

The 1979 All-Area Football Team

Offense is Bingesser's specialty

By HAROLD BECHARD

Sacred Heart's first offensive play from the line of scrimmage in the Class 3A state championship football game against Smith Center, quarterback Greg Strecker hit split end Randy Klaus with an 80-yard touchdown pass.

The play was a play-action pass, designed to freeze the Smith Center linebackers into thinking Strecker would be handing the ball off to fullback Chris Clark. The fake worked to perfection as Klaus slipped in behind the Redmen secondary for the touchdown.

Sacred Heart went on to claim the state title with a 21-13 win over Smith Center and it was that first offensive play by the Knights which shifted the momentum to their side.

"It got us down right quick," said Smith Center coach Roger Barta of the pass play. "They executed the play very well."

It's been that kind of offensive execution which has been a trademark of coach Jon Bingesser's teams over the past several years. That type of offensive ingenuity has helped the Knights to three state titles in 10 years.

And the latest state title, which came about on Nov. 24 at Hays, earned Bingesser The Salina Journal's Area Football Coach of the Year award.

Bingesser, who is also the assistant principal at SHHS, just completed his 13th season as football coach at the Salina Catholic school. There have been

Area Coach Winners

1977 - (tie) Clayton Williams, Beloit; Ed Buller, Clyde.
1978 - Paul Dennis, Abilene.
1979 - Jon Bingesser, Sacred Heart.

some rumors that he's ready to give up coaching and become a full-time insurance representative — something he's done for the past few summers.

"I want to stay with it for a while yet," Bingesser said. "I don't have any plans to get out of it."

That should relieve Sacred Heart boosters, who have seen Bingesser compile an 88-39 record at SHHS (114-56 adding three years at Solomon and two at Palco) since 1968.

How did he get the Sacred Heart job?

"Before I moved to Solomon (in 1963) I inquired about the Sacred Heart job," Bingesser remembered. "They said if a position was open I could have it. I took it three years later and I'm very happy I did."

While other small schools in the state suffer through bad times in athletics, Sacred Heart seems to be strong every year — especially in football and basketball. What's the reason for this?

"I would say that some of things going for us are the unity in the students and the backing of the parents, fans and teachers," Bingesser explained.

"They expect the kids to do well. I always expect them to get the job done and do it right."

And the Knights have been doing it right for Bingesser, who has an outstanding record of 52-11 over the last six years. SHHS won state titles in 1969, 1974 and 1979.

Not only do the Knights win, but they're also very entertaining with their wide-open offense and razzle-dazzle plays.

"I'm always thinking of plays that will be successful," said the 1961 graduate of Washburn University. "I wouldn't call them trick plays, but rather a surprise to spring on an opponent."

Bingesser has received coaching offers from colleges, but has turned down every one.

"I've had opportunities to move into the college ranks, but it seemed like each time I had the opportunity, I would have a good team the next year at Sacred Heart and want to stay on with the kids."

The Knights were 12-1 the past season and the future looks rosy at least two more seasons for Bingesser.

Being the assistant principal at the high school also has its headaches, but Bingesser likes the challenge.

"I definitely is a lot of work, but I like doing it," said the SHHS coach. "It keeps me busy. Sometimes the only time I have to plan for practice is when I'm getting dressed or walking out on the field. And sometimes the coaches don't even know what we're going to do until I tell them during our listhenics."

Bingesser was actually interested in medicine during his first two years at Washburn, but during his junior year, decided to go into coaching.

"I just enjoyed the sport so much that I wanted to become involved in it and in sports in general," Bingesser concluded.

And SHHS fans are glad Bingesser made that choice back in 1959.



1979 ALL-AREA TEAM — Members of The Salina Journal's 1979 All-Area Football Team are (front row, from left) Tracy

Hunnaccutt, Smith Center; Greg Cook, McPherson; (second row) Roger Linder, Clay Center; Coach of the Year Jon Binges-

ser, Sacred Heart; Scott Fulhage, Beloit; (third row) Brad Heinrich, Oakley; Pat Poore,

Stockton; Brad Wilkinson, Belleville; Curtis Cobb, Russell; (back row) Fred Swander, Sa-

cred Heart; Jim Sargent, Russell; Harry Sulzman, Hoxie; and Greg Strecker, Sacred Heart.

Journal Photo by Fritz Mendall

Offense galore on All-Area team

By HAROLD BECHARD

Trying to stop The Salina Journal's 1979 All-Area Football Team from moving the ball on the ground or through the air on your defense would be like trying to shoot down a 747 with a sling shot.

There's no way.

The All-Area squad, the fourth of its kind since the The Journal started selecting the 12-player team in 1976 from its 33-county circulation area, is loaded to the brim with offensive talent.

The two receivers caught passes for 1,093 yards, the two quarterbacks on the squad threw for 3,247 yards and 44 touchdowns, while the three running backs amassed an astounding 3,421 yards.

