

Undefeated Temple, Pitt in Keystone Clash

Written by Pat Clifton

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2-0 Temple and 2-0 Pitt meet Saturday in Bridgeport, Pa. for a key league match. The winner instantly becomes the favorite to win the league, while the loser falls behind the eight ball.

For Pitt, they're already having a successful season. The Panthers moved up from DII over the summer, and they've knocked off two veteran DI-AA teams in Millersville and St. Joe's. Beat the Owls, and they're one step closer to reaching the DI-AA playoffs a year after missing the DII national postseason.

Temple, on the other hand, is trying to get back to the DI-AA playoffs for the second time in three years. Last season, they dropped just one league match and tied another to miss the postseason.

"It got a lot of underclassmen a lot of time, and that St. Joe's game left a nice sour taste in their mouths," Temple coach John Sciotto said of last season.

Leading the Owls this year is No. 8 Chase Haberstroh.

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“He really should get All American looks,” said Sciotto. “He’s a monster. He’s all over the field, makes every tackle, just quick, dynamic, moves the ball well, just does everything right. The only problem he’ll have is the fact that he’s not wearing a Penn State or Cal or Army jersey.”

Emerging as a try scorer is the speedy Devin Sugg.

“We have a very dynamic backline,” said Sciotto. “(Sugg) was probably one of the fastest guys, I’ll say, in the CRC last year. He’s scored a couple of nice tries already. He has some nice speed.”

Temple’s done well, too, to start 2-0, but the Pitt game is the front end of a three-game gauntlet for the Owls.

“I feel very confident with the team we have right now, but we have three big challenges over the next three weeks, we have Pitt, Penn State and St. Joe’s,” said Sciotto. “After those three games I think will be a better determining factor if we are playing to the capacity I think we can play at.”