



## Former Pine-Richland quarterback Kevin McCabe enters TV booth for Friday night broadcasts

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Kevin McCabe's playing days are well behind him, but the former Pine-Richland star quarterback is still a natural when it comes to football talk. After all, McCabe's post-PR football life took him all over the place — college stops at Virginia and California University of Pennsylvania, a two-month stint with the Steelers, a couple years in the Arena Football League and even a recent coaching gig at Duquesne. He has an internal treasure trove of football knowledge to pull from.

This fall, however, McCabe will be taking his talents to the TV booth — serving as the new color commentating voice for Friday Night Rivals WPIAL football broadcasts on 22 the Point! Pittsburgh.

“Everybody's kind of communicated that if you're good at that, then you'll be good at this job,” said McCabe, who graduated from Pine-Richland in 2003. “I'm just going into it trying to have a good conversation about the game. Looking forward to being a part of it and seeing where it takes me.”

The man McCabe is replacing just so happens to be a fellow WPIAL standout himself: Mike McMahan, who starred at North Allegheny in the late '90s before playing in the NFL with the Detroit Lions and Philadelphia Eagles. McMahan held the color commentating role for the past few years, but took an assistant position on new Pine-Richland coach Jon LeDonne's staff this past offseason. So now, when North Allegheny faces Pine-Richland on Sept. 30 in a highly-contested live TV matchup, McMahan and McCabe will both be involved — just in different capacities.

“It's not even like [McMahan] can banter about his alma mater since he'll be coaching against them,” said McCabe with a laugh. “I'll have to remain

neutral though, which is going to be a little challenging because naturally I'm animated. You try to have a neutral stance when you watch a game, but I'll have to be a little bit more objective with my viewing. Ultimately, with the outcome, I'll just have to call it for what it is."

The orchestrator behind McCabe's TV debut has WPIAL roots as well. After news broke that McMahon was joining the Pine-Richland staff, an old high school teammate of McCabe came calling.

"The opportunity itself actually came through Neil Walker," said McCabe. "Whenever Mike took the job on LeDonne's staff, Neil called me and just asked if I had any interest in doing it. I had said yes, and he relayed the word back to the production company that manages the games. I went down to the station to try a practice live-read and we made it happen."

McCabe and Walker attended Catholic grade school at St. Alphonsus in Wexford together and later developed into quite the high school passing combo for Pine-Richland. As a senior, McCabe completed 123 of 196 passes for 2,179 yards and 30 touchdowns with Walker among his favorite targets, leading a 12-0 PR team to the WPIAL Class 3A championship game against Paul Posluszny (Penn State, NFL) and Hopewell. The Rams fell short in the final minutes of that game, but McCabe still finished with more than 4,300 passing yards and 51 touchdowns for his high school career.

"It was an interesting time for the Pine-Richland program," McCabe said. "Before I got there, they had made the WPIAL playoffs just once over the past 25 years. But when I was a freshman, they made the playoffs. Then, my sophomore and junior year when I started, we made the playoffs and got it rolling a little bit. And then my senior year, that was the first year we got really good. We started really scoring and beating teams to the point where we were sitting out the third and fourth quarters, which was new to us. We had a mentality that we wanted to build something at Pine."

McCabe chose to play college football at Virginia over the likes of Notre Dame, Michigan, LSU and Georgia Tech. Walker, one year younger, later turned down several Division I football offers to play baseball. He was selected by the Pirates with the 11th overall pick of the 2004 MLB draft before carving out, as many in Pittsburgh know, a highly successful MLB career. Walker played 12 seasons in the majors with the Pirates (2009-2015), Mets (2016-17), Brewers (2017), Yankees (2018), Marlins (2019) and Phillies (2020). In 1,306 career games, he produced a .267 batting average, 238 doubles, 22 triples, 149 home runs and 609 RBIs.

Nowadays, Walker dabbles in TV as the newest member of the Pirates' broadcast team. Soon McCabe will be joining him in a TV booth of his own.

"My co-host Dan Watson, everybody raves about how professional and great he is," McCabe said. "So he's kind of the star quarterback of the team and I'll be here to provide support."

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