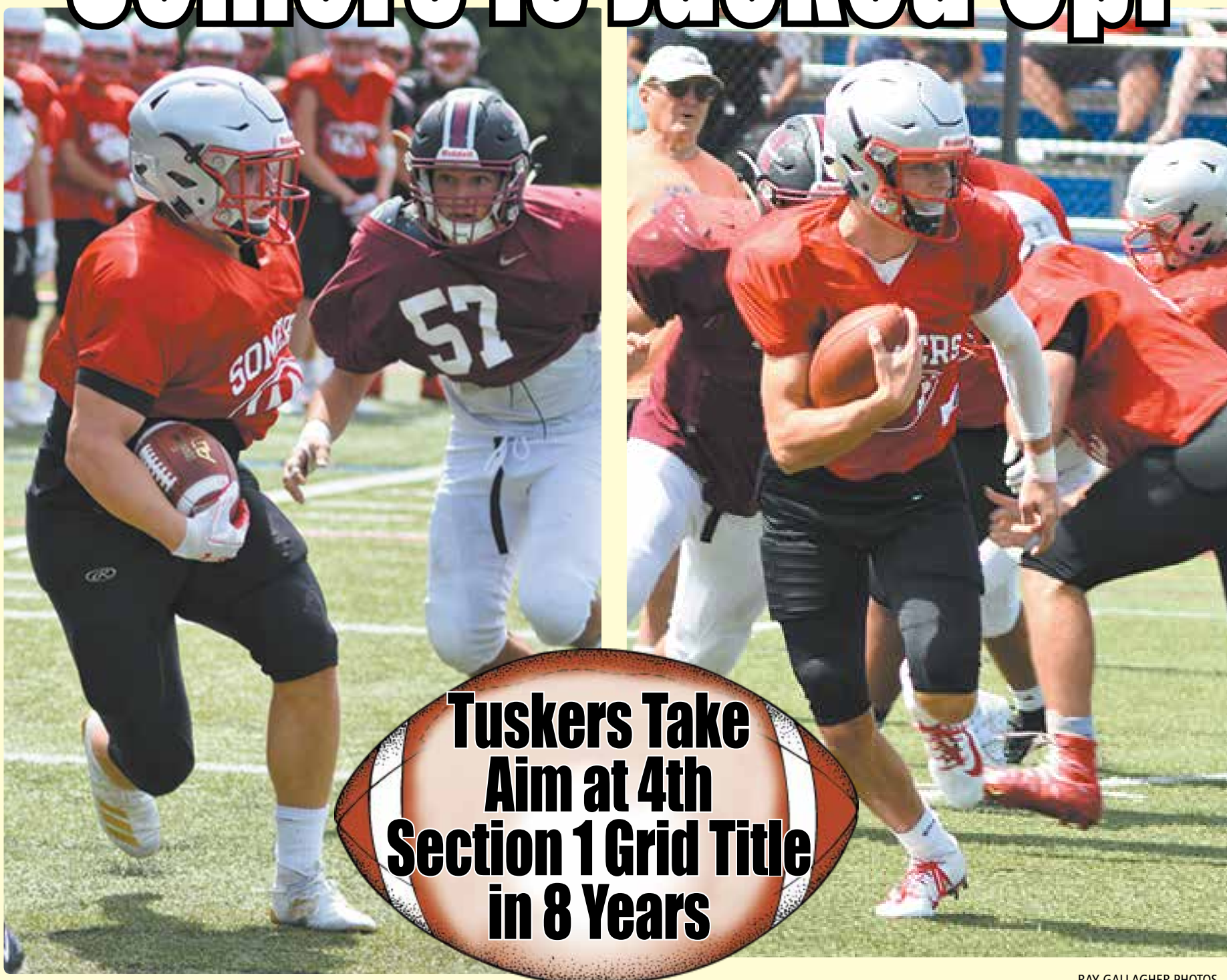


The Northern Westchester Examiner Sports

Covering Putnam County and Northern Westchester Sports



Somers is Jacked Up!



**Tuskers Take
Aim at 4th
Section 1 Grid Title
in 8 Years**

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

Somers junior RB Jack Kaiser and junior QB Jackson Kossow will headline an offense that is sure to put up a ton of points this season as the Tuskers -- crowned sectional champions three times between 2012-2016 -- look to regain that championship form this fall amidst a list of at least five serious Class A title contenders. The Section 1 football season is set to open this Friday at a gridiron near you, so be there or be square... see Grid Notebook

Sports

2019 Grid Preview

PURSUIT FOR PAYDIRT

*Class A Somers Poised to Regain Supremacy,
Class A Carmel Aiming for Final 4 or More;
Class B Runner-Up Putnam Valley Has Rough Off-Season*

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays

The 2019 football season has dawned upon us, bringing with it the enthusiasm and hopes for a grid campaign worthy of celebration. The 2018 Section 1 season saw just two of the local programs from the Northern Westchester/Putnam County region – Class D Haldane and Class B Putnam Valley – reach their respective sectional championships, with only Haldane emerging as champs in its two-team classification.

The usual suspects from the Northern Westchester region, they being either Class A Somers and/or Yorktown, who will square off in Week 2, were denied a sectional title appearance for just the second time since 2012. Class A went to rival John Jay CR for the first time ever, and it appears to be there for the taking this season, so let's delve in to Class A first and then maneuver around the other classifications in turn.

CLASS A SOMERS

It was anything but a typical year for the then-youthful Tuskers last season. Starting out in an atypical 0-2 hole, courtesy of facing the eventual champs (John Jay) and the section runner-up



RAY GALLAGHER/BOB CASTNER PHOTOS

Somers FB Jack Kaiser hopes to lead Tuskers to Class A promised land in 2019.

