

St. Mary's in background

St. Agatha's 'time' for title is now

By C.J. RISAK

"I hate to say we'll be there, but if we're ever going to do it, now's the time."

Coach John Goddard of St. Agatha High School, in Redford, displays the same guarded optimism every high school football coach has before the season starts.

The difference is that Goddard may have more reason to feel good about his team's chances in the rapidly approaching Catholic C-D season than most coaches.

A glance at last year's record might not reveal any reason to be optimistic. St. Agatha's finished with a 2-7 record, the worst in the school's history. In fact, it was the first losing season for the school.

"We lost some key kids early," Goddard, now in his fourth season, at St. Agatha's, explained. "We were probably the youngest team in the league."

"At one time, we had 13 starters out with injuries, and were playing between six and nine sophomores."

"This year, we have 49 out of 54 players coming back."

Much of Goddard's optimism stems from the return of Al Jones, a 6-foot-3, 195-pound halfback who missed virtually the entire season last year when he broke his ankle in the opening game. Goddard rates Jones as a college prospect and one of the best in the Catholic league.

BUT ST. AGATHA wasn't the only team during the past season to be hit hard with injury. Orchard Lake St. Mary started last season with a new coach, Al Dicken, and an almost entire new line-up from the previous year's Class D champions.

"We were rebuilding last season," Dicken said. "We had been heavily depleted through graduation."

"We started Jim Kinville at quarterback, and he played really well in the first game. But he hurt his knee and was out for the season."

Dicken, who had been without an experienced quarterback to begin the season with, now had to face the problem of finding an able one in mid-season. Fortunately, he came across Carl Pellegata.

Although only a freshman at the time, Pellegata came in and played the final 7/4 contests, passing for more than 700 yards in the process. Even though the squad was in the midst of a "rebuilding year," they finished with a respectable 6-3 record.

Dicken is pleased with his quarterback situation now, even though he has been unable to decide who will start during the season, Pellegata or Kinville, who has worked hard during the off-season to rehabilitate his knee.

"It's really tight," Dicken said. "Those two are really battling for the quarterback spot."



JOHN GODDARD
St. Agatha

"JIM (KINVILLE) IS a big, strong runner, Carl (Pellegata) is a little quicker. Both throw the ball well."

Graduation claimed six players who started in nine positions for Dixon last year. His biggest replacement problem will be in the offensive backfield, which will have to be rebuilt completely.

But Dicken has no qualms about his team's chances for a league title.

"We were second last year (Detroit Benedictine was first), so they're going to have to beat us," he said. "What we're going to have to do is win on the road."

That may not be such an easy task. Dicken and Goddard figure, besides their own squads, that Benedictine, coached by Ted May, and St. Florian, with Bernie Popp as head mentor, will be very tough.

"St. Florian's has 10 out of 11 offensive starters returning," Dicken said. "And Benedictine always comes up with good athletes. They have great team speed, which we don't have."

Goddard agreed with Dicken's assessment, and pointed to his first league game as a key. That contest is on Saturday, Sept. 22, at home against St. Florian.

One advantage Goddard may have over Dicken is that St. Agatha will play two of its three biggest competitors at home (St. Florian and Orchard Lake St. Mary, on Oct. 20). Orchard Lake St. Mary must play all its biggest games on the road (St. Agatha, Benedictine on Sept. 16, and St. Florian on Sept. 29).

After the first five weeks of the season, both St. Agatha and OLSM will have played two of their three biggest rivals, and their fate may have already been decided.

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1979 Lions Home Game Schedule

Date	Time	Opponent	No. of Tickets
Aug. 4	8:00 pm	Cincinnati Bengals	
Aug. 18	8:00 pm	Cleveland Browns	
Sept. 8	1:00 pm	Washington Redskins	
Sept. 23	1:00 pm	Atlanta Falcons	
Sept. 30	1:00 pm	Minnesota Vikings	
Oct. 28	1:00 pm	Buffalo Bills	
Nov. 11	1:00 pm	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	
Nov. 22	12:30 pm	Chicago Bears	
Dec. 9	1:00 pm	Miami Dolphins	
Dec. 15	4:00 pm	Green Bay Packers	

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