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ANDREW FLORITA, *Christian Brothers student body president, on the Holy Bowl*



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Christian Brothers' mascot makes the rounds between classes Wednesday. Jesuit and CBS will renew their rivalry Saturday.

Holy Bowl at 40: Rivalry game remains a focus

BY JOE DAVIDSON | [jdavidson@sacbee.com](mailto:j davidson@sacbee.com)

It's festive. It's fun. It's football. And it's a night when only one team has its prayers answered.

It's the Holy Bowl, a high school rivalry that transcends the game itself and has a special stranglehold on players, coaches, faculty, friends, family and alums alike. Christian Brothers versus Jesuit, the annual meeting of the region's only two Catholic high schools with football.

The Holy Bowl celebrates its 40th year Saturday at Hughes Stadium, where a crowd of 17,000 or more is expected. Both schools are eager to see where their teams are, each having won a game impressively and each having absorbed a humbling defeat.

Thursday, September 24, 2



ROBERT DURELL Bee file, 2008

At last season's game, Brother Donald Johanson shot photos for Christian Brothers' Web site. The Falcons lost to Jesuit 20-19 that night.

The schools - CBS in Oak Park and Jesuit in Carmichael - are in the midst of spirit week. There are posters and signs on the campus halls. Everyone is buzzing. On game night, Jesuit will trot out a student body in a sea of white T-shirts. CBS will counter with a horde of students in blue, each group trying to out-chant the other, including, "We can't hear you!"

"It's not just a game," Jesuit student body president Harris Rudman said, "it's a lifestyle. Nothing compares to the raw energy of the Holy Bowl. I get chills just thinking about it."

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HOLY BOWL

**No. 19 Christian Brothers (1-1)
vs. No. 20 Jesuit (1-1)**

When: 7 p.m. Sat., Hughes Stadium.

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Bowl: Family ties put on hold

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So does his buddy Andrew Florita, who happens to be the CBS student body president.

"I agree with Harris - this is about memories and school pride, and that's the beauty of the it, because you can talk to an alum from the '70s or '80s and this game still means everything," Florita said, noting quickly his friendship with Rudman will take a few hours off this week.

"We may all be friends and know each other, but there are no CB and Jesuit kids hanging out (together) this week."

That goes for family, too. Dan Carmazzi has been directly involved in more Holy Bowls than anyone. He was a CBS quarterback in the first two meetings, and he's been the Jesuit head coach since 1980. Yes, he defected to the dark side or, rather, the Big Red side.

Carmazzi coached three sons in the game over the years - Matt, Gio and Dominic - and now he has to game plan against his nephew, CBS center Paul Carmazzi Jr. It's a close family, but there hasn't been much dialogue this week.

"It will be fun going against Paul, but he could have been here," Dan Carmazzi said. "I tried to recruit him."

"I've tried to ask him leading questions about this game but he's been pretty tight-lipped."

Said Carmazzi Jr.: "I think the winner might puff his chest out a little more at Thanksgiving."

There is always extra intrigue in the Holy Bowl because so many of the players know each other. Many attended the same elementary schools. There is respect, to be sure, but no text message exchanges of late.

"They bleed red and gold, we bleed blue," Carmazzi Jr. said. "If we all hung out this week, the colors just wouldn't



ROBERT DURELL Bee file, 2008

Enthusiastic Jesuit rooters were primed in 2008 for a 20-19 Marauders' victory.

come out too well."

Still, the colors sometimes switch. Matt Traverso grew up watching the Holy Bowl. He helped CBS halt an overall nine-year losing streak to Jesuit in 2001.

"I thought it was my destiny to end the curse to Jesuit," said Traverso, now working in a state legislative office. "Like anyone who played in the Holy Bowl, you remember it forever."

Upon graduating from Stanford in 2006, Traverso defected to Jesuit to be an assistant football coach. Concussion disorder, perhaps?

"I would have disowned myself at the thought years ago," Traverso said. "But I found that the CB and Jesuit kids are all cut from the same cloth; great kids who love this game. Now I'll go to the game Saturday wearing yellow or orange because I'll root for both teams."

And to think the Holy Bowl almost never got off the ground. School officials from both sides feared a rivalry would cause ill will, and there were concerns football would become too much

of a campus focus. As it turned out, the Holy Bowl has emerged as the area's best longstanding rivalry.

The first Holy Bowl, in 1969, pitted 93-year old CBS against 6-year-old Jesuit. Jesuit students held torches for players to run through before the game. Like any rivalry, the series has had fantastic finishes, horrific blowouts - and even a scoreless tie in the mud. League championships have been decided, the higher position in Bee rankings, too. And plenty of pride, bruised or otherwise. Jesuit leads the all-time series 23-14-2 (which includes a 1993 playoff win).

The freshman and junior varsity teams from each school have their own Holy Bowl games earlier Saturday.

"Those teams get a feel for the rivalry, how special high school football can be," Jesuit athletic director Phil Nuxoll said. "We can all meet on the gridiron on Saturday and at church on Sunday."

Call The Bee's Joe Davidson, (916) 321-1280.