(Rye), the Tuskers rebounded in characteristic fashion with six straight wins en route to the final 4.

However, John Jay had the Tuskers' number that day and sent Somers packing. That loss hasn't sat well for 10 months, and while Rye may be looking like the pre-season favorites in Class A, Somers Coach Tony DeMatteo knows full well he has a legit contender.

"I don't know that we'll be able to beat Rye in Week 3 during the regular season," the coach said as he enters his 51st season in Section 1, "but I do think we can devise something, scheme something to beat them in the playoffs."

And, when you get right down to it, that's all that matters at Somers this season; the quest for a fourth sectional title since 2012 and fifth since 2000.

Coach: Tony DeMatteo (51st year in Section 1, 20th at Somers)

Last Season's Record & Playoff Result: (6-4, lost in semis to John Jay)

Key Starters: DeMatteo's Tuskers feature one of the best backfield tandems in the section in bruising junior FB Jack Kaiser and



Opponents will want to take caution when they see Somers senior RB/DE Charlie Grinrod headed their way.

shifty HB Charlie Balancia. Kaiser flirted with a 1,000 yard season and reached paydirt 24 times as a sophomore, so his rugged style and sturdy 6', 210 pound frame is set to push the limits of the Somers record book this season and next, barring injury (42 career TDs and 2942 rushing yards by Messiah Horne).

DeMatteo put Kaiser "in the top five" of all-time great fullbacks he's coached over the course of his 50-year career.

Balancia, a 6', 185-pound RB/DB has been the talk of the town, having chiseled his frame and upped his speed game. The two-way standout went for 1,067 all-purpose yards and scored five TDs a season ago. The dual threat figures to trigger the Tuskers' offensive scheme and erase the painful memory of a season-ending 29-7 semifinal whipping at the hands of John Jay.

"We are so ready for the season," Balancia exclaimed! "We love the 1-2 punch we have but we have a few more kids that will rotate in. Our team has put in an insane amount of time and effort over the summer. The deal is to be ready for the playoffs."

Junior QB Action Jackson Kossow (6', 155) returns for a second go under center. Senior WR Kenny McGrane (6'3") is a legit down-field threat.

Top O-linemen include technically-sound senior C/DT Dominick Cheek (5'10", 210); Jr. G Anthony Cheek (5'8", 185); Sr. OL Joe Griffith (6', 270); Jr. C Colin Smith

Defensively, senior DE/FB Charlie Grinrod (5'10", 210) was a beast last season, charging off the edge to wreak havoc. He also plays some FB and showed great burst in a recent scrimmage. OLB Nick Rossi; DB Brian Marcus; Jr. DB/RB TJ Deagan.

Key Rookies: Somers will start a chiseled freshman at RT in 6'2" 235-pound Jake Polito, who could end up being an all-time Tusker great when all is said and done.

Team Strengths: Experience at skill positions.

Goals: Section 1 title and beyond.

Coach's Quote: It may take us some time defensively to figure out who we are, but we know we'll put up enough points to keep us

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Somers HB Charlie Balancia will be effective outside the tackles, providing a mean 1-2 punch with FB Jack Kaiser.

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Under watchful eye of grid Coach Tony DeMatteo, Somers junior QB Jackson Kassow is poised for breakout year.

in games until we do, and when we do, watch out. We have some concern about the O-line but it is improving. You can't throw the ball or run the ball if you're going to block anybody, but we're very skillful and the quarterback has been outstanding. We have multiple backs in the backfield and a 6'3" split end in McGrane, who can go up and catch the ball. But it all boils down to how far the line advances. Our goal is to use each game and each team to get ready for the playoffs. The goal is to try and win but just get better. We have a team of 66 kids with that mindset and I'm excited about that and the future of the Somers football program.

Class A Favorite: Rye, DeMatteo admitted as much.

Outlook: Seniors Rossi, McGrane and Grinrod and junior Deagan will make a serious impact behind Kaiser and Balancia, and the rest of the grunts will follow suit. DeMatteo believes that a very athletic Kossow is ready to take control of the offense.

"This might be one of the most skillful teams I've seen at Somers in my 20 years here," DeMatteo said. "Jackson has experience. Kaiser is back with a year of fullback under his belt. Charlie's back and better. We have a lot of kids that were JV players last year fighting for time on varsity this year."

The Tuskers open up Saturday at Greeley (1:30 p.m.), who Kaiser exploited for four TDs last season. Somers will face Rye in a Week 3 showdown that many are



Yorktown QB Sean Vogel has looked good in pre-season drills, practices and scrimmages.

predicting will be a prelude to the Class A title game.

"We are so pumped and ready for this season," Kaiser said. "We have so much motivation, and we have been preparing so much this offseason. We are gonna come firing out of the gates."

Nobody doubts that.

Final Thought: The skill players are like a pack of Starburst: Don't matter which one you bite into, each one has its own superb flavor. There are weapons all over the field on offense and more than 30 players bidding for time in the defensive backfield, so once this unit clicks, be it Week 1 or Week 4, the chip is on the line at the end

and Somers should be there.

Twitter: @Somersfootball

YORKTOWN

It's no secret that Yorktown is believed to be in a slight rebuilding mode this season based on the number of key personnel losses the past two seasons, including QB Tommy Weaver, who guided the Huskers to a state championship appearance in 2017. However, expectations are always high in the land of the of the Cornhuskers, where contending for the Class A title has become the norm. The O-line is experienced, stout, disciplined, well coached and competent, but the skill position players, outside of workhorse

HB Dylan Smith, are literally and figuratively untested at the varsity level. Yorktown's success will boil down to the development of its potential two-pronged QB system and the development of HB Dylan Smith, who showed legit glimmers of promise the past two years while scoring 12 TDs and 674 yards on the ground.

