



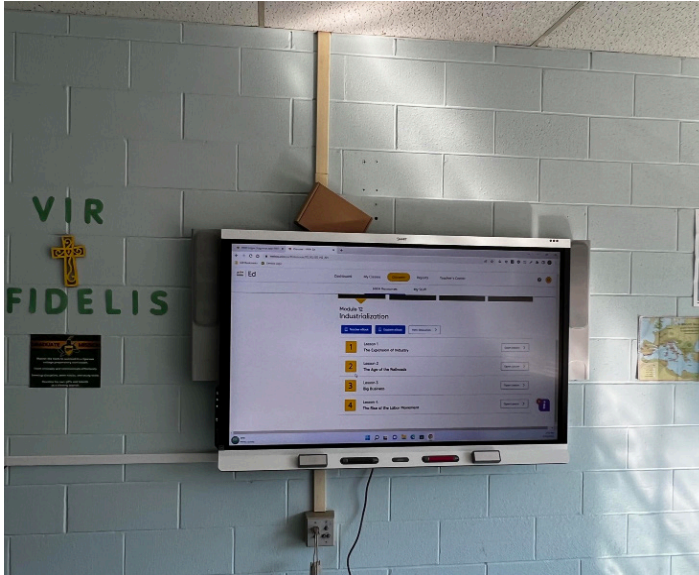
The Guardian

Vol. 60 Issue 1

Saint Joseph Regional High School, Montvale, NJ

Friday, September 30, 2022

New Smartboards and Significant Upgrades



One of thirty-five newly installed smartboards.

By Jake Persaud '23

After school ended in June, SJR underwent numerous renovations in preparation for the commencement of the 2022-23 school year. These renovations included cleaning the path on the north side of the school, upgrading the security infrastructure and removing diseased trees behind the building, as well as major technology updates. The purchase of thirty-five smart boards, three mobile smart boards, twenty new HP computers and five HP all in one computers was made possible by a grant that the school received. In discussing the benefits of the smart boards Principal Bruno recently stated "Streamlining our educational technology will have a significant, positive effect on both students and teachers."

The upgrades have greatly enhanced the entirety of the school, providing students with access to state of the art learning opportunities and presenting a welcoming, safe building and campus environment that is appealing to students, parents, and alumni alike.

During the summer, SJR Board President Dan Kelly, enlisted volunteers to help clean up the path on the

north side of the school. The students cleared roots, debris, weeds, and cleared the path to make it more user friendly and well-maintained. The walls in the basement used to be a vanilla color which, over time, proved to be exceptionally bland. The walls were painted a light yellow to represent one of the school's colors, along with new ceiling tiles being installed in the basement and cafeteria. The color choice for the walls and the changed ceiling tiles have brightened up the entire area.

New sanitary sewers and manholes were installed to prevent backups, which would have been an issue had the school kept the old ones. The security has improved greatly in the school. New cameras have been installed around the building to maintain safety and immediately observe any wrongdoing within the building, as well as on exterior school grounds. A welcome desk has been placed in the main lobby and there is now someone available to greet anyone entering the school.

Room 115 used to be the Performing Arts office, but now serves as the room for Mr. Richard Adams, the new Public Speaking teacher. Room 17 was built in the second hallway in the basement, which is currently used by freshman basketball coach Daniel Davis '99, who teaches Marketing and Theology.

The varsity baseball field has been in dire need of an upgrade, and will finally get one before the season starts in the spring. New security fencing and netting will be installed to restore the existing ones.

SJR made substantial improvements before school began and has committed to the continuation of renovations throughout the year. Green Knights, parents, and alumni will certainly look forward to seeing the changes made to the school, as well as having the opportunity to enjoy those changes in the future.

Opinion

Dylan's Gaming: A Deep-Dive into *The Last of Us*



By Dylan Nazario '23

In 2013, Naughty Dog released one of the best narrative driven games ever made. *The Last of Us* was an instant classic. Selling over 20 million copies worldwide and winning many game of the year awards, we all awaited its sequel which would be in development for 7 years. *The Last of Us Part II* was released with somewhat mixed reception due to the narrative aspect, but one thing is certain: the game was another hit.

