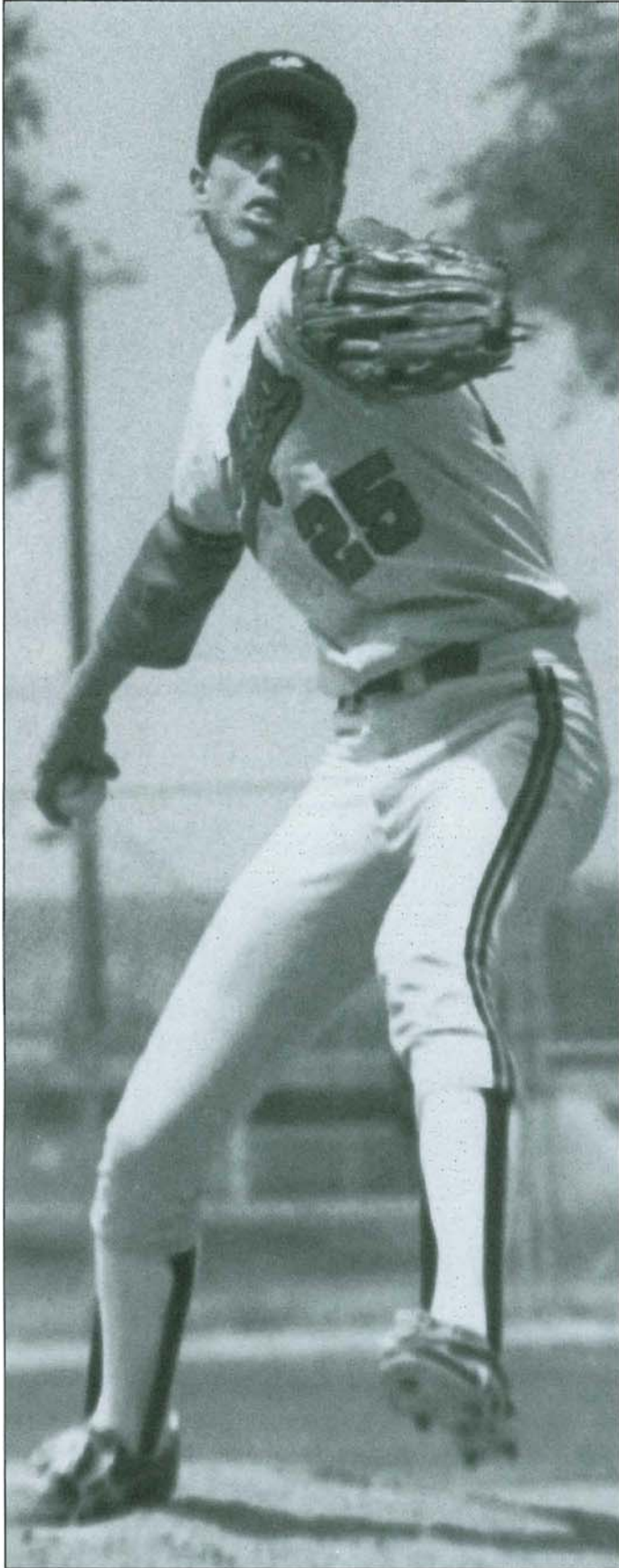


# LAMAR HIGH SCHOOL

## Story By L.D. Elarton, Principal Lamar High School - Lamar, Colorado



*Soph. Tyson Hartshorn 6-5 185 lbs.  
9-0 As A Starter: All State-All Conference in 1991*

"Three-peat!" "Three-peat!" "Three-peat!" the chant began to emanate from the large contingent of Lamar High School Savage baseball fans. Only the top half of the first inning of the state championship game had been played, but Lamar supporters were vocal. And why not? The Savages had scored eight runs in the top half of the first against arch-rival La Junta. Things were shaping up early for a third consecutive state title for the Jess Downey coached baseballers.

