



When Sam and Mary Ciciarelli were raising their family they put a high value on education. Although they themselves were not afforded the luxury of a high school education they made it a priority for their eight children and wanted to make sure that they received the best education possible. So it is not a surprise that they made great sacrifices to send their six boys from their Niagara Street home to the CBA on Willow Street the finest school in the City. Although brother Joe left after three years at the Academy, Sal '45, Pete '48, Vic '51 and John '54 proudly developed a legacy at CBA. Pete and Vic both had distinguished themselves on the athletic fields earning all city honors on the gridiron in their respective senior years. So when it was time for youngest brother Paul to choose a high school, there really wasn't much of a choice involved. It was a foregone conclusion that Paul would attempt to follow in his brothers footsteps although it was understood that it would be very difficult to fill their shoes. By then Sam and Mary had become such supporters of the school they loved that they earned the nickname Mr. and Mrs. CBA. Now we're not sure when the CBA Golden Tornado nickname, coined in the 20's, morphed into Brothers, but it certainly was very appropriate when being applied to the Ciciarelli's



Paul was the most gifted athlete of the family. As will all exceptional athletes of the time Paul played more than one sport. In the spring he manned the hot corner for Coach Joe Weber's Brothers in each of his four years at Willow Street. He was considered a solid defender and a consistent offensive weapon. He helped his team win the city league championship in 1957 and was chosen first team all city in his junior and senior years.

However, Paul really made a name for himself on the gridiron. He was lightning quick and touted as one of the most versatile backs in the league. In his junior year, after an uncharacteristic 0 – 2 start, Coach Ludovico used Paul's talents by adding the t formation to his playbook along with his legendary single wing formation. The Brothers went 4 – 0 – 1 the rest of the season and earned a second

place finish. Paul was chosen to the all city team (in one paper anyway, remember when the city had two

papers, both with different information... No, didn't think so!) and finished second in the league in scoring. But Paul saved his best for his senior season. With a great returning cast Paul led his charges back to the top of the City league. A tie with Nottingham was the only league blemish on the teams' record and they finished as co champions, back to the top after a three year hiatus. "He's the top back in the city because he can do things that no one else does" Central Coach Fran Raye commented on Ciciarelli. Paul repeated as an all city league selection (this time in both papers). He again finished second in the league in scoring with twelve (the record was still held by former teammate Tom Filicia!)

Paul's love for CBA continued as he continued his career as a teacher in the City school district. He combined his love for sports and working with youth by volunteering to coach in several football, softball and baseball leagues throughout the area. So when the Varsity Football position at his alma mater opened up for the Fall of 1991, there was no question that Paul wanted to give back to the school that he loved so much. At the time the program was in disarray. Decreased enrollment and lack of interest forced the school to drop the JV program. In fact the year before Paul returned, only 50 boys were part of the program, which had won only 3 games in the previous two seasons. In Paul's first season he began to lay the groundwork for what would become a recipe for future success. He convinced the parents to prepare pre game meals for the team so that they would spend more time together as a group in an attempt to create a family atmosphere. Before his second season, Paul instituted more changes. He felt that he needed to change the attitude of the program, so he traded the Green Bay gold in the uniforms for Vegas Gold and a uniform style that we still wear today. Whether it was the attitude change, uniform change or just a reaction to Paul's genuine caring for his players, starting in 1993 the team began to win. From 1993 through 1998 the football family that Coach Ciciarelli helped to create amassed a record of 55 - 7. During that time his teams won four league championships and the schools first two sectional championships in 1997 and 1998. In '97 the Brothers were an extra point short of a state championship when they lost the State Championship in double overtime. When Paul stepped away from coaching after the 1998 season, CBA football was in a different place than it was when he took it over. Coach Ciciarelli had brought the program back to being recognized as one of the most respected teams Syracuse area and all of New York State.

Paul, you and your family have always been great supporters of Christian Brothers Academy. As a player and then a coach, you helped the CBA Community have great pride in our football program. Today, as you take your rightful place in the Lasallian Hall of Fame, I hope you understand how proud we are of you.

