

Northeastern Small football capsules

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BEVERLY

Coach: Dan Bauer (fifth year, 22-20).

Last year's record: 9-1.

Playing surface: Grass.

Football website: bhsonline.org/athletics.php.

Returning starters (11): Greg Pierce, RB-DB, 5-10, 190, Sr.; Liam Blodgett, OL/DL, 5-10, 220, Sr.; Brian Kureta, OL-DL, 5-11, 240, Sr.; Dave Patnaude, FB-LB, 5-10, 190, Sr.; Pat Abate, TE-DE, 6-0, 225, Sr.; Levi Anderson, OL-DL, 5-10, 225, Sr.; Chris Bushey, WR-OLB, 5-9, 160, Sr.; Sean Deady, WR-DB, 6-1, 165, Sr.; Llazar Cuko, K-P, 6-1, 190, Sr.; David Gadbois, WR-DB, 5-10, 170, Sr.; Rashad Sims, TE-OLB, 5-11, 165, Jr.

Returning letter winners (4): Sam Rinaldo, TE-DE, Sr.; Alex Mock, WR-DB, Sr.; Kyle Tuneberg, OL-DL, Sr.; Jon Kleemola, OL-DL, Sr.

Strength: Returners on lines, depth at skill positions.

Concerns: Experience at some positions.

Outlook: The Panthers return 11 starters from last year's nine-win team. They are among the most accomplished group of players in the competitive Northeastern Conference. The strength of the team comes from its offensive and defensive lines. This contributes to an aggressive style of play that focuses on rushing the ball with Greg Pierce and getting to the other team's quarterback. Beverly plays Lynn English, Lynn Classical, and Gloucester in the first three weeks of the season, which Bauer acknowledges will be "a big test" for his team. After experiencing success last season, this year's seniors will try to avoid becoming complacent, and hope to cap their high school careers with a league title.

DANVERS

Coach: John Sullivan (eighth year, 40-32).

Last year's record: 3-7.

Playing surface: Grass.

Football website: danvers.mec.edu.

Returning starters (6): Patrick Hennessey, G-DE, 5-11, 185, Sr.; Kevin Keogh, C-LB, 5-11, 230, Sr.; Chris Martin, FB-MLB, 5-10, 185, Sr.; Matt Pasquariello, WR-DB, 5-11, 175, Sr.; Michael Pursley, RB-LB, 6-0, 185, Sr.; Nick Pellino, K, 6-2, 220, Jr.

Returning letter winners (3): Colin Cooper, RB, Jr.; Josh Levesque, LB, Jr.; Brian Blanchette, LB-TE, Sr.

Strength: Enthusiasm and attitude.

Concerns: Holes on the lines.

Outlook: After a one-year absence as head coach of the Falcons, Sullivan is looking to pick up where he left off, when he led the team to eight wins in 2005. His players are focused on the same goal, having worked diligently in the offseason in preparation for this year. That hard-working mentality is fostered by the team's senior captains, Hennessey, Keogh, and Martin. Their leadership is important for a team that graduated a number of key players last year, particularly on the offensive and defensive lines. Sullivan knows that filling those holes will be crucial to his team's success, noting that, "You only go as far as the lines take you." Playing behind those lines will be Martin, a force on both sides of the ball, while Pellino should provide stability and points on special teams. "I don't usually talk too much about kickers," says Sullivan. "But if we get inside the 30, we should have a real good chance at scoring at least three points." There are no sure things in football, but for a team looking to bounce back from a disappointing season, that sort of a positive attitude is a good place to start.

MARBLEHEAD

Coach: Doug Chernovetz (third year, 6-22 overall).

Last year's record: 4-7.

Playing surface: Grass.

Football website: marblehead.com/schools/athletics.

Returning starters (5): Eric Fader, OLB-C, 5-10, 175, Sr.; Drew Guzowski, OL-DL, 6-1, 200, Sr.; Mike Sahaigan, RB-DB, 5-11, 170, Sr.; Nick Haller, RB-DB, 5-8, 160, Jr.; Sam Perlow, TE-DE, 6-0, 225, Jr.

Returning letter winners: 0.

Strength: Winning attitude.

Concerns: Inexperience. **Outlook:** The Magicians will look to remain competitive this season while fielding a very young team. They will start at least seven sophomores and may turn to a freshman or two. However, Chernovetz stresses that they are tough kids who play hard and he won't do anything different in his approach to coaching them. He and his players will try to continue to turn the program around and build on a positive season last year that could have just easily ended up at 6-5. The players believe in themselves, and the six seniors that the team does have all lead by example. Ian McKinley, a junior quarterback, and Tariq Allen, a sophomore defensive back and wide receiver are two of the younger players from whom Marblehead is looking for big things. The team will try to establish the run, but there are high hopes for the passing game as well. Chernovetz expects his defense to be a strength, and should steady the inexperienced squad as it focuses on taking things one game at a time.

SAUGUS

Coach: Mike Broderick (third year, 4-17).

Last year's record: 3-7.

Playing surface: Grass.

Football website: mec.edu/saugus/shs/sports/sports.html.

Returning starters (7): Tyler Trainor, LB-RB, 6-0, 195, Sr.; Andrew McDermott, DE-OL, 6-1, 265, Sr.; Paul Sullivan, DE-OL, 6-1, 215, Sr.; Gilson Fernandes, DB-RB, 5-8, 170, Sr.; Brett Reid, DB-QB, 5-8, 160, Jr.; Anthony Barasso, DL-OL, 5-8, 230, Jr.; Mike Dean, LB-RB, 5-9, 180, Jr.

Returning letter winners (3): Nick Ortega, LB-RB, Sr.; Mike Gray, LB-OL, Jr.; Paul Ducette, LB, Jr.

