Carmel QB, Rams Set Sights on Class AA Prize; Somers Eyes a 6th Crown Since 2000, 5th Class A Title in 9 Years

Carmel QB Kevin Dall (14) will have a ton of weapons at his disposal for the 2021 grid campaign, including the majority of the Rams’ smash-mouth offensive line, including guard Scott Danvin (79), which Carmel hopes will be enough to produce its second Section 1 title under longtime Coach Todd Cayea. Meanwhile, Somers will usher in a new era under first-year Coach Anthony DeMatteo (inset, L), the son of legendary Coach Tony DeMatteo (R), who engineered five Section 1 titles at Somers (including the 2020-21 sectional regional crown last spring) before retiring just four wins short of the state record... see our 2021 Pigskin Previews inside
Class AA Carmel, Class A Somers Hope to Reign Supreme
Reigning Class B Champ Byram Hills Eyes a Repeat;
Pleasantville, Hen Hud Hope to Challenge

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor, @Directrays & Rob DiAntonio, co-Editor RJD_Photos

First-year Somers head Coach Anthony DeMatteo Jr. has never traveled the easy road a day in his life. If anything, he’s taken the road with the most bumps, the steepest hills and the lion’s share of challenges during a promising varsity career at Somers (2003 grad), followed by a 12-year coaching career as his father’s understudy upon graduating from SUNY Cortland. When legendary Somers/Roosevelt Coach Tony DeMatteo stepped aside last spring as the second all-time winningest coach in New York State history (360 wins), after 52 years on the Section 1 sidelines (22 at Somers), there was little doubt who the legendary coach would tap as his replacement. And there would be no debate from Somers Athletic Director Roman Catalino; the choice was clear.

DeMatteo Jr., now 37, has lived a full life despite a handicap he’s never let slow him down, including his 2010 All-Section senior season as the team’s leading wide receiver and top defensive back. He will inherit a program that won a state title, three Section 1 championships and last spring’s regional bowl championship during his 12 years of tutelage under the great one. Somers has won four sectional titles since the turn of the century. (2000, 2012-13, 2016).

There will be no shortcuts for the 2021 Tuskers, the reigning 2020 co-regional bowl champion. Coach Todd Cayea’s youth program that continues to feed the DeMatteo stables with young mustangs, but depth is the issue. On Defense, we will need to run the football and tackle. We are balanced on the offensive side of the ball. Our staff will need to be creative, so everyone healthy is critical. We have some holes to fill and some of the younger players will need to step up to create depth. I think we will be balanced on the offensive side of the ball. Our staff will need to be creative, so everyone is getting touches and Dall is a dual threat at the QB position. Most of the OL returns but depth is the issue. On Defense, we will need to run the football and tackle. We are a multiple attacking front that will need to be disciplined in our run fits. I am excited to watch them play.

Outlook: Coach Cayea is as optimistic about the 2021 season as any other in his career, including the 1998 Section 1 Class AA title winners, the Rams’ lone sectional title under Cayea. Dall can spin it under center with a battle-tested veteran unit returning to the fold, league and section titles are being discussed, in that order without looking too far ahead. To stay focused on our process and improve from week to week and the results will speak for themselves. Obviously, the expectations are high, but the goal is to be playing for a championship which is our goal every year.

Coach’s Comments: With all the hype around our team it will be extremely important to set egos aside and stay humble. We have a very difficult schedule and staying healthy is critical. We have some holes to fill and some of the younger players will need to step up to create depth. I think we will be balanced on the offensive side of the ball. Our staff will need to be creative, so everyone is getting touches and Dall is a dual threat at the QB position. Most of the OL returns but depth is the issue. On Defense, we will need to run the football and tackle. We are a multiple attacking front that will need to be disciplined in our run fits. I am excited to watch them play.

Carmel seniors, QB Kevin Dall (14) and RB Josh Massi, provide a 1-2 backfield punch that will be tough for opposing D’s to contain. The 2020 fall season was postponed due to COVID-19 and an abbreviated, revamped session was concluded last spring on account of some major campaigning from yet another DeMatteo, fifth-year Mahopac Coach Dominick DeMatteo.

There are football programs all across the state of New York that fluctuate cyclically, but there are “football towns” in NYS that rarely, if ever, suffer through “down seasons”: Somers is one of them. With a thriving youth program that continues to feed the DeMatteo stables with young mustangs, Somers and 2020 co-regional champ Rye are the two programs that habitually challenge for Class A supremacy, much like New Rochelle dominates the Class AA landscape, but could face another staunch challenge from Carmel this fall. Coach Todd Cayea’s Rams are legit title contenders, provided the unit does not put the cart before the horses.

You can also bank on Yorktown and John Jay CR to be among the perennial Class A powers, and that shouldn’t change at all this season despite Mahopac’s presence. Meanwhile, Byram Hills returns with a Class B chip under its belt, having never won one before in the modern state title era (1993 and up). Here’s a deep dive into the 23 football programs throughout the Examiner-area coverage zones from White Plains to Carmel, all of which are hoping for a more typical season, which is expected to conclude with sectional and state playoffs later this fall.