The Last of Us franchise is getting its own HBO Max series in a few months and with that Naughty Dog has decided to remake the first game, which is only 7 years old. Most games are not remade unless they are truly old and unplayable by a modern audience. In addition, the game is priced at \$70, a very steep price considering there's already a remaster that is only a few dollars.

This has left many wondering why Naughty Dog is wasting time and resources remaking a game unnecessarily. Why not spend resources on another game franchise and why price the game so high? To understand the answer we have to understand the concern.

The Last of Us was undoubtedly ahead of its time. Released on the PS3, the game still looks great to this day. However, when played side by side in the *The Last of Us Part II*, the graphics, gameplay feel, and facial expressions have become outdated, even considering the remastered version of *The Last of Us* for PS4. *The Last of Us Part II* fixed many gameplay issues that were apparent in the first game. It built upon the gunplay, brutal combat and stealth mechanics and of

course the stunning graphics.

The remake of the first game takes most of the improved mechanics from the sequel to make the game feel updated and smooth. The graphics and facial expressions are greatly improved and are now on the same level as the sequel. So with this knowledge, we can start to piece together why Naughty Dog would remake the original game. But an issue remains. Did *The Last of Us* truly need the remake?

In short, yes and no. With the soon to be released series on HBO Max, Naughty Dog wants a central hub for people who have only watched the show to hop into the games. If you have never heard of *The Last of Us* games and you are just watching the series, then you can access the best possible versions of both the first and second game on PS5.

Having played the remake and the original, it's become clear who it is designed for. If you have played the original, then this game doesn't have much to offer. The improvements are great, but they don't warrant a \$70 price tag for those who have already played the game before.

If you are new to the game and willing to make that kind of expenditure, then this game is for you because it is the best transition into the sequel and it is mainly for new players.



Please email letters to the Editor to sjrguardian@sjrnj.org

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Student Life

Student Spotlight: Chris Dolan-Eagle Scout Project



Chris Dolan '23 standing on the newly built footbridge.

By Fintan Henry '23

Chris Dolan started Cub Scouts in kindergarten. He worked his way through the ranks in Pack 91 in Hillsdale. A favorite memory from his early years was the annual Pinewood derby. Chris also enjoyed the annual Klondike event held in the winter. He earned the rank of Webelos 2 in fifth grade and bridged over to Troop 350 in Westwood NJ.

What was the inspiration for his project?

Chris was on a community cleanup service project with his troop in the Fall of 2020. He spoke with a town councilwoman about his search for an Eagle project as he was at the second highest rank as a Life Scout. The councilwoman brought up the town's dire need for a new footbridge over a drainage culvert. This sparked an idea for Chris' Eagle project.

Details about the project:

Chris received approval from the town council for his idea and began working in December. A local contractor and family friend was excited about the idea and was eager to help. He started the heavy work by digging two massive holes for the footings of the bridge.

The next big step was pouring cement into the holes that they dug. A small cement truck was able to wiggle its way through the small park and pour the cement. Finally, Chris and his fellow scouts spent the next three months assembling the bridge. He finished the job on May 12.

Chris completed his board of review and had his Eagle Scout Court of Honor in late May and became an Eagle Scout!

Chris stated "This project definitely taught me what it means to be a leader and how to complete a professional job with little experience and supplies. This journey has given me some of the best memories and friendships of my life. I am very proud to be an Eagle Scout."



A view from the newly-built bridge, attributed to Chris Dolan.

Freshman Community Trip



SJR's Freshman Community Retreat took place from Monday September 12, until Wednesday September, 14.

Counter Clockwise from top right (All pictures left to right)

Mr. Asselta and Chris Pinto engage in a game of ping pong.

Freshman spending time in nature.

Students completing a team building exercise.

Mr. Becker talks to the Freshmen about brotherhood.

Mrs. Cavera leading the group in prayer on the Hudson River.

All photos by Barry Donnelly '71



Freshman Community Trip



Clockwise from top left (All pictures left to right)

Matt Fallon and Thomas Snyder '23 participate in the Light of Life ceremony.

RJ Gatto '23 and Victor O'Lori '26 pose for a picture.

Freshman Community Trip group photo in front of the Marist Brothers building.

A group of freshman in the midst of a bonding activity.

A group of freshman participating in exercises to prepare themselves for the start of the school year.

All photos by Barry Donnelly '71



Esopus Summer Camp



Counter-clockwise from top right

Barry Donnelly '71 and Brother John Dunning join student volunteers at Esopus.