And the linemen, who would have the job of protecting the quarterback and opening holes for the linemen, are size-wise, the largest ever. The quintet averages 6-foot-1½ and 214 pounds per man.

But if the unlikely would happen and the offense was stopped, the All-Area team still has the top punter in Kansas, who booted the football over 45 yards everytime he put his foot into it.

The talent of these players (all seniors) didn't stop on offense. Most of them were also their team's top defensive player.

The members of the All-Area first team are Fred Swander and Greg Strecker of Sacred Heart, Curtis Cobb and Jim Sargent of Russell, Brad Heinrich of Oakley, Harry Sulzman of Hoxie, Roger Linder of Clay Center, Greg Cook of McPherson, Pat Poore of Stockton, Scott Fulhage of Beloit, Brad Wilkinson of Belleville and Tracy Hunnaccutt of Smith Center.

And if this talented group of athletes would ever take the field, it would be capably coached by Sacred Heart's Jon Bingesser — The Journal's Area Coach of the Year. Bingesser led SHHS to the Class 3A football title and its third state crown since he started coaching

at the Catholic school back in 1967.

At least four members of the team — Heinrich, Cook, Cobb and Fulhage — are being courted by major colleges, but as one coach said after the All-Area banquet last Wednesday, five or six more of them could be that caliber after a couple years in junior college.

This year's crop of seniors in the area are only topped by the 1977 group which included Beloit's Wade Wentling (K-State) and Grant Thierolf (KU), Hill City's Phil Switzer (K-State), Hays' Kirk Maska (KU) and Norton's Amos Donaldson (K-State).

The first-teamers will also carry that all-important winning attitude into the college ranks. The combined record of the schools represented was a sparkling 80-29 (.734) and 10 of the 12 prepsters participated in post-season grid playoffs.

The players come from schools the size of Class 2A Stockton to Class 5A McPherson and size-wise from Sulzman (6-1, 235) to Strecker (5-8, 145).

Here are individual sketches of each player on the "Top 12" team.

Fred Swander — Sacred Heart

Some observers felt the 6-1, 195-pound Swander was the best tight end in Kansas during the '79 campaign ... and the SHHS standout may have been:

He caught 45 passes for 618 yards and 12 touchdowns as a senior and grabbed 69 for 1,084 and 18 TDs for his career. As a defensive end, he was the fifth on the defensive points chart. Swander started for two years as a tight end and three seasons as a defensive end.

"He would have to be one of the best I've ever coached" said Bingesser. "He catches everything that is close to him. He was also very consistent on defense ... no one got around his end."

Although he can catch the ball as well as anyone in the state, Swander's speed is what makes the big schools leery. Most of the state's small colleges such as Bethany, Fort Hays and Washburn are very interested.

Brad Wilkinson — Belleville

Wilkinson, a 6-2, 175-pounder, was an All-North Central Kansas League selection on both offense (tight end) and defense (linebacker) after playing offensive guard as a junior.

The Buff standout led the league in pass receiving with 29 catches for 475 yards and four scores and was also the leading tackler with 122 tackles and had four interceptions. He was a unanimous all-league pick as a linebacker.

BHS coach Ron Tuley compares Wilkinson to 1979 graduate Doug Doubek, who was a Class 4-5A All-Area selection last season as a linebacker.

"He was a super highlight for us all season," said Tuley. "Brad called all of the defensive stunts and really laid the old hammer down when he tackled someone. He could get up to 220 before he's done. He's only 17-years-old and he has a big frame. He had quite a year for us."

Greg Cook — McPherson

The 6-2, 230-pound tackle, was a tower of strength for coach John Hoffman's Bullpups. He was an all-league performer on offense as a junior in the tough Ark Valley League and on defense as a senior.

"Greg is an outstanding blocker as an offensive tackle and possesses great quickness and lateral movement as a defensive lineman," said Hoffman.

Kansas and K-State have shown plenty of interest in the senior lineman as well as Wichita State and all the state's small colleges and jucos. Cook was an all-state selection as a defensive player, where he played the tackle position and also some at nose guard.

Tracy Hunnaccutt — Smith Center

Hunnaccutt, at 6-2 and 230 pounds, was one of the leaders in Smith Center's Cinderella season which saw the Redmen place second in the 3A playoffs behind Sacred Heart.

The Redmen senior was an All-Mid Continent League selection as an offensive tackle. He was in on 120 tackles during the season. K-State has shown

some interest as have all of the small colleges.

"He's the best offensive lineman I've ever been associated with," said coach Roger Barta. "He's big and he's quick. I know quite a few colleges are looking at him as an offensive lineman. We ran to his side a majority of the time."

Hunnaccutt made 65 tackles, helped out on 55 others, recovered two fumbles and blocked a punt for the stingy SCHS defense.

Roger Linder — Clay Center

Linder, a 6-3, 200-pound offensive tackle-defensive end, was an All-NCKL

choice on both offense and defense for the surprising Tigers, who finished second in the league race before reaching the second round of the Class 4A state playoffs.

