

Roth Plans On Playing For Bears

By BILL DICKENS
The El Cajon Californian

University of California-Berkeley football coach Mike White got his biggest and best Christmas present four days early this year.

White, who'll be beginning his third year at the Berkeley helm next fall, announced at Saturday's Grossmont College Football Awards Breakfast that Griffin All-American quarterback Joe Roth will be playing for the Golden Bears in 1975.

"We're really grateful that Joe's decided to come join us," White said. "By getting Joe I think it'll help our entire program in recruiting other kids. It'll show that our good year (7-3-1) this year is going to be the first of many.

"In our opinion, Joe was the best JC quarterback in the nation this year. He's the kind of athlete who'll be able to keep our program going in the right direction."

In selecting Berkeley, Roth turned down numerous scholarship offers to places such as Oregon, San Diego State, Brigham Young, Stanford, San Jose State, Oregon State, Washington, Utah and Colorado State among others.

"I haven't actually signed anything yet," Roth said, "but I've made up my mind. Cal is the best place for me. Academically, it's what I'm looking for and they also run my style of offense."

The 6-foot-3, 180 pound Roth will have a large job ahead as he'll try to fill the shoes of the graduating All-American quarterback Steve Bartkowski.

"It won't be easy to replace an All-American, but I'm ready to accept the challenge," Roth said.

"Joe and Steve have a lot of the same qualities," White judged. "And our offense is very similar to what coach (Dave) Jordan runs here at Grossmont College.

"Joe will be able to make a natural transition."

Roth will report to Berkeley by Jan. 6 in time to start the winter semester.

"That in itself gives Joe a tremendous advantage," White said. "He'll be able to get the feel of the school and he'll be able to get acquainted with some of the kids on our team."

Two of the athletes Roth will become familiar with in a hurry are wide receivers Steve Rivera, a senior All-American and junior Wes Walker.

"I think they are two of the best receivers in the country," White said.

In two years at Grossmont, Roth, who started all 22 games, completed 352 of 520 passes for 4,134 yards and 40 touchdowns.

"Going to JC was the smartest move I could make out of high school," admitted the Granite Hills High graduate. "I really couldn't throw the ball very hard when I left high school and the only passes I completed were to the wide open receivers.

"There are a lot of people responsible for my success at Grossmont and I'd like to thank them all."



Joe Roth