

MARIST COLLEGE



Cover Photo By Kathy McLaughlin

1987 LACROSSE GUIDE

MIKE MALET

HEAD COACH

If you are looking for an athletic program that has experienced an abrupt turnaround in recent years, look no further than the Marist College lacrosse program. And the man responsible for this about face, head coach Mike Malet.

Since assuming the head coaching duties prior to the start of the 1984 season, Malet has guided the Red Foxes to a 27-14 record. That is a drastic improvement over the two years prior to his arrival during which Marist produced a 7-14 mark. In his maiden season, the native of Poughkeepsie, New York, restored respectability to the program by orchestrating a 5-6 record. The following year, Marist turned in a 10-6 record. That set the stage for Malet's crowning achievement in 1986 as the Red Foxes produced the finest record in the history of Marist lacrosse, a sterling 12-2 mark. Along the way the Red Foxes put together a school-record and 1986 Division I best 11-game winning streak and came within one game -- a 12-11 defeat by New York Maritime -- of winning their first Knickerbocker Conference Championship since 1981.

During his three-year tenure at Marist, Malet has not only won 69 percent of his games, but he has done so against an upgraded schedule. This year the schedule is even tougher, as Marist has added contests against proven winners, Siena, Stony Brook and Whittier.

In addition to his duties on the lacrosse field, Malet also is the head coach of the Marist football team, a position he has held for nine years.

A 1970 graduate of Cortland State University, Malet resides in Poughkeepsie with his wife Cindy and son Christopher.

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1987 SEASON PREVIEW

As the 1986 lacrosse season came to a close, the Marist Red Foxes finished the year without something they desperately wanted: the Knickerbocker Conference Championship. After a record-setting 11-0 start, the Red Foxes dropped a heartbreaking 12-11 decision to New York Maritime. The loss ended any hope Marist had of winning its first league title since 1981. Despite the defeat, the Red Foxes still posted an impressive 12-2 mark -- their best record ever -- and finished in second place in the conference with a 6-1 record.

Mike Malet, who is entering his fourth season as Marist's head coach, was troubled by the defeat. However, he took consolation in his team's strong showing. "The loss to Maritime was a tough one," Malet said, "but it showed how far our program has come and where it is going."

If the Red Foxes are to better last season's accomplishments, they will have to do so against a much tougher schedule and a well-balanced conference lineup. Making this year's slate a shade more difficult are matchups against Siena, SUNY-Stony Brook, and Whittier College of California. ~~The conference play should also be as competitive as ever,~~ with Maritime, Kean College, and Southampton all returning strong teams. "There are no more weak games on our schedule," Malet said. "The automatic wins have been eliminated."

The race for the conference title promises to be a close one, however, Malet feels his Red Foxes have as legitimate a shot as anyone. "The conference is much stronger this year," Malet said. "We'll be disappointed though if we don't compete for the conference championship."

With the top two scorers returning this year, Malet has good reason to be optimistic. Sophomore attackman Peter Cleary heads the list of returnees for Marist. Last season, Cleary ripped the cords for 47 goals and handed out 45 assists for a Marist single-season record, 92 points. Cleary, who is one of six returnees who were named to the all-conference team, also was among the nation's best in terms of points per game average. Joining him on the front line will be junior Bill Drolet. Touted as one of the best playmakers on the team, Drolet scored 25 goals and dished off 39 assists for 64 points last year. Not only were Cleary and Drolet the Red Foxes' leading scorers a year ago, but, according to Malet, they also are two of the hardest workers on the squad. "Peter and Bill are typical examples of our players," Malet said. "Our players look to become the best they can be." In addition to Cleary and Drolet, Malet fully expects senior Tim Dunn, who did not play last year, to compensate for some of the offensive punch Tom Daly (25 goals) took with him upon graduating.

With a good deal of experience returning, the midfield position should be a steady one this season. Junior Dan Arnold, a 1985 all-league selection whose quick stick makes him a scoring threat from almost anywhere on the field, is back after missing last year. Arnold's comeback -- he scored 31 goals and added 11 assists two years ago -- will go a long way toward solidifying Marist at midfield. Also returning at middle is senior tri-captain Steve Wolfe. A three-year starter, Wolfe scored seven goals and pitched in three assists last season. Todd Jesaitis, J.R. Morrissey, and Mike Daly round out what Malet feels will be a strong corps. "We should be able to run three good midfield lines," Malet said.

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If there's one weakness among this group of midfielders, it is in the face-off department. Missing from this year's squad is John Young. Not only was Young the Red Foxes' finest face-off man, but he also was Malet's best man-to-man player. "We lost a great face-off man and middle when John Young graduated," Malet said. "He also was a great defensive player and I think that is what we will miss most."

Perhaps the biggest question mark this year surrounds the defense. Two mainstays from last year's team, Paul Rezza and Steve Ryan, have graduated. However, two starters return along with some talented newcomers. Back are all-conference honoree Bob Cowie and junior Jon Cannon. Cowie, a junior tri-captain, will be looked upon to bring the freshmen along for the conference schedule. Battling for the final spot will be sophomore Will Masi, freshman Paul Cleary and several other talented newcomers.

If there was one job that was safe even before the season started that was the goaltending spot. Back for his junior year is Chris Reuss. As a freshman, Reuss led all Division I goalies with a .690 save percentage. He came back last season and finished second nationally with a .706 save percentage. Recording all twelve victories for the Red Foxes, Reuss pulled yeoman duty in 1986, playing 789 of a possible 840 minutes.

Hopes for the 1987 season are high and well they should be. The Red Foxes are 22-8 over the past two years and are coming off their finest seasons ever. With seven starters and 14 lettermen returning, this season could well be the year that Marist fulfills its expectations and walks off the field as Knickerbocker Conference Champion.

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