Kevin McNulty '78 and Brother John Dunning enjoy a break from activities with another group of student volunteers.

New alumni Nicholas Steinhauser '22 returned soon after graduation to volunteer his services.

(From left to right) Massimo Titolo '24, Luis Saenz '22, Peter Edmonds '22, Brother John Dunning, James Titolo '22 and Lucas Masotti '22 stop to pose for a photo.

A group of alumni volunteers enjoy their time with Brother John Dunning.

All photos courtesy of Brother John Dunning



Esopus Summer Camp



Clockwise from top left.

Joe Schiavone '11 enjoys lunch-time at Esopus.

Timothy Doherty '23, Timothy O'Sullivan '24, Dylan Bellofatto '23, join a volunteer from Archbishop Molloy HS in fun and colorful festivities.

Another group of weeklong volunteers, including an array of alumni, students and former faculty.

Timothy O'Sullivan '24 preparing the salad bar.

Volunteers prepare and serve healthy meals.

All photos courtesy of Brother John Dunning



She Hulk Review: A Subpar MCU Effort



By Dylan Nazario '23

At the end of every Disney plus show comes the start of another. *She-Hulk: Attorney at Law* is the most recent Disney Plus project with a total of nine episodes. The show is loosely based on *The Savage She-Hulk* comic. Four out of the nine episodes have aired to very mixed reception, making it time for a deep dive.

The first episode of *She-Hulk* revolves around a flashback. The show commences with Jennifer Walters AKA She-Hulk getting heckled by some men and holding out on them before Bruce Banner AKA Hulk stops her from doing anything she would regret. We learn that Jennifer Walters is Bruce Banner's cousin. This is one of the many issues with the show.

Throughout the episodes, the audience must be wondering how Jennifer gets her powers. She-Hulk gets her powers after coming into contact with her cousin Bruce's irradiated blood. She is just as powerful as the Hulk we know and love from the MCU movies.

Her origin is ruined from the comics and mitigates the entire Hulk character. Bruce Banner was his mad father's experiment that is depicted as traumatic and horrible. The trauma and anger that manifested inside of Bruce Banner as the gamma experiments were going on is what makes him the Hulk.

On the other hand, Jennifer got some of Bruce's blood on her during a Shakaarian attack, a very bland and dialed down version of the comics, where she was fatally wounded in a failed mob hit. She then needed a blood transfusion and Bruce was the only one who can help.

All of this to say that the show isn't staying close enough to the source material that makes these characters more than just heroes. The Hulk had to go through so much pain and suffering, whereas She-Hulk didn't and it feels very contrived.

Aside from the extremely bad CGI that makes She-Hulk look like Fiona from *Shrek*, *She-Hulk: Attorney At Law* is a bit of a mess. Jennifer Walters' character is certainly quirky and there are some nice elements here, including the attempt to bring in a sitcom-esque style to the MCU. Those parts are certainly a decent inclusion, although the comedy is still hit or miss.

However, there are two distinct problems with this series that really stand out: fourth wall breaking commentary and very clear woke writing. Jennifer will sometimes talk to the audience and consider everything that has been produced by the MCU; the wall breaking feels very weird and unnatural.

On the other hand, the "woke" writing is very apparent. While some may not find it bothersome, it's something that should stay out of the MCU.

Comics and related movies are a way to escape from the world around us and exist in a world with an angry green monster and a god of thunder. Most viewers of the show have voiced their opinions on social media and it's clear that a majority of fans think the wokeness is a bit unnecessary.

She-Hulk is a very polarizing show; You either like it or you don't. There are many downsides to the show that have earned it some bad reviews. The at times cringey dialogue and subpar writing stop this show from having the same quality and care that other Disney Plus shows have had such as *Falcon and the Winter Soldier* or *Moon Knight*.

New Faculty Members

Wilson Dedios Makes His SJR Debut



New Teacher Wilson Dedios with Ashton Samson '23

By Ashton Samson '23

What is your personal and educational background?

I come from Passaic, New Jersey and went to High School there. I then attended William Paterson University, where I got my B.S. in Movement Science. I have been married for almost twenty years and am privileged to be the father of three children. I have two daughters, one is twenty-eight and the other is nine and a fourteen-year old son. My parents, who were from Mexico raised me to speak Spanish, so I am a native speaker.