Strength: Experience.

Concerns: Depth.

Outlook: The Sachems are excited about beginning a new season, and for most of the team, it is not a new experience. Many of the players are two- or three-year starters, having been forced to play when they were sophomores. This year's underclassmen might find themselves in a similar situation. The team has good backups, but is undermanned, and the depth chart is filled with younger players. Saugus likes to mix it up on offense, but "If all goes well," according to Broderick, "we should be throwing a lot." That task falls to Reid, who along with his fellow upperclassmen, contributes on both sides of the ball. The team will use its first four games against non-league opponents to sharpen their execution in anticipation of league play. The Sachems hope that their players will be able to capitalize on their experience and translate it into success on the field.

SWAMPSCOTT

Coach: Stephen Dembowski (ninth year, 56-34).

Last year's record: 5-6.

Playing surface: Grass.

Football website: swampscottfootball.com.

Returning starters (9): Michael DePippo, DE, 5-10, 182, Jr.; Dorsey Dobias, OT-DT, 6-2, 232, Sr.; Chris Gioiosa, OG, 6-3, 225, Sr.; Jordan Kelly, WR, 6-3, 205, Sr.; Peter Kinchley, DB, 6-0, 182, Sr.; Ilya Levin, LB, 5-10, 188, Jr.; Justin Mitchell, WR-OLB-P, 6-1, 175, Sr.; Steve Moran, CB, 6-0, 178, Jr.; Brian Palangi, OL-DL, 6-4, 266, Sr.

Returning letter winners (10): Frank Barile, OL-DL, Sr.; Connor Cross, DB, Sr.; Stephan Khouri, WR, Sr.; Adam McSwiggin, WR, Sr.; Eric Rothblatt, WR-DE, Sr.; Paul Vousboukis, OL-DL, Sr.; Shawn Hubauer, LB, Jr.; Kyle Shonio, DB, So.; Jon Poth, WR-LB, Jr.; Matt Barbuzzi, K, So.

Strength: Attitude, skill depth and experience.

Concerns: Depth in the secondary and at running back.

Outlook: The Big Blue, with its largest group of experienced players since 2003, has high hopes for the 2007 season. Kinchley will assume the starting quarterback role after logging time at the position the past two seasons. He should have no trouble finding quality receivers to whom he can throw the ball, with returning starters Kelly and Mitchell backed up by a deep group that can provide different looks. Protecting their QB will be a powerful offensive line anchored by senior captains Dobias and Palangi and returnee Gioiosa. The strength of the team, however, should be its defense, which returns seven starters and experienced lettermen at almost every position. The defensive line in particular should benefit from veteran leadership, while the linebackers are led by Levin, an all-league player last season. While the Big Blue are still looking for capable return men to emerge, the special teams unit should provide stability with the return of its place kicker, holder, snapper, and punter. With the team taking its cues from experienced players, the Big Blue looks forward to challenging for the small crown this season.

WINTHROP

Coach: Sean Driscoll (first year).

Last year's record: 13-0.

Playing surface: Grass.

Football website: winthrop.k12.me.us/whs1/.

Returning starters (3): Joe McDermott, RB-DB, 5-10, 175, Sr.; Robert Hamilton, C-DT, 6-0, 253, Sr.; Stephen Keough, DT, 6-1, 315, Jr.

Returning letter winners (27): William Milano, QB-DB, So.; Matthew Moore, QB-DB, Jr.; Vincent Eruzione, WR-DB, Sr.; Ospina Santiago, DB-WR, So.; Christopher Carew, TE-LB, Sr.; Kenny Quist, RB-DB, Jr.; Chris Beranger, RB-LB, Jr.; James Doherty, RB-LB, So.; Patrick Delaney, TE-LB, Jr.; Adam Pirone, RB-DB, Sr.; Frank Ambrosino, RB-DB, So.; Richard Sheldon, OL-DT, Sr.; Al Petrilli, DT-OL, Sr.; Khalid Ekaidat, OT-DT, Sr.; Michael Reilly, DL-OL, So.; Nicholas Leonard, OL-DL, Sr.; Anthony Spinazzola, OT-DT, So.; Peter Caggiano, OL-DL, Jr.; Sean Reilly, OL-DL, Jr.; Jon Testa, OL-DL, Jr.; Nicholas Fyler, OL-DL, Sr.; Keith Stasio, OL-DL, So.; David Alzate, TE-DE, Jr.; Dan Ramos, DB-QB, Jr.; Robert Deeb, DB-WR, So.; Jake Connors, DB-WR, So.; Marcus Cecca, TE-LB, So.

Strength: Offensive line and enthusiasm.

Concerns: Depth and experience.

Outlook: Last year's Division 2A Super Bowl-winning team finds themselves in a new division this season, but hopes that the results will be the same. Although only three starters return from the championship team, twenty-seven letter winners should help alleviate the burden of living up to what are now very high expectations in Winthrop. The Vikings are counting on the rushing offense, with its powerful offensive line, to carry them through the season. Beranger will see the majority of the touches, with McDermott stepping in occasionally to keep the junior playmaker fresh. This tandem is crucial to the team's success, as the Vikings are still looking to solidify the quarterback position. First-year head coach Driscoll, replacing local icon Tony Fucillo, contends that his team will go as far as their offense takes them. While he is confident that his defense will be strong, he is concerned that nine players start on

both sides of the ball. He and his coaching staff will work to limit the number of mental breakdowns that come with players concentrating on both offense and defense, and will use substitutions wisely to keep players fresh. The team should also receive a lift from its younger players, who have injected the Vikings with an infectious dose of enthusiasm. Driscoll is eager to find out how his young team will respond to the pressures of the season and to establish a foundation that will keep the Vikings competitive for a long time.

Compiled by David Burg ■

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