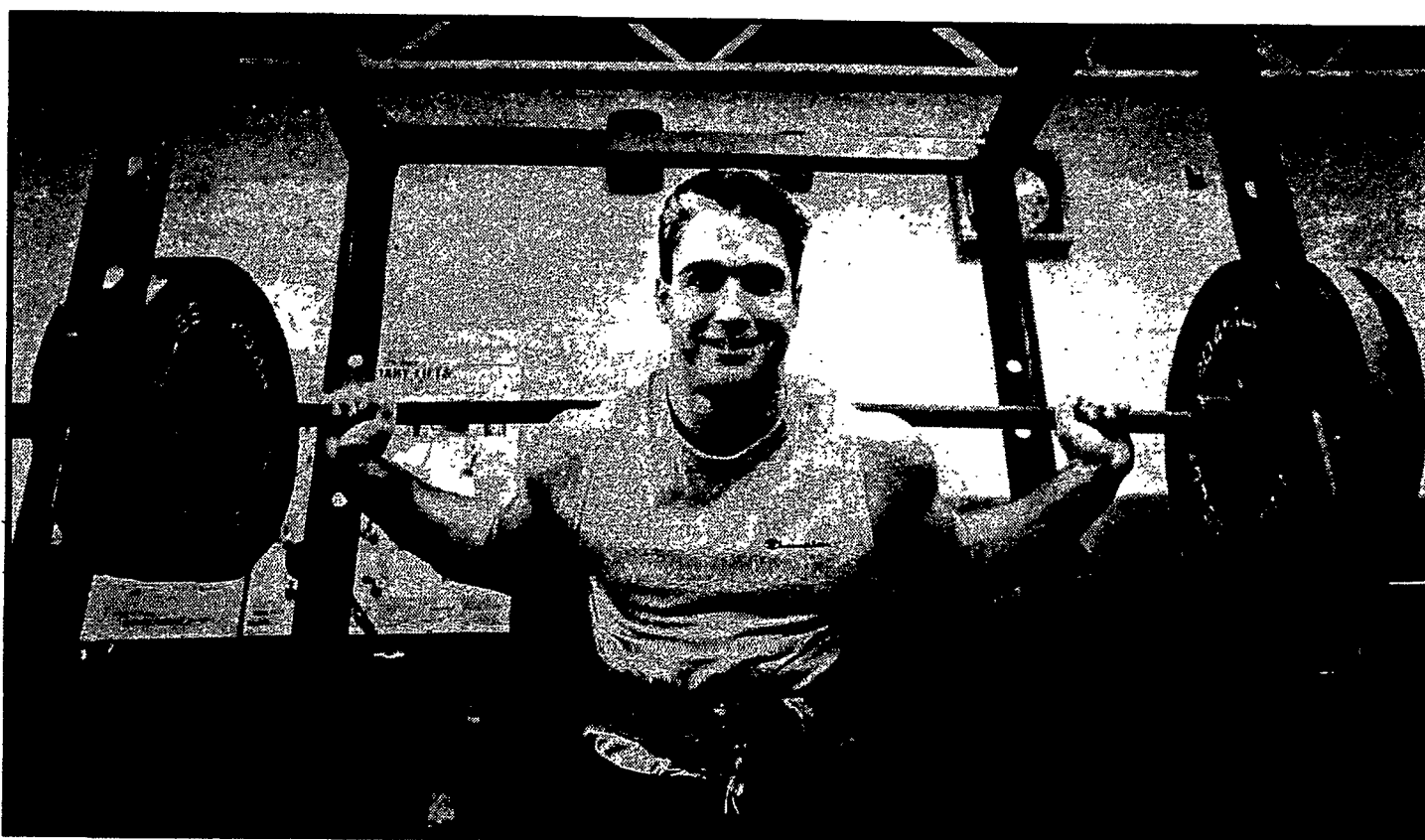


A CLASS ACT ON AND OFF THE FOOTBALL FIELD



Story by Mike Latona

Photo by Andrea Dixon

It took Cory Kilpatrick three years of playing soccer — perhaps a bit too forcefully — to realize he was a born football player.

"I kept getting yellow (warning) and red (ejection) cards. I was always leaning into people," said Cory, explaining that the soccer officials discouraged heavy physical contact. "So my dad said I should play football."

Good move, Cory.

The 18-year-old senior recently finished his high-school career as Elmira Notre Dame's all-time leading tackler, with 353 tackles over four years. Playing on the offensive and defensive lines, Cory's accomplishments have netted him lofty praise from his head coach, Mike D'Aloisio.

"He's probably the best two-way lineman we've ever had," D'Aloisio said of his 6-foot-1-inch, 250-pound star.

Cory is highly recognized around the state as well, attaining Class C All-State first team honors as a senior after making the All-State second team in 1999. Another deeply significant honor came in December, when Cory was named recipient of

strong Notre Dame tradition helped him raise his own level of play. "There's great coaches and athletes here, people who want to work hard," he said. "People are always in the weight room and running; they know there's high expectations."

Cory is the only child of Karen and Rick Kilpatrick. He has been a three-sport athlete during most of his time at Notre Dame, but took the basketball season off to pursue college options. He plans to play baseball this spring and is hitting the weight room five days per week.

Cory will focus on football at Colgate University next year. He was due to sign his official letter of intent to Colgate on Feb. 7, and expects to play on the defensive line for the Division I-AA Red Raider program. Cory, who carries an 89 average in classroom, said he would like to major in history at Colgate and eventually attend dental school in the hope of becoming an orthodontist.

Along with his athletic exploits, Cory was named a Hands of Christ recipient by the Diocese of Rochester this past fall for his service efforts at St. Casimir Church in Elmira, where his family attends. Cory said his faith is also important in his athletics, noting that the Notre Dame football team prays before games and after practices.

"It's carried over to the football field a couple of times," he said. "In my junior year, two (Notre Dame) players were taken off the field on stretchers and we all knelt down and said an Our Father for them."

As he goes off to bigger and better things, Cory will carry warm memories of his high school. "Notre Dame is more like a family. You know everybody by name," he said.

D'Aloisio predicts many future successes for Cory, saying that his "dignity and class, both on and off the field" will carry him a long way.

"He's an outstanding football player, but more importantly, a great person," D'Aloisio remarked.

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