Old-School Football at Augusta High

A return to the basics led this Kansas school from 1-17 to 10-2



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Old-school football coaches will tell you that the first step in developing a championship football team is attitude – that if you don't believe you can win, you won't. It would be hard to find a better example of the power of positive thinking than the players at Augusta High School.

n the 2002-2003 seasons, the Orioles from Augusta, Kansas, had a combined record of 1-17. Head Coach Steve Pazzie recalls that, judging by the attendance at games, the team was pretty much ignored by the community and the rest of the student body. But despite such apathy, the team never stopped believing they could win. "You wouldn't have known we were losing by watching their effort on the practice field and in the weightroom. They were committed to turning the program around and worked their tails off – it was phenomenal."

To the Orioles' credit, Pazzie says they were in a tough football league, and because there was such a low turnout for the team he was often forced to play freshmen and sophomores. After the 2003 season, Pazzie knew he did not want that group of young athletes to look back on their high school playing days with regret. Something in their program had to change, and Pazzie decided that the first place he would start was the weightroom.

"I had been at Augusta High for 25 years, 15 as the head coach, but I'd never had anything to do with the weight pro-



After their opening game victory in 2005, the Orioles had great support from the community and student body.

gram. But after the disastrous seasons in 2002 and 2003, it was obvious that our off-season program just wasn't getting it done for us." Pazzie adds that his players were small and lacked speed, with his skill players seldom running the forty faster than 5.1.

Having heard good things about BFS, Pazzie decided to bring out BFS Clinician Jim Brown for a clinic in May of 2003. Pazzie says the clinic provided a great start to the summer program, and it helped get other coaches on board about the value of unifying the workout program. Another plus about the BFS program was how long it took to complete. "My philosophy is that a workout should only take about 45-50 minutes, because it's hard to maintain good intensity if you go longer." At Augusta, since the coach for the weight training classes during school hours did not use BFS, Pazzie

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The 2005 season resulted in 10 victories, a feat accomplished by Augusta High School once in 25 years.

I don't think you can have a successful football program without a good weight program anymore, and you can't beat what it does for the confidence factor.
—Head Coach Steve Pazzie

Heavy duty power racks form the core of Augusta High's weightroom — it's old-school weight training at its best!



took it upon himself to open the weightroom at 6:30 a.m. and implement the program himself.

The following year strength coach Matt Ingrim took over the weight training classes and implemented BFS, so now the players could train during school hours – and get a bit more sleep!

Getting with the Program

By the start of the 2004 season, the Orioles' die-hard determination to win had some real muscle behind it. Pazzie says, "When we walked on the field for our first game a year ago I could see that our players didn't have that wide-eyed look – there was a look of confidence in their eyes."

The Orioles won that first game, and with just that one victory the fans also became believers. "After we won our first ball game it was just unbelievable how the community and the school came alive – it was incredible! We started getting over 3,000 fans in the stands; and here in Kansas, 3,000 people is quite a crowd for a high school football game." And the Orioles continued to impress.

That year the team ended 7-3 and made it to the first round of the playoffs, just missing the league title when a kick-off was run back in the last 30 seconds of the game. The juniors and younger players on the team were hungry for even more, and they went into the off-season with just as much enthusiasm and discipline as in the previous year.

The 2005 season started off with four league games, and the Orioles won each game handily, with scores of 32-19, 37-9, 23-10 and 36-7. Their final league game, against Wellington High School, was a major victory for the defense, as the team pulled off a 9-0 victory. After

that, their offense became a touchdown machine, racking up scores of 40-14, 62-37 and 49-14. They finished the season 8-1, their only loss being to Andale High School, and the former cellardwellers were again in the playoffs.

The Orioles won their first two playoff games with scores of 27-7 and 40-28. Playing in November was very special to Pazzie, because since 1960 only one other Orioles team had had 10

wins in a year. In the quarterfinals they were pitted against Andale, which had beat them 40-14 in the regular season. This game was a different story; although

the Orioles didn't win, the game was sensational and the fans got their money's worth – the final score was 13-14.

