



Carbone's Corner

By Joe Carbone

At 5-9, 160 pounds, Steve Scafa isn't considered big, physically, by baseball standards. But the senior second baseman doesn't come close to falling short when you measure his importance on St. John's University's nationally-ranked team.

"Steve is the guy who gets us going offensively with his hitting and base-stealing ability," said pitcher John Franco.

Scafa, who has hit around .300 all season while leading the team in walks (29), would make Lou Brock proud of his base-stealing abilities. Steve has swiped at least one in 20 games and has been caught only twice in 31 attempts.

"This season everything seems to be going my way," says Scafa. "My legs are in much better shape than last season (only 18 stolen bases) and I'm getting the good jumps on the pitchers."

Russo feels that experience has helped Scafa more than anything else.

"Steve has good speed and has learned to study the pitchers well," explained the coach. "He can get things going for us quickly and you just love to have players like that."

Scafa's ability to get on base is a main season Redman slugger Karl Komaythy has been swinging a hot bat.

"One of the reasons why Karl has driven in so many runs is because Steve is usually in scoring position when he comes up to bat," continued Russo. "The pitchers are throwing Karl more fastballs than they'd like to because they have to worry about Steve stealing on them."

Komaythy agrees with his coach.

"Having Steve on the basepaths when I'm up guarantees me that I'll see more fastballs than usual," said Komaythy. "Steve is important to this team not only on offense but also the field."

Scafa considers himself a sparkplug but is quick to point out that no one man has put the Redmen among the nation's elite.

"This team is just so solid all-around," concluded Scafa. "I like to think of myself as an important contributor, but I'm just one of the many whose goal is to win the College World Series."