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IHSLA Players to Watch 2018

By Byron Stankus

Since it is early in the season, I thought I might put a list together of some of the players to watch. This is not an exhaustive list and there will be many players throughout the season that will rise and be noticed. This is just a taste of some of the top players by position that you might want to keep an eye on.

Attack:

Chad Kittaka, Carmel – This is not surprise. Chad will likely be the league's leading scorer or at the very least among the top. The only reason he might not have the numbers is because the team around him is so talented. But when in doubt, he'll get you a goal.

Keegan Logan, Hamilton Southeastern – Another player dominant on the score sheet. This year he is a known quantity and may be drawing the top defenders from each team. That may slow his point totals down, but probably not. He is another player with talent around him that will have to share the points.

Asher Mendell, Carmel – Asher has already committed to Detroit Mercy University; where his brother is, but that hasn't slowed him down. He is not content with that. Asher is a threat to score at any time, but he also sees the field well and will find the open player if you slide too early to him.

Will King, Brebeuf Jesuit – I believe Will King is the best player in the state. He is one of the quickest and smartest players I've ever seen. He is so fast and has a great shot. He is listed on the roster as an attackman but he will also run some midfield. The coaches will put him wherever they need and he will deliver. I would consider him the top Midfielder and a top attackman, at the same time.

Midfield

Lucas Devoe – Hamilton Southeastern – I really like watching Lucas as a player. He has been a defensive midfielder in the past and is the type of player that will do whatever the coaches ask and you can see it in his play. I'm not sure he will be the biggest point getting midfielder, but he does everything well. He'll be a part of the high-powered HSE offense but he still may be their best D-Mid too.

Will King, Brebeuf Jesuit – I know I mentioned him in the attack but I would feel remiss to not list him as one of the best Midis too.

Midfield- contd.

Eli Null, Carmel – Eli is one of the top players on the high-octane offense at Carmel. I think he is the mid that is going to stand out this year. They have a couple to choose from, but Eli looks like he's on a mission this season and is stepping forward as one of the team leaders.

Aidan Itamura, Brebeuf Jesuit – Aidan is a transfer in from Lawrence North. Aidan is the player that is going to benefit from the threat that teammate Will King is. Aidan is great in his own right, but now that he doesn't have to carry the load for his whole team and the spotlight is on someone else, watch him rack up a bunch of points.

John Thomas, Noblesville – I'm listing John here as an honorable mention. He is a big, strong player and when he gets going he is a force to be reckoned with. I expect him to lead the Noblesville team. If you are looking for a dark horse first team All-State he might be it.

Defense:

Erich Wiitala, Guerin Catholic – Erich is fun to watch. He has great feet and a great stick. He has some of the best stick checks in the state. It's fun to see how long a ball carrier can hold the ball when he's on them. He is not only one of the best defensemen but when he gets the ball and goes up field, he is a threat to score, not just to shoot but to find the open player and assist too.

Nick Riina, Hamilton Southeastern, Nick is a magician with the stick. He can throw all kinds of stick checks and dislodge the ball. But when he possesses the ball his stick is magic then too. Not only a good passer and shooter with the long pole but he also has one of the best ball fakes in the state, at any position. He'll fool someone at least once a game. Good times!

LSM:

Nate Crowder, Hamilton Southeastern – This is another no brainer. We all know Nate is the best LSM in the state and has been for a bit (arguably). But that's no reason not to watch him. He is strong off the wing, relentless defending midis and aggressive all over the field. If Nate is on you, give up the ball.

Garrett Spencer, Heritage Christian – This is a bit of a sleeper pick. Garrett will be a force at LSM for Heritage. He's big, strong and has a good stick. The Eagles' team is young and offense heavy, but he will be a bright spot on D. I expect him to dominate against the players he is scheduled to play.