



When young boys grow up, they try to emulate their heroes. Be it a fireman, a doctor or even an athlete, young boys watch their heroes every move and look forward to the day that they can be just like them. Today, through the many types of mass media young people can follow the careers of people from all over the globe. But back in the 40's before the internet and even before cable TV, young men found their heroes closer to home. High school athletes were often the subjects of young boys dreams and if they were family members sometimes that was even better. Such was the case of Lou Pascarella. When he was the starting center helping to lead the 1948 CBA Football team to the City Championship, a young Mike DeLucia took notice. Mike looked to him and couldn't wait for the day that he would don the purple and gold. But little did he realize how great an impact he would have on the CBA programs.

Mike was the oldest of eight children in a very athletically inclined and close knit north side family. His parents were willing to sacrifice to send Mike to CBA so that they could receive the best education possible. A very talented and versatile athlete, Mike spent two years representing CBA on the baseball diamond where he played for back to back city league championship teams. Mike played center field for the Golden Tornadoes and was an All City selection his junior year. That season, not only did excel at the plate, he went through the entire season without making an error. Not too bad for his second sport.

But Mike was a tremendous football player. When Mike started at CBA as a freshman there was something in him that legendary coach Walt Ludovico noticed. He was the only member of his class, one of the most athletically gifted classes to ever attend CBA, to play on the varsity team that season. He learned his craft behind senior all star Roy Spadafora and the team won the league and all city championship.

So when the 1951 season began, everyone was full of optimism. Coming into the season with 4 game winning streak, the team had begun to assert itself on the field and learned how to win. In fact, in what I think is an amazing stat, in the three years that Delucia was a varsity football starter at CBA, he NEVER played in a game that his team didn't win.....THEY Never LOST!!!! During those years, the team was 24 and 0 and get this one, they outscored their opponents by 155 – 36, 230 - 6. 196 – 0. That means in his junior and senior years, CBA opponents only scored one touchdown!!! Offensively, while Chuck Zimmerman and Frank Cappelletti were getting the headlines for scoring points, Delucia at center anchored the line which included Dan DeLany and Jim Fitzgerald and opened gaping holes for those storied backs to run through. He and the rest of the line gave Zimmerman the time to complete passes to Lennie Basile. On defense, Delucia was magnificent. He had a

knack for being around the ball at all times. At 6' 180 he was surprisingly agile and was feared and respected by his opponents. Against Valley, one of his more impressive games, he intercepted two passes and ran them back for touchdowns. For his hard work, Mike was a three time All City all star. When he was chosen to the all star team as a junior, it was written that "he received the honor hands down and his performance left little



room for argument. Those who observed him in action found him to be alert and aggressive. He intercepted passes and recovered fumbles to give his team the opportunity to be successful". The story that epitomizes just how Mike played the game, happened his sophomore year in the City County championship game. During the first half, a Solvay player bit Mike on the hand. (remember, no facemasks at the time!) but that didn't stop him, he wrapped it up and continued to play and the event was actually documented in the post Standard... look at the picture. Senior year brought more honors for Mike... all upstate, honorable mention catholic school honorable mention. But as humble as he is, the most memorable and satisfying part of his high school career was the friendships and camaraderie that developed among his teammates. A fact evident the number of his former teammates here today!!!

After CBA, Mike and Chuck would reunite with Former teammate Frank Cappelletti at Fordham with hopes to continue the success they enjoyed at CBA. But that was short lived because after their freshman year, Fordham dropped their football program. Wanting to continue playing the game he loved, Mike transferred to Villanova University to continue his academic and athletic career. He picked up right where he left off at CBA. At the time Villanova was in the Eastern independent conference which included Syracuse, Boston College, Penn State and all the major football school in the east. A three year starter, playing pulling guard and middle linebacker, during his junior year he showed his durability by logging almost 60 minutes in every game during that season. Mike earned the respect of his coaches and teammates and was chosen captain during his senior season. That year he was selected to the All East All star team and was also chosen to represent the Wildcats in the senior bowl. He was recognized for his achievements at Villanova when he was inducted into their Hall of Fame in 2006.

Mike, you were always proud to represent CBA on the gridiron and the ball diamond. You were and still are a leader amongst your teammates and because of your impeccable character, have earned the respect. It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to take your rightful place among CBA's finest in the LaSallian Athletic Hall of Fame.

