

La Salle College High School Football: In Retrospect



NOTE: This is the tenth of, I hope, many retrospectives highlighting some unique history of the football program at La Salle. The topics to discuss seem endless at this time. Hope you enjoy these.

Bill Wasylenko, '69

Issue Number Ten: PCL Colors, Nicknames, Songs, Logos, Helmets

Colors

I've always been fascinated with uniform colors, especially when we finally got a color TV in the mid-60's. Watching college games with UCLA, USC, Nebraska, LSU, Ohio State, Michigan, and other colorful teams had me glued to the new TV. For a while, anyway, the understated elegance of the Fighting Irish Blue and Gold wasn't splashy enough for me.

But I didn't need a color TV to see colorful football uniforms; all I had to do was to go to a La Salle game to get my fill. La Salle's gold in those days was a "yellow gold", more like the maize of the Michigan Wolverines. Only in the last decade have we switched to the "old gold" or "Vegas gold" or, if you will, Notre Dame gold.

And the opposition wore some loud colors as well. Father Judge, North Catholic, and Cardinal Dougherty had their unique colors, and I have a great story to tell about them. North Catholic was founded first, back in 1926, and they chose colors of red and white: white for purity and fidelity, and cardinal red to honor Dennis Cardinal Dougherty, the Archbishop of Philadelphia, for his sponsorship of the school.

Father Judge was formed by some of North Catholic's Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, and their unique colors of Columbia blue and red are a rare combination; I can only recall the Houston Oilers wearing a similar color scheme. The Columbia blue was selected as a symbol of the Marian year of 1954 when Judge was formed, and legend has it that red was chosen as a symbol of the Oblate brotherhood between North and Father Judge.

And Cardinal Dougherty High School was formed soon after, to honor the recently deceased Archbishop. Little did we know that those 3 schools, mutual arch-enemies, had a "birth" link to each other's colors. Dougherty adopted the garnet and gold colors reminiscent of teams like USC, the Minnesota Golden Gophers, and, of course, the hated Washington Redskins.

Other great colors included the green and white of Monsignor Bonner, now Bonner-Prendergast. Legend has it that their first coach, former Eagle Jack Ferrante, somehow got his hands on a pile of used green and white uniforms when he needed to outfit his freshman fledglings who first operated under the Archbishop Prendergast High School For Boys banner in 1953. By 1955, Monsignor Bonner High School For Boys was formed, and Prendie became a girls' school, but Bonner kept the green and white colors.

St. Tommy More's Golden Bears were not too successful on the field, but their Kelly green and gold uniforms must have looked sharp. And Roman Catholic's regal purple and gold are a stunning combination. Cardinal O'Hara's cardinal red and navy blue seem to mimic the Quakers of Penn, and the Archbishop Carroll Patriots' red and white look like their New England namesake's old-style uniforms.

Many schools feature black and gold in their color combinations now, including Archbishop Wood, Bishop McDevitt, and Neumann-Goretti. And then there's the crimson and gray of that school at 18th and Girard. I still try to avoid wearing that color combination even around the house! See the chart listing the known colors of all current (& some past) PCL teams.

Nicknames

La Salle's nickname of Explorers, or "Little Explorers", wasn't used until the early 1930's. Just prior to that time, they were ironically known as the "Preppers", to differentiate themselves from the college team living on the same grounds. La Salle College was in search of a nickname; up till that point, they referred to themselves as the "Blue and Gold". To make a long story short, the name "Explorers" was either determined by a school committee, used by out-of-town writers, or both, even though the explorer La Salle and St. John Baptist de La Salle weren't the same person!

Other classic Catholic League nicknames appeared. Catholic High, now Roman Catholic, uses the nickname "Cahillites" to honor their founder, Thomas Cahill, a 19th Century Philadelphia merchant who established a free Catholic high school education for boys in his will. Free no longer, but the Cahillites still patrol Broad and Vine. West Catholic has the unique nickname of "Burr", ostensibly because of the burr trees that dropped their burrs onto the sweaters of West Catholic students. St. Thomas More was the "Golden Bears", matching the University of California with a colorful and powerful nickname.