CLASS AA

CARMEL

2020 Record: 5-1 (there were no playoffs in Class AA in 2020), runner-up to New Rochelle in 2019
COACH: Todd Cayea (27th season, 157-81-1)

Top Returning Players: Sr. QB Kevin Dall, 6-0, 165; Sr. RB/LB Josh Massi, 5-9, 185; Sr. WR Andrew Fiore, 6-1, 175; Sr. WR/DB Trevor

RAY GALLAGHER/ROB DIANTONIO/ANDY JACOBS/BOB CASTNER/BILL KENNEDY PHOTOS

Carmel senior WR-DB Andrew Fiore should make a big splash on Section 1 grids this fall.

Fox Lane QB Eric Miller will lead the Foxes into battle this fall.
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and Massi, a fortified stud who can run between tackles or take the pitch outside, is among the elite RB’s in the section. He has great hands, his run-after-contact skills are for real and the kid can block and tackle with the best in the section. Fiore provides a lanky target, who can also run jet. Cayea has as many weapons in this offense as he’s ever had, and all return with a ton of run under their belts. Drives that may stall will surely be bolstered by the leg of Sodano, who is pure from 40+. Surely, five-time defending sectional champion New Rochelle comes in as the favorites, but the Rams are not far behind the 14-time sectional champion Huguenots in terms of talent and know-how. While there are several other solid Class AA title contenders, Carmel is of that ilk and don’t say you weren’t warned when all is said and done. If there was ever a year when the stars aligned and New Ro’ could be all is said and done. If there was ever a year when the stars aligned and New Ro’ could be the year they move through life beyond high school. That normalcy of that there’s going to be a league champion, there’s going to be playoffs and we’ve got to make the playoffs. That normalcy of that there’s going to be a league champion, there’s going to be playoffs and there are going to be seedings. All of that stuff is huge and it’s just great for the kids. You're actually playing for something.

Outlook: With longtime coach Bill Broggy’s retirement, Andrew Giuliano takes over the Foxes program after being an assistant since 2011. A big piece coming back to the program is Noah Bernero (FB/S), who returns after a season at Stepinac. Bernero started as a sophomore for a Fox Lane squad that won six games. Giuliano said, “nothing but a player to work with.” Bernero is a ball hawk on defense and always in the right spot making plays, Giuliano said. Senior quarterback Eric Miller returns after getting a season under his belt in the spring and should progress nicely. Miller has some targets to throw to including senior Logan Matson, a three-sport athlete who Giuliano says “loves competition, embraces a challenge and is someone who can make big plays down field.” Senior Marc Berisha, a key linemen and wrestler who missed his junior season due to injury, is going to help tremendously according to Giuliano. With plenty of experience back and some talented new faces, the Foxes have the capability to make some noise in Class AA.

“Overall, I feel we have a well-balanced team whereas there’s not one amazingly skilled guy, however it is the first year in a while where everybody can make a play,” Giuliano said. “I look forward to coaching these kids. I look forward to developing as a new head coach, and overall I am just excited to be back out there grinding it out with the team.”

Twitter/Social Media Acct.: @FoxLaneFB

WHITE PLAINS

2020 Record: 2-4
COACH: Mike Lindberg (6th season)
Top Returning Players: Sr. WR/DB Elijah Pierre; Sr. WR/S Daniel LaSalle; Sr. QB Jay Biondi; Sr. OL/DL Nick Pasqualini; Sr. RB/S Nicolas Spista
Goals: “In the spring our goal was to get through the season healthy with no COVID issues,” Lindberg said. “We were lucky we didn’t have to get quarantined or anything like that. The goal there was to just get as many games as possible. Now, we actually have, ‘Alright, let’s go, we need to win some games here (this season).’ We’ve got to compete for the league championship and we’ve got to make the playoffs.

FOX LANE

2020 Record: 2-4
COACH: Andrew Giuliano (first season, assistant since 2011)
Top Returning Players: Sr. FB/S Noah Bernero; Sr. WR/DB Logan Matson; Sr. OL/DL Will Hoyt; Sr. TE/LB Will Shepherd; Sr. QB Eric Miller; So. C/DL Brian Bailey
Key Newcomers: Sr. OL/DL Marc Berisha (injured last year); Jr. OL/LB Roan Guyder; Jr. RB/LB Max Guyder; Jr. FB/LB Charles Hoyt
Goals: Win the first game on the road against Ketcham (Sept. 10), win their league and establish unity and culture within the program, according to Coach Giuliano.

Coach’s Comments: I am excited to get things going over here at Fox Lane. The kids are excited as well. I think we have a well mixed schedule that should provide us with some great, competitive games. I also think a league title is something in our reach if we play our style of football and play clean football. Our motto has been worry about us and we play with no excuses and do not let hurdles get in our way. If we prepare with a mindset like that, then I know we can be successful this season, and far beyond for the players as they move through life beyond high school.

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Twitter/Social Media Acct.: @FoxLaneFB

White Plains RB Elijah Pierre is the Tigers’ most electric threat in 2021.
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That’s our initial goal to go 1-0 and then to eventually be playing for a league championship.”

Coach’s Comments: We were super young in the spring, which was tough then. But now, we return a ton. It was almost kind of like a college spring ball for us this past spring. There’s nothing like varsity game experience; just the speed of the game and stuff like that. So, for the juniors to get that opportunity was just huge for them and their development. There won’t be that dear in headlights in that first varsity moment because we already got that out of the way.

