

# Have BFS, Will Travel

Coach Ron Hamamoto's latest success story: Monte Vista High School

As any successful coach knows, in this profession change is the name of the game. For Coach Ron Hamamoto, that has meant multiple job opportunities and new challenges. Through it all, BFS has been there with him and for him.

BFS first featured Hamamoto 10 years ago when he was a coach at Rancho Bernardo, a Division I high school in San Diego, California. Hamamoto had become the school's

head football coach in 1998, when their Broncos were struggling to maintain a .500 win-loss average. To help jump-start his program Hamamoto enlisted the help of BFS clinician Bob Rowbotham, now the CEO of BFS, to give a BFS Total Program clinic. It had an immediate, positive impact on the attitude of his athletes.

"Our athletes accepted the BFS program right away," says Hamamoto. "They saw the benefits, and Coach

Rowbotham did a great job – our weightroom was packed after the clinic." That enthusiasm and the forthcoming hard work in the weightroom paid off on the gridiron. Hamamoto told BFS that after the 2001 season, "Our school, like any other school, really got fired up when our football team had so much success this season. The whole community did. When we made it to the stadium for the finals there was a big rally, tailgating at the stadium,



BFS clinicians and the Monte Vista High School take a break after another successful clinic. From left to right: BFS President John Rowbotham, Manny Diaz, Jr., Page Culver, BFS CEO Bob Rowbotham, head football coach Ron Hamamoto, and BFS clinician Doug Kaufusi.



Coach Kaufusi teaching the six absolutes in a group setting.

thousands of people at the game.”

With such success, it was a difficult decision for Hamamoto to leave Rancho Bernardo in 2007 and take a position at Lincoln High School in southeast San Diego, but he looked forward to the challenge. “I had been at Rancho Bernardo for 11 years, and this was an opportunity for me to be not just a head football coach but also an athletic director. Lincoln was also a school with a great athletic tradition – it’s where Marcus Allen and Terrell Davis graduated from.” The only downside was the weightroom.

Although the school had undergone a \$150 million renovation after having been closed for four years, the weightroom “was an afterthought,” and, as such, a disappointment, says Hamamoto. Nevertheless, he implemented the BFS Program and sponsored more BFS clinics to jump-start each football season. Again, success followed, with the Hornets going to the quarterfinals three of his four years there, and one year making the finals. Then it was time for another challenge.

## The College Experiment

After four years at Lincoln, Hamamoto was given the opportunity to coach at San Diego Mesa College. He worked part time at Mesa, also taught elementary school, and coached in the afternoon. Whereas at the high school level Hamamoto had been teaching full time five days a week, his schedule was much lighter at the junior college level and the job was close to his home. In retrospect, he says taking the junior college position was a good career move, but it “backfired” on him.

“I was offered a part-time job for the first year and was told that by the second year it would turn into full time. I was at Mesa for a year and they said I did a great job; but with all the budget cuts they could not offer me a full-time position for two or three years, and even then they didn’t know if they could hire me full time.” Consequently, Hamamoto started looking for another high school job, and in 2012 a job opened up at Monte Vista High School, a Division 4 school with an enrollment of 1,600 students in nearby Spring Valley.

During his years as a coach, Hamamoto says he has seen some disturbing trends. One is a lack of young coaches. “There are a lot of young coaches trying to get teaching jobs, but it’s really tough because there are so many teachers with tenure. Anytime a job comes up, someone with tenure, whether they are a better teacher or not, gets the job because the district has to fill the job with these people. A lot of good, potential young coaches are shying away from the profession because even if you get a degree, there’s no guarantee you’re going to get a job.”

Coach Hamamoto is also troubled by the lack of emphasis on physical education in US schools. “At the elementary school where I taught, I had each class for an hour *a week*; it used to be you got PE every day.” As for parental involvement, Hamamoto finds that there is less because the parents are so busy. “There’s a lot more complaining. In the old days, your coach says something, you do it. Now there is a lot more questioning about what you’re doing.”

In the face of these challenges, Hamamoto remains passionate about maintaining the quality of his programs by bringing out the BFS clinicians for clinics at every high school where he coaches. He remarks, “Honestly, every time I bring John, Bob or Doug out, I learn something. Also, whenever you bring in a professional, they are going to cover things in more detail than I ever would. And a clinic makes for a good starting point to get the athletes

excited about lifting.”

What sets BFS apart for Coach Hamamoto? “I tried other programs that had four workouts a week split up into upper and lower body. I found that it burnt out the kids – their hearts were just not into it. My athletes really bought into all aspects of the BFS program, such as being able to break personal records on a regular basis. I especially enjoy all the written material provided by BFS that expands on the

program, along with the magazine and the website.”

As for advice Hamamoto would give to young coaches, he says, “If you’re going to coach at the high school level, it’s important to understand that you will be dealing with these kids as a counselor, motivator and father figure. You’ll also be dealing with parents and the community. Coaching is not just about X’s and O’s; it’s about being able to work with people.” BFS

All the key components of the BFS program are taught “hands-on” in a BFS clinic.



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