

# Carmel rides the arm of Johnston

High school football records are sometimes difficult to track down and verify, but that may not be the case this year concerning Kenny Johnston and the Carmel Padres.

Fans and followers of Carmel High football could have a front row seat to history, at least if his sophomore season were any indication.

The 6-foot-1 Johnston is believed to have thrown for more yards during the regular season last year than any Monterey County quarterback in history with 2,294.

And it was done with a nine-game schedule, one fewer than most teams.

Before that, only three other county quarterbacks are believed to have thrown for more than 2,000 yards in the regular season.

Brian Kirkpatrick of King City passed for 2,262 in 1994, Jeff Foudy of Carmel tossed for 2,111 for Carmel in 2005 and Wes Cooly of Pacific Grove threw for 2,018 in 1998.

But only Johnston topped the 2,000-yard mark as a sophomore.

And it could be just the start.

"The more you play, the more the game slows down, and your vision becomes better," said Craig Johnston, Kenny Johnston's father and Carmel coach — himself once a standout quarterback for Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo. "But it still comes down to decision-making and making the right throws."

Johnston was intercepted 14 times in 261 throws last year, but also tossed for a county-record 27 touchdowns.

His talent has already caught the attention of college recruiters. Johnston participated in several high-profile invitation-only passing camps this summer.

For a team that has passed for more than 1,000 yards for 15 straight seasons, there's no telling what kind of numbers the Padres and Johnston are capable of piling up this season.

"Kenny has really put his mind into it," Johnston said. "He went out for track to improve his speed. It paid off in the summer. He was able to escape trouble by scrambling. He's doing everything he can



THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN/SCOTT MACDONALD

Carmel quarterback Kenny Johnston takes a snap during practice last month.

do to be as good as he can."

The anticipation for this season is as high as ever at Carmel, and a peek at the schedule shows their confidence level is too.

The small-school Padres have two large-school T-CAL teams on their non-league schedule, at North Salinas and Alvarez.

"We have high expectations," Johnston said. "We've put a great amount of attention into

our offense."

Carmel returns two experienced receivers in Alex Martinez (34 catches, 403 yards) and Andrew Melendrez (19-369).

Hoping to ease the pressure off Johnston is a running game which features 5-9, 160-pound sophomore speedster Andrew Keyser, the MTAL's 100- and 200-meter sprint champion.

Jonathon Nobrega and Jason

## Padres schedule

**Sept. 1:** Carmel 45, St. Francis Catholic of Watsonville 2  
**Sept. 8:** At Alvarez, 2 p.m.  
**Sept. 14:** North Salinas at Salinas Sports Complex, 7:30 p.m.  
**Sept. 22:** Bye  
**Sept. 28:** At King City, 7:30 p.m.  
**Oct. 6:** Gonzales, 2 p.m.  
**Oct. 13:** Stevenson, 2 p.m.  
**Oct. 20:** Sacred Heart Prep (Atherton), 2 p.m.  
**Oct. 27:** Greenfield, 2 p.m.  
**Nov. 2:** At Soledad, 7:30 p.m.  
**Nov. 9:** At Pacific Grove, 7:30 p.m.

Field also return in the backfield and as starting linebackers.

The defense includes 6-2, 230-pound Shon Pedemonte; 6-1, 235-pound Pedro Perez and 6-2, 230-pound Daniel Renitzer. Johnston said returning strong safety George Porter is the rock of his defense.

"The biggest issue for us is to stop the run," he said. "Teams are going to try and run against us, so we don't get the ball."

Carmel has a string of six straight winning seasons, second longest (Palma leads with 24) among Monterey County schools.

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