Baseball successes had been plentiful in recent years, but three in a row would be an accomplishment that few teams realize. To "re-peat" is one thing. That can be accomplished in consecutive seasons with few lineup changes. But the "Three-peat" feat requires top level success from a variety of personnel and at some point a vastly different lineup. The Savages had ridden the pitching prowess of Scott Brocail (Class of 1990 and now a top pitcher for the University of Arkansas) to sequential titles. But with the Spring of 1991, Brocail and much of his supporting cast were gone. Most observers saw it as a rebuilding year. Pitching was particularly suspect and only a couple of proven hitters were back. With Brocail gone, the burden of the pitching chores would fall upon Sophomore Tyson Hartshorn and Freshman Scott Elarton. Both were blessed with great size (6-5 and 6-7 respectively) and outstanding athletic ability, but could they sustain the drive to a third consecutive championship? Shortstop Jasen Jameson and versatile Thom Hartman (outfield, infield, relief pitcher) were back from great hitting seasons and All-State selection. Bart Cruikshank, a tremendous defensive catcher (All-State as a junior) was still in the fold, but his hitting was a question mark. Ryan Elarton, coming off an Honorable Mention All-State performance as a sophomore, would be solid in the outfield but could he hit? Eric Carnall same scenario, great fielder questionable hitter. Sophomores Joe Clark and Dennis Wolfe had enjoyed good ninth grade seasons, but would they hit the well known sophomore slump?

Well - as intimated earlier in the article - the "Three-peat" rallying cry led to the third consecutive Colorado state title for the Savages. As Jess Downey and his charges have proven on numerous occasions, they do not rebuild, they just reload! Observers of the program would suggest a variety of reasons for the ongoing success: Great coaching, outstanding talent, solid summer program, community support, and more. All of these things have been critical factors in the success formula, but a less obvious success factor has been the extensive and dedicated work done in the weight room under the supervision of strength coach Jess Downey.

# THREE-PEAT CHAMPS!

Each member of the three-peat team spent an hour a day in the Lamar High School weight room along with approximately 200 other students. The days of the weight room being available after school for a few interested athletes, as it was only a few short years ago, has evolved into a situation where weight training is offered each period of the school day to meet the needs of a broad range of students. Certainly many athletes have prospered from their efforts in the room, but large numbers of non-athletic students enjoy weight training benefits daily. More than 50 female students can be observed working diligently each day under the supervision of qualified instructors. Not only has the added strength paid dividends for LHS athletes, but the agility gained and the self-discipline required in the room have carried over to sports successes. The athlete that is well conditioned and strong physically, becomes the athlete who also develops mental toughness. They are the athletes that produce when the chips are down. They are the baseball players who will get the big hit in the last inning, or make the defensive play that saves the game, or strike out the opponents leading hitter when the game is on the line. The confidence and sense of teamwork that develops in the weight room, as encouraged by Downey's buddy system of lifting, carries over to the athletic field in the form of great success. The players help each other to achieve to levels that individually they could not realize.

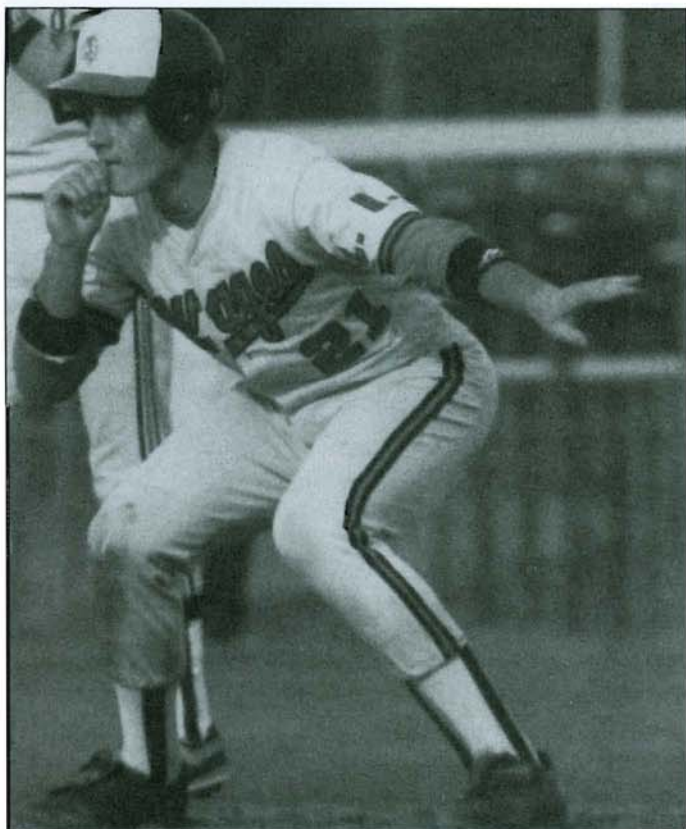
Without exception, the Lamar High School baseball players who have earned post-season honors, and there have been many, were each products of the LHS weight room. The many former LHS players who are now playing at the collegiate level would credit their experience and development in the weight room for their ability to play at the collegiate and higher levels. Doug Brocail, now on the San Diego Padres major league roster, realized great strength and agility gains from his lifting days at Lamar High School. To this day he works out regularly in the LHS weight room during the off-season.

