

# With new look, St. Edmund has hard road ahead of it

BY JOSEPH STASZEWSKI

St. Edmund had the benefit of senior leadership last season, but this year have the promise of youth around a veteran core.

Pitcher Emma Ferington and catcher Casey Scalfani were both gritty and battle-tested. After a slow start the Eagles won seven straight games to claim their first CHSAA Brooklyn division title since 1993. But with CHSAA Brooklyn/Queens Division I merging into a single eight-team league and Ferington and Scalfani both graduated, this year's St. Edmund team has a different journey ahead of it.

"Every game will be a battle and we have to be ready, mentally and physically, to come out of that battle victorious," Eagles coach Rowena Motylewski said. "It's going to take hard

work and complete dedication and absolutely nothing can be taken for granted."

With Ferington gone, the fourth-year coach is going to have to rely on two underclassmen in the circle in sophomore Monica Mangano and freshman Angela Fox. Both worked over the summer to prepare for the challenge and Motylewski feels her defense will need to pick them up early on as they build confidence. Fox could also see time at shortstop.

"Both young women are not going to replace the confidence and strength we had in Emma immediately, but we have complete confidence in these girls to throw strikes and let the field do its job," the coach said.

A lot of that confidence comes from the returnees in the field. Cassandra Mo-

linari, one of the city's most complete hitters, is back at shortstop, but could also see time behind the plate. Janelle Garvey, the lineup's biggest thumper, returns at third. The junior ended last season on a power surge that saw her hitting a home run in almost every game, prior to a heartbreaking playoff loss to Mary Louis. Sophomore Veronica Cupo takes over at first base and sophomore Meagan McBride will be at second.

"Janelle has been working hard to continually improve her strong bat and will undoubtedly find herself having another great year," Motylewski said. "Her strength and speed on the bases allows her to be that menacing and terrific force."

St. Edmund's strength lies in the outfield. The speedy Shelly Cranston is



Senior Cassandra Mollanari could see time behind the plate and at short.  
Photo by Philip Hall

back in left field and Jenny Russo in right. Both are capable of covering plenty

of ground. Motylewski believes sophomore Alex Samosiuk, who will be patrol-

ling center field, could have a breakout season. Demi Speranza could see time behind the plate with Emily O'Regan and provided outfield depth with Briana Munos and Brianna Riviezzo.

"Alex is really just becoming a great ballplayer all around as each day goes by," she said. "She'll be our key defender in center and her bat is really coming along."

The same could be said for her team. The pieces are there for another successful season, but could take some time and experience for things to come together.

"This team knows that success will be something that every single player has to commit to in order to achieve it," Motylewski said. "We can't sit back and let our pitcher do all the work this year."