

**SPORTS SECTION**

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## **Dual options at quarterback making South Elgin tough to stop**

By **Jerry Fitzpatrick**

**South Elgin doesn't have a quarterback controversy.**

It's more like a quarterback luxury.

South Elgin is 2-0 in the Upstate Eight Conference under new coach Dragan Teonic, thanks in part to the production of quarterbacks Jakob Johnson and Azxavier Salinas. The seniors alternated series during lopsided victories against West Chicago and East Aurora.

Johnson (6-foot-1, 170-pounds) has started both games at quarterback. Salinas has started at cornerback and played both ways. Each is developing into a dual offensive threat.

Johnson has completed 12 of 22 attempts for 141 yards and thrown 2 interceptions. He has rushed 12 times for 74 yards and 2 touchdowns.

"I can run it if I need to, but I can also stay in the pocket and deliver a throw," Johnson said after Saturday's 47-0 home win over the Tomcats in which he completed 8 of 12 passes for 79 yards.

Salinas (5-11, 180) has thrown for 114 yards and 2 touchdowns on 7-of-10 passing with one interception. He has 6 carries for 95 yards and 3 touchdowns, highlighted by an electrifying 59-yard touchdown run last Saturday. With time winding down in the first half, Salinas dropped back to pass, tucked the ball away, hit the jets, made a sharp cutback 10 yards downfield and outraced the pursuit to the end zone to give South Elgin a 16-point lead.

"I was looking for my wide receivers but I couldn't find any of them," Salinas said. "My offensive line just opened up a big hole for me, and I have to thank my wide receivers for blocking for me."

Combined, the Storm quarterbacks have completed 69 percent of their pass attempts (19 of 32) for 255 yards and 2 touchdowns (3 interceptions). They have rushed 18 times for 169 yards and 5 touchdowns.

"Salinas is doing some good things in the pass game and, obviously, he's got breakaway speed," Teonic said. "I'm really happy with Jakob, too. It's a good deal. Both kids deserve to play and they both bring a slightly different dimension to the game, so we're going to continue to roll with it. It's the right thing to do building depth down the road."

South Elgin plays its first road game of the season Friday against Elgin (0-2, 0-2) at Memorial Field.

Winging it: St. Charles East offensive linemen Justin Hull and Dylan Barrett both weigh in the neighborhood of 290-295 pounds "but they can get up to 300 depending on what wing night looks like," Saints coach Bryce Farquhar said.

Every Wednesday night the Saints linemen get together at team sponsor Spotted Fox in St. Charles to devour all-you-can-eat chicken wings.

"I have the record at 61," Barrett boasted Wednesday. "Hull is trailing at 59 so he's right there. And that's on top of all the carrots and celery and ranch and the drinks they give you."

St. Charles East's linemen don't leave any meat on the bone on Friday nights either.

In last week's 38-7 win at Carmel, the unit of Barrett (6-foot-5), Hull (6-3), center Anthony DiGiulio (6-3, 250), Alex Cox (6-2, 265) and Eduardo Mancera (6-3, 240) paved the way for 559 total yards, the highest single-game total since Farquhar became head coach in 2014.

"Going into a game our mentality is to dominate," Barrett said. "That's our goal every week."

"It's a special group," Farquhar said. "They get along so well and they're such good leaders. They just communicate well. They are able to see a lot of stuff and pick up stuff because they've worked together for so long. Dylan and Hull have been together since we brought Dylan up halfway through his freshman year, so those guys have been working together for three years now. They're doing a great job."

Barrett received his 11th Division I offer this week from Missouri. Considered one of the top junior linemen in the state, he already holds offers from Northwestern, Illinois, Iowa, Purdue, Wisconsin, Northern Illinois and Boston College, among others. He said Wednesday he hopes to make a decision by early spring.

"And if you watch the film, Hull is a phenomenal offensive lineman, too. He's right there with Dylan," Farquhar said. "They've done a great job on the left side."

St. Charles East (2-0) hosts Glenbard North (1-1) Friday in the first DuKane Conference game on the new turf field at Norris Stadium.

They'll be back: Westminster Christian has canceled its 8-man football schedule due to a lack of participation, but the program is not going away for good, coach Mike Gross said Tuesday.

The Elgin school itself requires a minimum of 12 on the roster to play games. That's how many Warriors participated last year when the team finished 4-2. However, several of those players were seniors. Only eight students came out for football this season.

The remaining Warriors continue to practice rather than call it quits. With an eye toward next season, they hope to scrimmage the teams they were supposed to play in 6-man games. Seven of the eight players out for football this year intend to return next year. Gross said enough eighth-graders in the school are interested in the sport to revive the 8-man football team in 2019.

"We should be back at full strength again," he said. "For now, we've got some really quality kids who are going to be the key to keeping the program going."

Rockets not losing sight of goals: Burlington Central is trying to work itself out of a hole following losses to Sycamore (33-6) and St. Francis (35-7).

An early season flu bug isn't making preparations any easier for Friday's trip to defending Kishwaukee River Conference champion Johnsburg (1-1).

"We had four offensive linemen miss practice," Central coach Brian Melvin said Tuesday. "It's just spreading like wildfire right now. That's our adversity this week."

The third-year coach said his team needs to play with a sense of urgency.

"We're staying positive," he said. "I told them on Saturday they are the best 0-2 football team in the state. Our team goals are still attainable. We have seven games left. Yes, we play Johnsburg this week, but, hopefully, we can figure it out."

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## **Boys soccer: Lopez, Elgin edge Larkin**

### **Daily Herald Reports**

Omar Lopez scored 2 goals Wednesday leading Elgin to a 2-1 win over Larkin in Upstate Eight Conference action.

The Maroons improved to 5-1 overall and 2-0 in conference.

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## **Girls volleyball: West Aurora tops Neuqua Valley**

### **Daily Herald Reports**

West Aurora bounced back from a loss to South Elgin on Tuesday by beating Neuqua Valley, 25-23, 25-21.

Kendra Battle led the Blackhawks with 9 kills, 5 digs and 3 blocks. Olivia McPherson added 8 kills, Lauren Greenwood had 8 digs, 2 aces and 2 assists, Jenna Millen set 14 assists, and Kiara McPherson finished with 11 assists.

