



## Golden Season, Silver Anniversary

The scoreboards at the old Giants Stadium told the shortest version of the story: Prep 26, Bergen Catholic 24. When Coach Rich Hansen had convened his rising seniors the previous spring, the team leaders agreed their goal for '94 was straightforward, if lofty: a state title and a perfect 11-0 record. And before 22,000 witnesses at the Meadowlands, they had made good. This fall marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Prep football's 1994 state championship, which saw the undefeated Marauders end nationally-ranked (and favored) Bergen's three-year reign as state champions. The team finished the campaign ranked #1 in New Jersey and #6 in the nation.

The stingy "sea of maroon" defense had held its nine regular-season opponents to a total of 34 points, including a 14-7 win over Hoboken that marked the Red Wings' only loss. In the state final, stout defensive work helped Prep to open a 12-3 gap in the first half, handing Bergen its first halftime deficit of the year. The lead would hold despite two late Bergen scoring drives, and Prep's (and Coach Hansen's) second state title in six years was secure. With 11 wins, the first undefeated Prep Football squad since 1958 had set a new program record for wins in a season.

Some faces in the Will Cofunk photo above, which appeared in the Spring '95 *Prep Magazine* are still familiar around Prep, age notwithstanding. Aside from Coach Hansen (accepting the trophy), who has since led Prep to two more state titles, then-president Jim Keenan, S.J. (second from right) remains a fixture at various Prep events, and team co-captain Anthony Verdi, '95 (#65, kneeling) is now chair of Prep's History and Social Sciences department. ✕



Linebacker Damien Locricchio, '95 (#56) was one of two first team all-state selections for the 1994 season, along with tackle Bill "Bubba" O'Donnell, '95. Damien is the brother of Anthony Locricchio, '96, Prep's dean of student life, and the son of Maryphyllis Locricchio, assistant to the president.