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**AIA FEATURE STORY** By: Don Ketchum

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## **INMAN SET TO LEAD YUMA CATHOLIC**

PHOENIX, AZ (November 13, 2008) – Matt Inman has played in some big football games before, but none like this.

The quarterback will lead Yuma Catholic (10-1) against defending champion St. Johns (11-0) on Friday night in a Class 2A quarterfinal game.

The 6-foot, 180-pound senior has emerged as one of the top signal-callers, regardless of classification, and will do everything he can to extend the Shamrocks' season at least one more week.

He enters the game as the state's leading passer with 3,249 yards, 41 touchdowns and only three interceptions. He also has rushed for 430 yards and six TDs.

It is a long trip, about seven or eight hours – about twice as long as it is from Yuma to San Diego. But that is OK with Inman, given what is at stake.

“We have a lot of respect for them. They're undefeated, the defending champs, the best team in the state. But we are going to try to prepare for them in every way possible.”

St. Johns features running back Shad Bride, who as a junior was The Arizona Republic's Small School Player of the Year in 2007 for classes 3A through 1A.

Yuma Catholic had a strong season in 2007 and had quite a few players returning this season.

“There were a lot of expectations for us this season. If we execute, take care of business, we are capable of beating anybody.”

The only blemish is a one-point loss to Phoenix Christian.

Yuma Catholic coach Rhett Stallworth isn't sure what he would do without Inman leading the way.

“He's not the biggest guy around, but bar-none, he is one of the most competitive,” Stallworth said. “He is competitive, no matter what the game is. He takes it to heart.”

Said Inman: “It's our goal to win a state championship. It's important for Yuma Catholic and important for the city of Yuma.”

Inman admits it is tempting to run with the ball, but worked hard during the off-season to have more patience and remain in the pocket.

He has been working with quarterback coach Michael Cooley, a former Yuma Catholic quarterback.

“My footwork has really improved,” said Inman, who hopes to have a college commitment by the end of December.

When Inman steps in to take the snap from center, he is the switch. The game's electricity runs through him.

"You have got control of everything on the field. The ball is in your hands," he said.

Does Stallworth give Inman the chance to improvise on occasion?

"It's always an option, if I see something that might benefit us when we're out there. We've known each other awhile now and I think the trust is built into that," Inman said.

"It's my job to make the plays when we really need one. That's what I try to do."

**Have a Story Idea:**

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