



### PAUL (BABE) PARENTI

"Football builds character, makes men out of boys" is a philosophy chided by modern-day critics. But for the man who boasts the longest coaching career in New Mexico, it was a motto never tampered with in his 40 years as all-everything mentor at St. Mary High School . . .

What started as "a helping hand for two weeks" in 1927, ended in 1967 when the school on Seventh Street closed its doors . . . But in that 40-year span, Babe Parenti had turned his "boys" into giants as the Cougars compiled a 171-159 football record against state powers enrolling five times as many students . . . St. Mary basketball quints achieved over



500 triumphs, and Cougar baseball clubs passed the 400-win mark; thrice won the State diamond crown . . . Parenti even ventured into the strangeness of boxing and ice hockey, not to mention track, tennis, golf . . . Add 'em all up, and it results in over 1200 wins . . .

Today's computerized coaching society finds it hard to believe that one man could reach such heights with a "sound fundamentals, hard work and a pat on the back" approach . . . But his "kids" believed then and in 1968 at the Babe's giant retirement banquet as tears flowed freely, shamelessly, and when the Archbishop Lamy Medallion was bestowed by the Catholic Archdiocese after Parenti's coaching chores at St. Pius ended . . .

He learned his football under the late F.M. (Tony) Wilson (Hall-of-Famer last year) at Albuquerque High as an end in the early 1920s . . . He observed closely the coaching of UNM football greats Gwinn Henry, Roy Johnson (Hall-of-Famer) and Ted Shipkey, then turned their principles into Cougar successes . . .

His yesteryear stars shine in today's business world. But the brightest light of all belongs to the man in the Navy blue baseball cap . . .