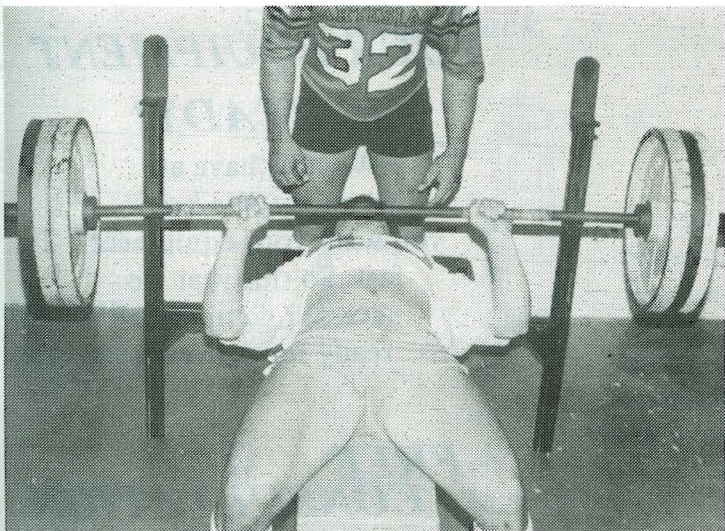


THE MAKING OF A CHAMPION

by Dr. Greg Shepard



Scott Runyan "BFS Athlete of the Year" in 1981 continues winning.



Scott, a QB, increased his Bench from 200 to 435 plus!

Several years ago I became familiar with Artesia High School in Artesia, New Mexico. Coach Mike Phipps became interested in the BFS Program and started using it for his football team. Coach Phipps had a young athlete by the name of Scott Runyan who weighed 155 pounds, ran a 4.9 forty and could bench 200 and squat 200. Coach Phipps decided because Scott was a 4.0 student and a fine athlete, he'd be a natural at quarterback.

After an opening loss against Hobbs, New Mexico, Scott became the starting QB as a Sophomore. Scott led his team to 13 straight victories and the State 3A championship. He ran the wishbone to perfection as he rushed for 1,369 yards and a 6.6 yard per carry average and managed to throw for 380 more yards and 6 touchdowns.

There was no denying Scott first team All-State honors. He scored 19 touchdowns and 23 extra points which was a new record for scoring by a sophomore in New Mexico. He was the first team All-State punter. Scott is also a baseball pitcher and his football has been clocked at 92 MPH.

Both Coach Phipps and Scott work very hard at winning. When I call long distance to talk to Coach Phipps in the evening, I call the field house, not home. Kind of reminds me of Coach Paul Bear Bryant who, many years ago, called Auburn from the Alabama field house. The operator said "Seven in the morning is too early. Our head football coach doesn't come in until much later." Coach Bryant drawled, "You folks don't take your football too serious, do you?" Anyway Coach Phipps reported that Scott, just before his Junior year in August, 1981, now weighed 185 pounds, ran a 4.6 forty and could bench 340, squat 515 and clean 275 pounds. The hometown fans expected another state championship. After all, Artesia had an All-State quarterback didn't they? It should be a piece of cake. Never mind that opposing coaches lay awake nights trying to figure out how to key on Runyan. Never mind that four schools on the schedule have twice the enrollment of Artesia. Well, when they only just made the State playoffs and didn't win the State championship, there was some grumbling. A lot of Monday morning QB's just knew they could have won the State championship.

Now Coach Phipps wanted to win this year in the Fall of 1982, especially since it was Scott's lasy year. Coach Phipps invited me in the spring of 1982 to put on a BFS Clinic. I was really excited about going to Artesia. I'd never met Coach Phipps or Scott Runyan, even though Scott had been the BFS athlete of the year in 1981.

Artesia is a town of about 15,000 in southwestern New Mexico. I wondered why Coach Phipps had a southern drawl. He said he'd grown up in Arkansas and that wasn't how people normally talked in New Mexico.