What would be more exciting than winning three consecutive state championships? Winning four in a row would be. Thus, the rallying cry of the current edition of Lamar High School Baseball player "Four-peat!" "Four-peat!" "Four-peat!" And you know what? They just might get the job done. Three outstanding seniors are gone (Jameson, Hartman, and Cruikshank), but the nucleus returns with great potential. The champs of 1991 recorded a perfect log of 22 wins and 0 losses. Eighteen of those wins were earned by Hartshorn (9) and Scott Elarton (9). They are both back along with five other starters and additional players with some experience. Seniors Eric Darnall and Ryan Elarton may realize the dream of playing on four state championship teams. To "Four-peat" would be neat!

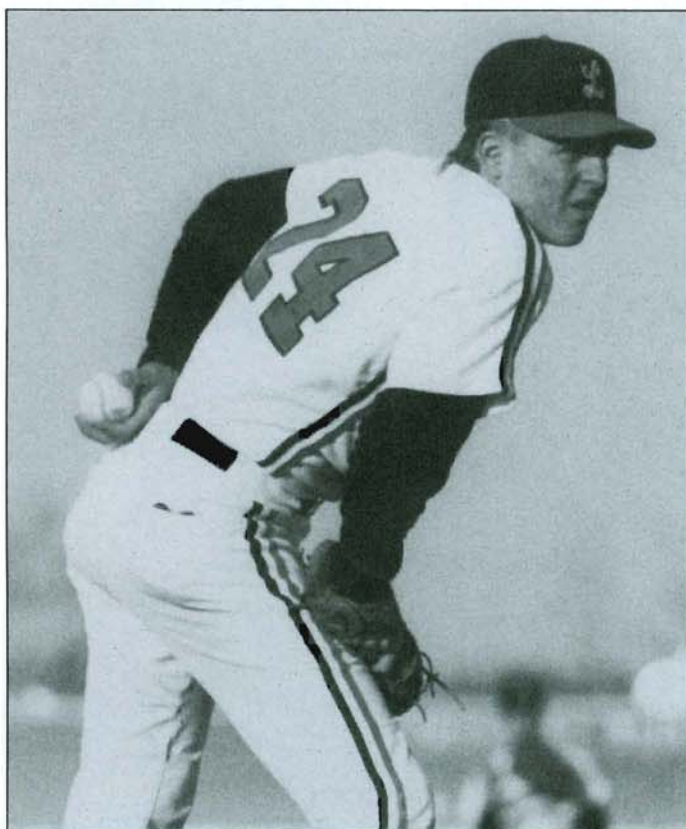


*Freshman Scott Elarton 6-7 219 lbs. 9-0 As A Pitcher in 1991  
.541 Batting Average, Lead Team In RBI's :  
All-State - All Conference*

# LAMAR HIGH: THREE-PEAT CHAMPS!



Senior Catcher: Bart Cruickshank 6-0, 190 lbs. Lead Team In Doubles (12); All-State, All-Conference in 1991



Senior Thom Hartman: Outfield-Pitcher 5-10 175 lbs. Lead Team In Homeruns (8) and Triples(6) All-State, All-Conference in 1991.

