

At the Quarterback Factory, Maryland athletes have a clear goal: ‘See the DMV take over college football’



By KYLE J. ANDREWS

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Saint Frances quarterback John Griffith passes during a game against IMG Academy at Morgan State's Hughes Memorial Stadium Fri., Oct. 18, 2019. (Karl Merton Ferron / Baltimore Sun)

Quarterbacks are creatures of habit. They wake up, train their arms, watch film and consult with their teammates on a daily basis.

For 21 years, a business in Crofton has helped Maryland quarterbacks refine those habits.

The Quarterback Factory has helped prepare the next wave of Maryland passers for college and beyond.

Chris Baucia is the founder of the organization. He has coached the likes of Kevin Hogan (Gonzaga/Stanford), Kurt Rawlings (John Carroll/Yale), Kasim Hill (St. John's/Maryland/Tennessee) and is currently coaching five-star quarterback Caleb Williams (Gonzaga), the nation's No. 1 dual-threat recruit [who's narrowed his list of college choices](#) to LSU, Oklahoma and Maryland.



Former Maryland quarterback Kasim Hill worked with Chris Baucia, left, at the Quarterback Factory. (Bill Wagner / Capital Gazette)

“It’s been a lot of good quarterbacks over the years that have played in the Baltimore area and luckily, I’ve coached some — I coach at St. Frances and I coached at Gilman before that,” Baucia said. “We’ve had some good ones that have come since I’ve been there in 2011 until the present. We’ve been fortunate enough every year to have a Division I kid. You’ve got places like [Archbishop] Spalding, who have produced three consecutive Naval Academy guys out of their place — the last one being Jayden Umbarger last year.

“It really depends a lot on their situation and how they’re used and the level of competition that they play means a lot too. I think the Baltimore area has a lot of good football in it.”

Baucia serves as the offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at St. Frances. He was the architect of quarterback John Griffith’s efficient sophomore season when Griffith completed 99 of 149 passes (66.44%) with 1,523 yards, 18 touchdowns and just four interceptions. Griffith’s work on the field as a sophomore has enticed Kentucky, LSU, UMass, Michigan and Tennessee to offer scholarships.

The 6-foot-2, 206-pound rising junior is currently ranked the 17th-best pro-style quarterback of the 2022 class, along with being the 14th-ranked player in Maryland and a three-star prospect, per [247 Sports](#). He’s worked with Baucia since the third grade — citing Baucia’s time at Gilman and heavy knowledge of the game as a guiding light in his performance. Griffith said Baucia is “one of the top guys in the nation” and enjoys training with another star like Williams.

“Caleb — me and him both have been going to him [Baucia], ever since we were younger,” Griffith said. “He [Williams] has always been a guy that I’ve looked up to.”

Baucia also is working with Scott Smith III of St. Paul’s, Noah Brannock of Calvert Hall and several other Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association quarterbacks. Under Baucia’s tutelage, Smith has received interest from Columbia, Fordham, Holy Cross, Morgan State, VMI and Yale and continues to craft his game. Smith passed for 1,703 passing yards, 18 touchdowns and eight interceptions in his junior season.

The St. Paul’s quarterback marveled at the discipline and expectation of excellence that Baucia demands of his quarterbacks, specifically Griffith.

“When I first went in there, he was the one that I knew that he was a role model for me and watching his footwork — he had a really quick release and mine was slower at the time,” Smith said. “I was just watching every single rep. I would try to get in his group to see if I would make up time with it. [I liked] how Quarterback Factory was super consistent every week.”

Brannock has been training with Quarterback Factory for six seasons since he played recreational football. The rising sophomore credits Baucia and the rest of the coaching staff for adding to his ability “inside the pocket and outside” and being able to deliver passes under duress. Brannock made it to Calvert Hall’s varsity team in his freshman season and saw limited action behind starter Amir Jenkins, passing for 112 yards, two touchdowns and three interceptions.

“I’ve been training with Scott Smith a lot, Preston Howard [McDonogh] — it’s been great working with them — and Austin Tutas [Archbishop Spalding] a little bit,” Brannock said. “With just looking at them, Preston Howard is really good at moving with his legs and extending plays. We’ve talked a little bit and then, with Scott, it’s his height and how he’s gets to find open receivers easily.”

Howard and Tutas have turned heads in their own right.



Bishop Moore defensive end Ronnie LeDuc (58) rushes Spalding quarterback Austin Tutas (6) during the Archbishop Spalding at Bishop Moore Catholic High School on Friday, September 6, 2019. (Stephen M. Dowell/Orlando Sentinel) (Stephen M. Dowell/Orlando Sentinel)

McDonogh's Howard is also a three-star quarterback, and several Power 5 schools have offered him a scholarship, including Auburn, Boston College, Maryland, Michigan, Penn State, Syracuse and West Virginia. The 6-6 rising junior is rated as the seventh-best dual-threat quarterback of the 2022 class and the 10th-ranked player in Maryland, per [247 Sports](#).

Spalding's starter has generated interest from 17 schools as a three-star dual-threat quarterback, per [247 Sports](#). The rising senior quarterback put up 2,150 yards passing with 18 touchdowns and 11 interceptions. Though he hasn't been in contact with Baucia as much recently, the growth and instruction he's received has led him to assist the next generation of quarterbacks in the Washington, Maryland and Virginia area.

"I feel a tremendous sense of pride," Tutas said. "I'd put the DMV area up against any area in the country. We might not get the same respect as some of the traditional football powerhouses areas get but, I think that the Quarterback Factory and guys from this area have done enough to prove that we've got a lot of good football players here. We play a tough brand of football, and I'm certainly proud to be a part of it."

Tutas has trained with Baucia since he was 9, when his father got connected with the coach through a friend, until his sophomore year of high school. Tutas worked with Calvert Hall's Brannock from an early age, sharing knowledge of his training with Hill and top-tier quarterbacks in the Baltimore-Washington area.

"The goal is to pass those tough, grittiness and hard-working attitudes that we've developed here in the DMV and pass that down to guys like Noah and guys that will be coming through the MIAA and WCAC here in the next couple of decades and the next 10 years," Tutas said. "All we want is to see the DMV take over college football and start to show that this area has some of the best football players in the country."



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Kyle J. Andrews is a high school sports reporter. He is a 2018 University of Baltimore graduate and a Randallstown native. Before joining Baltimore Sun Media, Kyle was a Ravens and Orioles reporter for 105.7 The Fan in Baltimore. He also interned with Pressbox Media and Fox Sports 1340 AM.