What is your prior work experience?

For the past twenty years I have been in the fitness industry, both as a coach and personal fitness trainer. I ran a fitness facility that I enjoyed working at where I developed relationships with some great fellow trainers as well as long-lasting family friends with those who I coached. I have also been in the world of education as a PE teacher for eight years. Now at Saint Joe's, I will be able to split my duties doing two things that I love equally, working as a Spanish teacher and a physical educator.

What brought you to St. Joe's?

I learned about Saint Joe's through friends I have known for a long time and applied immediately. I was lucky enough to get a call back from Mr. Bruno. It all happened very quickly and I am grateful because I am fitting in very well.

What do you enjoy most about being a Spanish and PE teacher?

I love sharing my culture and teaching students about it. But what I enjoy even more is teaching them about how and when to use Spanish and its importance in their future paths. I am trying to prepare every one of my students so that when they enter the real world, they use Spanish to their advantage. This coincides with why I enjoy PE, because it is also something of importance to one's future life. I love teaching PE because I hope to instill in students a sense of how being physically active can make them stronger, healthier citizens.

What has your experience been like at Saint Joe's so far?

Saint Joes feels like a big family. I have been welcomed here by all the teachers and staff. I am also getting very familiar with all of my students and even those who I don't have in my classes, which has been nice. Everyone tries to be upbeat and maintain a positive attitude.

What activities do you enjoy outside of school?

I enjoy being with my family and sharing time with them. We are a sports family, so we do a lot of sporting activities together. We are invested in soccer almost all year around, as the soccer club runs from around now until the end of the spring. Other than that, most of what we do is outdoors, whether it be sports or hiking, but we also enjoy going out to dinner and having a good time with friends and neighbors.

What is your goal for the duration of this school year?

My goal is to continue to prepare the students so that they can serve as positive representatives of the school and to continue emphasizing that Spanish will likely be a part of their lives one way or another. It is my sincere hope that if they truly commit what I teach them to memory, they will be able to use the Spanish that they learn and the cultural aspect of it, as well as Physical Education positively in their future.



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New Faculty Members

James Fink Makes His SJR Debut



Mr. Fink teaching his History class.

By Nicholas Pantano '25

What is your favorite thing about teaching?

I have always enjoyed learning new things and as a teacher I have the ability to share some of my knowledge.

Where have you taught in the past?

I started my teaching in Verona when I was at Montclair State University and after that I taught at many schools, including Elizabeth and Mahwah. I was an English teacher for most of my teaching career, but when I began teaching in Glen Rock, I taught History, Drama, Public Speaking and coached several different sports. This will be my thirty-third year teaching.

Tell me about your education.

I got my bachelors degree in English and History at Franklin and Marshall College and I got my Teaching degree at Montclair State University.

Do you have any kids?

I have been married for twenty eight years. I am celebrating my anniversary next month. I am married to a wonderful

lady, named Irene, who is also a teacher. She teaches in Glen Rock. I have three children, Jon aged 26, Tim aged 24 and Chris aged 20.

What was your favorite thing to teach or coach, since you have taught and coached many things?

I was a golf coach at Glen Rock at the varsity level for 6 years and I taught middle schoolers for about 15. I think it is important for people to learn to have proper golf etiquette, although I am not the best.

What is the greatest lesson you've learned through all your years as a teacher?

I've learned that you have to be patient with people. You have a plan that you want to follow, but you are in a class with 25 different types of personalities so you have to help each of them learn and end the year well. Of course the year, other students and the teacher's time have to be considered as well. I like the quote "Patience is a Virtue."

Outside of teaching and coaching, what hobbies do you have?

My wife and I love to travel; we love beach-side trips. Chris, my son is going to college in Vermont so we are going up there, into the mountains and Jon is leaving in a week to go to graduate school in London, so we plan on traveling there too. I am a fan of the Green Bay Packers. This year I am going out to see them play. This will be my first time so I am very excited.



New Faculty Members

Alumni Brian Maye '93 Returns to SJR



Brian Maye '93, SJR's new math teacher.

By Nicholas Pantano '25

Of the nine new teachers to arrive at SJR this school year, it is always special to have an opportunity to talk to one who is also an alumni. Brian Maye, '93 joined SJR this fall as a new math teacher. After graduation from SJR, he attended Boston College where he majored in marketing. Let's find out what he has been doing since then.

