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Crean Lutheran football team honoring Garrett Cox before Thursday's game

By [TIM BURT](#)

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Former Crean Lutheran football star Garrett Cox, who died over the off-season, will be remembered Thursday in a ceremony before the Saints opening game with Calvary Chapel at Irvine Stadium.

"All of our players have a GC 44 decal in remembrance of Garrett," said Crean Lutheran's first-year coach Matt Bowman. "His passing struck our program hard. All of the kids, especially the ones who have played with him and fought for him on the field, it really affected them.

"Garrett was loved by everybody and he was a great kid."

The 6-foot running back/linebacker, a Tustin resident, was named the Academy League's defensive player of the year, helping the Saints reach the semifinal round of the CIF-Southern Section East Valley Division playoffs for the first time in school history.

Cox, an All-CIF player for the Saints in his senior season, died on June 24.

In August, Northwood football players, led by coach Phil Roh, visited Crean Lutheran to present the Saints with an autographed No. 44 Northwood jersey in honor of Cox, who wore No. 44 for Crean Lutheran.

"I was moved by Northwood's generosity," said Bowman at the time. Coach Roh is a class act. Their team shirts said 'Family' and they really showed that. Their whole varsity signed a 44 jersey and said no one on their team would wear 44 next season.

"Northwood's players also shared a card with us. Several of them said they were thinking about us and praying for us during this difficult time. Football is a brotherhood, and this just shows you how this game and the young men who play it can unite whole communities together."

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