

QUEST FOR GREATNESS

A Continuing Novel by Greg Shepard

QUICK REVIEW

Chapters 1-34

Quest For Greatness is based on true stories. Coach Travis Drake is the new football Coach at Hamilton High School. With energy, enthusiasm, charisma and hard work, positive changes have been taking place.

The other major character Rick Steadman, who is a senior at Hamilton, has been devastated by tragedy. His father and two sisters died in a fire that destroyed their home. Only his little brother Billy survived.

Coach Drake with a lot of caring has helped Rick overcome his problems and this tragedy. Billy and Rick are now part of Coach Drake's family. The Town, School, and team are going crazy over the unbelievable turn around.

Hamilton has now qualified for the playoffs. The team is stronger than ever and hopes are high against huge Bakersville High School.

Chapter 34 The Playoffs

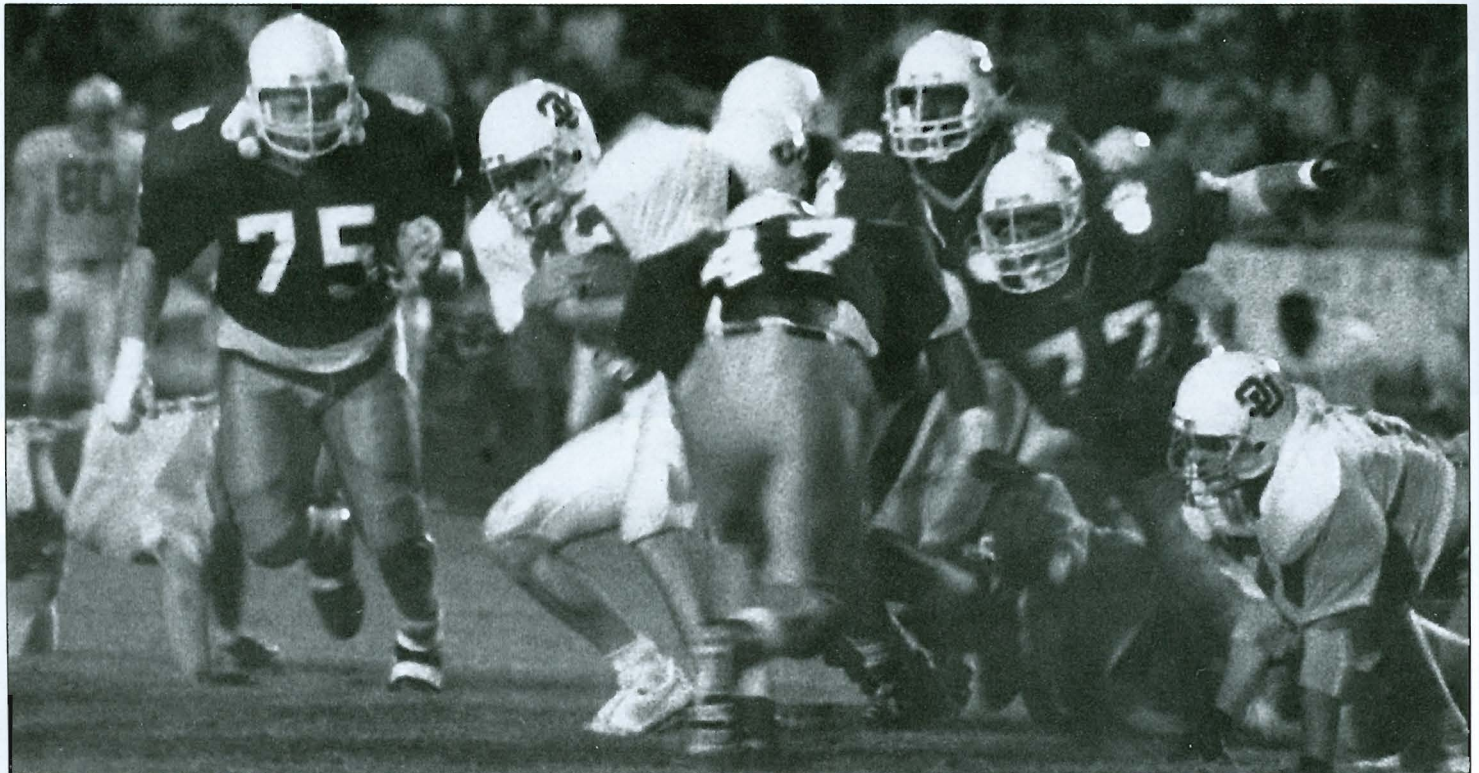
"Good Lord," exclaimed Coach Myers, "look at the size of those guys." He was gawking at Bakersville's line during warmups. "We can handle them. I know we're stronger and quicker!" assumed Anthony Green, Hamilton's All-Conference linebacker. Anthony was right. Hamilton methodically put Bakersville away by a 21-6 count. Travis played Rick sparingly, trying to save his ankle.

