

BFS CLINIC BRINGS SUCCESS TO E.E. SMITH

By Glen Fairclough

Visit E.E. Smith High School in Fayetteville, North Carolina, today and you'll see students infected with football fever.

Golden Bulls players have pride—pride in what they do on the field and pride in a football program that has compiled a 27-13 record and one league co-championship over the past four seasons.

When they watch televised broadcasts of games involving local colleges (North Carolina and others), chances are that the roster will include one of the 16 former E.E. Smith players who have gone on to play college ball.

Over 100 hopefuls come out each fall to try out for a spot on the football team.

Even junior high students, anxiously looking forward to the day when they will attend, are filled with excitement when they come to visit the weight room and other facilities the school has to offer.

But it wasn't always this way.

When Coach Dean Saffos was hired in 1984, he inherited a program that had won only seven or eight games over the previous few seasons. There wasn't much of a weight program in those days. "Our weight program was—we have weights, you all go lift if you want," Coach Saffos recalls.

What turned things around?

"I believe that the change in our program can be explained in three statements," the coach said.

"First, we have great discipline in our program all year—we monitor grades, attendance, and conduct.

"Second, we have strong work habits with no attitude problems.

"Third, the Bigger Faster Stronger weight program is the foundation of our program."

Shortly after Coach Saffos was hired, Dr. Greg Shepard put on a BFS clinic at E.E. Smith High School. Coach Saffos said, "We had a small turnout and we were not as enthusiastic as we could have been. But I learned enough about the BFS program to believe in it. It really impressed me, now we don't do anything but. I have to credit the BFS program for our success."

Before the clinic, the team was comprised of fewer than 30 players. The coach recalls that three or four guys could Squat 400 pounds, and a lift of 200 was a rarity.

Today, he enjoys watching the expressions on the faces of incoming sophomores when they see his players lift. "It's something to watch their faces when they see someone lift 500 pounds—that's five plates on each side of the bar. A 500-pound lift is not unusual around here any more. They can't believe it when I tell them that they'll be doing it themselves in a year."



Rovell McMillan (No. 1) of E.E. Smith High School fends off a tackler.

Many of the players can Bench Press 250 to 300 pounds, and the coach reports that his players Squat very well (he has two 700-pound Squatters), and they also do well on the Power Clean.

The strength and conditioning program has paid off in the form of fewer injured players. "We've been real fortunate, knock on wood," Coach Saffos said. "In the years I've been here we've always done a full 20 to 25 minutes stretching, not just jacks and go. That helps, plus strength. Our All-Conference linebacker was lost for two games and our kicker broke his leg playing soccer. Oh, we've had a few pulls and strains, but we've been very fortunate to stay healthy."

All of the athletes at E.E. Smith have benefitted from the improvements made since the BFS program was instituted. Coach Saffos shared two examples.

Everette Norwood, a linebacker, also played basketball for the Golden Bulls. Coach Saffos said that Everette had never been able to dunk the basketball, but as he learned to Squat better he was able to jump higher. One day he went up and jammed it, but the impact of his success didn't sink in immediately. He took a few steps before he realized what he'd done, then became ecstatic. Everette has gone on to Savannah State, where he plays fullback. He holds the record for most carries in the North Carolina Shrine Bowl (44), breaking the mark held by Freddie Solomon.

"At the start of the 1985 season, we noticed a young man who had a great potential. Steve Flowers was a sophomore. He had fair size, a lot of intensity, and fair speed. The big asset was his ability to deliver a blow, but he lacked commitment and would not come to all of our

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E.E. SMITH SUCCESS

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A change in attitude helped Steve Flowers (No. 61) develop into an All-Conference defensive player.

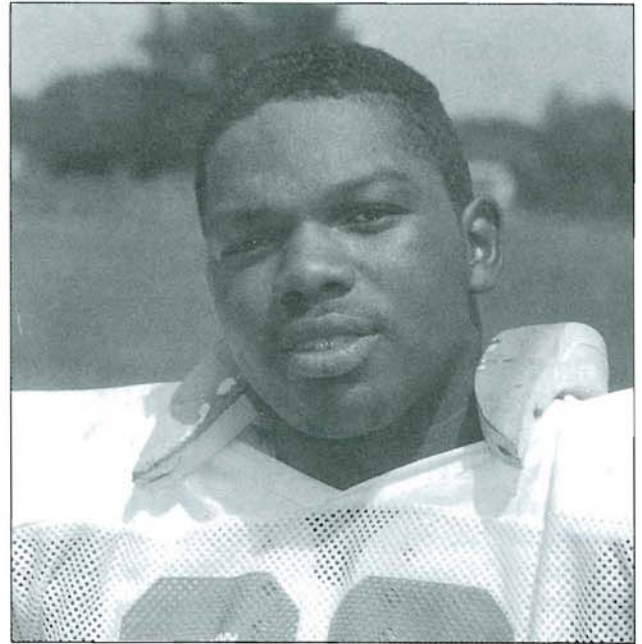
practices. After counseling and repeated trips to Steve's house, I asked him not to come back any more.

"Our season was a great success. We won our first five games and finished 8-2. We entered the playoffs for the first time in 15 years and finished second in our conference. Football fever was once again a disease at E.E. Smith.

"Steve came to see me in January 1986. He said, 'Coach, I made a mistake and I want you to give me another chance to play football for E.E. Smith. Coach, I promise to work hard and lift weights. Whatever I have to do to play, I will do.'

"The rest is history. Steve worked very hard. He went from no strength to a Bench Press of 345, a Dead Lift of 505, Power Clean of 265, and a Parallel Squat of 565. He also ran a 4.9 in the 40-yard dash. He started as our offensive right guard his junior year and defensive tackle his senior year. Steve made the All-Conference Defensive Team, was nominated for the North Carolina Shrine Bowl team, the North Carolina East-West Team, and he was our Defensive Player of the Year. Several colleges were interested in him.

"Vision, change of attitude, maturity—call it what you want—Steve Flowers caught it. Young men like Steve Flowers are why we coach."



REGGIE BUNDRAGE

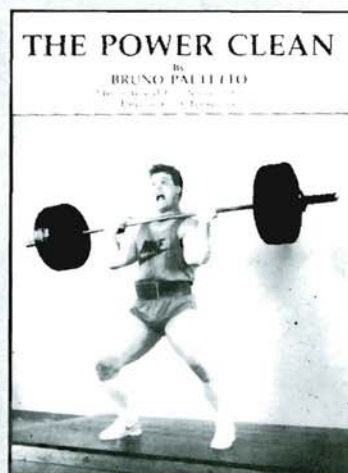
Reggie attended Southeast High School in Bradenton, Florida. His football coach, Herb Tschappat, stated, "Reggie attended Upward Bound in Tampa during his junior and senior years and during the summers. Upward Bound is a voluntary educational program for ambitious and motivated black youths."

Reggie carries his 195 pounds on a 5-8 frame in powerful style. As a fullback in an option attack, he carried the ball 163 times for 1,083 yards—with *no fumbles!* That's almost 7 yards per carry! Reggie led his team to a 10-2 Regional Champ football record and was honored as an All-Area running back.

Florida has recognized weightlifting as an official high school activity sport. They have great participation. Reggie was the Florida State 198-pound champion and was named the Most Valuable Lifter. His Bench Press of 410 pounds was a state record. Reggie also did a Clean and Jerk with 290 pounds for a 700-pound total.

Roses to Reggie for his outstanding football and weightlifting achievements. All this while earning a 3.2 grade point average! We at BFS wish him the best.

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