



## Little Big Men

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You know they're coming but, in a way, they don't look so imposing when they're lined up still in the backfield.

That's the calm before the storm.

In an instant, Bishop Dwenger's Remound Wright bursts through the slightest hole created by his massive offensive line. In an instant, Bishop Luers' Kenny Mullen has made a cut, and left a trail of falling, grasping defenders in his wake. In an instant, Leo's Connor Kacsor has rolled around the end and turned on afterburners no one thought the small-school kid could possess.

Three running backs.

Three different schools.

Three instant impacts.

It doesn't matter whether they look imposing standing still, where their size is average among football players. Wright is 5-foot-9, 205 pounds. Mullen is 5-10, 175. Kacsor is 6-foot, 200.

They're not standing still for long.

"The game has changed since the days when old guys like us played," Dwenger coach Chris Svarczkopf said. "It's gone from a game of power to a game of speed and agility. You want to get the ball offensively to the players who have that kind of speed and agility."

Dwenger turns to Wright, Luers turns to Mullen and Leo turns to Kacsor. Everyone else turns to watch.

Speed and agility equal individual impact. Individual impact leads to team wins. No teams are likely to log the wins any faster this season than Dwenger, Luers and Leo.

Not only do these players have talent in common, but they have some training background, too. All three have worked to hone their games with former Luers and University of Saint Francis standout Michael Ledo at Athletes With Purpose (AWP). Wright and Mullen have worked with AWP since eighth grade. Kacsor has been with AWP for the last year.

Anyone who's met Ledo knows he's passionate about training athletes and passionate about football.

He gushes over the impact these three can have this high school season.

Wright, who will continue his career at Stanford University, was a one-man wrecking crew for Dwenger last season. He rushed for 2,049 yards and scored 36 touchdowns. And he scored from everywhere, including a pair of catches, a pair of punt returns, a pair of interceptions and a kickoff return.

Maybe Wright's legs stopped moving at some point. Maybe.

"Remound is the best running back I've ever worked with," Ledo said. "He has the full package. Strength. Balance. His footwork is superior. He would be able to go anywhere to play running back, and he'd have better footwork than anybody in the country."

Wright has lined up at running back from the time he was barely big enough to carry the ball.

“Since you don’t have God-given size, you have to work on your speed, your explosion, stuff that makes you better than other people,” Wright said. “It’s paying attention to the little details.”

Wright isn’t quite as fast as Mullen or Kacsor – who both run in the high 4.4s in the 40-yard dash, Ledo said – but his ability to use power, speed and balance sets him apart. Wright is also very strong as a receiver out of the backfield.

“He has great speed and agility, yet he has the power to block and run over a tackler at the same time,” Svarczkopf said. “You don’t see that very often.”

Mullen, meanwhile, is a blur. He’s a threat to score from anywhere, anytime. He’s headed to Indiana University as a defensive back, but he can hardly be pigeonholed into one position. Mullen rushed for nearly 1,100 yards and 30 touchdowns last season, and also caught 21 passes for 251 yards.

“Kenny is just a sparkplug,” Ledo said. “He’s that guy, when you think of secondary-wise, he could play very early at IU. As a running back, he’s just explosive. He’s a Devin Hester kind of guy, that guy who can change a game with a big play.”

Mullen has added about 15 pounds to his frame since last season, but he still doesn’t look overly imposing to defenders – until he has the ball and they’re in futile pursuit.

“I’m strong enough to make things happen now,” Mullen said. “I’m getting stronger and keeping the same speed and stuff like that. A lot of players on our team have done the same, so I think we can be very dynamic and very special as a team.”

Kacsor is the fastest of the three running backs, Ledo said, and is the fastest athlete currently working with AWP. He rushed for 1,605 yards and 18 touchdowns last year, and Leo coach Jared Sauder said he believes Kacsor is noticeably more powerful now.

“As a sophomore, he was 170 pounds, so he’s put on a lot of strength,” Sauder said. “He’s always been a pretty hard runner and when he breaks free, he can get away real quick.”

Ledo said Kacsor can still use some work on his balance and footwork to become more effective as a running back, but says he expects him to have a great season and to get some smaller college scholarship offers.

“He’s blazing fast and very deceptive,” Ledo said. “He’s a sharp kid. He runs hard. He’s raw, but he’s good.”

Kacsor said his work with AWP has made a difference in all phases of his game, which can only be good for Leo.

“I feel a lot stronger and a lot quicker from working out the whole summer,” Kacsor said. “I’m really looking forward to using my added strength.”

Those who appreciate strong running backs will love watching Wright, Mullen and Kacsor in action.

The only ones leaving the stadium unhappy will be those defenses wondering what just hit them.

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– Bishop Dwenger coach Chris Svarczkopf