

This marks the 60-year anniversary of not only a third straight Section 2 championship for Franklin, but the school's first first team all-stater in football.

Paul Beals, a 5-10, 170-pound guard, was named to the Associated Press all-state first team in 1960.

And, said Franklin coach Jim McCullough, "They (the voters) couldn't have waited for a better boy."

Two teammates were picked to the AP squad: Tackle Ron "The Rock" Baughman was named to the third team and center Vince Witherup received an honorable mention.

McCullough called the three along with tackle Tom Sloss and guard Walt Miller "possibly the best high school line in the state."

All five were named to the Section 2 first team and allowed the Knights to produce three straight games in which two running backs gained 100 yards or more.

Fred Yetka (119 yards) and quarterback Bill Beith (109) first did it against Meadville. Then it was Jack "The Slasher" Schosser (221) and Yetka (176) performing the feat against Corry. The Knights rolled up 381 yards rushing against the Beavers, prompting McCullough to declare, "(That) was probably the greatest game I've ever seen by a high school line." And it should be noted that George Case was playing in place of Sloss at tackle that game.

Schosser (176) and Yetka (119) did it again the next week against Ford City. Schosser averaged 120 yards in Franklin's eight games.

Considered by many to be the best football player in Section 2, Beals was by far the smallest player on the AP's first team line.

And possibly the most unusual.

He was an A student -- tops in his class of 250 who had his eye on Penn State and scholarship feelers from Cornell, Columbia, Dartmouth and Dayton.

The son of Dr. and Mrs. Norman K. Beals of Miller Park, Beals was also an accomplished violinist and pianist.

His most famous teammate on the first team was Beaver Falls' Joe Namath, who shared quarterback with Fred Mazurek, a future star at Pitt. Also on that team was running back Cosmo Iacavazzi who later starred for Princeton.

Only one vote separated Namath and Mazurek in the voting.

One of Baughman's teammates on the third team was Erie Tech's Fred Biletnikoff, later to become a Hall of Fame receiver for the Oakland Raiders. Biletnikoff was picked as a running back.

Getting back to the 1960 Knights. They opened the season with a 12-6 loss to Hickory, but yielded only four more touchdowns the rest of the way. Included were shutout routs of Warren (41-0), Oil City (33-0) and Titusville (39-0).

Six of the last seven opponents failed to gain 100 yards against the defense, which allowed 106 yards per game.

Said Ford City coach Walt Charley after his WPIAL team lost to Franklin, 34-6, "I haven't seen a team like that for many years. Their big line just rolled over us."

Other memorable moments of that campaign:

-- QB Don "The Rifleman" Harbaugh threw three TD passes against Warren. They went to Jimmy Brown for 44 yards, John McMichael for 15 and Bill Beebe for 40. Schosser averaged 8.5 yards per carry.

-- On one series against Meadville, Beals, playing middle linebacker, knocked down a pass, broke up another and made an interception on the third play. An earlier INT by Fred Bradish set up a Franklin TD.

-- Yetka's 5-yard run, the first of two touchdowns, snapped a 7-7 fourth-quarter tie against Grove City. He finished the season with 13 TDs.

-- The Knights scored on two returns -- a 48-yard interception by Rick Ditzenberger and an 18-yard fumble recovery by Miller -- against Oil City. Harbaugh also scored a touchdown, passed for another and kicked three extra points against the Oilers

In the end, Franklin won the mythical District 10 title and received a trophy for it.

The Knights were also in the midst of a 15-game winning and an 18-game unbeaten streak in Section 2. Their last league loss was to Corry in 1958, and there was a tie with the Beavers in 1961, when Franklin won/shared a fourth straight S-2 title.

Warren ended the winning/unbeaten streak in the opening game of the 1962 season, but this four-year era was the beginning of big things to come over 34 years -- a 194-117-12 record with three other unbeaten teams from 1958-92.