The quarterfinal game was played at Jackson High School on a colder-than-usual night. Emile sprang one on a punt return and Lem went absolutely nuts after he returned an interception 44 yards for a touchdown. The 27-14 victory propelled the Lions to a number four ranking.

Rick talked to the team after the game, "I love it. You guys played great. You know how, as a team, we yell, 'Psych, Psych, Psych,' before the game?" Everyone nodded. "Well, I want to go to the Dome really badly. I move that we change 'Psych, Psych, Psych,' to 'Dome, Dome, Dome,' for the last two games." Soon everyone was screaming and chanting, "Dome!, Dome!, Dome!"

'Dome' referred to the State championship football game played annually in the Dome in front of over 20,000 people. The last obstacle to the Dome was a fine Parksfield team, which had a high-powered passing offense.

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Bakersville was huge but #47 Anthony Green tackled everything in sight.

This semi-final game was unfortunately to be played at Parkersfield. This was determined by alternating the site each year. Last year, the semi-final game had been played on Hamilton's side of the State. Twenty buses were scheduled to make the long haul to Parkersfield. The game was scheduled for Saturday afternoon and many of Hamilton's businesses simply shut down for the day.

It was the wildest game Travis had ever been involved in as a player or as a coach. The defense was hanging on, and they were desperate to find a way to stop Parkersfield's passing attack.

Coach Myers was going berserk on the sideline. The lead exchanged hands four times. Finally, Hamilton beat Parkersfield at their own game as TJ hit Skip Hunter on a 65-yard pass play. It was Hamilton 35, Parkersfield 28.

The after-game scene was wild. The after-dinner scene on the road was wild. The entire bus ride home was wild. In fact, everything about the game was wild for Hamilton. Travis spoke as they neared a noisy, welcoming crowd at the school, "Men, our dream is nearly complete. We've been underdogs all year long. Next Saturday, we will again be underdogs. I've just been informed that we will get another crack at Templeton."

The bus erupted. "Dome! Dome! Dome! Dome! Dome! Dome! Dome! Dome! Dome!"

Chapter 35 The Dome

It was Tuesday night, and Diana rolled over to the other side of the bed. In spite of being 3:00 a.m., she instinctively began to awaken. Travis had told her he needed to do some work and would come to bed later. He had never made it at all. She quickly put on her robe and went downstairs.

There he was asleep. The TV was on, but only showing the test pattern. Still on his lap was a clipboard full of plays.

"Honey, wake up; wake up," Diana said.

"Huh — oh, my head. What time is it?" mumbled Travis.

Diana looked at her beleaguered husband and jokingly ordered, "It's time for bed. You're not going to be any good to anyone unless you get some sleep." She helped Travis stagger up the stairs, while hoping the pressures of going to the Dome weren't becoming a problem for her Travis.

"Mrs. Atkinson, would you please get Coach Drake? I need to see him immediately," said Donaldson rather sharply.

"Yes, sir," she said. A student was sent to the lower level to find Travis.

As Travis approached the office, he was wondering



*Crisp Double Team Blocking Opened
Huge Holes For Steadman*

what Donaldson wanted now. Travis knocked gently on the principal's door.

"Come in, Coach Drake. I need to discuss a very important matter with you."

Travis came in the office, and from the tone of Donaldson's voice, he knew something serious had happened.

"Lem Kalani just beat up Bart Snyder and broke his nose. Mrs. Kate Snyder is hysterical and wants Lem thrown off the team," said Donaldson heatedly.