"We didn't keep a tackle chart, but he played well for us," said CCHS coach Larry Wiemers of Linder. "I know he played very well against Abilene. It was his best game of the season."

Veteran Abilene Paul Dennis called Linder, "the best linemen our team faced all year."

(See ALL-AREA, Page 26)

1979 ALL-AREA FOOTBALL							
FIRST TEAM				SECOND TEAM			
PLAYER — School	Hgt	Wgt	Yr.	PLAYER — School	Hgt	Wgt	Yr.
FRED SWANDER — Sacred Heart	6-1	195	Sr.	WES ADDINGTON — Abilene	6-0	170	Sr.
BRAD WILKINSON — Belleville	6-2	175	Sr.	HARRY SHAW — Russell	6-4	185	Sr.
GREG COOK — McPherson	6-3	230	Sr.	GREG CASE — Salina Central	5-11	215	Jr.
TRACY HUNNACUTT — Smith Center	6-2	230	Sr.	JEFF COLVIN — Oakley	6-3	225	Sr.
ROGER LINDER — Clay Center	6-3	200	Sr.	MIKE MARTIN — Sacred Heart	6-1	208	Sr.
JIM SARGENT — Russell	5-10	175	Sr.	JEFF MAY — Concordia	6-2	195	Sr.
HARRY SULZMAN — Hoxie	6-2	235	Sr.	STEVE PENNER — SE of Saline	6-5	250	Sr.
PAT POORE — Stockton	6-1	150	Sr.	BARTON HUNDLEY — Clay Center	5-10	155	Jr.
GREG STRECKER — Sacred Heart	5-8	145	Sr.	CURT PEIRANO — Russell	5-11	155	Sr.
SCOTT RITTER — Beloit	6-1	196	Sr.	BRAD HILL — Canton-Galva	6-0	170	Sr.
BRAD HEINRICH — Oakley	5-11	180	Sr.	TERRY SCHERLING — Thomas More Prep	6-0	175	Sr.
SCOTT FULHAGE — Beloit	5-11	184	Sr.	DANE SCHERLING — Smith Center	6-0	185	Sr.
THIRD TEAM				HONORABLE MENTION			
PLAYER — School	Hgt	Wgt	Yr.	ENDS — Kent Cross, Thomas More Prep; George Hartz, Miltonvale; Alan Jamison, Lucas-Luray; Tracy Kingsbury, Smith Center; Randy Klaus, Sacred Heart; Alan Meil, Oakley; Matt Miller, Stockton; Greg Zerr, Quinter.			
KELVE IRWIN — McCracken	6-1	204	Sr.	LINEBACKERS — Rick Arts, Concordia; Greg Balharoz, Concordia; Lance Billings, Salina South; Mark Carsovsky, Colby; Gary Coady, Russell; Rod Cole, Kensington; Kevin Cromwell, North Center; Brian Lamar, Russell; Dan Pfannenstiel, Norton; Brian Reid, Beloit; Dale Shogren, Salina Central; Doyle Spears, Osborne.			
MIKE FEITZMEIER — Ell-Saline	5-8	205	Sr.	BACKS — Monty Bechard, Clyde; Jeff Finlayson, Washington; Kent Fisher, Clay Center; Chris Monas, Ellis; Dru Hughes, Hoxie; Jeff Jackson, Sylvan Unified; Brian Long, Sacred Heart; Steve Long, Beloit; Dan Kellerman, Phillipsburg; Kent Miller, Kensington; Eugene Morrill, SE of Saline; Keith Patterson, Quinter; Vince Wagoner, Lenora; Rick Winder, Osborne.			
JOEL LOONEY — Salina South	6-4	167	Sr.				
KALE NELSON — Marquette	6-2	220	Sr.				
SCOTT RITTER — Sacred Heart	5-10	166	Jr.				
FRED WISE — Plainville	5-10	205	Sr.				
MARK BERGLING — Atwood	5-10	165	Sr.				
JEFF BLACKWOOD — Miltonvale	5-10	165	Sr.				
CHRIS CLARK — Sacred Heart	5-10	178	Sr.				
SCOTT FANTER — Kensington	5-11	200	Sr.				
MARK PHILLIPS — Concordia	5-11	175	Sr.				
POSITIONS				POSITIONS			
TE-DE	TE-DE	TE-DE	TE-DE	QB-FS	QB-FS	QB-FS	QB-FS
OT-DT	OT-DT	OT-DT	OT-DT	OG-LB	OG-LB	OG-LB	OG-LB
OG-LB	OG-LB	OG-LB	OG-LB	RB-CB	RB-CB	RB-CB	RB-CB
OT-DE	OT-DE	OT-DE	OT-DE	K-FB-LB	K-FB-LB	K-FB-LB	K-FB-LB
QB-FS	QB-FS	QB-FS	QB-FS				
OG-LB	OG-LB	OG-LB	OG-LB				
RB-CB	RB-CB	RB-CB	RB-CB				
K-FB-LB	K-FB-LB	K-FB-LB	K-FB-LB				