

RECORD SLASHER

Lancaster Catholic's Kyle Smith is on pace with history

By Joshua Funk

For PA Football News

Pat Bostick. Jeff Smoker. Zach Kulp. Chad Henne. Those are the four Lancaster-Lebanon League quarterbacks to throw for 5,900 yards or more in their careers.

Bostick, Smoker, and Henne were all Division-1 quarterbacks. Bostick is at Pitt, but considering a transfer. Henne was a starter at Michigan and won the Outback Bowl in Lloyd Carr's final game. Smoker went to Michigan State, and finished 8-4 his senior year with a loss to Nebraska in the Alamo Bowl.

Kulp, meanwhile, is Lebanon County's all-time leading passer, throwing for 5,922 yards in his career at ELCO.

That L-L League quartet will soon get some company from a junior field general who plays for Lancaster Catholic High School.

Kyle Smith is his name. Tossing touchdowns is his game. Soon enough, he'll earn some fame.

There's no doubt that Smith will be the L-L's latest Division-1 quarterback. Catholic head coach Bruce Harbach said that Smith doesn't have any offers, but has visited Notre Dame and Michigan. A 6'3, 200-pound lefty, Smith has the build and the arm to be successful.

Then, there's his jaw-dropping stat line. Through 14 games, Smith has thrown for 3,014 yards and 41 touchdowns, completing 165 of his 251 passes. He's thrown only four interceptions.

The career stat line, through 26 games, reads as follows: 326-of-489 (66.7 comp. %), 5,629 yards, 68 touchdowns, 10 interceptions.

In terms of passing yards, Smith is 36th all-time, 15 yards past Marian Catholic's Chuck Andrew (5,614 yards from 1995-'97).

In terms of passing touchdowns, Smith is in the Top-12 all-time, a tie for eighth, to be exact. Smith is tied with Lackawanna Trail's Devin Myers. Another District 2 quarterback, Dunmore's Miller Holmes, who will be a senior next season, has thrown over 70 career touchdown passes.

Smith smashed Lancaster Catholic's career passing yardage record several weeks ago, which was previously 4,359 yards and belonged to Nick Downey, the first Catholic quarterback to lead the Crusaders to a PIAA playoff game.

Smith's passing yardage in 2008 is just 667 yards shy of the state's single-season passing record (3,681 yards by Mechanicsburg's Zach Frazer, 2004), and eight touchdown passes shy of the record 49 that Clearfield Area's Chad Kroell threw in 1994.

So, Coach Harbach, does Mr. Smith remind you of anyone?

"Yes, he does," Harbach said. "He reminds me of Chad Henne."

Keep in mind that Harbach said this before Smith went out and completed 64 percent of his passes for 323 yards (a school single-game record) and two more touchdown passes in helping Catholic win its first PIAA playoff game, 41-28, against Mount Carmel.

Smith didn't get too amped up when he heard his game stats.

"That's a tribute to our team," Smith said. "It's not just me out there."

Smith's effort was part of a day in which Catholic racked up 605 yards of offense and 24 first downs against a Red Tornado team known for its "Red Death" defense.

Big offensive days will continue to be a pattern for Lancaster Catholic. Especially with #17 calling the shots.

He's pretty good, if you couldn't already tell. And he's got a chance to be great.

Smoker. Henne. Kulp. Bostick. Now, add Kyle Smith.

That's quite a quintet.