speculate on any new varsity talent, saying, "Nobody is ready to be mentioned. They kind of have to prove themselves."

Leewards

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