HOLY BOWL AT A GLANCE

Series scores:

1969: CBS 20, Jesuit 7

1970: Jesuit 8, CBS 7

1971: CBS 40, Jesuit 7

1972: Jesuit 21, CBS 0

1973: CBS 0, Jesuit 0

1974: CBS 53, Jesuit 1

1975: Jesuit 7, CBS 6

1976: Jesuit 13, CBS 6

1977: No game

1978: No game

1979: CBS 53, Jesuit 1

1980: CBS 40, Jesuit 1

1981: CBS 17, Jesuit 1

1982: CBS 21, Jesuit 1

1983: CBS 31, Jesuit 1

1984: CBS 17, Jesuit 1

1985: CBS 35, Jesuit 1

1986: Jesuit 13, CBS 1

1987: Jesuit 24, CBS 1

1988: CBS 11, Jesuit 1

1989: Jesuit 21, CBS 1

1990: CBS 3, Jesuit 0

1991: Jesuit 39, CBS 1

1992: CBS 28, Jesuit 1

1993: Jesuit 14, CBS 1

1994: Jesuit 28, CBS 1

1995: Jesuit 38, CBS 1

1996: Jesuit 23, CBS 1

1997: Jesuit 34, CBS 1

1998: Jesuit 56, CBS 1

1999: Jesuit 63, CBS 1

2000: Jesuit 49, CBS 1

2001: CBS 14, Jesuit 1

2002: Jesuit 28, CBS 1

2003: Jesuit 42, CBS 1

2004: Jesuit 55, CBS 1

2005: CBS 19, Jesuit 1

2006: Jesuit 21, CBS 1

2007: Jesuit 32, CBS 1

2008: Jesuit 20, CBS 1

*-playoff game

Source: Christian Brother

High School.

HOLY BOWL | Jesuit vs. Christian Brothers, 7 p.m. Saturday, Hughes Stadium

10 games worth revisiting

The Bee's Joe Davidson looks at 10 memorable Holy Bowl games:

1970: A win with McGinn

The lad had one play all season, and he's still a legend for it. On the last play of the regular-season finale between league champs at soggy American River College, Jesuit sophomore Dano McGinn came off the bench to run in a two-point conversion for an 8-7 win, dashing CBS' run at its first perfect season since 1936.

1974: Amen, Brothers

In a battle of top talents, Jesuit's Matt Bouza broke up a second-half end-zone pass meant for All-America wide receiver Dan Farrell, prompting the Jesuit rooting section to yell in unison, "Some All-American, CB!" One play later, Farrell caught a pass in stride, just beating Bouza - who went on to the NFL - as CBS scored on every possession in a 53-28 win, prompting the CBS students to chant, "Amen! Amen! Amen!"

1975: Drive, Marauders

In another meeting of league champions facing off in the season finale, the Marauders passed on the city playoffs for a shot at CBS and used a 99-yard drive to win 7-6 behind runners Tim Lee and Joe Riehl.

1986: Streak busters

CBS, a 13-point favorite, led 10-0 at the half before the Marauders rallied behind a Mike Walter score and a Mike McIntee touchdown pass to Dan Cahill to win 13-10 and halt the Falcons' seven-year winning streak in the series.



RANDALL BENTON Bee file, 2007

2007: Isaiah Frey of Jesuit scored the game-winning touchdown in the 2007 Holy Bowl.

1989: Charlie, angel

Charles Alimena caught a late 40-yard touchdown pass from Chris Bradford, and sealed it with an interception at the 3-yard line for a 21-14 Jesuit win. He said he never hugged so many people after a game in his life.

1990: Go West, young man

In a defensive slugfest with forced fumbles and goal-line stands, it came down to a Cornel West interception

in the closing moments on fourth and goal at the Falcons' 7 to preserve a 3-0 CBS win. Julian Gutierrez kicked a 28-yard field goal.

1992: McKechnie's moment

Jesuit stormed to a 16-0 halftime lead, prompting CBS coach George Smith to ditch the game plan and unleash dynamic passer Kevin McKechnie, who after throwing three interceptions in a loss to Jesuit staged the most dramatic Holy Bowl rally. He tossed three second-half touchdown passes - two to John Hooper - and ran for another score for a 28-16 win.

2001: Matt and Mel prevail

Behind team leaders Matt Traverso and Mel Cuckovich, CBS halted an overall nine-game skid to Jesuit. Traverso had 11 tackles and Cuckovich knocked off a two-point conversion pass with 1:03 left to preserve a 14-13 victory.

2005: Tie goes to the winners

The first tie of this series was 0-0 in 1973. This time ended 19-19 and was a lot more entertaining. CBS rallied from a 13-0 hole behind Curtis Raulinaitis, who threw two touchdown passes and rushed for a score to offset Jesuit leaders Kevin Novick and Evan Reuter.

2007: Big Red nerves

Two late fourth-down conversions made Jesuit coach Dan Carmazzi nervous, and then he was just plain proud as son Dominic helped steer a rally to offset the versatility of CBS ace Asa Jackson. Isaiah Frey won it with a late TD as Jesuit prevailed 32-28.

- Joe Davidson