Northeast/North Catholic adopted the nickname of "Falcons", because the falcon is a bird of prey that never lets go, is forever faithful to its trainer, and is the fastest of God's creatures. And here I thought that North, full of Polish students in a Polish neighborhood, adopted Poland's red and white colors, as well as its national bird, the falcon! Certain nicknames reflected a more chivalrous time, as Crusaders and Royal Lancers were selected. The Augustinians of Monsignor Bonner were honored by the nickname selection of "Friars"; now that the Augustinians have left Monsignor Bonner, and the school is now Bonner-Prendie, maybe a new nickname will be considered some day.

Many nicknames were selected to coincide with NFL teams, especially some of the expansion teams in the 1960's, as well as the AFL teams. Names like the Patriots, Raiders, Eagles, Vikings, Cardinals, Lions, and Saints were seen in the PCL and the NFL. Of course, St. Joseph's Prep used the collegiate nickname of the Hawks. Bishop Kenrick was once the Knights, but became the Wolverines when merged with Archbishop Kennedy. St. John's of Manayunk, for a short time in the Catholic League, had the appropriate nickname of the Hilltoppers, but also were the Eagles. Another short-timer was Salesianum, referred to as the Sallies, which occasionally was used in the papers to denote La Salle as well. And St. James in Chester was the Bulldogs.

Southeast Catholic, which became South Catholic, then Bishop Neumann, and then St. John Neumann, was branded the Pirates, but they became Saints when merged with St. Maria Goretti, which was nicknamed the “Lambs”; got that? And lastly, Villanova Prep and Trenton Cathedral may have had nicknames, but I haven’t found proof yet. Villanova was, I’m guessing, the Wildcats. I’m sure that Trenton was NOT the Oyster Crackers!

Songs

Every school, I’m sure, boasts of an Alma Mater, and I found many of them online, and are shown in subsequent pages. These get changed and revised at times in a school’s history, and I’m sure that some of the merged schools have new Alma Maters to honor the combined school. La Salle had a different Alma Mater back in the 1930’s, longer and a little more flowery; the present Alma Mater, as I’m sure you know, has an understated dignity and simplicity, and should always be remembered by all La Salle alums. Fight songs are also prevalent among the schools, and La Salle’s “Fling Out” now is played after each Explorer touchdown. And the Hawks play their infernal fight song after their touchdowns, too. Many other fight songs are taken directly from college fight songs; I believe that Father Judge uses the melody of Villanova’s fight song “V For Villanova”.

Logos and Seals

Each school has a school seal, which is usually an emblem with some symbols and some Latin motto in it. Additional logos are used, typically in a unique font that the school uses for much of its media offerings. La Salle has a certain brand that it conveys in its logos shown in every facet of school life, from the signs on the driveways to the stationery logos. La Salle’s seal, or emblem, has the Latin words “Virtus Scientia”, or “Virtue and Knowledge”; quite appropriate for our Alma Mater. St. James in Chester had the cryptic Latin motto of “Quae Sursum Quaerite”, which translates to “Seek the things that are above”. Bet you didn’t get that one on first try.

Helmets and Miscellaneous Items

Two Internet sources were used to display school helmets on the following pages: the PA School Helmet Project has the current helmets for all Pennsylvania schools, and Joe’s Sports Connection, advertised on Ted Silary’s site, produces mini-helmets for purchase, including some vintage designs.

Some of the items shown below are “knockoff” items that are not official school merchandise or logos, but were available as images on Internet searches. Especially neat among them are the varsity-style jackets that were a mockup for several schools. Some of the mascot logos found on sites other than the official school sites may be bogus as well, but still neat to see.

I welcome your comments, corrections, and additions.

Go La Salle!!

