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## 'One of the best linemen we have ever had'

By RYAN LEMAY Staff Writer  
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Mason Imbt runs up the field during last week's Northern Tier League Large School showdown against Athens.  
Review Photo/Matt Patton

Linemen are often unappreciated in football. Headlines go to the quarterbacks, receivers or running backs, but for the Troy High School football program, linemen are the star of the show and senior captain Mason Imbt is the leader of the linemen group.

"Mason is a four-year starter and has won lineman of the year a few times," Troy head coach Jim Smith said. "He also won player of the year which is unheard of for a lineman. He is quite honestly one of the best linemen we have ever had. He is big, strong, has a great work ethic, is a team leader, and he comes from a football family."

Imbt started playing football in kindergarten and always being one of the largest players on the field made him gravitate towards becoming a lineman.

Imbt blossomed into one of the best linemen in the region during the past three seasons and the senior standout plans on pursuing football at the next level.

"Playing football is the dream and whoever gets me is going to get a hard worker and a good player," Imbt said. "I want to pass on as much as I can to the kids and have some fun playing football."

Smith described Imbt as a natural born leader and a great human being who helps instill wisdom upon the younger players on the team.

“He is a great leader, a great teacher and on multiple occasions I have had coaches from opposing schools call me and they just wanted to tell me what kind of character Mason Imbt had,” Smith said. “He is a guy that will help the opponent up, smack them on the behind, and he just has a great attitude about life.”

In 2019, Imbt’s brother Jack committed to play Division I football for Marist. Both Imbt brothers were part of the 2019 team that won its first NTL title since 1988 and the team also broke a school record for 4,000 rushing yards.

Troy prides itself on being a team focused on boasting a strong line on both fronts.

“For 10 years we probably haven’t averaged more than three to five passes a game,” Smith said. “Our winning percentage in the NTL is very high and our focus is our linemen. We tell our backs we are nothing without them and their yards are our line’s yards and the guys that are scoring touchdowns know that it is not about them.”

“This day and age is hard to get big kids out to play but the kids here know that our focus is not on the wide receivers, it is not on the quarterbacks, it is not running backs, so guys are excited to be a focal point in a day and age where linemen are virtually non-existent,” Smith added.

Coach Smith believes that Imbt will succeed at the next level. The pandemic limited what Imbt could do in the college search process last year, but this past summer Imbt was all over the country visiting Division I, FCS, and Division II schools.

“You see kids that are proud of 10 pancake blocks that they had in the season. To watch Mason have 10 pancake blocks in a quarter like for three seasons is a pretty special thing,” Smith said. “You will see him driving big people to safeties and he just has fun doing that and he knows that he still has to prove it at the next level but he has given himself an opportunity with a lot of hard work to have a chance to play at the next level.”

Smith will remember Imbt as a leader, on the field, off the field, and in the weight room. Imbt plays a crucial role on the field and in helping develop the young players — and he has an opportunity to finish his high school career on a high note.

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