## 1992 Season Update

At this writing, Lamar is well into the season and is undefeated with over 40 victories in a row also spanning last year's season. Coach Jess Downey has this thought as he tries to keep his team focused on extending the streak without big heads, "America roots for the underdog so we know no one is pulling for us. We're constantly fighting off distractions."

"We do all the BFS Core lifts. Our players also climb a lot of rope and our pitchers use surgical tubing for some of their resistive exercises. Most of our players do a complete workout on game days." Obviously this is counter to what the majority of baseball coaches do as most wouldn't touch a weight during the season. "It hasn't screwed one thing up we do," said Coach Downey flatly. "I preach that."

"I see athletes who are superior as freshmen that don't improve that much when they're seniors. We don't want that to happen with our kids, We're blessed with some great height (6-3, 6-4, 6-5 and 6-7<sup>1/2</sup>) but we've made them strong even though they are lean. We demand our players lift and they understand its importance."

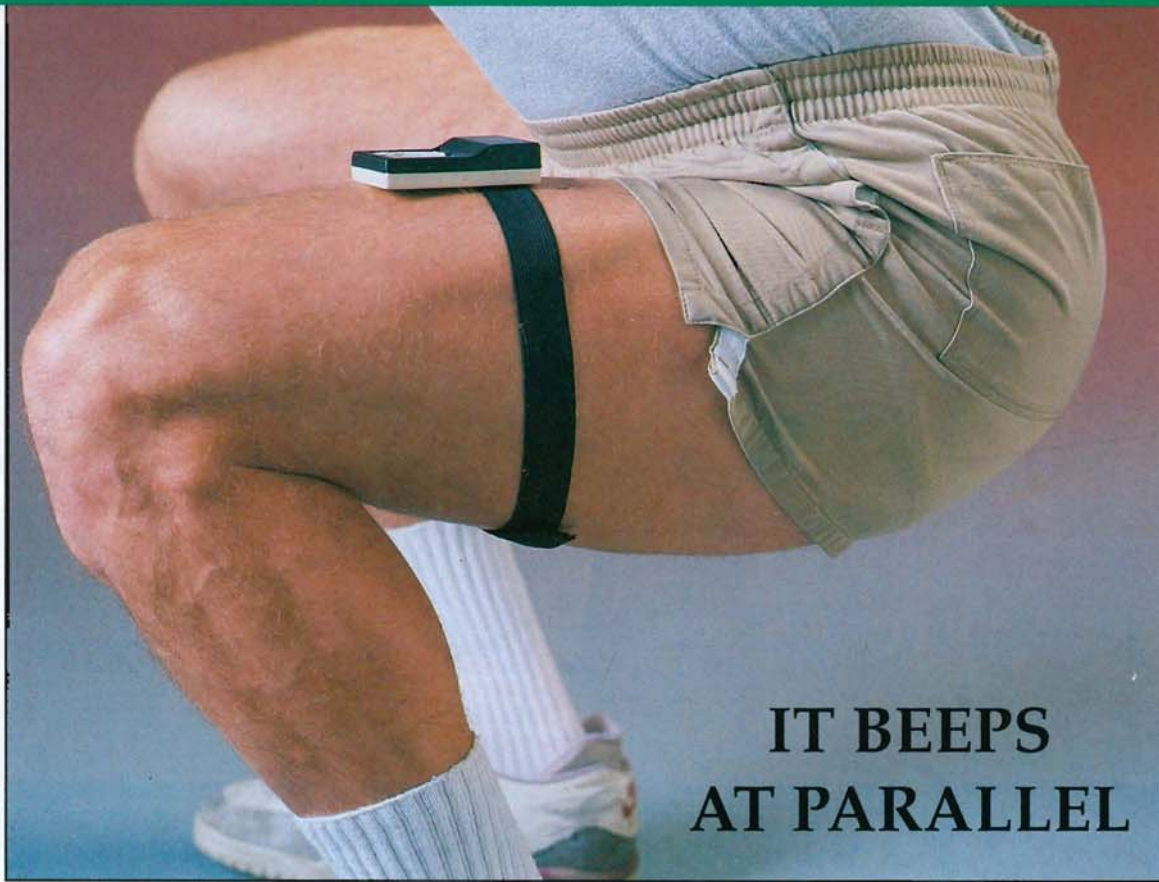
## Stats After Only 8 Games

Batter	Pos	AB	Hits	Avg	Runs	RBI	2B	3B	HR	BB	SO	OBA