How did you get into teaching?

After college, I worked at Merrill Lynch on Wall Street. After two years I realized that was not where I wanted to spend the rest of my life, so I went into teaching at Cardinal Hayes in Bronx, NY and I loved it. I was a teacher there for twenty years.

What is your favorite kind of math to teach?

Algebra is my favorite. It is important for college level work. I like to teach the other levels of math too, but Algebra is definitely my favorite.

You have spent over two decades teaching, what is your most important lesson that you've learned?

Don't judge a book by its cover. There is a student there in everyone. Do not dismiss someone as "not a student"

because if that student is engaged, he can accomplish great things. I've learned over the years that there is a way to reach every student, you just have to find it.

What is your favorite thing about teaching?

My favorite thing about teaching is seeing a student go from a defeatist attitude, thinking they are unable to do something and then bringing them over the top-to see the realization that they are better than they think they can be.

What extracurricular activities did you do as a student at SJR?

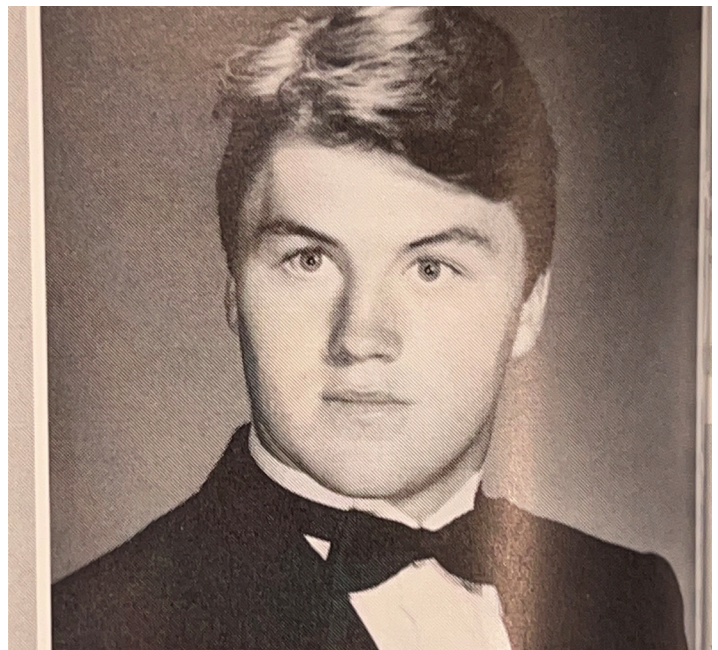
I was a three sport athlete, most of my time was spent playing football, basketball and baseball, I was not involved in any clubs because the sports took up too much of my time.

Do you have any kids?

I have three children, a fourteen year old daughter named Abby, a twelve year old daughter, named Caitlyn and a nine year old son, named Brendan.

How did you come back to Saint Joes as a teacher?

I moved from Jersey City to Pearl River, which borders Montvale. I am friends with many people who work in the schools. From there I was informed of the teaching position at Saint Joes. That's how the process started. There is always a love for your school. There is a football game tonight (The Joes vs. Bosco game) and it feels like I never left.

