

New coach ready to build George School from ground floor

By Stuart London, Correspondent

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The Cougars don't have a big team, but the players have been working hard since Dominic Gregorio took over the program.

Last year Dominic Gregorio was trying to win a state championship. This year, he will be attempting to string together some wins.

Gregorio is the new head coach at George School, replacing George Long. He was the defensive coordinator at Bishop McDevitt, which lost in double overtime in the second round of the state playoffs last season.

It was Gregorio's second year in the position. Previously, he had coached at Abington in two stints (2015, 2001-07) after an All-Catholic career playing for McDevitt.

George School only won one game last season but Gregorio is anxious for the challenge.

"I think it's a mirror image of where McDevitt was three years ago," said Gregorio. "When I played there, we were ranked top in the state every year but then we went thru a valley for 15 years. McDevitt lost games and lost a lot of kids to other schools. (McDevitt head coach) Mike Watkins came in and we built the program up, went 8-4 last year and made the state playoffs; won our first and then lost in double overtime.

"I think George School is a diamond in the rough. The facilities are second to none. It's funny, at McDevitt we had a motto 'brick by brick' but here they already have the infrastructure."

The Cougars play an independent schedule with a lot of small enrollment Bicentennial Athletic League teams usually on it.

Gregorio previous stops involved going against powerhouses like West Catholic in the Philadelphia Catholic League and North Penn and the Central Bucks schools in the Suburban One League.

He is hoping to eventually turn the Cougars into a program to be feared as well.

"Hey, (state power) St. Joe's Prep was a bad program a while ago," said Gregorio. "George School is a prestigious school. If we can get some good, smart kids in here, and if we can win some games, it's a win-win situation.

"I emphasize students-athletes; we want good character. The school has good out-of-state and international ties. In the end, it is still coaching football. The most important thing is building relationships with the kids."

As for this year's squad, senior Bennett Lichtstein (5-foot-8, 155-pounds) will be counted upon heavily. Besides starting at wide receiver and defensive back, he will serve as the Cougars placekicker and punter.

Gregorio is hoping senior Will Rampe (6-2, 215) can serve as an anchor on the offensive and defensive lines. He will start at offensive tackle and defensive end. Two others who will be key lineman are senior Graham Janovich (5-11, 185) and junior John Hutchins (6-2, 180), as each will start on offense and defense.

Bringing some speed to the team will be senior Daizae Tucker (5-9, 155), who should be a solid kick returner as well as a dangerous wide receiver. He also can start at defensive back. Angelo Leon (5-8, 165), a junior, is a promising running back and defensive back.