Clark, J	SS	28	10	.357	8	7	1	1	0	2	2	.400
Craig, C	DH	2	2	1.00	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1.00
Elarton, R	LF	24	13	.542	14	5	1	0	0	5	1	.621
Elarton, S	2B	24	7	.292	9	10	2	0	3	3	0	.414
Hartshorn, T	CF	24	10	.417	8	9	2	0	2	2	3	.481
McCorkle, L		6	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	6	4	.500
Portillo, P		17	3	.176	3	2	2	0	0	7	6	.417
Vallejos, N	P	22	7	.318	9	5	1	0	0	6	6	.483
Darnall, E	3B	24	11	.458	12	2	4	1	0	4	1	.581
Stiles, G		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wolf, D	RF	11	4	.364	1	5	0	0	0	4	2	.533
Nelson, K	C	24	7	.292	7	8	1	0	0	2	8	.370
Kelley, J	LF	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Cousins, JC	PH	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## Stats After Only 8 Games

Pitcher	IP	BF	Hits	Wins	Lose	ERA	ER	RUN	2B	3B	HR	BB	SO
Elarton, S	19	0	9	3	0	2.21	6	7	1	0	0	3	30
Hartshorn, T	25	0	20	4	0	.84	3	4	4	0	0	13	28
Portillo, P	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vallejos, N	5	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5

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# SPEED TRAP II

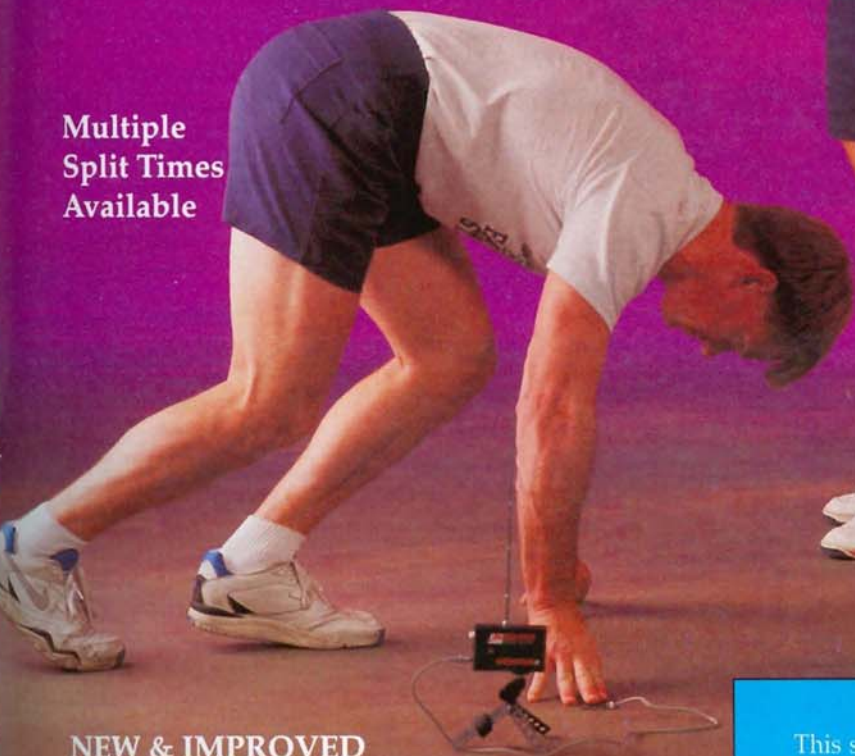
Wireless Timing System  
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