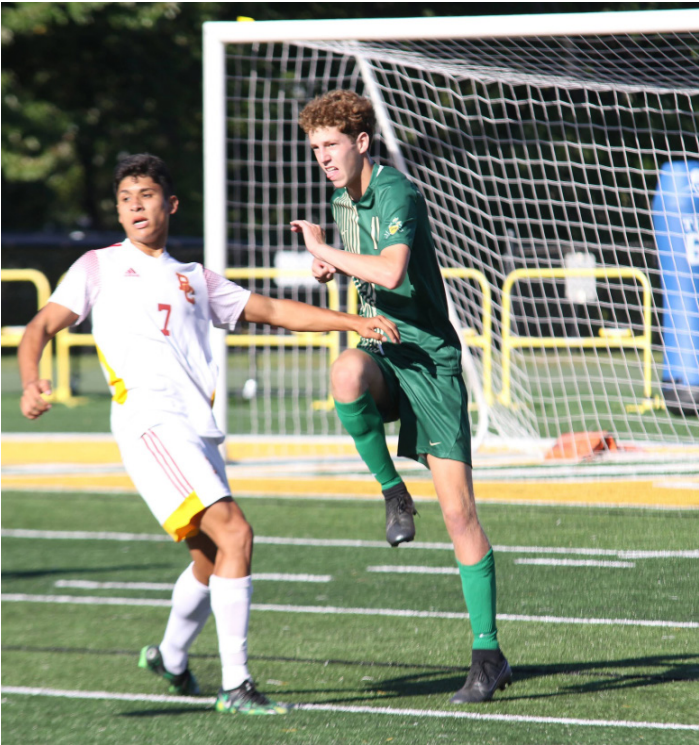




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Sports

SJR Soccer's First Win of the Season



Dan Brennan '23 during the September 15th game against BC.

By Timothy Doherty '23

The Varsity soccer team found themselves at 0-4 after a challenging start to the season, which saw them play four of the best teams in Bergen County, three of whom were ranked in the top twenty in New Jersey. The team has taken major strides in each contest though, with each game becoming more and more competitive. The Green Knights are starting to find the back of the net more while adjusting to the new play style under first-year head coach Jairo Munoz.

A recent contest, a 4-2 loss to defending state champion and Bergen County runner-up Ramsey, was an encouraging sign for the team, as they were able to keep it close (one goal match throughout the majority of the second-half) and give themselves several winning chances against one of the better teams in the area.

The Green Knights have a mix of veterans and newcomers that make up the core of the squad, which will serve them well as they continue their season in the tough Big North Conference. Senior Dan Brennan said, "We have a great group of guys this year who are getting better every day."

The most encouraging sign has been the overall attitude of the boys, who have shown up every day for practice and worked hard despite some tough losses to start the year.

This work ethic has already paid off and the results were evident as The Green Knights gained their first win of the season with a score of 2-0 against a 3-1 DePaul Catholic team. They followed that up with a 5-1 win over Paramus Catholic, giving them two victories in their last three games.

Senior Tim Doherty said the team viewed the DePaul game as a "must-win game that helped set the tone for the remainder of the season." The Green Knights have shown flashes in every game, but seemed to have turned a corner with their wins these last two weeks.



SJR Soccer grabs its first big win.



Sports

SJR Cross Country Off to A Strong Start



Coach DeVito preparing the team for the season opener.

By Fintan Henry '23

Coming off of a successful season in 2021, the Saint Joseph Regional Cross Country team was looking to rebuild after losing two of their top runners in Shane Brennan and Tom Mendoza.

Coming into the first day of training, Coach DeVito was pleased to see the unprecedented participation from incoming freshmen. While many of the newcomers had little running experience coming into the season, a few hard weeks of training whipped them into shape quickly.

Varsity returners Jeff Guneratne and Fintan Henry led the underclassmen through brutally hot days of summer in preparation for the first meet. The Green Knights opened up their season with an invitational meet at Darlington County Park.

The freshman team took the county by storm and won the freshman meet in the 2900 meter course. The team led by Darren Coyle and William Park finished in first place in a field of over 20 teams. This win is very promising for the meets to come. In the 3.1 mile race, Jack

Laux and Jeff Guneratne led the pack for SJR earning medals.

The Green Knights had high expectations going into the league meet on September 13th. This meet was a competition between Saint Joseph's, Bergen Catholic, Don Bosco, DePaul, and Paramus Catholic. As a result of the freshmen community retreat, the team could not compete in the event.

Fintan Henry bounced back after a disappointing season opener, and led the Green Knights in the league meet. A pair of new additions to the team in Alex Naddeo and Jayden Jenkins had a strong performance and helped displace runners from opposing teams. SJR came in 4th place in the meet and is looking to hold onto the momentum.

There is a bit of a gap until the next meet for the team. The Knights have about 10 days of training until the Big North League Championship. These next two weeks will consist of intense training hoping to crush previous times.



Invitational Meet at Darlington County Park, Mahwah.



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Sports

Loss to St. Peter's disrupts Homecoming weekend



SJR Green Knights running onto the field at game time

By Jake Persaud '23

The Green Knights took the field Saturday, September 24th, to face off against the St. Peter's Prep Marauders. Saturday was the fiftieth anniversary of the class of 1972. It was also the return of former Green Knight Kenyon Massey, who transferred to St. Peter's this past summer, and recently broke the Marauders' record with eighteen receptions in a game in his last outing. Unfortunately, SJR blew a 38-21 lead when St. Peter's scored twenty unanswered points in the fourth quarter and went on to win 41-38. With the loss, St. Joe's fell below .500 with a 2-3 record in the season.

