

High School Sports

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Just another day at Grant Field for coach

Rozumek

Gary Fitz



Salem quarterback Adam Rozumek looks for a lane as he is chased by the Haverhill defense (8-left there is no eight on the roster I have) and 85=Sean Alfonsi late in the 2nd quarter on Thursday, November 28, 1996. (E-T photo/Judy Emmert)

The last time Salem High School won a football championship, Adam Rozumek played a key role in the victory, tossing a pair of touchdown passes in a 13-7 victory over Londonderry in the 1995 Division II title game.

The Rozumek name is big in the Salem-Lawrence (Mass.) area. His uncle, David Rozumek, who grew up just over the border in Lawrence, is Salem's athletic director – and a former Kansas City Chiefs linebacker who was a collegiate standout at the University of New Hampshire.

Adam Rozumek will be back at Grant Field today, no doubt shaking hands with Salem coach Jack Gati, who is in his 16th year guiding the Blue Devils, along with close friend and former teammate Matt Barry, who is on the coaching staff.

But Rozumek will be on the Nashua High School North sideline. He's in his fifth season on the Titans coaching staff, this year handling defensive backs.

His Salem ties helped land Rozumek at Nashua North. L. Patrick Corbin, executive director of the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association, was the principal at North when Rozumek was hired as a **business teacher**. Corbin was the principal at Salem when the Blue Devils won the 1995 title.

Former Salem coach Jeff Collins, now the principal at Portsmouth High School, was also on the North staff when Rozumek was hired.

“He (Collins) asked me if I’d be interested in coaching here,” Rozumek said. “I met with Jason (Robie) and here we are, five years later.”

Going against Salem is always a little different. Rozumek knows most of the coaching staff, many of whom were there when he was a player. He talks to his uncle, who coached him from Pop Warner through high school, frequently.

“My own father was more of a baseball, hockey guy,” Rozumek said. “So I played football for my uncle. He was the defensive coordinator at Salem when I played.”

He’s seen the Salem offense evolve from the Straight T to incorporate elements of the Double wing and Wing T.

“The scheme hasn’t really changed that much,” Rozumek said. “They’ve definitely opened things up over the years, depending on the talent they’ve had to work with.”

Gati isn’t surprised to see Rozumek coaching.

“He was a very heady player when we had him,” Gati said. “He had a real grasp of the game, early on.”

Rozumek said it was a little strange at first returning to Salem as an opposing coach, but it’s developed into a rivalry with his friends on the Salem staff.

As for the current Salem team, which Rozumek will try to defend today, he said it’s among the most explosive Salem teams he’s seen.

But he thinks his own 1995 team belongs in the discussion. “We had three runners who were all close to 1,000 yards,” said Rozumek of the 1995 team, which averaged 34.4 points per game.

“We were very explosive on both sides of the ball.”

The 30-year-old Rozumek said he’d like to be a head coach someday, but doesn’t think he’s ready yet.

In the meantime he’s become an important member of the Nashua High School North staff, especially when they are preparing to play Salem.

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