Lessons Learned

One lesson Pazzie has learned from his experience with his Orioles is the power of attitude – you can make athletes faster. "The more that's published about successful strength programs, I think a lot more coaches are buying into it – we definitely saw it firsthand. You can improve your speed, no question. Obviously there's a difference in talent

between running a 4.5 and running a 4.8, but I can remember years when none of our kids ran faster than 5.1, and now our linemen are under 5 flat. Our quarterback and halfback did 4.7, and that's extremely fast for us. Yes, you definitely can develop speed.

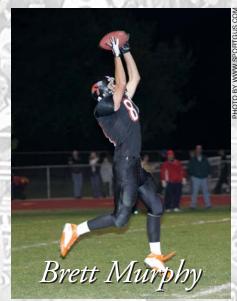
"I don't think you can have a successful football program without a good weight program anymore, and you can't beat what it does for the confidence fac-

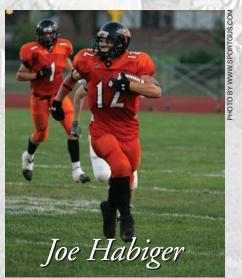
tor. The other thing the weight training program did for us is it helped bring our team together as a unit. Our players developed great chemistry. These kids didn't just show up; they

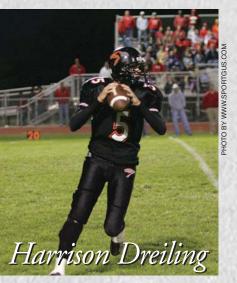
were committed.'

Orioles

After the Orioles' awards banquet, Pazzie says the coaches talked about the possibility that next year's team might slack off. "Some of our younger kids don't understand the kind of work ethic and commitment it took our last two senior classes to get to this point, so that's a concern. But on the other hand, our program is set in place, it's great, and we're looking forward to next year. When it comes down to it, when you invest time in kids and show them you care, they give everything they've got."







Great improvements in team speed helped the Orioles reach the quarterfinals in the playoffs for the 2005 State championships.



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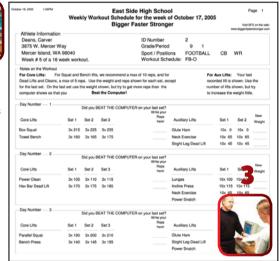
Print Test Sheets

Forms for weights and field testing

	Individual Ironn	nan, Pow	igh School er, and Overall Rar er Stronger	nkings	Page
Athlete Information					
Deans, Carver					
ID Number:	2		Height: 6 Ft 1 li		
Grade/Period:	9 1		Weight: 160 Lbs		
Weekly Workout Sch	sedule: FB-O		Sport: FOOTB	ALL CB	WR
Note: For all Lifts and	Speed & Agility Ev	ents, higher	Point Values are better		
Ironman Ranking					
	1 Rep	Point.		Rank	
Core Lift	Max	Value	Ironman Ranking	Grade	School
Squat	225 lbs	2	Good	4th	4th
Bench	165 lbs	2	Good	3rd	3rd
Dead Lift	200 lbs	1	Beginning	6th	6th
Clean	125 lbs	1	Beginning	4th	4th
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	Overall Ironmo	an Ranking:	Beginning		
Power Ranking —					
	Most				
E	Recent	Point	Power Ranking	Rank	
Event 20 Yard Dash	Score	Value	Great	_Grade_	School
	2.80 sec	12			3rd
40 yard Dash Dot Drill	4.90 sec 72 sec	10	Great	3rd 7th	3rd 7th
	72 sec	7	Beginning Good	7th 5th	7th 5th
Vertical Jump					
Long Jump	47	0	Beginning	9th	9th
Sit & Reach	2"			9th	9th
	Point Total:	34	Beginning		
Overal	Power Ranking:	5,440			
	Remember it is	not where y	ou start, it is where you	finish.	
			personal records each		
Recommendation # 1			.,,	.,	
Flexibility is key to impro	ving speed. Stretch will	n intensity every	day with the BFS 1-2-3-4 File	xibility program.	
Recommendation # 2					
The key to explosive por You need to really empl	wer is the Panallel Squat hasize this part of your t		and Plyometrics.		
Recommendation # 3					
	Dot Drill every day. Get				

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