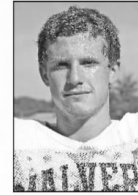


INTER-AC LEAGUE PREVIEW

Malvern coach really likes team

In fact, Pellegrini thinks it could be in best-ever territory

By **TED SILARY**
silaryt@phillynews.com



STEVEN M. FALK / Daily News

Malvern coach Gamp Pellegrini, with James Connelly, Billy Conners.

Coach Gaspere "Gamp" Pellegrini was sounding rather happy about his 2008 Malvern Prep football team, so it made sense to pose the question.

"Does this team have a chance to be one of your all-time bests?"

"No question," he said.

Gulp, just went the rest of the Inter-Ac League.

Pellegrini, now in his 31st season at Malvern and 42nd total as a city leagues boss, already has captured 19 I-A titles, with 15 outright. As he seeks 20/16, he does so with eight returning starters on offense and six more on defense.

"This is a good group and I have great expectations," Pellegrini said. "We have size and speed and talent, so if we stay healthy I can picture us playing with anybody."

Among the returning are the top two rushers, Neil Willis and James Connelly (1,400-plus combined yards), and No. 1 receiver Joe Price (551).

The quarterback, Billy Conners, is new, but he's the classic overall-athlete leader (bound for Duke for lacrosse) so favored by Pellegrini through the decades, mostly because they've been so good to him.

"As good as I'm feeling right now, the fact is we're 0-0," the coach said with a laugh. "No better than anybody else. We still have to get things done on the field."

Assuming Malvern follows through, the battle for second place could be mad-scrabble material. Each of the other five

RETURNING ALL-INTER-AC PLAYERS
(Selected by coaches)

OFFENSE
Receiver: Joe Price, MP.
Back: Neil Willis, MP.

DEFENSE
Linemen: Shomari Watts, HS; CJ Mooney, MP.
Back: Billy Conners, MP.

teams has legitimate reason for hope.

There is one new coach, Penn Charter's Jeff Humble, and he's able to call upon the league's lone early Division I commit, two-way end Justin Renfrow (Virginia). ★

CHESTNUT HILL ACADEMY
Coach: Rick Knox, fourth year (also Episcopal, 2001-04); Education: Chestnut Hill, Penn. Career: 37-21, 23-6 at CHA (third year in I-A).
Last year: 4-1, second-9-1.
Great eight: Jon McAllister, Rec.-DB, 6-foot, 190; Ibraheim Campbell, RB-DB, 5-11, 185; Julian Brown, Rec.-DB, 5-10, 185; Alex Legue, Rec.-DB, 5-8, 160; Dan Gallagher, QB, 6-foot, 165; Tom Devlin, RB-LB, 5-11, 225; Will Emory, T, DT, 6-foot, 265; Matt Flannery, Rec.-LB, 5-10, 169.
Happy about: speed/athleticism.
Concerned about: inexperienced lines, passing game's consistency.
Knox' comment: "As long as we come together, we could do very well."

EPISCOPAL ACADEMY
Coach: Bill Gallagher, fourth year (also Chestnut Hill, 1973-80; Penn Charter, 1981-91 and 1993-94; Springfield Montco, 2004); Education: Judge, Notre Dame. Career: 145-68-4, 16-13 at Episcopal.
Last year: 2-3, tie third; 5-4.
Great eight: Steve Faulkner, RB-LB, 6-2, 215; John Gormley, RB, 5-9, 185; Ryan Klein, QB-DB, 6-foot, 185; Buddy Ferris, Rec.-LB, 6-1, 195; Bob Reinhard, T, DT, 6-3, 285; Rich Rosati, DB, 5-10, 190; Jake Butts, G-DE, 6-2, 225; Sean Toner, Rec.-DE, 6-1, 190.
Happy about: skill positions.
Concerned about: kicking game.
Gallagher's comment: "Some early injuries to key linemen are forcing me rethink our approach on offense."

GERMANTOWN ACADEMY
Coach: Luke Harris, third year; Education: Germantown Academy, Dickinson. Career: 10-9.
Last year: 1-4, tie fifth; 3-6.
Great eight: Timmy Vernon, Rec.-LB, 6-3, 215; Pete Haines, QB-LB-DB, 6-3, 195; Pete Weindorfer, G-DE, 6-2, 230; Ian Hillman, T, 6-5, 225; Tom O'Hara, Rec.-DB, 5-10, 165; Greg Myrick, L-DL, 6-foot, 255; Jake Bell, Rec.-6-3, 180; John Cierono, LB, 5-10, 180.
Happy about: attitude, returning starters.
Concerned about: inexperience at key positions, finding K/P.
Harris' comment: "If we do well with the fundamentals and effort, the win-loss record will take care of itself."

HAVERTOWN SCHOOL
Coach: Michael Murphy, fourth year; Education: Quakertown, East Stroudsburg. Career: 8-24.
Last year: 1-4, tie fifth; 4-7.
Great eight: Dan Judge, QB; Shomari Watts, C-LB; Terance FitzSimmons, RB-LB; Chris Ambrogio, Rec.-DB; Kevin Eberly, RB-DB; Joe Nassab, Rec.-DB; Stephen Aiken, L-DE; Wyatt Benson, RB-LB.
Happy about: off-season commitment, experience.
Concerned about: line size, opponents' talent level.
Murphy's comment: "In our fourth year, I'm excited about seeing these guys put it together."

MALVERN PREP
Coach: Gaspere "Gamp" Pellegrini, 31st year (also St. Thomas More, 1967-69; St. Joseph's Prep, 1970-77); Education: St. Thomas More, Delaware. Career: 208-144-9; 209-86-8 at Malvern.
Last year: 5-4, first-9-1.
Great eight: Neil Willis, RB-DB, 5-10, 175; James Connelly, RB, 6-foot, 180; Billy Conners, QB-DB, 5-11, 175; Rob McCabe, RB-LB, 6-2, 210; Joe Price, Rec.-6-3, 185; CJ Mooney, Rec.-DE, 6-4, 235; Joe DiTrollo, G DT, 5-11, 245; Mike McCormick, G-DE, 6-foot, 245.
Happy about: vast experience.
Concerned about: special teams.
Pellegrini's comment: "We want to get to the first game and beat somebody."

PENN CHARTER
Coach: Jeff Humble, first year; Education: Coughlin (Wilkes-Barre), Cortland State (NY). Career: 0-0.
Last year: 2-3, tie third; 5-4.
Great eight: John Ryan, QB, 6-3, 195; Justin Renfrow, Rec.-DE, 6-6, 225; Joey Volgraf, G-LB, 5-10, 180; Curtis Jones, G-DL, 5-8, 270; Jordan Stusovan, T-LB, 6-2, 220; Mike Rauchut, G-LB, 6-2, 300; Mike Brown, RB-DB, 5-8, 185; Dylan Moody, RB-DB, 5-6, 170.
Happy about: quick adjustment to new coach/schemes.
Concerned about: tough schedule.
Humble's comment: "Myself and the staff are very eager to see how the kids rise to each challenge."

2008 PreSeason preview

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