Bill Wasylenko, ‘69

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SCHOOL	TEAM NAME	COLORS	YEARS IN PCL	YRS NOT IN PCL (ONCE ENTERED)	PCL CHAMPIONSHIPS
LA SALLE	EXPLORERS	BLUE & GOLD	1920-	1921-1922, 1928-1933	1955, 1957, 1958, 1960, 1989, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
ROMAN CATHOLIC	CAHILLITES	PURPLE & GOLD	1920-		1922, 1923, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1947, 1999, 2007
ST. JOSEPH'S PREP	HAWKS	CRIMSON & GRAY	1920-	1956-1962	1920, 1921, 1924, 1928, 1930, 1933, 1938, 1939, 1942, 1977, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005
WEST CATHOLIC	BURRS	BLUE & GOLD	1920-		1925, 1932, 1940, 1941, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1951, 1962, 1965, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
VILLANOVA PREP	WILDCATS	TBD	1920-1922		
SALESIANUM	SALLIES	GOLD & WHITE	1922-1937		1931, 1934
TRENTON CATHEDRAL	TBD	TBD	1927-1927		
NORTHEAST CATHOLIC	FALCONS	CARDINAL RED & WHITE	1927-2009		1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1949, 1950, 1952, 1956
NEUMANN-GORETTI	SAINTS	GOLD & BLACK	1935-		1948, 1954
ST. JOHN'S	HILLTOPPERS, EAGLES	TBD	1935-1949		
ST. THOMAS MORE	GOLDEN BEARS	GREEN & GOLD	1937-1970	1964	
ST. JAMES	BULLDOGS	BLUE & GRAY	1943-1992		1953, 1972
FATHER JUDGE	CRUSADERS	RED & COLUMBIA BLUE	1956-		1964, 1975, 1981, 1983, 1984
BONNER- PRENDERGAST	FRIARS	GREEN & WHITE	1956-	1962	1959, 1961, 1994
CARDINAL DOUGHERTY	CARDINALS	GARNET & GOLD	1958-2009		1968, 1982
CONWELL-EGAN	EAGLES	ROYAL BLUE & WHITE	1963-		1963, 1966, 1967, 1969, 1970
BISHOP MCDEVITT	ROYAL LANCERS	WHITE & GOLD	1963-	1978	1986, 1987, 1999
KENNEDY-KENRICK	WOLVERINES	ROYAL BLUE & ATHLETIC GOLD	1963-2009	1989-1992	
CARDINAL O'HARA	LIONS	CARDINAL RED & NAVY BLUE	1965-		1973, 1979, 1980, 1985, 2000, 2004
ARCHBISHOP WOOD	VIKINGS	BLACK, GREEN & GOLD	1966-		1974, 1978, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
ARCHBISHOP RYAN	RAIDERS	BLACK, RED, & GOLD	1968-		1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993
ARCHBISHOP CARROLL	PATRIOTS	RED AND WHITE	1969-		1971, 1976, 2000, 2001, 2002
LANSDALE CATHOLIC	CRUSADERS	GREEN & GOLD	2008-		

NOTES: NEUMANN-GORETTI ONCE CALLED SOUTH CATHOLIC AND BISHOP NEUMANN, TEAM NAME WAS PIRATES. CONWELL-EGAN ONCE CALLED BISHOP EGAN. KENNEDY-KENRICK ONCE CALLED BISHOP KENRICK, TEAM NAME WAS KNIGHTS, COLORS WERE GREEN & GOLD. ARCHBISHOP WOOD COLORS ONCE WERE BLACK & GOLD. ARCHBISHOP RYAN COLORS ONCE WERE BLACK & RED.

La Salle

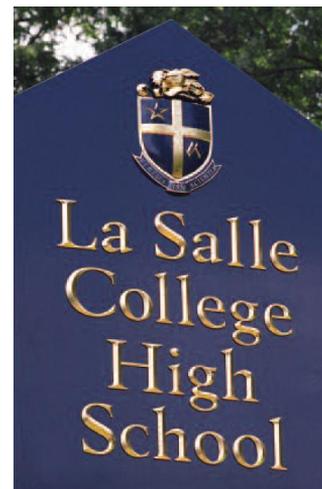
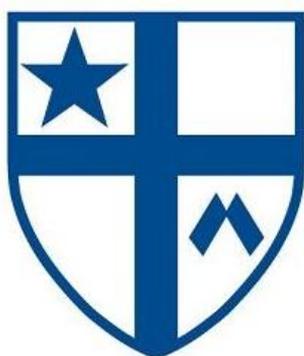


Hail La Salle
We praise thee,
Honor and
Tribute true,
Great and bright
Your splendor,
Banner of
Gold and Blue.

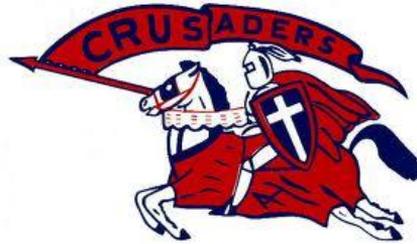


Fling out the Blue and the Gold,
And join the jubilee,
While La Salle is marching
Onward to victory,
RAH! RAH! RAH!
Fling out the Blue and the Gold,
And wave it far and free,
Fight, fight, Explorers
To victory!!

