

Talent and potential in Lamorinda football

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So far, the key addition has been at quarterback with sophomore Tyler Winkles, who played on the freshman team last year. "Tyler is very smart and is able to see the whole field," Burnsed said. "He anticipates routes, throws on time, and does not lock on to one player. He reminds me of (former NFL QB) Ken Dorsey who I coached at Miramonte."

Backing up Winkles is Wyatt Zawadski and WR David Gonzales. The running backs are set with Austin Wampler and the multi-talented Deonte Littlejohn, who ran for 68 and 55 yards respectively in the opening win over Lowell.

At WR, Nico White is the leader from last season (51-748) and set the tone for the first win over Lovel by returning the opening kickoff for a touchdown. Gonzalez, Tyler Kim, and sophomore Finn Rivera, who also starts in the secondary, gives the team good depth on the outside. Junior Josh Everts is the starting tight end with JB Frolich currently out with an injury.

The offensive line continues to be a strength for the Dons with Joey Martin, up from JV at center, Andrew Tresser returning at right guard, Jack Manful at left guard, Santiago Chenelo at right tackle and Drew McKenzie the left tackle, and the only lineman that also plays on defense.

At 6'2" and 220 pounds, Deonte Littlejohn was dominant in the opener with five tackles for loss and one sack. A key addition on the line has been DT Bethel Imasuen at 6'4" 255 who was a rugby player in England. "Bethel is just learning how to play and is really enjoying the game," Burnsed said.

Despite losing their starting linebackers to graduation, seniors Brady Wall, Jake Hawkins, and Wyatt Cooper still bring experience to the position. "They all had good playing time last season so we're not starting from scratch," Burnsed said. The corners are River Lockwood and Ilias Kaplanes-Jones. Birdsong, Jonah Rivera, and LB Marco Giorgiani all had interceptions in the first game.

"I like our team," Burnsed, "We've got a lot of players that are going to be exciting to watch play."

MIRAMONTE

The Nick Safir regime has started very successfully, defeating Oakland Tech 42-6 and Alhambra 44-0. "We've got a really resilient group of guys without a ton of numbers," Safir said. "These kids really want to be good, and they have really bought in, and I couldn't be happier with them. The players have learned I want to get the best out of them and know that I'm a player's coach."

Along with quarter-

back Carson Blair, the Matadors will be running a spread offense with three wide receivers, an H-back, and a single running back. "We're really going to stress running the football and be more balanced than we were last year," Safir said. "Carson is a great quarterback and we're going to put a lot of things in his hands because we're really confident with him leading our offense with Charlie Methard as his backup."

Miramonte ran for 256 yards in their opener vs. Oakland Tech led by Charlie Hwang, Derek Youn, and Blair. "This offense has been a lot of fun so far," Hwang said. "For Derek and me to get 19 carries was more than we had been used to and Carson has the option to run off the pass plays."

The receivers are led by Andrew Bjornson and Jack Quinild, and H-backs in Mitch Reichenbach and Justin Jalowiec. "They are the pistons to Blair's role as the team's engine," Safir said.

The offensive line is led Leo Wampler, sophomore Jack White, Andrew Davenport, and Hugo Shen. "Andrew is a dominant player on offense and defense and if he stays healthy, he's going to have a monster season."

With a 4-2-5 defense, the line is set with Davenport playing on the inside and outside. Bjornson has moved to DE along with 6'5" Tanner Gunn; Harry Smith lines

up on the nose and Preston Hawthorn at defensive tackle. "Bjornson gives us length and a great pass rush and Gunn just needs to play meaner. Smith has been really hard to block, and Hawthorn brings a great motor," Safir said.

Luke Milmore and Jalowiec are the starting linebackers. "Luke is the heartbeat of the defense and he and Justin both play mean," Safir said. The defensive backfield is being led by sophomore George Gilbert, who is being counted on to direct the players.

"There's going to be some growing pains for him but he's the guy that is going to be make a lot of the calls," said Safir."

Safir is very confident in this team: "We just need to play within ourselves, not forcing things and running the game plan. On defense we need to make the tackles and not get beat deep."

CAMPOLINDO

With only eight seniors on the Campolindo roster, Coach Kevin Macy is relying on an uncharacteristic number of underclassmen to carry this year's team. Compounding this issue has been an unfortunate number of offseason knee injuries that has led to depth issues on the roster.

"We have so many young people," Macy said. "We're not deep in experience right now and we've seen the need to get the players more focused. It's good that we have caught it early and

we're addressing it and moving forward."

The Cougars started slowly in their opening game loss, but did adjust and outscored Vanden in the second half. "The team focused and grew up after the first half and we're going to have to continue to grow from week to week."

Junior QB Reid Habas showed well in the first game, splitting time with Max Robeson, and should be getting the majority of the playing time.

Junior Micah Parker (133-863) who led the team in rushing last year, Mack Fisher (35-258), and Zach Tabbian are the leading running backs. "The big thing for us is getting Blaise Clancy up to speed, coming off a torn ACL last summer and he is going to be the biggest key to us moving forward," Macy said. "He can do a lot of things for us but we're being a little cautious, he and will be looked upon to be the true leader on the team, having led his class since his freshman year."

Joe Revelos (29-481) is coming off a good junior season and is the leading receiver on the team this year. Junior Everett Zellmer caught a touchdown pass in the first game. "Everett is going to be solid," Macy said. "He's going to be that guy that just keeps making plays for us."

Crosby Kelly, who had a solid sophomore season at tight end, has been bothered by nag-

ging injuries all summer. Last year, Campolindo had the benefit of having five senior starters on the offensive line, but has made their year's line a work in progress.

Standing out among the group has been Elliott Frick, who is a first-time center, and junior Caleb Blete at right guard. "Caleb worked very hard in the off-season. He has become durable and shown a lot of improvement and made himself into a starter," Macy said.

Depth is also a question on defense and Macy is again looking forward to being able to use Blaise Clancy and Crosby Kelly more often. "Not having Crosby hurts because he's a fighter and the one that's out in front of everyone," Macy said. "We're also hoping to see Blaise step in at linebacker because he has the instincts to play there, and he plays with real desire." Mac Fisher, as an outside linebacker, also brings some experience.

Matthew Sugiyama is now being used exclusively in the defensive backfield and Luke Bonardi has moved from safety to corner because of his ability to tackle and stop the third down conversions.

"This is a year we're going to have to grow on the run," Macy concluded, and they have already started the process defeating Northgate 31-23.

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