While Smith is a known commodity, QBs Trevvon Johnson and Sean Vogel are competing as seniors for the quarterback position.

"Both kids bring a different skill set to the position," Yorktown Coach Mike Rescigno said. "Both are doing a great job learning and commanding a very complicated offense. They will also contribute to the defense at corner. Sean has also presented as a great weapon at wideout; definitely nice to have options."

The TE position has been Yorktown's bread and butter in recent seasons, too, and Ben Robinson will bear that pivotal function.

Coach: Mike Rescigno, 15th season

Last Season's Record and Playoff Results: (5-4, lost in 1st round)

Returning Offensive Starters: RB Dylan Smith (Sr.) "We have a lot of guys that can be considered newcomers," Rescigno said. "Some guys are seniors that just had limited reps last year as juniors. We have a lot of these guys that we are fired up about, including senior Dylan Smith, who will be a very impactful running back for us as well as safety on the defensive side of the ball. He's a multi-sport athlete."; OG Ed Cappone (6-0 210 sr.), OG Jack Tinari (5-11 195 sr.), C Johnny Bowen (6-0 sr.), T Matteo Cermele (6-1 235 sr.), TE/RB Ben Robinson (6-0 215)

Returning Defensive Starters: LB Capone, LB Tinari, LB Ben Robinson, DB Keith Boyer (Jr.)

Key Rookies/Newcomers: RB Boyer (Jr.) "This is a kid that we are excited to have around. Closing speed on defense. Breakaway speed on offense. Multi-sport kid."; RB/DB Dean Patierno (Sr.) "He's tough as nails."; WR/DB Evan Makar (Jr.) "He will have an impact on both the offensive and defensive side as a wide out and corner. He's a fast and fluid player."; OT/DE Gerald Gentile; TE/DE Mike Benzinger; WR/DB Nick Mehta

Final Thought: There's a learning curve to overcome and a ton of new faces in new places, but Yorktown football has proven time and time again that it is in to win it, and nothing less than a Final 4 appearance is acceptable for the



Yorktown senior RB Dylan Smith should be a handful for opposing defenders this season.



Brewster LB Nick Girard has to be a two-way force for the Bears in 2019.

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2019 Grid Preview



Brewster QB Chris Donohue throws nice ball and could have legit impact for Bears in 2019.

former two-time NYS champions (1993-94) and 2017 NYS runner-ups. Somers will be a tough test in Week 2, but there are five very winnable games on the schedule, which should provide a Final 4 path.

BREWSTER

Brewster Coach Ed Mulvihill is thinking outside the box. The veteran mentor is toying with the idea of starting sophomore QB Chris Donohue, a 6'4" 195-pounder under center. Senior Joseph Dominguez is also a possibility. The hope is two-fold, in that, Mulvihill wants to develop Donohue for the future while utilizing the athletic Dominguez as both an OLB and backup signal caller.

"The truth is the soph throws a great ball," the coach said. "If he gets through the scrimmage and looks good, he will get the start. Dominguez is solid though and will be the starter if Donohue falls off."

After a 4-5 season and a qualifying playoff loss last year, the Bears are seeking to return to their 2015-16 form when they went a combined 14-4 and gave eventual champ Somers fits in a 42-35 semifinal setback in 2016. While 2019 may not prove to be quite as fruitful, the once-mighty Bears -- winners of three sectional titles and two state final appearances between 1996-99 -- are hoping to get above .500 and reach the field of eight Class A playoff teams. Hard to believe it's been 20 years since that glorious November when Brewster ruled the roost under former Coach Brian Walsh, now at Lourdes.



Lakeland captains Jason Green, Matt Makar, Jorge Duque, Tyler Santucci, Landon Ruggieri seek to change Hornets' recent fortunes.

It's impossible to miss two-way senior OL/DL Nick Girard in pads. Mammoth to begin with, the 6'4" 285 pounder is built to thrill on both sides of the ball, and he will serve as a primary factor in protecting whatever QB the Bears decide to go with.

Coach: Ed Mulvihill (8th season)

Last Season's Record & Playoff Result: 4-5 lost in qualifying round

Returning Offensive Starters: Girard - OG - 6'4" 285 sr.; Franco Milano OT - 6'2" 255 jr.; Paul Catalano - WR - 5'11" 185 sr.; Jack Gusler - TE - 6'2" 200 sr.; Tom Consolato - RB - 5'7" 185 sr.; Justin Niles - WR - 5'11" 190 sr.

Returning Defensive Starters: Girard -- DT; Milano -- DE; Catalano -- DB; Joe Dominguez - LB - 6'0" 225 sr.; Tom Consolato - DB - 5'7" 185 sr.; Nico Surace - DB 5'10" 180 sr.; Jason Cardone - LB 5'7" 175 jr.; Anthony Capone -- LB 6'0" 185 sr.

Key Rookies/Newcomers: Austin Beal - C - 5'10" 220 sr.; Teddy Tepper - DB - 5'6" 170 sr.; Christian Rhodes - WR/QB - 5'10" 175 jr.; Jason Borsari DE/TE - 6'3" 210 jr.; Chris Donohue - QB - 6'4" 195 so.; Dom Bartolomeo - WR - 5'9" 170 sr.

Team Strengths: Overall, team speed is better than previous years. Bears have some size on the lines but need to develop some depth. Have a number of players that can help at the skill positions.

Base Offense: Spread/Pistol

Base Defense: 4-3

Outlook: Consolato is a player to watch and if the Bears can charge hard out of the gate, they could get

the program back on track.

