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Big-time 'backer

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Comments (No comments posted.)

GENEVA – Geneva junior Brennan Quinn does not look like the prototypical middle linebacker.

At 270 pounds, Quinn looks the part of defensive tackle more than a field general roaming the middle of the field.

Quinn's brawn will come in handy tonight as the Vikings take on physical Rochelle with at least a share of the Western Sun Conference title within the Vikings' grasp. Because the Hubs run the ball nearly every play, having a behemoth like Quinn behind the defensive line can only help the Vikings' cause.

"It's pretty much the D-line and linebackers the whole game," Quinn said. "It's a lot different than most of the teams in the conference, because most of them run the spread offense, so it's a fun game, a little bit different, more hitting."

Despite only being a junior, Quinn has plenty of experience. He was the youngster starting alongside Geneva's talented trio of senior linebackers, Josh Brennan (Carthage), Pat Schiller (Northern Illinois) and Alex Springhorn (College of DuPage), who are all playing in college this year.

"They taught me pretty much all I know for my defense," Quinn said. "They really got me going for this year. It was most of the time them taking me under their wing. There were a few times they got on me because I was younger, but they helped me out most of the time."

Geneva coach Rob Wicinski knew Quinn was a rare talent coming into last season, prompting him to start Quinn on the varsity squad as a sophomore. This year, Quinn has become one of the focal points for the defense.

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"It's obvious that he saw the way they handled adversity, saw the way they handled their practices, how they practiced, how they behaved, on and off the field," Wicinski said. "That was really good. He came in with a lot of skills anyway. I think it was more the mental aspect and how he handled it. His work ethic, his off-season. He's always very positive with everybody around him. He's got 'it.'"

Quinn's size might limit him in pass coverage, but the Vikings (6-0, 4-0 WSC) do not put him in many positions where he is exposed. Against the run, Quinn is a beast.

Wicinski said that when he watches film of linebackers, often times they will pop their hips at impact. Not Quinn.

"He has no pop. He steamrolls," Wicinski said. "He's 270 pounds and he's always going downhill."

Wicinski plans on seeing plenty of that Friday as the Vikings face their biggest test of the season against Rochelle (5-1, 3-1). Running the Wing-T is a rite of passage in Rochelle, and this group has done it just fine behind three key returnees, quarterback Alex Prough, fullback Devon Mancillas and tailback Rosendo Garcia.

"His size is invaluable," Wicinski said. "Let's hope he has a big game. If our front four pays attention to what they need to do and Quinn has a solid game, we'll be OK up front."



Geneva linebacker Brennan Quinn (39) smiles during football practice at Geneva High School on Thursday afternoon. (Justin Runquist photo)

COMMENTS

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