Loyal Sons
We'll ever be,
High we'll hold
Your memory,
Hail La Salle,
Our Alma Mater,
Hail! All! Hail!

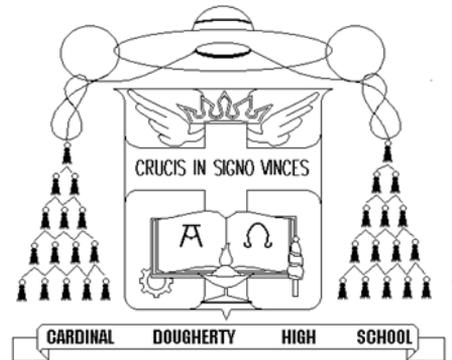
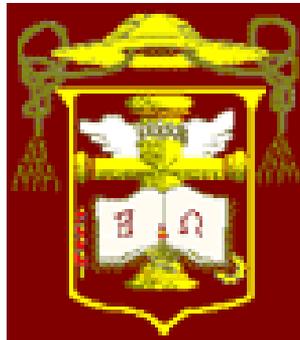


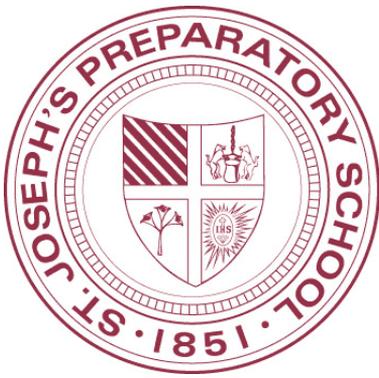
Father Judge



 **FATHER JUDGE**
HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS
3301 SOLLY AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19136 · 215-338-9494

Cardinal Dougherty





St. Joseph's Prep



THE PREP



 **ST. JOSEPH'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL**
THE JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL OF PHILADELPHIA



Roman Catholic



The Purple and Gold

When Day mounts the East,
What flag does he hold?
He flings out his banner of
Purple and Gold!
And when at the eve, He
sinks to his rest,
With Purple and Gold still
aflake is the West!



Then stand by the flag, The
young and the old!
Its colors are yours – The
Purple and the Gold!
A smile on the lip, A tear in
the eye,
Salute ye the colors of
Catholic High!



Refrain:

Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!



Northeast Catholic



See our banner wave proudly before us,
Colors gleaming in hues ever glorious!
Flag of honor, o'er foe victorious,
Lead thou on til the triumph we gain...



(CHORUS) Onward, Onward! Behold
where dawns the glory!
Hail, alma mater, our North Catholic High!
Sing with joyful heart and voice the story!
Hail, alma mater, our North Catholic High!

May the sunshine of youth never leave thee!
Nor the shadow of age never grieve thee!
Falcon symbol, we now salute thee!
Sons who love and revere thy fair name...



(CHORUS) Onward, Onward! Behold
where dawns the glory!
Hail, alma mater, our North Catholic High!
Sing with joyful heart and voice the story!
Hail, alma mater, our North Catholic High!

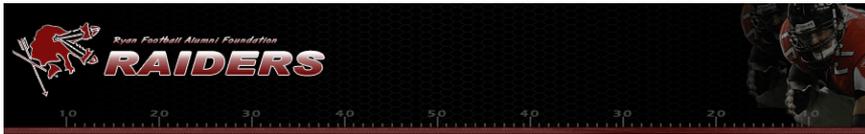


West Catholic





Archbishop Ryan



Conwell-Egan



Oh, see how the eagle soars,
through the white and blue above,
And in our hearts once more,
that swell of pride and love:
Conwell-Egan, Tower of strength,
Your sons and daughters praise;
Alma Mater, pledged to you,
The service of our days.



Oh see how the eagle glides,
upheld through wind and rain
By God's loving graciousness,
again and yet again.
We shall soar as eagles soar,
Triumphant, brave and free;
But we shall build the future blessed
with true humility.



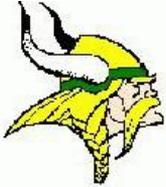


Archbishop Wood

We salute you Alma Mater
Hail with pride our honored seal
And beneath our glowing colors
Pledge to you our faith and zeal.