Coach's Quote: I'd like to think, if we stay away from injury, we will be able to compete each week. Defensively, I expect us to be better than the previous few years. Offensively, we have some question marks at key positions but we will figure them out and move on.

League Favorite: John Jay
Section Favorite: Somers

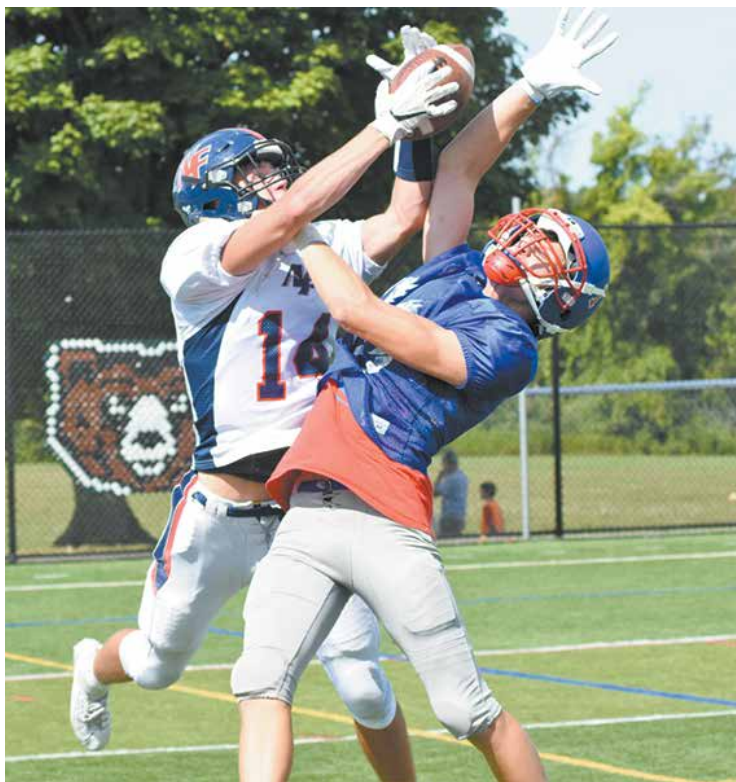
Final Thought: Brewster isn't close to the Brewster club that won three sectional titles and appeared in two state finals before the turn

of the century (1996-99), and the Bears won't likely win a title in 2019, but they should shoot for a win among the field of 16 qualifying playoff teams and advancement to the quarterfinals.

Twitter handle: @bearsbrewster

LAKELAND

When third-year Coach Mike Meadows took over from former Coach Rob Cappelli, he was stoked to do so; despite the fact that Lakeland had some growing pains over the course of this expedition. Fast forward to Year 3, and Meadows is fired up for a slew



Carmel DB Aidan Babnik (R), a lax player by trade, is hoping to make an impact on the grid this fall.

of different reasons. No, Lakeland has rarely been lumped into the 'football school' mode, but here we are in 2019 and Meadows and his coaching staff can barely contain their glee. The coaching staff has a strong belief that this particular unit can accept the challenge before them: To advance beyond the qualifying round and reach the field of eight Class A playoffs teams.

Week 1 against Brewster is pivotal, in that it will set a tone that could make or break Lakeland's season. A win over the Bears might set the Hornets up for a glorious start. A loss could establish another ho-hum start and set them up for a downward spiral.

Coach: Mike Meadows (3rd season)

Last Season's Record & Playoff Result: 2-7 - No playoffs

Returning Offensive Starters: Sr. RB Matt Makar (5'7, 160, SR) is a shifty, versatile, three-down back that excites the coaching staff; Jr. QB Tyler Santucci (6'0, 160, JR) started nine games last season and has plenty of experience in the spread offense; Jr. Slot Back Mark Cummins (6'0, 170, JR) is a three-sport freak; OL Jason Green (6-3, 240, Sr.) is a two-way beast up front; C Brandon Gu (5'10, 205, SR); RT- Jorge Duque (5'8, 220, SR)

Returning Defensive Starters: OLB- Jake Difede (6'0, 180, SR); DE Green; MLB Cummins Key Rookies/Newcomers: CB/WR Landon Ruggieri (6'0, 180, Sr.); RB/S Danny Libretti (5'10, 160, Jr.); DE/RG Michael Mulhern (6'0, 220, Jr.); DE/LG- Carl Lund (5'10, 200, So.); TE/OLB Brandon Cassese (6'1, 170, Jr.); WR/S Rob Nardelli (6'0, 150, Jr.)

Team Strengths: Overall athleticism., athletic lineman that can move in space, which makes up for a lack of size against some teams. Lakeland also has positional players that can match up with many teams with their speed and quickness.

Base Offense: zone read spread

Base Defense: Multiple 4 front

Captains: Jason Green, Matt Makar, Jorge Duque, Tyler Santucci, Landon Ruggieri

Outlook: Lakeland should be competitive and get to the next level as a program this season based on the amount of athleticism the Hornets have and the increased degree of coaching. Entering its third year, the coaching staff has developed a rapport and put in the necessary time to increase its output. The optimism is real surrounding OC Ryan Shilling's offense with Santucci, Makar and Cummins all reaching new levels. Lakeland should be much

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2019 Grid Preview



Carmel QB Andrew Nunez ripped a few nice touch passes in recent scrimmage action.



Carmel QB Kevin Dall, just a sophomore, will be a good one in the very near future.

improved and there's reason to believe the Hornets can crack the field of eight playoff teams with a possible 3-0 start against the likes of Brewster (Friday, 7 p.m.), Poughkeepsie and Beacon before facing Lourdes and John Jay in week's four and five. Week 6 brings a visit from rival Walter Panas, so a 4-2 regular season is within the realm of possibilities, provided the Hornets bring the sting.