Outlook: Eli Pierre and Danny LaSalle should cause fits for opposing defenses at wide receiver with both standing over 6-foot-2 and weighing in around 200 pounds. On top of that, they’re both athletic and bring speed to the table. “I completely expect Eli and Danny to be two of the tougher receivers for people to guard,” said Lindberg, who noted that Pierre was nagged by a high ankle sprain last season after a breakout sophomore campaign. Quarterback Jay Biondi split last season after a breakout sophomore season, is a crutch to lean on. History, and Bernardo, now in his third three very winnable games based on recent ascent in Class A.

Class A

League A-North is about as brutal a combination of teams as any we’ve seen in recent seasons. Geography-based leagues, during this COVID period, were not kind to the locals, who were bunched together, which makes for very few “gimmies”. Somers, John Jay CR, Yorktown, Lourdes and Mahopac are considered the heavyweight challengers, but Brewster, Lakeland, and Panas, in particular, are intriguing underdogs.

In the end, all roads have often led to Somers or Rye, the nine-time Section 1 and three-time NYS champs (since 1993), where legendary Coach Dino Garr and his 320 career wins will probably remain in place until taking over the state record (Howie Vogts, 364). Rye (6-0), which won the section in 2019 and was a regional bowl champ in the 2020-21 pandemic-affected season, should/could be a shoe-in for the top seed this fall, given the league breakdowns and strength of schedules in League A-South, unless Clarkstown South (5-1) can continue it recent ascent in Class A.

SOMERS

2020 Record: 6-0

COACH: Anthony DeMatteo Jr. (1st year)

Top Returning Players: Ethan Krauss, Sr., TE/LB, 6-1, 215; Trey Mancuso, Sr., WR/SS, 6-0, 180; Jake Polito, Jr., OL/DL, 6-3, 285; Sr. RB/LB Derek Marcus, 5-8 175; Sr. WR/DB TJ Olifiers, 5-6 165

Key Newcomers/Adds: Sr. QB Matt Fitzsimmons, 6-5; Jr. RB Ravi Dass, 5-7; Sr. TE/DT Dylan Faller 6-4, 215; Jr. RB/LB Luke Kennedy 5-10 175; Sr. RB/DB Mikey DiFilippo, 5-10 175

Goals: Nothing short of a league and sectional title will suffice.

Coach’s Comments: We as a coaching staff are extremely excited for what we can accomplish this year. These kids have given us a tremendous preseason and we are ready for the long haul. Nothing is going to change in Somers about what our goals are.

Outlook: Like Class AA New Rochelle, there is no substitute for a Section 1 title at Somers, which has appeared in six of the last nine title tilts, winning four (including the 2020-21 regional title) under former Coach
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Tony DeMatteo. Somers has also appeared in nine of the last 10 sectional Final 4’s. The transition should be seamless, giving Anthony Jr.’s decade-long involvement with the program. There should be no issues given the fact that this ego-free, battle-tested coaching staff knows its role. Polito is a game-changer up front on both sides of the ball. Somers, the reigning Class A co-champs, won the regional title game last year with a game-manager under center. Strides will be taken there and the Tuskers will take off as they have in the past with Fitzsimmons under center. Rookie HB Duss is quick to the hole and one to keep eyes on.

The hard part will be replacing stud RB/LB Jack Kaiser, an All-NYS player while getting an inexperienced but highly capable quarterback up to speed.

“From the coaching staff all the way to our whole team we have that next man up mentality, a whole roster of committed individuals ready to go as one to go out and win football games,” said Polito. “It’d be hard for me to say that we can easily replace someone like Jack Kaiser, especially after the year he had last year and the influence he’s had the past few years. But I genuinely believe we are ready to go with a different look than everyone’s expecting. Somers football, this year, is different from past years, and I can’t wait to see how the year goes for us.”

Twitter/Social Media Acct.: @SomersFootball

MAHOPAC

2020 Record: 4-2

COACH: Dominick DeMatteo (5th year at Mahopac)

Top Returning Players: Anthony DeMatteo, Sr., QB, 6-1, 185; Joey Koch, Jr., WR/RB/DB, 5-10, 170; Tyler Maewsly, Sr., OL/DL, 6-2, 215; Adam Montalvo, Sr., OL/DL, 6-3, 265; Craig Perri, Sr., OL/DE, 6-3, 190; Steven Perrone, Sr., RB/WR/DB, 5-8, 175; Colum Ranaghan, Sr., TE/LB, 6-4, 170; Ryan Reilly, Sr., OL/DL, 6-3, 240; Ryan Rondeau, Sr., WR/DB, 5-10, 160

Goals: With a battle-tested veteran unit returning to the fold, Mahopac should be able to match or improve upon its 2020 season, it’s first in Class A.

Coach’s Comments: After a slow start to the Spring 2021 season we were able to make some adjustments and win our final four games of the season. Our kids demonstrated tremendous grit and truly became a TEAM as the Fall 2021 season progressed. After a productive summer of strength and speed training, as well as attending 7v7s and the Hudson Valley Football Camp, we believe we are prepared for preseason. The key to our success this season will be to remain healthy and continue to develop all of our student-athletes while hopefully building our depth. If we are able to do those things we should be a playoff team.