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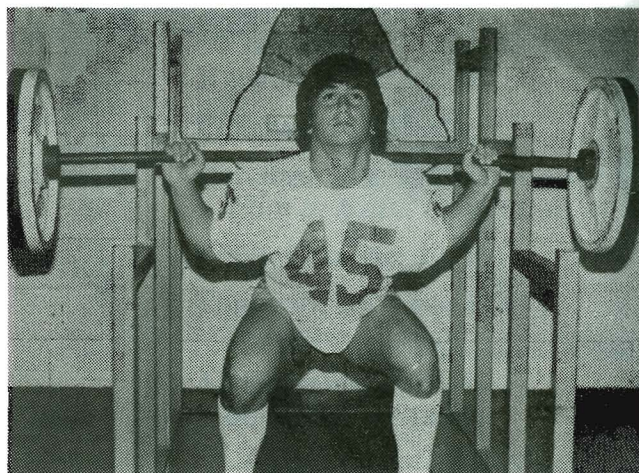
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The Making of a Champion continued from page 14.



Scott's 500 Squat helped him run a 4.7 forty.

We pulled up to the high school and Mike had a class to teach. I was immediately impressed with the friendliness of the other teachers and especially the students. The politeness of the general student was unusually nice. An administrator told me the coaches and athletic program have a major influence on the fine attitude of the school.

After class, Mike and I drove in his pickup to the field house. This is where the weights and athletic dressing rooms are contained. The stadium was really impressive. The football field was in a bowl with seating surrounding the field. The field house was located on one end of the field. Then something unusual was to happen. As we got out of the pickup, I noticed Coach Phipps left his keys in the ignition. I said, "Coach, don't you want to get your keys?" Mike responded matter of factly, "We don't have to worry about that here!" I was to soon find out that in the Artesia athletic program trust, honesty and self-respect were not meaningless words. It was quickly apparent great leadership was in great abundance.

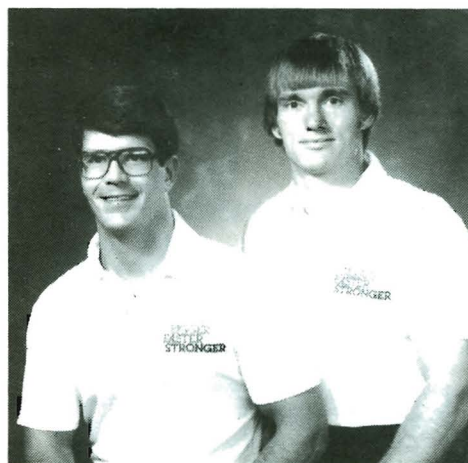
Finally I was to meet Scott. We shook hands. "Hello, sir," said Scott politely. Scott was with some of his buddies. As I asked them questions, they all responded, "Yes sir or no sir." Coach Phipps told me, "I guess we just do this because I'm from Arkansas." "Yes sir," I said. "I think it's such a great habit. Rick Anderson and I respond this way on the phone in our office in Salt Lake City. Try us some time." I've done a number of clinics in the southern states where it's natural to say "yes sir or no sir," but not in New Mexico. Good habits were taught in Artesia.

Continued on Page 23

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We had a great clinic. Scott dead lifted 500 pounds. Goals were set to win the State championship and the BFS munchies goal setting plan to arrive at that goal was instilled. Coach Phipps and I had a great time talking about football and the strength program. In fact, we talked too long. "You've got to drive me to Roswell," I frantically yelled. "What time does your plane leave?" said Mike calmly. I blurted out, "In 35 minutes." "Don't worry," he said as we scrambled to the pickup. "It's only 44 miles away." Well I'll guarantee you, Coach Phipps' pickup went faster than my plane. I made it. Now Coach Phipps and Scott and his teammates had to make it with a lot of hard work to make their goal.

After the first four games this past season, I called Coach Phipps to get an update on Scott. I called the field house at 10 in the evening. "Coach Shepard, we're one win and four losses," offered Coach Phipps dejectedly. "They're keying on Scott something fierce. I don't know if the wishbone's the way to go. We may try the I formation. We played some of the big, tough teams in Texas. Now we settle down to league play. I just don't know." "Can you still win the State championship?" I asked. "Yes, but we have to win *all* the rest," related Coach Phipps. "Then go for it," I replied.