Coach's Quotes: Being that

it's my third year as head coach, I am confident my staff and I have done everything possible to improve this off-season. The boys have also worked extremely hard and are really looking forward to making their mark on the program. The program is growing and the community support is through the roof. All that is left is to play the actual games. We want to put the hammer down!

League Favorite: John Jay CR



Carmel senior Alex Beauchesne (2) is expected to be a jack of all trades for the rams in 2019.



CINDY GODINO PHOTO

Hen Hud RB Michael Tiso will be a primary component of the Sailor offense.

now home, back in the yard he grew up in as a former Hen Hud assistant football coach and playing legend back in the day. Catano takes over for former Sailor boss Mike Lynch, who put the Sailors back on the Class A map in recent years. After some off-season turmoil, though, Hen Hud tabbed Catano as its next football coach, turning to the former JV head coach and varsity assistant who graduated from Hen Hud in 1976. He also served 18 years at Croton where he won three sectional titles and took to the Tigers to two state finals (2008-11) and spent the last two years at James I. O'Neill High School in Highland Falls before coming home.

"It's a dream come true," Catano said. "I couldn't pass it up."

There will be some growing pains along the way, make no mistake. Catano inherits a team that has graduated a ton of talent over the last two years, making 2019 the dreaded "rebuilding season".

Coach: John Catano (First year at Hen Hud, 19th season as head coach in Section 1)

Last Season's Record and Playoff Result: (5-4, lost in first round Class AA sectional)

Returning Offensive Starters: Marcus Lena 6'1" 180 SR RB; Corey Cothran-Segar 5'11" 240 OL/DL SR; Frank Giodino 5'7" OL/DL JR

Returning Defensive Starters: Mike Tosi 5'8" 200 LB SR; Ryan Travis 5'10" DB JR;

Dylan Struthers 5'8" 240 DL JR; Chansé Artope 5'10" 195 LB JR

Team Strengths: Offensive Line

Base Offense: Spread

Base Defense: 3-3

Captains: Mike Tosi, Marcus Lenz

Coach's Quote: Would like to improve on last year's playoff outcome.

Final Thought: Coach Catano is an old-school cat, and the hope is that the Sailors (and their significant others) can get on board with that. If they buy in to what the 'Big Cat' is selling, the rewards could be substantial, if not this year than next.

WALTER PANAS

It's a new era in Pantherland as longtime Coach Dan Patronik makes way for rookie Coach Paul Ronga. Ronga is hoping to change

the culture of a program that has finished below .500 11 of the past 14 years. With only six returning starters, the coach, who spent five years as the Saunders varsity coach and another year as Lakeland's JV coach, it won't be easy.

Coach: Paul Ronga (7th season overall, 1st with Panas)

Last season: 2-6

Returning Offensive Starters:

TE Jason Keefe (6-7, 272, sr.); WR Evan Harkin (5-10, 160, sr.); WR Robert Ennis (6-0, 170 sr.)

Returning Defensive Starters:

DE Jonathan Feldman (6-3, 240, sr.); LB Dean Ragone (5-10, 170, jr.); NG Jack O'Brien (5-8, 202, sr.)

Key Rookies/Newcomers:

LB Ralph Arthur (5-11, 180, sr.); OG Tyler Carter (5-10, 210, jr.); WR Marco Consentino 5'11, 150, jr.; QB Mark Perez (5-9, 160. Sr.)

Team Strengths: Incredible effort and work put in during the offseason

Base Offense: Multiple

Base Defense: 3-3

Captains: Jason Keefe, Robert Ennis, Evan Harkin

Outlook: Very competitive league, and tough division schedule

Coach's Quotes: Panas Football never had less than 30 players attend any offseason session; we have great pride and enthusiasm.

Section Favorite:

Rye

Final Thought: Panas has had some incredible quarterback play the past 20-plus seasons, including Sean Lindsay, James Luft, Kyle Pierce, Brandon Hodge and others, so the shoes to fill are quite huge for Perez. But the Panthers will need to develop a sound rushing attack to keep opposing defenders honest, so Perez can remain upright and find a trio of talented targets. One thing is certain, Ronga will bring the passion and the Panthers will be forced to work hard, and the could result in a strong start against the likes of Hen Hud, Beacon and Poughkeepsie before a hearty back end that includes John Jay, Lourdes and rival Lakeland.

CLASS AA CARMEL

As one of the longest tenured coaches in Section 1, Rams boss Todd Cayea is among the most consistent in terms of win production (just six shy of the 150 milestone). Entering his 25th season at Carmel, Cayea has the grunts along the offensive line to make some noise this season, provided the young skill players can get things in gear behind workhorse back Andrew Bumgardner. The senior RB was third or fourth in line for totes last season, but made the most of his chances. This season, Bumgardner is the featured back in an offense that includes versatile senior WR

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Hard-charging Mahopac sophomore RB Matt Courtney is one to keep an eye on the next three years.



Mahopac RB Zach Esteves is expected to take on a major role this season.



Mahopac senior signal caller Jack Casey (14) and junior QB Vin Bastone are running neck and neck for starting job and RB Henry Botchway (20) has looked good.

Alex "Booch" Beauchesne, who should create fear in opposing defenses.