With our banner's cross to guide us
Bringing wisdom to the world
Ever by our faithful striving
Will our colors stand unfurled...



Hail the Black, Green, and Gold
Of Archbishop Wood
May we bring to your banner renown
For in youth's loyal might
Serving God and the Right
Is Alma Mater's radiant crown,
Is Alma Mater's radiant crown.



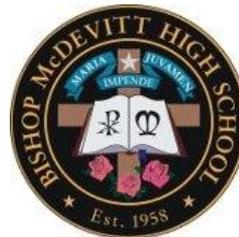
Bishop McDevitt



The challenge of a marching world
We meet with accent bold
While cherishing a standard
Ever new, as ever old.

We bear our banner gold and white
Our sign of royalty
And glory in our Queen's delight
Of flow'ring purity.

All hail, All hail to Bishop McDevitt
High
We pledge our loyalty to you
May we prove the trust our patron
ever lived
With ideals inspired by love.
Hail to you, Our Alma Mater!
Hail to you, Our Alma Mater!
May faith and courage be our guide
God our final goal.



May Mary hover near with help
Our motto is our plea
That we our vantage may sustain
While gaining victory.

At dusk, at dawning may we see
Amid the heavens fair
Our lovely Star of morn and sea
Whose symbol bright we bear.



Bonner-Prendergast



Hail Alma Mater, dear
Hail to Bonner High;
Hail to the Green and White
May your colors fly.



Bonner, Bonner,
Noble is your name,
Hail Alma Mater, dear
Hail to Bonner High.

Loyal sons of Bonner High,
We your praises sing,
When evening's shadow falls
May the echo ring
Bonner, Bonner,
Noble is your Name,
God, Country is our cry,



Cardinal O'Hara



O'Hara, O'Hara, home of the red and blue
Alma Mater, we salute you.
Our loyalty is true.

Our symbol, our motto, our flag and our song
The Lions show proudly; our hearts to you belong.

All hail, to O'Hara, your sons and daughters true.

O'Hara, O'Hara, long may your spirit glow
In our hearts and our minds as with you we grow.
So strong yet so tender, you stand at our side.
The Lions salute you, our teacher and our guide.



Neumann-Goretti

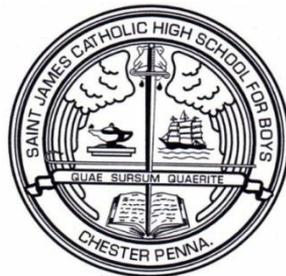


Sing we of our alma mater,
Neumann and Goretti High.
Filled with pride and true devotion.
Thus united do we cry:
Faith in God, who leads and guides us,
Pride in all we're called to be,
Sing together as one fam'ly
To our Neumann and Goretti High!
Sing together as one fam'ly
To our Neumann and Goretti High!

Guided by the lamp of learning,
And the blessings from above,
Armed with fortitude and virtue,
And simplicity and love.
Charge we toward the prize of vic'try,
One with all the saints on high,
Sing together as one fam'ly
To our Neumann and Goretti High!
Sing together as one fam'ly
To our Neumann and Goretti High!



St. James



As we hail thee, Alma Mater,
St. James High School Blue and Gray,
We are mindful of thy motto,
"Quae Sursum Querite."
Blue and Gray, Blue and Gray,
Our faith and hope renew.
For when life seems gray,
We humbly pray,
And look up and see the blue.

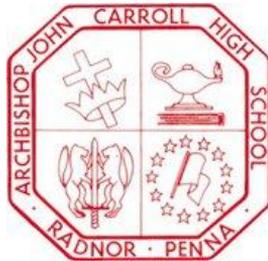


Salesianum

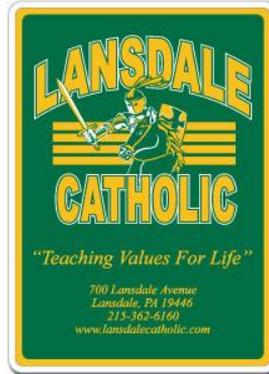
In the shadows of the night
shines a beacon clear and
bright:
Light possessing;
Strength and blessing
It is our banner, gold and white.



Archbishop Carroll



Lansdale Catholic



Kennedy-Kenrick



St. Thomas More

