

## **SEASON RECAP 2018**

On behalf of my entire coaching staff, I wish you a good evening, and I thank you for another year of incredible support. And it's an unwavering support, trust me, our players know it and feel it. Whether you've helped to paint the night purple, bought merchandise, contributed to our beef and bowl or sent words of support and encouragement via text or social media, we appreciate you!

It all starts at the freshman level and again under the guidance of Coach Zack Elwell, the boys battled hard all season despite not necessarily getting the desired results on the pitch. But this is where it all begins both physically and mentally... it truly is the beginning of the student-athletes' learning process.

At this time, I would like to call up Freshman Head Coach Zach to present the team MVP Award.

This season, Junior Varsity welcomed Coach Tom Crosset into the mix and together with Coaches Biddle and Rector again found themselves amongst the top of the JV pack. I know I've said it before, but believe me, it really isn't an easy task to coach at the JV level. We do however have a program, much like the freshmen team under Zach, with these fine men at the helm, that is truly second to none. And for that, I remain grateful for their dedication, loyalty and often unnoticed hard work.

At this time, I would like to call up JV Head Coach Mike Biddle for the team MVP Award.

On the varsity level, what can I say? Wow... what a year!

We returned a mix of very talented underclass men with strong senior leadership in what looked to be a special season even from the onset of training camp. Through the ups and downs of two a days, in the hot, hazy, summer heat, the team notched a pre-season tournament title when we captured the SEPA Hall of Fame Tournament title in late August. The train started to gain steam and began rolling from there.

We notched our first two victories in Wildwood, with wins over both Camden Catholic and Malvern Prep on Labor Day Weekend, before returning back to the city to kick off the PCL season. Despite a ton of weather related cancellations and postponements that caused unfathomable stretches of games in relatively close succession, the PCL victories started adding up.

A mid season match with Archbishop Wood featured a battle of unbeaten teams. In a preview of things to come, the intense and hard fought match was won off the foot of Little Nicky LoBiondo as he touched it in off the cross from Senior Captain Jared Dillon and a flick from Junior Gil Newton.

Unlike last year, the team took care of its non-league business this season as well. With wins over Cheltenham, Wissahickon, Downingtown East and a quality draw with Penn

Charter, we seemed poised to make a deep run as our overall record soared with one impressive win after another.

After bizarre, see-saw match at Devon Prep, which featured duel hat tricks from the twin towers, Jared Dillon and Eric Williams in the 6-3 victory, we traveled up to Bucks Country to face LaSalle. One parallel to last season however remained constant. LaSalle seems to be our Achilles heel. After visiting the Ukraian Nationals on a Friday night, the Explorers posted a 2 nil victory as they once again handed the team our only PCL regular season loss.

Even with the lone blemish in the L column, we would clinch the regular season top spot and prepare for Archbishop Ryan in the quarterfinals of the PCL playoffs. That's when Kieran Boyle busted loose for the natural hat trick moving us into the semis against the Prep. With similar results, we clipped the Hawks wings, 3 nil, with the poison dagger coming from a brilliant direct kick from Junior Kevin Davis.

For the fifth consecutive year, there we were in the PCL finals. A rematch with Archbishop Wood proved to be everything you'd want in a title match. After a scoreless 110 minutes of championship soccer, the match would end in PKs and unfortunately we watched the Vikings walk away with the hubcap.

We still had work to do though. By virtue of our season finish amongst schools in our class designation, we advanced to the PIAA District 12 Championship vs NE High School. We quickly jumped out to control the match and captured the title with a 5 nil Saturday night victory. The win lined us up for a 1st round state match with the Wilson Bulldogs from Berks County. In an eerily similar match to the PCL Championship match, the contest would be scoreless for the full tilt plus two OT periods. Yet again we would fall in PKs as Wilson moved on to win the state tourney.

Certainly an interestingly amazing season. While we notched some firsts for the school and the program, we obviously want to recapture the PCL Championship and bring it home to Broad and Vine. I promise you we will be knocking on the door again next season. With any hope we can put a few more in the trophy case in 2019. But we need your help to do so! Please keep the power of purple alive. Thank you.

## 2018 Defensive MVP

**Our Defensive MVP this year goes to a guy who oddly enough, gave us was more excitement watching him jump up into the offensive play, than helping us post 15 shutouts this year. But that's how it goes sometimes. Going into camp he was asked to come out and earn his place on the pitch. He did that and more.**

**As part of a hard working foursome of fullbacks, he was the player that the opposition always needed to know where he was be it in a stay at home and defend posture or getting up into the attack where he becomes very dangerous.**

He's already posted 5 goals and 12 assists for his career and we will always remember his direct kick strike in the semi's against the Prep which all but took the flight out of the Hawks championship dreams. The good news is we get him back as a senior next year.

He was named to the 2018 2nd team All Catholic squad and next year he will be asked to carry more of a leadership role on the team as well.

Please welcome, Kevin Davis.

## **2018 COACHES AWARD**

The recipient of this year's Coaches Award would be very hard to miss whether you're walking through the hallways of school or watching him go from zero to sixty on the soccer pitch.

No doubt about it, we had an incredible season. And during amazing seasons, there quite frankly needs to be amazing efforts. This is the reason I stand here tonight to present my favorite award because it usually goes to someone who flies under the radar but someone whom... without their contribution, winning campaigns can quickly turn into also ran in a heartbeat.

He had an impressive year offensively registering 12 goals and 7 assists and was voted as a 3rd team All Catholic even though we as a coaching staff all thought he deserved better.

He was asked to play many different positions throughout our season and he did so with a quiet confidence and a total buy in to the take one for the team mentality.

He's no stranger to awards either. He was the Freshmen Defensive Player of the Year in 2015, Varsity's Rookie of the Year last year and this year's recipient Coaches Award winner. He finishes his varsity career with 19 goals and 9 assists, please welcome one of the twin towers, Eric Williams.

## **2018 Offensive MVP**

Four years can fly by when you're having fun and watching outstanding players play well... outstanding soccer.

What can you say about a guy who goes out and puts up 59 career goals and 36 career assists? A PCL Title as a freshman, four PCL final appearances and now a PIAA District 12 Title as a senior... impressive I guess would fit.

His efforts this year earned him a return to both the First Team All Catholic roster and another All-State nod, this time as the first selection from the Philadelphia Catholic League. He also was named today for the 2<sup>nd</sup> straight year to the High School All American Eastern Region team.

**He played most of this season banged up and with a painful bout of turf toe. Even so, he took to the pitch befitting of the term Roman gladiator and missed very few minutes away from the play. He notched 16 goals and 13 assists this year and is deserving of our Offensive MVP Award yet again.**

**While we say goodbye to the Big Kid his legacy will live in the Roman Catholic record books for probably for years to come. Please help me congratulate on a brilliant, four year varsity career, ladies and gentlemen, the other twin tower, Jared Dillon.**