There is a healthy battle waging under center between senior QB Andrew Nunez and sophomore Kevin Dall

Coach: Todd Cayea (25th season, 144-79-1)

Last Season: 6-3, lost sectional semifinals to New Rochelle

Offensive Returning Starters: Andrew Bumgardner Sr. RB; Noah Wahl Sr. OL; Luca Piccolino Sr. OL; Matt Murphy Sr. OL; Alex Beauchesne Sr. WR; Will Boalt Sr. TE/DE

Defensive Returning Starters: Ryan McCarthy Sr. DB; Bumgardner Sr. Rover; Beauchesne Sr. FS; Picolino Sr. DT; Michael Storen Sr. LB, Matt Massi Sr. LB

Key Newcomers/Returners: Tim Hunt Sr. OL; Andrew Nunez Sr. QB; James Cox Sr. RB; Aiden Babnik Sr. DB/WR; Dall

Strengths: Offensive line returns three starters and others returnees with game experience. Beauchesne, a three-year starter will be the defensive play caller along with three-year starter Luca Picolino anchoring the D line. Boalt is a beast.

Weakness: Inexperienced skill players will need to step up early and often. The ability is there but early success will boost the confidence.

Coach's Quote: We have an experienced line. We need to get to know our new skill guys as the season goes on, but we have a core kids who want to work hard. We feel like we're going to be competitive every year. I like what I see from the defense. We've still got some work to do to get where we need to be, and, honestly, we'd rather see (Class A heavyweight) John Jay (EF) in Week 1 to see where we're at and build from it either way.

Base Offense: Multiple

Base Defense: 4-2-5

Outlook: The Rams have had Final 4 potential for the majority of Cayea's career and the 2019 will be no different if the skill players, Nunez in particular, can reach the next level. He's shown flashes in the past but he has to pay the piper. However, the junior class is rumored to be subpar to previous standards and this could be troublesome.

Final Thought: The junior class is light, and that's undeniable, so the coaching staff will rely primarily on the seniors, plus five sophomores and a freshman, which means depth is an issue. If Carmel stays healthy, and that's as big an IF as there is, the Rams will compete and challenge for league bragging

rights while bringing home a fifth-straight Bryan Higgins Memorial Trophy vs. Mahopac. If health becomes an issue, this could go south in a hurry with a lack of proven depth.

Twitter @Carmelramsfootball
MAHOPAC

Nobody said it would be easy to rebuild the once-mighty Indians, and third-year Coach Dominick DeMatteo discovered that notion in Year 2. After leading the Indians to an impressive 6-3 season in 2017, the Indians came back to earth in 2018, finishing a 3-6 season without qualifying for the playoffs. Truth be told, the Indians scored just 14 points the first two games of the season, and dug themselves a 1-3 hole, which was tough to dig out from given the back end of the schedule, which included fate-sealing losses to both Arlington (in OT) and rival Carmel.

The 2019 unit is young and relatively untested at the varsity level, and the schedule remains difficult, so it could be another year before we see the veteran DeMatteo deliver the kind of season he did in Year 1 at Mahopac, but this upcoming sophomore class should be impactful before long.

Coach: Dominick DeMatteo (13th season as a head coach, 3rd at Mahopac)

Last season's record & playoff result: 3-6 (did not qualify for Section One Playoffs)

Returning Offensive Starters: Billy Reilly OT (6'4, 255, Sr.)

Returning Defensive Starters: Zach Esteves CB (5'10, 146, Sr.); John Ryan DT (6'1 220, Sr.)

Key Rookies/Newcomers: Vincent Bastone QB/RB/LB (6'2 180, Jr.); Jack Carey QB Sr.; Zach O'Connor WR/DB (5'10 145, Jr.); Dominic Perricone OT/DT (6'4 300, Jr.); John Pranzo RB/LB (5'9 165, Jr.).

Team Strengths: Those that are WITH US are committed to OUR program. We have a core group of Seniors, Juniors & Sophomores that have attended the majority of our Winter & Spring Workouts, as well as, our Summer Events. We are seeking leadership from this group.

Base Offense: Multiple West Coast & Spread

Base Defense: Multiple 30

Captains: Team Vote, 8/28

Outlook: With only have three returning starters from the junior class, there is much to prove. The current juniors had success as a team on the JV last year (7-2), however they still have much to prove as a collective group. The sophomore class is strong (TYFL 13U Regional Champs in 2017 & Undefeated Freshmen in 2018) but obviously young

and likely a year away from making a major impact.

Coach's Quotes: With regards to wins, losses, playoffs and championships I have absolutely no idea what to expect... truly no idea. However, I am excited about the many layers and dynamics associated with our 2019 varsity team and program. There will be many challenges for us this year. However, that will provide us with the opportunity for success on many levels.

League Favorite: Arlington

Section Favorite: John Jay EF

Final Thought: From a football standpoint, the senior class isn't what they've come to expect at Mahopac. In reality, weather folks can handle it or not, the Indians are a year or two away from seriously challenging again. When the current sophomores are seniors and this ballyhooed eight-grade unit begins to mature, Mahopac could be legit Class AA challengers again.

Twitter Handle: @MahopacFB

The Indians will open at home against the Yonkers Brave this Friday (7:30 p.m.) in a game they best win if they want any hope of seriously challenging in Class AA this season.

CLASS B PUTNAM VALLEY

The 2018 season was straight off a Jekyll and Hyde-type script. The first half of Coach Ryan Elsasser's season was an abysmal disaster, the Tigers coming out of the gate at 1-6, but the second half produced the first-ever Section 1 championship appearance in school history before a season-ending loss to Ardsley in the title tilt. It was like nothing nobody had ever seen before, probably because it hadn't happened. The Tigers got hot at the right time, knocking off Nanuet and defending champ Pleasantville en route to the finals.

They were poised for some big doings again in 2019 before off-season disaster struck. The Tigers lost all-purpose RB/LB/P Garrett Leitman to a lacrosse injury and monstrous DE/OT Justin Federico to Iona Prep, leaving the team without one of its top two-way players and one of its best linemen.