Outlook: The Indians won four games last year, so the expectations, with a vast majority of the unit returning, is to improve upon that number and make a legit run to the Class A Final 4. Anything short of the semifinals will be a sub-par outcome, but reaching that goal will be extremely tough given the field of challengers. Rye, Somers, John Jay, Yorktown: Each have had significant showings on the playoff circuit, so cracking the upper crust will be difficult.

DeMatteo returns with All-Conference accolades after firing seven TD passes with 682 yards and a 59% completion rating. He has the potential to be one of the better QBs in the Lower Hudson Valley this season. Montalvo was an extremely consistent player on both sides of the ball this past spring, and at times was dominant on defense. He has the potential to be one of the better linemen in the region. Reilly is a Swiss army knife, having played TE, OT, OLB and ILB the past two years. DeMatteo calls him one of the most versatile players he’s ever coached. Rondeau has evolved into one of the most consistent skill players and one his best attributes is his ability to tackle in space. Perrone was a significant contributor at RB and DB last year. He is a dynamic offensive player who can run between the tackles and catch the ball in space. Koch impressed as a rook last year and was in the starting rotation at WR and was an every-down CB. DeMatteo believes he has the skill set and physical tools to be a difference maker on both sides of the ball. Perri excelled at OLB and evolved into one of the Indians’ better pass rushers. The only bad news for the Indians is the loss of two-way banger Michael Harney, who suffered a season-ending injury during lacrosse this summer.

Twitter/Social Media Acct.: @MahopacFB

YORKTOWN

2020 Record: 3-2 (3-1 in League)

COACH: Pantelis Ypsilantis (2nd year)

Top Returning Players: Sr. RB/WR/OLB Marco McKnight, 6-1, 180; Sr. LB/Oliver Vincent Cappello, 5-11, 201; Sr. C/DT Konstadinow Bowen, 6-1, 225; Sr. K/P Vicente Lyon, 6-2, 190; Jr. QB/DB Justin Meyreles, 5-8, 165; Sr. HB/SE/DB Jack Carlin, 5-10, 170; Vito DeBello RB/DB, Giacomo Micciari RB/LB, Dion Brucaj OL/DL, Robert Gormley OL/DL

Key Newcomers/Adds: Sr. Jack Baker OT/DE, Justin Price SE/DB, Dillon Carter RB/DB

Goals: Whether it was former Section 1 title-winning coaches Ron Santavicca (1993-94-96), Dan Callahan (1998), Mike Rescigno (1995-96), Dan Callahan (1998), Mike Rescigno (1995-96), or Ypsilantis, the five-time Section 1 champion Huskers are in it to win it every single year.

Coach’s Comments: We are very excited for this team and hope to work to be competitive in a very difficult league. We are a team full of hard working, lunch pail type players that work every day to become the best version of themselves. We have a nice group of returning players and a few newcomers who I think will help add depth and competition to the team.

Marco is a super athletic and long captain and hard worker. He showed some great flashes last year in a short season and appears ready to break out. Vin is the guy who every coach would want on their team. He is a great leader and an extremely hard worker who has gotten where he has by grinding in the weight room, studying his craft, watching film and doing anything he is asked. Dino was a force in the trenches last year who had a bunch of sacks and

Strong-armed Indian senior QB Anthony DeMatteo has weapons at his disposal should things go Mahopac’s way this fall.

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PANAS

2020 Record: 0-6
COACH: Bill Castro (2nd season)
Top Returning Players: So. QB/RB/DB Travis Carlucci, 5-10, 170; Sr. QB/RB/LB Nate Lugo 5-10, 180; Jr. RB/LB Paul Ronga; TJ Saraco; So. TE/DE KC Bryan; Mike Zazzini, 6-2, 185; Sr. OL/DL John Baisley 6-1, 210, Sr. QB/DB John Guida, 5-8, 140
Key Adds/Newcomers: Penn State-bound Sr. OL/DL Maleek McNeil, 6-8, 340; Jr. LB/TE Matt Tosolini, 5-7, 170; Dom Parante, 5-7, 175; Jr. WR/LB Cooper Schmidt
Goals: Improve on last year’s season in fundamentals, knowledge of playbook and overall effort. Compete to our very best for four quarters every game.
Coach’s Comments: We are excited to have a lot of key skill players back and looking forward to getting the ball in their hands. We had a very productive 13-week offseason where we saw a lot of our players get stronger, which leads to more confidence. We have a great group of young competitors that have been attacking each day of preparation with 100% of their effort.
Outlook: Obviously, with a newly-inserted Penn State-bound stud anchoring the O-line, things are looking up at Panas. McNeil, who is like that red-bowed Land Rover you find in your driveway Christmas morning, is the single biggest boost to any Section 1 program in quite some time. He’s bigger, stronger and quicker than any player/players he’ll line up against this season. He will protect Carlucci and or Lugo’s blind side and then some as the talented QB’s settles up under center. Carlucci, who returned a pair of electrifying kickoffs for TDs as a freshman last season, has game-breaking speed and untapped skill.
Still, the Panthers were winless last season, so, while expectations are much higher in Castro’s second season, let’s temper them. The league is extremely tough and there will be a legit test that confronts Panas each week. If the Panthers can muster three wins on this regular-season schedule, after not winning a game last year, they will have done well. If they find their way to the playoffs, they will be the feel-good story of the season.
Coach Twitter/Social Acct.: @Coach_Castro

