

Explorers, Eagles ready to face off in first matchup of season this Friday

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ALTON – The Friday night lights that tower over **Hauser Field** in **Bethalto** are set to switch on and illuminate hundreds of fans, students and players as the **Civic Memorial High School Eagles** and **Marquette Catholic High School Explorers** duke it out in the first football game of the 2016 season.

For the fans of either team, there is truly nothing like heading out to the football stadium for a solid game of high school football for the start of a brand new season. The opportunity for a fresh start is cherished by both coaches of the squads facing off on the gridiron Friday evening, but most of all, the teams are just ready to get out there and show the other squad what they've got.

“We’re at the point where practices are getting monotonous and the boys are sick and tired of hitting each other,” Parmentier jokingly mentioned.

“We need to play a game to see where we’re at,” he said. “It’s going to be a solid game and we’re really looking forward to it.”

Last season, the Eagles had a successful season under the leadership of head coach **Justin Winslow**, earning a **7-3** overall record and their way to the playoffs. In their post-season matchup, the team fell to the **Mater Dei Knights 34-14** to close out their postseason run.



After the season’s end, Winslow announced his departure from the Eagles coaching staff to pursue other opportunities. Rising up the Bethalto coaching staff to take his place, but by no means to fill his shoes, is **Mike Parmentier**. Stepping into the leadership role is natural for him, as he led the **Staunton Bulldogs** to success in his nine seasons with the team. During his time there, Parmentier accumulated a **53-41** record.

Both teams had a lot to say about their opponent’s coaching strong points in competitive play, a positive thing for leaders in this sport to appreciate.

Parmentier recognized Marquette head coach **Darrell Angleton's** experienced defensive line and success in the postseason.

“Both teams were in the playoffs last year and they tend to return a little more than we do,” Parmentier said. “We have a lot of experience coming back, but Marquette does too so it’s going to be a very solid game.”

Angleton commended Parmentier’s successful past leadership with Staunton and thinks he will do a great job as the new head coach for the Eagles.

“Parmentier has a winning history wherever he has coached,” Angleton said. “It’s always a talent.”



Under the leadership of Angleton, the Explorers pushed through the competition during their regular season with their strong defensive line. As a result of their hard work, the team faced off against the much larger team from **Rochester** in their first playoff matchup. Ultimately, the team fell to the Rockets **52-7** but maintained their solid record of **6-4** for the year.

Looking back to the regional match, Angleton was just impressed by the sheer size of Rochester's team, which had about 90 kids on the sidelines compared to the Explorers' 40. Now, with his numbers back up and a great group of returning athletes, his team is just ready to kick off the season and play some solid football.

"I feel that we're prepared for this game, but it's going to be a tough one," Angleton said. "The boys are in pretty good shape. I've got pretty good numbers on our junior and senior class, with all but one of all defensive line returning."

Angleton is fortunate to have the Blue Crew on his side, the fan base of Marquette Catholic students, faculty members and fans that come out to nearly all of the team's games no matter how far away they may play.

"The Explorers fans and the Blue Crew are the best. They're great supporters and we always get very good road support, even if we go to Nokomis," he said. "Bethalto is basically in our back yard, so it'll be a fun night to see them pack the stands."