There is some hope in the form of several athletic lacrosse players, who hadn't played football previously, giving it a go this season. Still, it's not ideal, the depth is necessary.

Coach: Ryan Elsasser (3rd Season)

Last season's record & playoff result: (3-7, lost in Class B sectional Championship)

Returning Offensive Starters:

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A slew of two-sport athletes return, including Matthew Carravone C/DT Sr. (Football/Baseball); Jake Listwan HB/LB Jr. (Football/Lacrosse); David Maloney OT/DT Sr. (Football/Wrestling); Joseph Cioffi SE/DB Sr. (Football/Lacrosse); Cole Durocher SE/DB So. (Football/Basketball); also Kaiden Patterson HB/DB Sr.

Key Newcomers: Senior QB Ryan Singer; Matthew Aviles RB/LB Sr. (limited use last season); A.J. Keogh RB/LB Sr. (limited use last season); Michael Reichardt SE/DB Sr. (limited use last season); rookies Charles Broas SE/DE Sr.; Kyle Wassil HB/DE Sr.; Ethan Mounier RB/DB Jr.

continue with the momentum we developed at the end of last season and build on it. We will be mixing up our identity on both sides of the ball. I hope to see a bunch of these guys in the end zone this season. As always, senior leadership will play a huge role. Class B is going to be tough once again with the returning talent around the area as well as the addition of Byram Hills and Pearl River. I think the players had a taste of the championship and want to get back there, I know that the coaching staff definitely does.

Section Favorite: Ardsley will be the section favorite this year. With some key players returning they will be a force to take on again

The unit has a lot of little things to clean up before opening this Friday (7 pm) against newly-minted Class B foe Byram Hills, which is a tough opener for the Tigers.

Twitter: @PV_FBall

CLASS D HALDANE

The Sam Giachinta era is over, and with it goes every rushing record in the Haldane book. The All-NYS RB/LB was in a tier by himself when things came to an end for the Blue Devils in the NYS Final 4. The 2019 squad will defend its second title in three years but will do so with a ton of youth, having lost major components across the board.

Coach: Ryan McConville (6th season, 22-23)

Last year's record and result: 7-2, Sectional and Regional Title

Returning Veterans: Jr. QB Dan Santos; Jr. RB Darrin Santos; Jr. OL Andrew Aiston; Jr. OL Christian Pezzullo; Jr. WR Doug Donaghy; So. OL Will Etta; So. OL Dominic Lyons-Davis

Key Newcomers: Fr. OL Jake Mason; So. WR Soron Holmbo; Sr. WR Charles Benichoux; So. WR Jullian Forcello; So. FS Giancarlo Carone

Outlook: Haldane lost a dynamic group of seniors and gifted WR Matt Champlin has opted out this season, but the junior class is just getting started. Tuckahoe enters the year as the team to beat in Class D.

Coach's Quote: We will be a young team, but a great junior class that will lead us this season. We are looking to QB Dan Santos, RB Darrin Santos WR Doug Donaghy to be our leaders on offense and have a bunch of young players with great athleticism to make plays as well. Defensively, it's going to be important we tackle well and get a lot of hats to the ball. We want to play aggressive this season and I'm looking forward to watching our guys compete, prepare hard and grow throughout the season

Sectional Favorite: Tuckahoe

Final Thought: With very limited participation from the senior class, it could take some time for the underclassmen to fire up on all cylinders, but when they do the Blue Devils will be a force.

Twitter: @CoachMcConville



Put Valley RB-LB Kaiden Patterson will assume a major increase in responsibility this season.



Put Valley QB Ryan Singer hopes to lead Tigers back to 2nd sectional title game in as many years.

Team Strengths: More speed all around; a senior-heavy returning line

Base Offense: Flexed Bone

Base Defense: 4-3

Captains: Kaiden Patterson and TBD

Outlook/Coach's Quote: After coming off of a big finish last year as a runner up for the Sectional Championship, we are looking to get back to Mahopac again this year. We have a large group of athletes again this year. We will need all 11 on each side of the ball to step up. Losing Darnel Shillingford (Bryant) and John Listwan (SUNY Cortland) to graduation was a big hit for us, but I feel that the players behind them are ready to follow in their footsteps. We will need to

this season. Byram Hills, down from Class A, is a darkhorse.

Final Thought: Defending champion Ardsley is in a class by itself this year, barring a major upset, which is why we play the games. There's about 90% of last year's touches up for grabs, so we'll have to wait and see who is capable of snaring them and making the most of opportunity. Expect a heavy dose of Listwan, who has great hands out of the back field, and Patterson on offense. The Tigers are one of several teams across the state with a girl on the roster in sophomore WR/DB Jessica Walsh. "She's one of the most coachable players on the roster," the coach said. "She's not afraid of anything."