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was a fearless and relentless blocker. Justin is looking to break out in his second year as a starter. He has experienced exponential growth and is a great leader as a junior captain. Justin has great speed and athleticism, but is also a very smart football player who has great instincts and Jack is one of the most intelligent players on the field and is an extension of the coaching staff.
Outlook: In a loaded league, Yorktown is certainly in the mix of challengers for supremacy. Meyreles is an electric presence who will only get better over time behind a stout O-line driven by Cappelli, Brucel, Bowen and Cermele. Yorktown has oft-had a strong tight end within the mix and is hoping for one to emerge as a vital part of its attack. Many expect the Huskers to get off to a 2-0 start before a rough two-game stretch that includes Somers and John Jay, who battled for regional supremacy last spring. We’ll know more about the Huskers by then.
Twitter/Social Media Acct: @YtownHuskers

Yorktown senior OL-LB Vincent Cappelli is a two-way force for Huskers.

Yorktown junior QB Justin Meyreles and senior RB Jack Carlin (10) will be pivotal keys to Huskers’ success in 2021.

Brewster RB Nick Sayegh should provide some burst between the tackles for 2021 Bears.

Lakeland RB Joseph Malaspina will be a workhorse for the 2021 Hornets.
LAKELAND

2020 Record: 2-3
COACH: Mike Meadows (5th season)
Top Returning Players: Sr. QB/DB Steven Dedvuljuk, 5-11, 161; Sr. RB/LB Joey Malaspins, 5-6, 140; Sr. DL/Ol Kevin Hickey, 6-0, 240; Sr. WR/DB, Tyler Ronk, 6-0, 165; Sr. LB/Ol, Connor Magannon, 5-9, 200; Sr. DB/WR, Ryan Gallagher, 5-7, 125; Jr. DB/TE, Andrew Mendel; Jr. OL/DL Ian Wikser, 5-10, 250
Key Newcomers: Jr. LB/TE Robert Nugent; Jr. WR/DB Jack Nugent; So. OL/DL Luca Sancinimino; Sr. OL/DL Nikolin Bujaj; Jr. RB/LB Steephn Carroll
Goals: Stay healthy! The Hornets have been unlucky the last few seasons with injuries. Continue to be a consistent and competitive program at both the JV and varsity levels.

Coaches Comments: We have already experienced many ups and downs this offseason. However, I really like the mixture of seniors and juniors we have on our team. We have guys with experience and guys with great talent. My coaching staff is all back and we know our team and program very well. It’s our job to set these guys up for success.

I’m excited to see what we can accomplish this season against some extremely tough opponents. In my opinion, I feel like we are in the most challenging league in all of Section 1. Regardless, as a program we are ready to leave it all out on the field and compete. As a program, we are ready for the challenge. Lastly, we need to believe and finish. We lost a few tough games last season. So my hope is we learned from them and we show we can get the job done.

Outlook: Lakeland nearly ended the year on a real high note before fading in the final quarter against Mahopac, which would have been a huge feather in the Hornets’ cap. That said, Mahopac is just one of many tough foes on the docket this year. The Hornets have not proved up to the level of Somers, Yorktown, Lourdes or John Jay in recent seasons, yet they will see all four, plus Mahopac. Finding more than two triumphs -- perhaps Brewster and Panas -- will be a tall order in what figures to be a very difficult season.

Twitter/ social media account: @LakehornetsFB

BREWSTER

2020 Record: 2-4
COACH: Ed Mulvihill (10th season, 48-32)
Top Returning Players: Sr. QB Chris Donohue, 6-4, 230; Sr. LB/OL Dom Rienzi, 5-10, 220; Mike Triolo, OL/DL, Sr. RB/LB Will Martinez, 5-9, 180; Sr. WR/DB Nick Sayegh, 5-9, 185; Sr. LB/OL Chris Triolo; Sr. WR/DB Matt Dunn; Sr. OL/DL Ryan Costales, 6-11, 193; Sr. WR/DB Joseph Thomas, 5-9, 140
Key Add/Newcomers: WR/DB Bryce Washington; Jr. WR/LB Luke Sanchez, 6-4, 165; Jr. WR/DB Alex Rienzi; Jr. DE/Ol AJ Pieragostini; Jr. WR/DB Massimo Parello, 5-9, 150; Sr. WR/DB Evan Knorr, 5-9, 160; Jr. RB/LB Joe Anfuso; Jr. WR/LB Leo Thomas
Goals: Brewster’s goal is to improve each week with its sights on a playoff spot in a very tough Class A.

Coach’s Comments: With so many new faces it will take time for us to adjust and all get on the same page with our offensive and defensive schemes. Offensively, we have a very capable QB in Donohue and he will carry a lot of the burden for the offense. He has the ability to take over a game and defenses will need to respect his arm. Our receivers are working on becoming more familiar with the passing attack. I like our overall speed at receiver. Washington, Dunn and Knorr all have above average speed and run good routes. Nick Sayegh, Leo Thomas, Luke Sanchez, Alex Rienzi and Mas Parello have shown good hands and nice quickness inside. Our line will need time to gel, Center Mike Triolo and Dom Rienzi at tackle will return. Chris Triolo, LucaSaccomano, AJ Pieragostini, Diego Diaz, Gabe Morrelli and Ryan Costales will all be in the hunt for spots on the O-line. Will Martinez, Joe Anfuso and Antonio Medina will handle the running back position.

