

# Explosive Power **In a Small Package**

## *A Profile of Sabino High School's Running Back Derek Fleming*

**By Jeff Scurran  
BFS Clinician &  
Sabino Head Coach**

Over the years in playing and coaching sports, I've heard many a coach say that "it's not the size of the player that counts". So many expressions about a "big man in a little Package" exist that this phrase is as overworked as any cliché in the cliché-ridden world of sports.

However, I've known very few coaches or players who demonstrate that they believe that this is really true. In fact, larger athletes are more and more the norm in sports.

If this is true in your school, you are losing out on athletes who carry the greatest attributes in winning that any team can have: work ethic, heart, and athletic ability regardless of size.

At Sabino High School, we have relied on a steady diet of players like this: For Example:

In 1990, our undefeated, State Championship Team, ranked #17 in the USA, had a defensive line anchored by 5'4", 140 lb, Tony Martin. Literally, you could not knock this future Marine off of his feet.

In 1991, our strong safety

**At a current height of 5'6" and a weight that has gradually increased to 155 lbs.. Derek presents the future of our running attack.**



**Derek Doing form Running  
Butt Kickers to Improve His  
Quick 4.5 - 40 Speed**

was 5'8", 135 lb, Doug Popvich. Doug is now at the University of San Diego and was named to GTE Academic All-American First Team.

In 1992, our undefeated, State Championship Team had a 180 lb. middle line backer named Chad Brewer. A year later, Chad was named First Team, All-Conference for Eastern Arizona College as a 195 lb. true freshman.

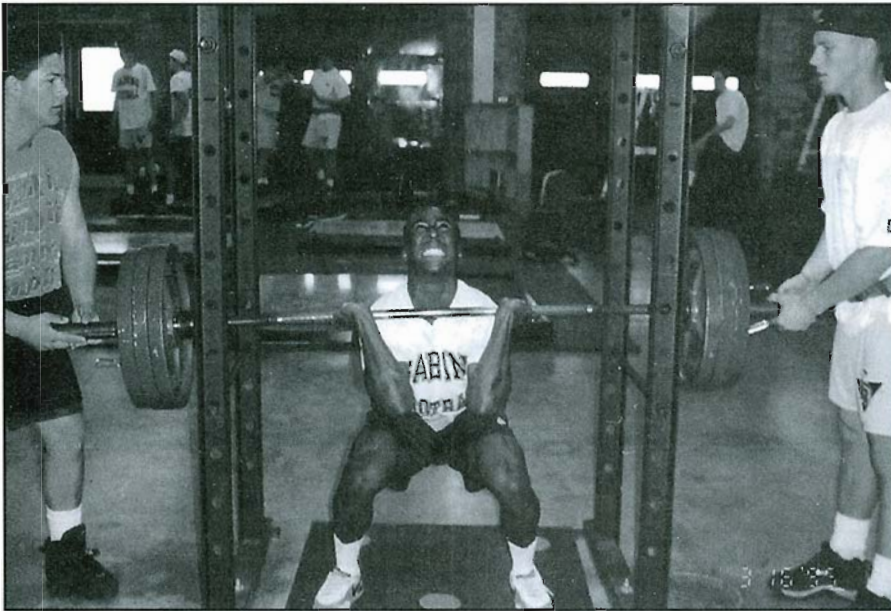
For the last few years, all eyes have focused on current junior, Derek Fleming, the strongest player, pound-for-pound that I have ever seen.

From the minute Derek walked his small frame onto our campus, Derek has never complained about anything, let alone his size. He answers all critics with the same quiet, mild-mannered response that he treats life with hard work and dedication. At a current height of 5'6" and a weight that has gradually increased to 155 lbs.. Derek presents the future of our running attack. This attack over the years had featured several All-American and All-State players, including 1994 BFS Athlete-of-the-Year, Corey Hill, currently at Stanford.

As you might imagine, Derek has literally no fat on his body. He has geared his entire game for quickness, speed, and agility. He constantly watches his food in-take and gets a lot of cooperation from his parents in buying healthy, fitness-oriented foods.

Derek's daily regiment includes the BFS 1-2-3-4 Stretching Program and the Dot Drill. Since his freshman year, Derek has participated in our football team's form running program, which includes movement fundamentals every day of football practice. Twice a week, Derek, along with the rest of his Sabino teammates, does box plyometrics. All of this in addition to the regular BFS Strength Program





**Derek's lifting routine is a precise BFS workout, right out of the book.**

that Sabino High School runs, straight from the book.

Derek likes the "variety of lifts" and "the challenges of breaking records" in the BFS System. "It's the only system I've ever been with, but it has served me so well," he says.

In the Spring, Derek runs sprints for the track team and continues in our football team's off-season running program.

"I believe that plyometrics has made me much more explosive," Derek states. "In track, it has helped me so much with my starts, getting out of the blocks. With my shorter

strides, I have to get out first or I can't win."

Derek's lifting routine is a precise BFS workout, right out of the book. Since his freshmen year, he has broken all six weekly set records every week, never missing a record. "It's not that hard to break records and the routine of lifting and recording has become habit," he says.

On the field, Derek's running style duplicates his lifting...100% effort on every carry. During last season, a 300 lb. lineman jumped on Derek's back trying to tackle him. Derek carried this

**A 300 lb. lineman jumped on Derek's back trying to tackle him. Derek carried this huge man over 10 yards..**

huge man over 10 yards until his legs finally collapsed, his body accepting the full force of the fall. Even before this giant could get up, Derek had rolled out from under him and popped up to his feet, ready for the next play.

During this past football season, Derek averaged 7.2 yards per carry on close to 70 attempts, but started primarily as a blocking back for our current crop of seniors. Imagine, a 5'6", 140 lb. blocking back in top level high school football.

Derek feels that the motivation to be a great small athlete in a big-person's world must come from within. "You must have the determination to be as good as you can be. You can't let other people convince you that you're too small."

"My goal is to get a scholarship in football", says Derek.

"People are going to tell me that I'm too small. I say that size doesn't make any difference. "It's all in how you see yourself...your mindset. Tell yourself what you want to accomplish, then make a plan that will get you there (like the BFS System) and get help from the right people (your parents, coaches, teammates), and be willing to do the work, then the sky is the limit".....□

**Derek's Progress Chart**

Grade	Wt.	Squat	Clean	D.lift	40
9	130	200	135	400	5.0
10	140	295	195	500	4.8
11	155	425	250	600	4.5
12*	170	500	280	650	4.4

\* Derek's Goals For Next Year.

