



A VERY
Good Year



SADDLEBACK
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Chapter 1

Clay was on his way to lunch. He thought about the next football game. It was on Friday night. Carter High would play Glen High.

Clay was the starting quarterback.

Clay saw Dan. Dan was at his locker.

Dan said, "Wait, Clay. I will walk to lunch with you."

Clay stopped walking. He waited for Dan.

Clay and Dan were good friends now. But they hadn't been good friends last year.

Dan put his books in his locker. Then

he came over to Clay. They walked down the hall.

Dan said, "I can hardly wait for Friday night to come."

Dan was on the football team too. He was a running back. He was also the back-up quarterback.

Dan had wanted the job as starting quarterback last year. But Clay had gotten it. Dan had helped him get it.

Clay was new to the school last year. And he didn't know all of the Carter High plays.

Coach Grant asked Dan to help Clay learn some of the plays. Dan didn't want to help Clay. But he did help Clay. Dan's help got Clay the job.

Dan said, "I hope we beat Glen High. But Glen High has a good team. And I am not sure we can beat them. What do you think?"

Clay said, "We can beat them. I feel good about this year. I think we will win all of our games. We will even win the Hillman game. It won't be easy. But I think we will be number one in the state this year."

Clay also thought he might make the All-State team.

Dan said, "I hope we will be number one. We haven't lost a game so far. But I am not sure we can beat Glen High and Hillman High."

"Don't worry, Dan. We will beat them," Clay said.

"I sure hope you are right," Dan said.

Clay saw Kim. She was walking down the hall.

Clay asked Kim for a date last year, but she wouldn't date him.

Kim smiled at Clay.

She said, "Hi, Clay."

“Hi,” Clay said.

And he smiled back at Kim.

Was Kim just being friendly? Or did she want to date him now?

Clay wished he knew. He still wanted to date Kim.

Clay had seen Kim only a few times this year. But she had spoken to him each time. He was always on his way to class or to lunch. So he didn’t have time to talk to her. Clay wished Kim had lunch when he did. Then he might be able to talk to her in the lunch line.

Clay could call her at home, but he wouldn’t do that. Not after she turned him down for a date last year.

“Maybe Kim wants to date you,” Dan said.

“Maybe,” Clay said.

Clay could ask Kim for a date. And then he would know for sure. But he

wouldn't ask her unless he thought she might say yes.

Clay asked, "Does Kim have a boyfriend?"

"I don't know. Why? Do you want to date her?" Dan asked.

"Maybe," Clay said.

"I will ask Eve. Maybe she will know. Eve will find out for you. She is on the volleyball team, and Kim is on the team too," Dan said.

Eve was Dan's girlfriend.

"Don't tell Eve I want to know," Clay said.

Dan laughed.

Then he said, "You know I have to tell her that, or she might think I want to date Kim. But I will tell her not to tell Kim that you want to know."

Dan was a good friend. Clay was glad he and Dan were friends now.



Chapter 2

It was Thursday. Clay, Kirk, and Dan were at football practice. Dan and Kirk had just walked out on the field.

Kirk was Dan's best friend. Kirk was on the tennis team. But Kirk also helped with the football team.

Dan ran over to Clay.

Dan said, "I asked Eve about Kim. She said Kim doesn't have a boyfriend now."

Clay was glad to hear that.

"Thanks for finding out for me," Clay said.

"Sure. See you later," Dan said.

Dan ran over to talk to Kirk. And

Hank ran over to talk to Clay.

Hank was the number three quarterback. It was Hank's first year on the team. He hoped to be the starting quarterback next year. He told Clay that on the first day of practice.

Hank said, "I can hardly wait until tomorrow night. Glen High has a good team. I know it will be hard to beat them. And I am only the number three quarterback. But do you think Coach Grant will let me play?"

Clay knew Hank wanted him to say yes. But he wasn't going to lie to Hank. It wouldn't be fair to Hank.

Clay said, "He might let you play. But we will have to score a lot of points first."

"I sure hope we score a lot. And that isn't just because I want to play. I want to win too," Hank said.

Coach Grant blew his whistle.

Then Coach Grant said, "Get started on your exercises. We have a lot to do today."

The boys did their exercises. Then Clay, Dan, and Hank practiced passing for a little while.

Clay passed well. But he often passed well. Dan passed better than last year. But Hank didn't pass well.

Coach Grant blew his whistle again.

He said, "We will play a game first. Then we will talk about the Glen High team."

The boys started to play a game. Clay passed well. Dan ran well. The team quickly scored a touchdown.

"Good job, boys," Coach Grant said.

The team scored two more touchdowns. Then the coach took Clay out. Dan was now the quarterback. Dan helped the team score two more touchdowns.

Then the coach let Hank play. But

Hank didn't play well. And the team didn't score any more points.

Coach Grant said, "Time to stop. We need to talk about Glen High."

Coach Grant talked about the good runner on the Glen High team. Then he talked some more about the team.

Carter High had worked on some new plays. Coach Grant talked about the new plays too.

Then he said, "Get to bed early tonight. Get a lot of rest. I want you to be in good shape for the game. The Glen High team will be hard to beat. But you can beat them."

All of the boys cheered.

Then Coach Grant said, "Be ready to play on Friday night. I plan on us being number one in the state this year."

All of the boys cheered again. They all wanted to be number one too.



CARTER HIGH[®]

SENIOR YEAR

Be Fair
It Does Matter
Just Be Yourself
The Last Time
One More Chance

Someone to Count On
Time to Move On
A Very Good Year
Worst Year Ever
The Wrong Way

Clay is the starting quarterback for the Carter High football team. He works hard to get what he wants. Clay wants to date Kim, but she turned him down last year. When Clay helps Hank with his passes, he finds out that Kim studies with Hank's sister. It could be the start of a very good year.



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