

KEVIN HARMON CONTINUES BAYSIDE FAMILY TRADITION

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SINCE 1977, Jesse and Jacqueline Harmon have had a lot to cheer about when they watched Bayside High School football games. Four of their sons have been among the city's finest schoolboy stars, with usually two of them in the lineup at any one time as the Commodores have dominated the Public Schools Athletic League.

Greg is now running the ball for a semipro club in Brooklyn; Derrick is a junior tailback at Cornell, and Ronnie, a freshman back, is on the way to stardom at Iowa. Only Kevin is left to carry the ball for Bayside.

But to say that the Harmons have little to cheer about because they have less to cheer about is not true. Kevin, a senior quarterback, may be the best of the family, at least at the high school level.

"All the Harmons have been great for us," says Tony Yacavone, who has coached the four brothers at Bayside, "and one just seems to be more fabulous than the other."

Certainly Bayside has benefited from their presence. Since 1977, the team has a 41-9-1 record, and it has won the P.S.A.L. title the last three years.

Last season, with Kevin accounting for 1,197 yards passing and rushing, and Ronnie taking Kevin's handoffs and catching his passes, Bayside was 10-1. Team of New Starters

This season, Ronnie has already been missed. Also, only three starters have returned from the championship team. Bayside lost its nonleague opener, 14-13, to Holy Cross in Flushing, Queens, last Sunday.

But Yacavone said that the absence of Ronnie should make Kevin a better player. "Kevin looked for Ronnie last year," the coach said.

"This year, he will have to look out for himself. Ronnie was a 'hotdog' from the word go, and Kevin was influenced by it. This year, Kevin is not as flamboyant."

For example, the coach said, Kevin begged Yacavone not to make him captain of the team. "I told him that you got to go out there and be the leader, it's your ball," said Yacavone. As it turned out, Harmon was not chosen to be captain. But his presence is always felt. "In his own quiet way, he is the leader," said Yacavone. "He doesn't need a badge to show it." Shows Leadership Quality

Kevin, who was introduced to football at age 6 by Greg and nurtured along by Derrick and Ronnie, said: "I won't have Ronnie to yell at me this year. That made me do what I had to do last season. This year, I will just have to push myself more."

Even in the loss to Holy Cross, Harmon displayed his leadership of the young team. He threw a touchdown pass and when Bayside lined up for the 2-point conversion that would have won the game for the Commodores, it was Kevin carrying the ball and coming just a foot short of making it.

If Kevin had his way, he would carry all the time. He wanted desperately to play tailback, for no other reason than that all the Bayside players except the quarterback play both ways. But two years ago, when Yacavone watched the youngster throwing passes 70 yards in the air, as well as sprinting out of the quarterback's position, he knew there was only one position for Kevin. A year ago, in his first season as a starter, Kevin passed for 10 touchdowns and ran for seven more. He averaged more than 20 yards on his completions and 6.9 yards on his rushes.

Yacavone expects to keep him at quarterback. "We want to keep him in position to have the ball in his hands," he said. "He is magic with that ball."

This season, Kevin is an inch taller (at 6-1), 15 pounds heavier (185) and a step faster (4.6 seconds in the 40) than he was as a junior. And he is only 16 years old (he will turn 17 on Oct. 26) and hasn't reached his full physical profile.

Yacavone said there is no doubt that Kevin eventually can play major-college football. Scouts from many schools, including Syracuse, Rutgers and Iowa, are keeping in touch with him. Kevin, who has poise off the field as well as on it, is keeping a low profile, however. He says that he does not want any of the colleges to become too encouraged at this point.

Besides, Kevin has a mission of his own this year: "I want to show my ability and not have people say I'm doing well because of my brothers."

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