Defensively, we will be more athletic overall. Defensive backs look strong with Washington, Sanchez, Knorr and Josh Thomas at the corner position and Sayegh, Alex Rienzi, Parello, Anfuso and Medina at the safety spot. Linebackers are led by Dom Rienzi in the middle with Chris Triolo, Leo Thomas, Will Martinez, Dylan Pitura, Dom Bonamassa and Julius Walters working the outside. The line is anchored by Ryan Costales inside with Jordan Salmon, Logan Simon, Josh Consentino, Luke Pratley working the interior. Jack Golinello, AJ Pieragostini, Derek Karlsson and Ian Hayes will work the defensive end position. What we lack in size we make up for in speed and athleticism. It may take us a few games to get our footing and figure out who we are and what we do best, but we will look to improve each week and be playing our best ball at the end of the season.

Outlook: In this particular league, the Bears won’t have a lot of time to figure out who and what they are. All hands on deck will need to get up to speed quicker than expected if Brewster is going to challenge the upper crust. Getting three wins in this league won’t be easy for anybody given the traditional challengers within. There was a time in Brewster’s history – somewhere between say 1995-2000 – when the Bears, under former Coach Brian Walsh (267 career wins at Brewster, Lourdes, Jay EF), were the upper crust and Brewster football was the envy of Section 1 while winning three sectional titles (1996-97-99) and falling one win short of a state title twice (1997-99), but those days are long gone. This year is about rebuilding and establishing a base for the future.

Twitter/Social Media Aect: @bthebrewsterbear

CLASS B

BYRAM HILLS

2020 Record: 6-0 (Section 1 Class B bowl champions)
COACH: Simon Berk (1st season)
Top Returning Players: Sr. RB/DB Michael Rocco; Jr. OL/DL George Gjelaj; Jr. OL/DL Zach Gluckman; Sr. QB/DB Jared Cohen; Sr. RB/DB Gavin Javorsky; Sr. TE/LB Ben Dreilinger; Sr. WR/LB Gino Scucciano; Sr. WR/DB Tyler Meltzer; Sr. OL/LB Joseph Brown; Sr. OL/LB John Anthony Lombars Key Add/Newcomers: So. G/LB Jack Quinn
Goals: “The goals are high,” Berk said.

“I’m excited to see what we can accomplish this season against some extremely tough opponents. In my opinion, I feel like we are in the most challenging league in all of Section 1. Regardless, as a program we are ready to leave it all out on the field and compete. As a program, we are ready for the challenge. Lastly, we need to believe and finish. We lost a few tough games last season. So my hope is we learned from them and we show we can get the job done.

Outlook: In this particular league, the Bears won’t have a lot of time to figure out who and what they are. All hands on deck will need to get up to speed quicker than expected if Brewster is going to challenge the upper crust. Getting three wins in this league won’t be easy for anybody given the traditional challengers within. There was a time in Brewster’s history – somewhere between say 1995-2000 – when the Bears, under former Coach Brian Walsh (267 career wins at Brewster, Lourdes, Jay EF), were the upper crust and Brewster football was the envy of Section 1 while winning three sectional titles (1996-97-99) and falling one win short of a state title twice (1997-99), but those days are long gone. This year is about rebuilding and establishing a base for the future.

Twitter/Social Media Aect: @bthebrewsterbear

Versatile Pleasantville sophomore Aiden Picart will be someone to keep an eye on this fall.

Byram Hills senior RB Michael Rocco will take on a much bigger role in 2021.
Wildcats back to Class B title game.

Westlake Coach John Castellano hopes to bring Westlake’s Anthony Arrichiello is expected to take over at QB for the 2021 Wildcats.

“stay healthy , not just because of COVID, Kittsley; Sr. WR/DB Aidan Finnegan Sr. OL/DL Brian Straus; Jr. OL/DL Cooper Mooney; Jr. OL/DL Joseph Reich; Jr. OL/DL Ryan Raefski; Sr. WR/DB Nick Paternostro; So. RB/LB Brian Scopino DB Quinn Egan; Sr. FB/LB Carl Herzner; Sr. OL/DL John McCarthy; Sr. WR/DB A.J. Moore; Sr. OL/DL Brian Scopino Key Newcomers/Adds: C Brandon Sumpter; G Mason Dietz; DB Ryan Clark Goals: Challenge for league title and be in position to battle for what is believed to be a wide open Class B crown.

Outlook: The Bears are back in Class B. A .500 season would be a positive start for Briarcliff after rejoining the big boys in B. A win over rival Pleasantville (Sept. 25 on the road) I’m sure is a goal for the Bears as well.

Outlook: Lacrosse/football stud Brandon Rispoli will see plenty of carries after Rispoli will see plenty of carries after lighting up scoreboards in the Independent League last season. Jaylen Savage is a threat at wide receiver but do the Bears have enough firepower outside of those two to be competitive in an always grueling Class B? Time will tell.