Although Saturday was a chilly day at first, it later became a warm and sunny afternoon. The class of '72 was honored at the fifty-yard line during a pre-game ceremony. The student section was filled to nearly the top of the bleachers, with students wearing white as part of a white out.

Kickoff was at 1:00 PM. St. Peter's received the ball first. The scoring began when John Forster '25 ran for a 62-yard rushing touchdown. After a successful PAT by Ruiz '23, the Green Knights led 7-0. The Marauders bounced back when running back Jalen Cline ran for a 2-yard rushing touchdown. After a successful PAT by kicker Nico Duarte, the game was tied at 7. St. Peter's got their first lead of the game when wide receiver Zion Fowler returned a punt for a 70-yard punt return. With Duarte kicking another successful PAT, their lead was 14-7. But SJR came back and scored a touchdown of their own when Yasin Willis '24 ran for a 7-yard rushing touchdown. After Ruiz's '23 successful PAT, the game was tied 14-14 at the end of the first quarter. St. Joe's extended their lead when quarterback Joey Gaston '25 ran for a 13-yard rushing touchdown. With Ruiz '23

kicking a successful PAT, SJR led 21-14. They extended their lead again when Willis '24 ran for a 5-yard rushing touchdown. The lead was 28-14 after a successful PAT by Ruiz '23. The Marauders closed the gap a bit when quarterback Champ Long threw the ball to wide receiver DJ Brown for a 25-yard touchdown reception. With Duarte kicking the successful PAT, the Green Knights led 28-21. But SJR struck back with Forster '25 leading the way for a 78-yard rushing touchdown, with Ruiz '23 kicking a successful PAT for a 35-21 lead. Ruiz '23 then kicked a 23-yard field goal to widen the gap for a 38-21 lead at the end of the third quarter. St. Peter's comeback started when Cline ran for a 29-yard rushing touchdown. After a failed two-point conversion, the score was 38-27. Long then ran for a 5-yard rushing touchdown, but failed to convert two points, leaving the score at 38-33. Then St. Peter's took back the lead when Long threw the ball to Massey for a 23-yard touchdown reception. After Long ran to convert two points, the score was 41-38. SJR had a chance to take back the lead and seal the win, but when Ruiz '23 missed a late field goal, their fate was sealed with the Marauders winning 41-38.

Gaston '25 had 65 passing yards and 6 completions on 13 attempts, as well as 99 rushing yards and a rushing touchdown on 7 carries. Wide receiver Nathan Bailey '26 recorded 24 rushing yards on 2 carries, as well as 8 receiving yards on 2 receptions. Willis '24 recorded 156 rushing yards and 2 rushing touchdowns on 26 carries, as well as 17 receiving yards on 1 reception. Running back Luke Tucci '23 recorded 17 rushing yards on 14 carries. Forster '25 had 155 rushing yards and 2 rushing touchdowns on 9 carries. Wide receiver Mekhi Rossignol '25 had 40 receiving yards on 3 receptions. Defensive end Jimmy Mullen '23 had 1 forced fumble. Defensive tackle Stephen Laguerre '23 had 1 fumble recovery. Defensive back Makhi Jones '25 recorded 1 fumble recovery. Jovon Williams '25 had 2 interceptions. Ruiz '23 1 field goal made on 2 field goal attempts and 5 successful PATs on 5 PAT attempts.

In total the team had 65 rushing yards and 6 completions on 13 attempts, 451 rushing yards and 5 rushing touchdowns on 58 carries, 65 receiving yards on 6 receptions, 1 forced fumble, 2 fumble recoveries, 2 interceptions, 1 field goal made on 2 field goal attempts, 5 successful PATs on 5 PAT attempts, 24 first downs, 139 punting yards on 4 punts, and 170 lost yards on 11 penalties.

The Green Knights will participate in the Zone6ix football classic on Friday, September 30th when they face Donovan Catholic at MetLife Stadium at 5:30 PM. Tickets are available on Ticketmaster.com. SJR will look to get their third win of the season and get back to .500.