"Now hold on a minute," retorted Travis. "Lem's a good kid. Did you get his side of what happened?"

"Not yet. We're out to get him now."

Travis charged back, "You're out to get him now? What does that mean?"

QUEST FOR GREATNESS Continued from page 27

"It means I've called the police. I can't have Tongan Warriors beating up our kids."

Now Travis was boiling. "What do you mean, 'our kids?' Lem is our kid."

Just then Mrs. Atkinson opened the door. "The police found Lem in class."

"Good," said Donaldson, "I want everyone in my office, including Mrs. Snyder and Bart."

"Yes sir."

"Wait, Mrs. Atkinson," Travis whispered.

"Yes, Coach," she said sympathetically.

"Please, get Rick Steadman, Mr. Maddox and Eddie Troutman as quickly as you can."

Mrs. Atkinson glanced at Donaldson and said, "I'll do what I can."

Mrs. Atkinson went first to find a student aide. "Quick, get Rick Steadman, Mr. Maddox and Eddie Troutman. Get them here pronto." Then she escorted Officer Wheeler, Lem, Mrs. Snyder and Bart into Donaldson's office

Mr. Donaldson took command: "Bart, would you tell everyone what happened?"

Bart was still holding his nose and was dressed in his black leather outfit. He whined, "I'm minding my own business, and this 'mother' comes over and breaks my nose."

Mrs. Snyder snapped, "What are you going to do? He shouldn't be allowed in our school, anyway," she said as she pointed her shaking finger at Lem. Lem just hung his head and didn't say a word.

"Well Coach," said Donaldson, "From the looks of Lem, he's guilty as sin."

Travis glared at Donaldson, "I'd like to hear Lem's side of the incident. Lem, tell me what happened."

Lem kept looking down. Tears were flowing down his brown cheeks.

"Coach, I lost my temper. I should not have hit him."

"Then why did you?" demanded Donaldson.

"Our Tongan custom is to roast a pig on Sunday. Bart saw our family last Sunday while we were having a pig roast. He called me over and asked me if I wanted to buy any drugs. I told him I didn't do drugs and if he asked me again, I'd roast him. Then he said my mother was a pig, and she should be roasted."

"You can't believe this native," screamed Mrs. Snyder, "Bart wouldn't do that. He's a good boy."

A knock came at the door. It was Fred Maddox, Rick and Eddy.

Mr. Donaldson asked them, "Please wait. We are in a meeting."

Travis jumped up and said, "Come in. Mr. Donaldson, I sent for these people. They can clear this up quite easily."

"I don't like you going behind my back," Donaldson growled.

NEXT ISSUE: Lem's Fate



Emile Martinez Making Key Catch In State Semis

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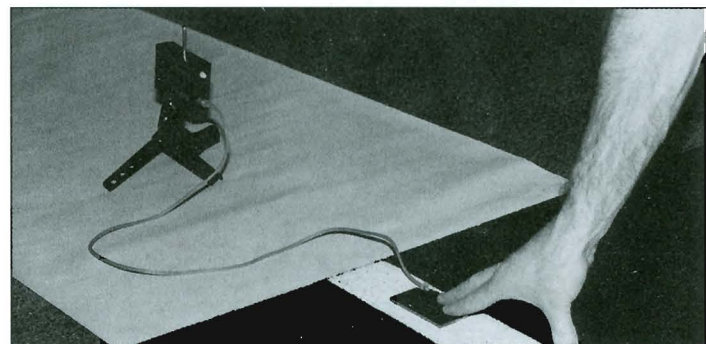
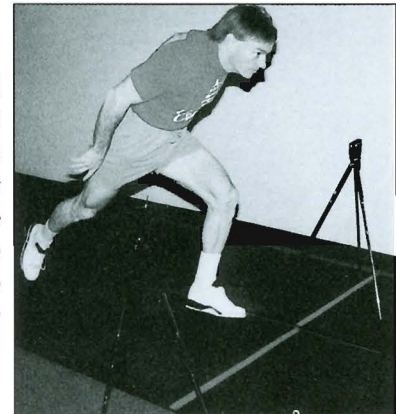
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