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[Grand Island's Blocho making a name for himself](#)

Viking back Danny Blocho carving path outside of brother's shadow

By MIKE MEILER Niagara Gazette

Niagara Gazette — Anyone familiar with high school sports on Grand Island probably knows the Blocho family name.

Mike Blocho may be the first name that comes to mind. The two-sport star dominated on the football and lacrosse fields, achieving all-state status in both sports in 2003, and eventually played Division I lacrosse at Canisius.

But Danny Blocho, Mike's younger sibling, is stepping out of his brother's shadow and right back into his shoes, leading this year's Grand Island football team to a 4-0 start. And just like his older brother, Danny's talents translate to lacrosse, where the senior hopes to play collegiately.

Grand Island head coach Dean Santorio, who instructed both players, said the similarities stop with the last name.

"They're totally different runners," Santorio said. "Mike was one of the quickest and shiftest players we've ever had come through here, and he was definitely smaller than Danny. Danny doesn't have the same breakaway speed, but he's got more size and might be a little tougher to bring down. They both have very good vision, though, and that allows them to see the hole quicker and gain a few extra yards."

Blocho is one of a plethora of Grand Island backs that have contributed to the team's hot start. Joining him are Mitch Fachko, T.J. Acker and Anthony Zogaria, who plays fullback. The quartet is getting reinforcements, too, with Max Oursler returning last week and last year's starter, Paul Sukmanowski, set to return to action this week from injury.

"It's nice right now because it's clicking that we all have different responsibilities," Blocho said. "None of us are really similar runners and we all can do different things out there."

"I like that we've been able to give our starting running back breaks," Santorio added. "Mitch Fachko has been a big surprise and has done a fantastic job so far. (Acker) is a great athlete, but we've had some concerns with ball security or you might even see more of him."

"(Zogaria) is huge for us in short yardage because the other team knows he's a threat they have to prepare for. Not only is he a tough kid, but he understands the game as well as anyone I've coached."

The group has been central to the team's early success, and Blocho said they'll have to keep up their play as the team piles up wins.

"It feels great (starting 4-0), especially after starting 0-3 last year," Blocho said, "but we still have to take it one week at a time. Right now, we're focused on (Williamsville North), next week it'll be Niagara-Wheatfield, and after that it'll be McKinley. We have to stay focused on who we're playing this week and not worry about our record."