Westlake’s Anthony Arrichiello is expected to take over at QB for the 2021 Wildcats.

continued from previous page history with the Panthers as they fell to them in the 2019 Section I final but got some revenge with a win last season.

“Ardsley is always a good team and always very well coached,” Berk said. “It’s certainly a good litmus test for kind of where we’re at and how far along we are in the path toward our goals.”

Twitter/Social Media Acct.: @ByramFootBall

PLEASANTVILLE

2020 Record: 3-3

COACH: Tony Becerra (18th season)

Top Returning Players: Sr. RB/DB Kieran Cotter; Sr. OL/DL Michael Gordon; Sr. QB/DB Michael LaCapria; Sr. TE/LB Ryan Miller; So. WR/DB Aidan Picart; So. RB/DB Daniel Picart; Sr. WR/DB Dominic Matica; Sr. OL/LB Jacob Carozza; Sr. WR/DB Quinn Egan; Sr. FB/LB Carl Herzner; Sr. OL/DL John McCarthy; Sr. WR/DB A.J. Moore; Sr. OL/DL Brian Scopino

Key Adds/Newcomers: Jr. RB/DB Eric Coleman; Jr. TE/LB Thomas Cahill; Jr. FB/DB Ryan Raefski; Sr. WR/DB Nick Pateraostro; So. RB/LB Ryan Horgan; Jr. FB/DB Owen Mooney; Jr. OL/DL Joseph Reich; Jr. OL/DL Ethan Taboh; Jr. OL/DL Bryson Williams; Sr. OL/DL Brian Strauss; Jr. OL/DL Cooper Kittsley; Sr. WR/DB Aidan Finnegan

Goals: “Our No. 1 priority is always to stay healthy, not just because of COVID, but to remain injury free,” Becerra said. “We’ve been bitten by the injury bug over the last few years, and because of the constant specter of injury/COVID. We need to develop some depth.”

Coach’s Comments: Our numbers are healthy with 41 on the varsity roster, but that remains to be seen if that will be a strength. If we can develop some depth at key positions then that will certainly help.

Outlook: Last season started smoothly with wins in their first two games but the Panthers dropped three straight after that. With a slew of skill players returning along with quarterback Michael LaCapria, the Panthers have the tools necessary to be a contender. It might come down to the play of the men in the trenches. Remember, Pleasantville is only four years removed from a state championship. Becerra and the Panthers know how to win and they plan to return to their winning ways in 2021.

Twitter/Social Media Acct.: @Pville_football

BRIARCLIFF/HAMILTON

2020 Record: 4-0 (Independent League champions)

COACH: Skip Stevens (5th season, former longtime White Plains coach)

Top Returning Players: Sr. HB/DB Brandon Rispoli; Sr. WR/DB Jaylen Savage

Goals: After a hiatus in the Independent League (and championship last season), the Bears are back in Class B. A .500 season would be a positive start for Briarcliff after rejoining the big boys in B. A win over rival Pleasantville (Sept. 25 on the road) I’m sure is a goal for the Bears as well.

Outlook: Lacrosse/football stud Brandon Rispoli will see plenty of carries after lighting up scoreboards in the Independent League last season. Jaylen Savage is a threat at wide receiver but do the Bears have enough firepower outside of those two to be competitive in an always grueling Class B? Time will tell.

WESTLAKE

2020 Record: 3-2 (lost in Section 1 bowl championship game to Byram Hills)

COACH: John Castellano (7th season, former coach at Nyack and Poughkeepsie)

Top Returning Players: Sr. QB/LB Anthony Arrichiello; Sr. OL/DL/K Josh Itri; Jr. G/LB Kyle Mello

Key Newcomers/Adds: C Brandon Sumpter; G Mason Dietz; DB Ryan Clark

Goals: Challenge for league title and be in position to battle for what is believed to be a wide open Class B crown.

Outlook: The Bears are back in Class B. A .500 season would be a positive start for Briarcliff after rejoining the big boys in B. A win over rival Pleasantville (Sept. 25 on the road) I’m sure is a goal for the Bears as well.

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WEEK 1 EXAMINER-AREA FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

9/10 Ossining @ White Plains 6 p.m. -- Pride’s 1st game back in Class AA won’t be a walk in the park.
9/10 Carmel @ Arlington 6:30 p.m. -- Heavyweight Class AA battle in hostile territory for rising Rams.
9/10 Fox Lane @ RCK 7 p.m. -- New coach, new era begins for Foxes in Dutchess Co.
9/10 Westlake @ Put Valley 7 p.m. -- Rebuilding PV hosts a Wildcat outfit that has had its number over years.
9/10 Pleasantville @ Hen Hud 7 p.m. -- A rematch of Class B hopefuls in what was a heck of a battle in mid-spring.
9/10 Greeley @ Edgemont 7 p.m. -- Tough to see these prideful programs going the Independent League route #TrustTheProcess.
9/10 Mahopac @ Somers 7 p.m. -- High hopes on both sides of the ball in what should be a hotly contested battle.
9/10 Brewster @ Yorktown 7 p.m. -- Two veteran QB’s -- Brewster’s Donohue vs. Ytown’s Meyreles -- going toe-to-toe.
9/10 Panas @ Lakeland 7 p.m. -- Who will be Penn State-bound Panther OL Maleek McNeil’s first pancake block?
9/11 Ardsley @ Byram Hills 1:30 p.m. -- Bobcats storm Ardsley as reigning champs for first time in school history.
9/11 Peekskill @ Irvington 3 p.m. -- Class D Blue Devils absolutely school Panthers last year.
9/11 Nanuet @ Briarcliff 3 p.m. -- Expect a ton of Bears RB Rispoli as they host traditionally-tough Nanuet.
9/11 Valhalla @ Croton 3 p.m. -- Curious to see if Viking QB Dawson can go off as expected.
Nanuet and Bronxville. Finding three wins features traditional powers like Westlake, Hen Hud, Ardsley, P'Ville and Briarcliff in and victories will be tough to come by with energy this year.

