

Marquette Catholic Coach McElrath Looks Forward to Spring Football With Explorers

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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ALTON - New Marquette Catholic High School head football coach Leon McElrath III is doing what all area coaches are at the moment, adapting to the IHSA changes. McElrath is elated there will be football for Marquette, even if it is in the spring of 2021.

The IHSA plan moves the football season from Feb. 15-May 1 from the normal mid-August to November. Four sports will remain in the fall: Girls tennis, boys and girls golf, boys and girls cross country and girls swimming and diving. The fall season begins Aug. 10, and continues until Oct. 24.

"I think right now, everybody's main concern is trying to fill their schedule out," McElrath said. "Especially a school like ours who's conference is disbanding. So it gives us a jump on things, and to try to fill out our schedule."

The move to the spring does help the Explorers' program tremendously.

"It certainly is." McElrath said. "Between our talent and what we've been working on, it's a blessing in itself."

But the bottom line is that even though it will be played in the spring, exactly like the former United States Football League, which played a spring schedule from 1984-1986, at its core, it's still football.

"Definitely so," McElrath said. "It's still football."

The most important thing is that the players - especially the seniors - will get to play a season and a chance to play a game that they love.

McElrath isn't sure what will happen in the spring, but does look forward to the opportunity.

"I don't know. I've never played in the spring before," McElrath said with a laugh. "Sometimes, the changes are good."