



*James Monroe High School
Bronx, New York*

Many teams have had success in the past, but how many have had a chance to battle for a championship year after year? James Monroe has a secret weapon in their coach Mike Turo.

A Bronx native, Turo grew up in the Bronx and graduated from Lehman. Turo has been coaching at the school since 1978. Under his guidance, the Eagles have won four city titles (1993, 2000, 2002, 2004) and made the semifinals 10 times. Those numbers should increase with Monroe in the playoffs year in and year out. The Eagles have made the postseason 20 consecutive seasons, writes Adam Martini PSAL sports reporter.

However, it's not just that Coach Turo is a strict disciplinarian with strong work ethics; he is gifted with a talented pool of players repeatedly. For example Deglis Soto is a senior who is hitting .478 with 9 doubles, 1 triple, 4 home runs, and 34 RBI's. He has become a real leader under Turo's guidance. So much so that he took it upon himself to move to centerfield, with incoming Dominican player Emmanuel Rodriguez getting a chance to play third.

Soto is also a dominant pitcher topping out at 92 mph with a 4-0 record, allowing only 12 hits with 29 strikeouts, and a 1.45 ERA. In addition to Soto on the bump is Darwin Rivas, a lefty, who is 5-0 with a 0.90 ERA, 36 strikeouts, allowing only 15 hits in 30 innings. He has pitched a shut out the last three times he has started this season.

Adding some offense is shortstop Carlos George who is hitting .370 with 17 hits, 4 doubles, 2 home runs, and 11 RBI's. George has also stolen 4 bases. Then there's Rodriguez who is hitting .472 with 34 hits, 5 doubles, 3 triples, and 22 RBI's. Not to mention both guys play great defense on left side of the infield.

"So far the kids are playing well. There hasn't been much hitting, but our staff is pitching well. Toughest part of losing some guys is blending this young team. We have 10 returnees, with 18 new guys; 7 are freshman, and 8 sophomores," quotes Coach Turo of his so far 27-1 season.

Turo also reports of his expectations, "To reach the semi-final round is about where we feel this team can go. Of course if our hitting is good and with our pitching and defense, we could make a run."

Well coach, keep those expectation high and you will have success! Good luck



**Coach Mike Turo
Head Baseball Coach**

By David A. Himmelstein