for our players to come in with grit and smaller school in the section it is important out on the field making the big plays. As a look forward to seeing a lot of different kids talents mixed into a number of players. I the ball. This year we have a lot of different few different holes this year on both sides of spring season. He may be seen at filling a very strong showing as a sophomore in the expect a lot from this year. Kyle Mello had a strong force for us in the trenches that we will be a strong hold on the line for us. He is a very strong showing as a sophomore in the season. He may be seen at filling a few different holes this year on both sides of the hall. This year we have a lot of different talents mixed into a number of players. I look forward to seeing a lot of different kids out on the field making the big plays. As a smaller school in the section it is important for our players to come in with grit and energy this year.

Outlook: The program is in rebuild mode and victories will be tough to come by with Hen Hud, Ardsley, P’Ville and Briarcliff in the league, and the non-league slate also features traditional powers like Westlake, Nanuet and Bronxville. Finding three wins there won’t be easy.

Twitter/Social Media Acct: @CoachElsasser

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working on getting him even more touches as they have playing key roles, including no different with as many underclassmen for sectional supremacy and 2021 will be years since the Tigers seriously challenged and Rye Neck for third place. It’s been a few years since the Tigers seriously challenged for sectional supremacy and 2021 will be no different with as many underclassmen as they have playing key roles, including QB. 2021 will be about building a base and reestablishing its culture.

Haldane

2020 Record: 2-4 (there were no playoffs in Class D in 2020), runner-up to Tuckahoe in 2019

COACH: Ryan McConville (8th season, 2-4)

Top Returning Players: Sr. RB/LB Ryan Irwin; Sr. OL/DL Will Etta; Jr. OL/LB Jake Mason; Sr. WR/DB Soren Holmbo; Sr. FS Giancarlo Carone; Sr. DB Soleil Gaines; So. RB/LB Evan Giachinta; So. OL/DL Dylan Rucker

Key Adds/Newcomers: So. QB Ryan Van Tassel; So. LB Eric Stubblefield; So. OL/ DL Jack Hartman

Goals: Each season we want to compete with the best teams in our league and make a run at the sectional championship.

Coach’s Comments: We feel that this year’s group is a great combination of returning skill players on the outside and some tough physical linemen that will create a lot of points on offense. We have an open competition for a lot of positions, and guys have really stepped up to the plate to challenge and push one another. Defensively we feel that our secondary is going to be

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very strong and we want to make sure we play sound up front to stop the run and put teams in situations where they are forced to throw the ball. This year we have a great competitive schedule and look to improve week in and week out to get ready for the end-of-year matchup with Tuckahoe (for the Class D title).

Outlook: One has to wonder: At a time when so many small school’s are struggling with numbers, how does Haldane continue to field a competitive product each and every year. There are Class B schools combining programs with other Class B’s and C’s, yet Haldane, a tiny Class D program along the western coast of Putnam County, has relatively no issues when it comes to numbers.

“It’s a big-time credit to our kids,” Coach McConville said. “They recruit each other and want to play with each other. I tell them all the time, football might not be your number one sport, and I’m cool with that, but come play, come compete with your friends. I also think outlet training methods are a big part. We want to help build athletes, so we train them to jump higher and run faster and improve their change of direction. Our coaches want to see Haldane Athletics win and improve every single day practice or game. We train them to jump higher and run faster. Our coaches want to see Haldane Athletics win and improve every single day practice or game.

Coach’s Comments: Coach Wright is seeking to build a strong program at Peekskill. He is full of passion and energy and is looking to infect the team with the same mindset and attitude. “Everyday we have to get better,” Wright said. “The motto ‘BE GREAT’ is what is thrown around everyday in the Peekskill football program and that will be the expectation for this team. They are looking forward to the progress of the Peekskill Red Devils this year, but they will be doing so in the shadows of an independent league until the program is ready to get back to Class A as soon as possible.

Twitter/Social Media Acct: @CoachMWright_
What these guys do in the red zone determines whether or not their teams hit paydirt, including Brewster QB Chris Donohue, Briarcliff RB Brandon Rispoli, Carmel RB Josh Massi, Mahopac RB Joey Koch, Pleasantville QB Michael LaCapria, Somers TE Ethan Krauss, White Plains RB Elijah Pierre, Valhalla QB Michael Dawson and Yorktown RB Marco McKnight, who will take the field at a Section 1 gridiron near you beginning this Friday (Week Zero) and/or Sept. 9 (Week 1) during what we hope is a return to normalcy this fall... see Pigskin Previews inside.