



Head football coach
Paul Farrah



Unified Success at Louisville High

How this Ohio high school achieves success with a smart and simple approach to sports training

Being an athletic director is a challenging job in today's recession: Not only do you have to deal with budget cuts, but the parents and community still demand a high

standard of excellence. In Louisville, Ohio, Louisville High School is ranked fourth from the bottom in the state in school funds for revenue per pupil. Nevertheless, this year the Louisville

football team went undefeated in the regular season and five other sports teams won conference championships. Do we have your attention?

In this exclusive interview,

Louisville athletic director Rich Venuto discusses how his athletes have been able to achieve such outstanding success despite the challenges of a recession. From fighting excessive pay-to-play fees to dealing with parents who want their kids to focus on just one sport, Venuto has a story that anyone involved in athletics will want to hear.

BFS: How is the economy affecting your athletic program?

RV: As the schools keep cutting back, we are really facing very difficult decisions with finances. We rely on our local property taxes to help fund our schools, so people in each of the individual communities have to vote for levies – in other words, they have to vote to tax themselves. What has happened here is that many people are turning down these tax levies; we have a team in our league right now that is facing the fact that because they have had about seven or eight levies in a row turned down, they are going to have to drop their athletic department program in two years.

BFS: With the recession, do the parents and community still expect your athletic programs to be successful?

RV: Folks don't care if you have money or if you don't have money – they still have high expectations. We're very lucky here because we have great coaches and they are all on board with the philosophy that they have to get the most out of their athletes with what they've got. And we know we have to share athletes.

BFS: Do you have a pay-to-play program at your school?

RV: We had to go to pay-to-play here two and a half years ago, and at that time we were charging \$350 per sport, so it really affected the number of three-sport athletes we had. But now our new superintendent has come in and put a cap on the pay-to-play program at \$350 per year, rather than per sport, so we are seeing more kids play multiple sports now.

BFS: Many athletic programs are suffering because they are losing volun-

teers. Is this a problem at Louisville?

RV: We are very lucky here, as we do have people who are willing to volunteer.

BFS: What inspired you to try the BFS program?

RV: We've had a good history of athletes in general, and we've always done well in football. We just wanted something that would bring our athletic department together and become more organized. Techniques were taught differently. Not all the teams lifted, and the terminology used was different, so what we found was that we were losing athletes in the weightroom during the off-season for certain sports. By unifying our program with the backing of our administration, we've seen an increase in our success.

BFS: How did you hear about BFS?

RV: The school that I had been at previously had a one-day clinic in 2000 when I was a basketball coach there. I was very impressed with it.



#55 Joe Poyser



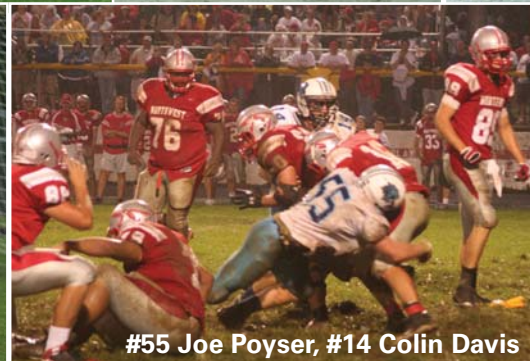
Dan Butera



Joe Stoffer



#16 Matt Lump , #00 Jeff Kibler



#55 Joe Poyser, #14 Colin Davis



Jarod Williams (center, front)
Curtis Hanle (far right, in back)



(Left to right) Volleyball: Jessica Lairson. Tennis: Brooke Mathie. Runners: Mattie Rankin (left), Samantha Norman (right). Shot put: Sarah Gertz. Runner at far right: Samantha Norman. Samantha is going to Kentucky on a track and cross-country scholarship. She holds the record in the 1600.

When I became the athletic director here at Louisville, I called BFS and we scheduled a one-day clinic with Mike Glennie in the spring of 2007—we had every one of our coaches there and probably 350 kids. Mike did a great job, and that’s what got it started.

BFS: You’ve also hosted two regional certification clinics for your coaches. Were these successful?

RV: Yes, and we’re going to host another one next spring. We have 12 coaches certified now. My goal is to get every head coach certified with BFS and then start working on at least one assistant from each program.

BFS: Is the temptation of earning a college scholarship a factor in many athletes deciding to focus on playing

just one sport year-round?

RV: Yes, many parents are chasing scholarship money right now, but they don’t understand how difficult it is to get a scholarship. What they also don’t understand is that the cross training that is done in athletics lends itself to many sports going hand in hand; for example, volleyball players will become better volleyball players by playing basketball. Also, when you pull athletes away from high school sports, you lose that camaraderie that high school sports build in your school and your community.

BFS: If you had to single out the most important benefits of the BFS program, what would they be?

RV: I can give you three good reasons why we do the BFS program: One,

we want our coaches to get the best out of their athletes they possibly can so they can reach their potential; without weight training and conditioning, that’s not going to happen. Number two is safety. We want our kids to be as safe as possible for sports by building their bodies, and I feel that with the BFS program they are going to better be able to protect themselves against injury. And three is to give them lifetime behaviors so our kids can stay healthy the rest of their lives by using weight training. I think the reason so many adults don’t lift weights for conditioning purposes is that they are afraid of it. Because they never did it, they get intimidated when they go into a gym. So if we expose them to weight training now in their youth, they will not have anything to be afraid of. **BFS**



A great weightroom and a year-round, unified program has enabled Louisville to produce exceptional athletes in many sports.

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With 30 years of experience, no other certification comes close.

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1 Day, Hands on Practicum & Written Exam

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Regional Certification

\$299 per coach – Practical & Theory Course
1 Day, Hands on Practicum & Written Exam



CONFIRMED DATES

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|
| ▶ MN Cottage Grove | 1/31/2009 | ▶ CO Highlands Ranch | 3/28/2009 |
| ▶ CA Montebello | | ▶ MS Jackson | 3/28/2009 |
| ▶ OH | | ▶ IN Ft. Branch | 3/28/2009 |
| ▶ MI | | ▶ MA Fitchburg | 5/02/2009 |
| ▶ CA S | 5/21/2009 | ▶ GA St. Simons Island | 7/13/2009 |

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