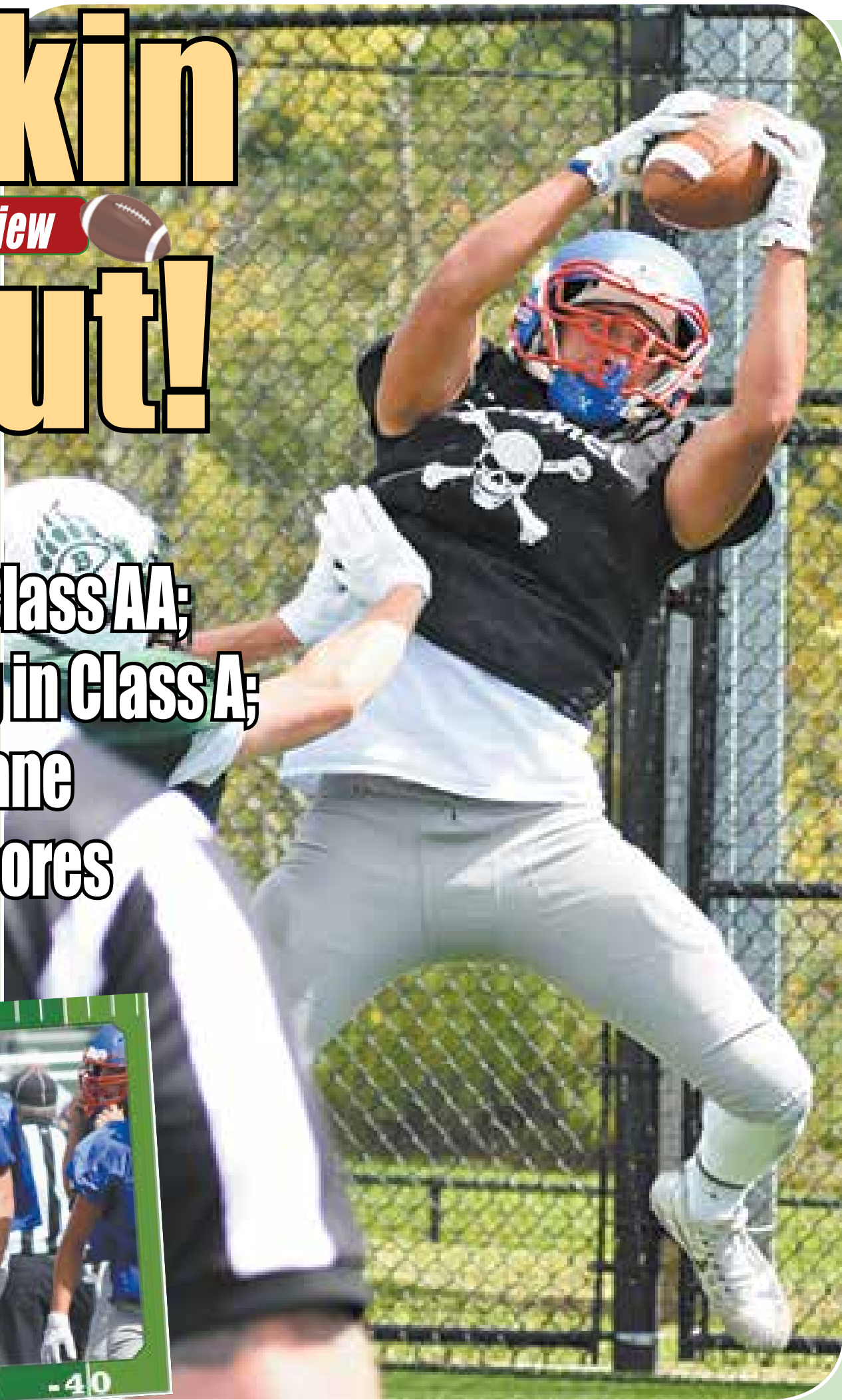
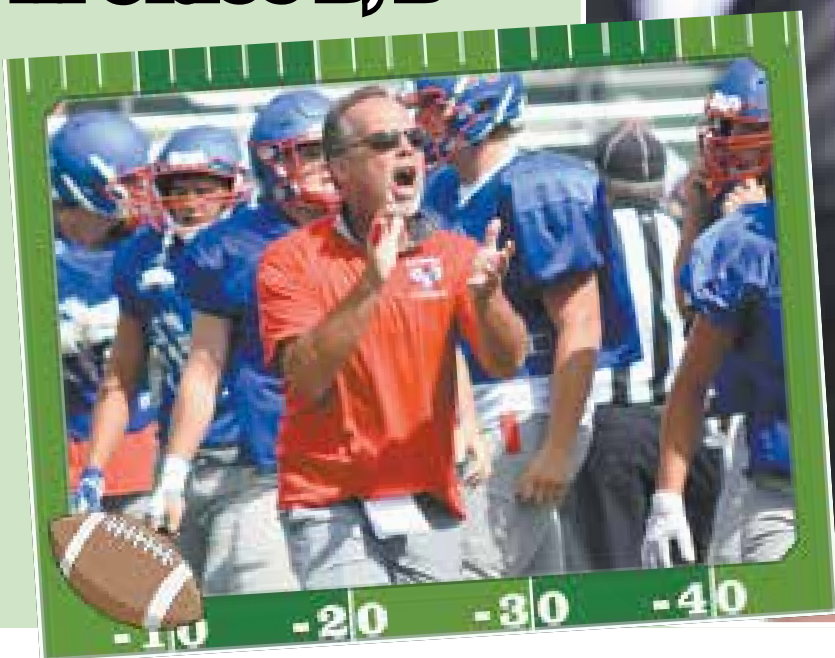


Haldane QB Daniel Santos will see a major bump in expectations this season.



Pigskin 2019 Grid Preview Pigout!

**Carmel Poised
for Damage in Class AA;
Somers Surging in Class A;
Put Valley, Haldane
Seek Strong Encores
in Class B, D**



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

Carmel senior WR/DB Alex 'Booch' Beauchesne will grab a slew of these high-point passes from Ram QBs this fall as Class AA Carmel highlights the list of Putnam County contenders this season, what is the 25-year silver anniversary for Coach Todd Cayea (inset). Meanwhile, Somers leads the Northern Westchester parade of teams, looking like a legit Class A contender in Coach Tony DeMatteo's 51st season as hopes to lead the Tuskers to a fourth Section 1 title since 2012... see Grid Previews inside