



A Few Words With...
**BFS Clinician
 Jeff Scurran**

A veteran of over 500 BFS clinics shares his insights into training student-athletes

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,” wrote George Santayana in his 1905 book, *The Life of Reason*. Although Santayana’s philosophy certainly applies to our failures in history, it can also apply to learning from our successes. In this sense, it applies perfectly to the coaching career of BFS clinician Jeff Scurran.

Scurran is one of the most in-demand BFS clinicians because he has a reputation for transforming troubled programs. In his personal coaching career Scurran has turned around five high school football teams. Four years ago he started a junior college program from scratch and led them to a bowl championship. A coach who is always looking for the edge, Scurran knows what works—and what doesn’t—in training athletes.

Scurran is a devoted family man who has been married for 34 years to Joan, a teacher. They have two grown children. Their daughter, Shelley, is an artist, and their son, Josh, is working on his MBA at Portland State University. The Scurrans currently live in Tucson, Arizona.



A veteran of over 500 BFS clinics, including 100 Be an 11! seminars, Scurran is one of the most active clinicians at BFS. He is also in demand as a speaker for many top

corporations, sharing lessons from the playing field to help companies win in business. In this exclusive interview, Scurran shares his thoughts on developing not just great athletes but great student-athletes.

BFS: What is your athletic background?

Scurran: Although I was one of the fastest kid on my high school football team, I was only 5-foot-8 and 145 pounds. I attended the University of Florida; and even though I loved football, I just didn’t have the size and ability to play the game at that level. But it took me a while to finally admit it!

BFS: The University of Florida has been a perennial powerhouse in college football. With your speed, don’t you think you could have played football if you had attended a Division II college instead?

Scurran: Yes, I believe so, but there were a lot of good reasons why I decided to attend the University of Florida. One of the primary reasons was that my brother was attending medical school there.

BFS: Let’s talk about your coaching success. You’ve turned around football programs at five different high schools. How did you do it? What was the biggest difference you made?

Scurran: Much of my success I attribute to teaching what I call the “Big Three”: *Work Hard, Work Smart, and Work Together!* I learned that from my dad, who

was a classic overachiever. My dad was smaller than I am, yet he was decorated five times in World War II. He was in the 10th Mountain Division, which saw more days in combat than any other unit. After the war Dad became a salesman, and he worked his tail off his whole life.

BFS: Is there anything special you do at your BFS clinics that contributes to a team's success?

Scurran: I try to get into a school early before the clinic. I like to roam

coaching a junior college team versus a high school team?

Scurran: At the junior college level, the number-one concern is about lifestyle decisions. These athletes are grown, they're out on their own, and so they are making choices that can complicate their athletic performance. There is also the larger issue of finances, and these schools often don't have much money. We had to practice in a city park because we had no home stadium, so

Last year Scurran's team at Pima Community College won the Pilgrim's Pride Bowl Classic in Mt. Pleasant, TX and were ranked 5th in the nation.



the halls, talk to a few teachers, athletes and some administrators. In about half an hour's time, I can determine exactly why a school wins or why a school loses. It's that obvious.

BFS: Four years ago you took over the football program at Pima Community College . . .

Scurran: I didn't take it over. I started it from scratch—they didn't have a football program.

BFS: Really! How did your team play that first year?

Scurran: In our opening game, with only freshmen, we upset the defending national champions, Glendale College. We finished that year at 4-6, although the local media and league coaches doubted we would win even a single game. The following year we were 7-1, but then our quarterback broke his leg and we

finished at 7-3. The next year we were 6-5; and this year we won nine games, won the Pilgrim's Pride Bowl Classic in Mount Pleasant, Texas, and were ranked fifth in the nation.



BFS: What are the special challenges involved in

all our games were road games. We had no locker rooms. The team joke was that when a recruit asked us where the team dressed, we'd ask them what kind of car they drove! It stopped being funny after a couple years, but it's true. But in the end, the financial limitations of these programs had nothing to do with how we performed on the field.

BFS: Do you have more discipline problems in college?

Scurran: In 2003 I had to remove 37 kids from the program because of discipline problems. But the kids who remained were great kids. At our bowl games most of the people who were cheering for us were local Texans—they supported us, a team that came from 1,500 miles away, not the team that came from two hours away; and I know that was due to the class my kids displayed in our three days in Mount Pleasant. Our kids won over the fans by our enthusiasm at practice and our great behavior at the bowl pre-game events. There was also the fact that we were underdogs, playing against a team that was far superior to us in terms of athletic ability.

BFS: You've been known to say, "You don't win championships with superstars." Would you elaborate

on this?

Scurran: Someday I hope to write a book called *Talent Is What You Lose With*. I believe that there are “X” numbers of great athletes per 100 kids, whatever that number may be. Every school has great athletes. I’ve always felt that these athletes cancel each other out, and that the way you win is by taking your average athletes and elevating them to competitive status. And in that process, some of them will become over-achievers—they will, in fact, become Elevens.

BFS: You give a lot of presentations to businesses. What aspects of athletics carry through to the job world?

Scurran: Sports can teach you how to get along with people, work within an organization, set goals and know how to reach them. Many of these qualities can be taught in the weightroom, particularly with a system such as Bigger Faster Stronger.

BFS: How did you first learn about BFS?

Scurran: I first heard about it through the magazine. The training articles in the magazine caught my eye, plus I enjoyed all the success stories. This motivated me to schedule a clinic, and in 1989 Rick Anderson came out to our high school and did one. When Rick saw what my athletes were doing he said, “You don’t need to have a clinic—you need to be a clinician!”

BFS: What do you remember about your first year as a BFS clinician?

Scurran: I remember saying to myself, “Geez, what do I know that these other coaches don’t? You see, I just assumed that everybody understood that you have to take athletes and make them better, to make them faster, stronger and

more explosive—not just make them better football players. What I eventually realized, and it’s still true today, is that not everybody understands this.

BFS: Would you share with us one of your favorite clinic experiences?

Scurran: That’s actually difficult to answer, as I have been able to help so many schools turn losing football programs into state champions. For example, a few years ago BFS did a story about Somerset High School in Somerset, Wisconsin. After our first clinic they went from three wins to state champions in just one year, and I’m invited back every year.

BFS: Having given over 500 BFS clinics, are you still as enthusiastic about doing them as when you first started?

Scurran: Even more so! Whenever I go to a clinic I’m instantly up. Sure, I feel an obligation to help those kids experience the same success that my athletes have experienced, but when you get down to it, it’s just fun. It’s amazing to see the look on the kids’ faces when they realize that they can be champions; it’s an experience that is very difficult to put into words. You have to witness it firsthand. Also, because more than half of my clinics are repeats, I feel like I’ve become a part of the coaching staff of those schools.

BFS: You’ve coached at the high school level and the college level. Which is more enjoyable?

Scurran: Let’s just say I love high school sports. I believe high school sports are the peak of where



training, athletic ability and purity of sports come together. In college it becomes a business.

BFS: What's the best aspect of the BFS program—what sets it apart from all those other programs available?

Scurran: On one hand I could say the set-rep system, but really I think it's our attention to all the areas where we reach the athlete; in mind, body and spirit. And I believe we appeal to the highest ideals of sport. We don't take shortcuts at BFS because we know this is a guaranteed way to get better.

BFS: What do you like about the Be an 11! Program?

Scurran: First of all, the guidebook—it has so many inspirational examples of role-model athletes that any kid will be touched by them. The second thing is the program's attention to goal setting, about how to develop an action plan to achieve those goals. Finally, it's a flexible program that addresses the specific needs and problems of any group of student-athletes.

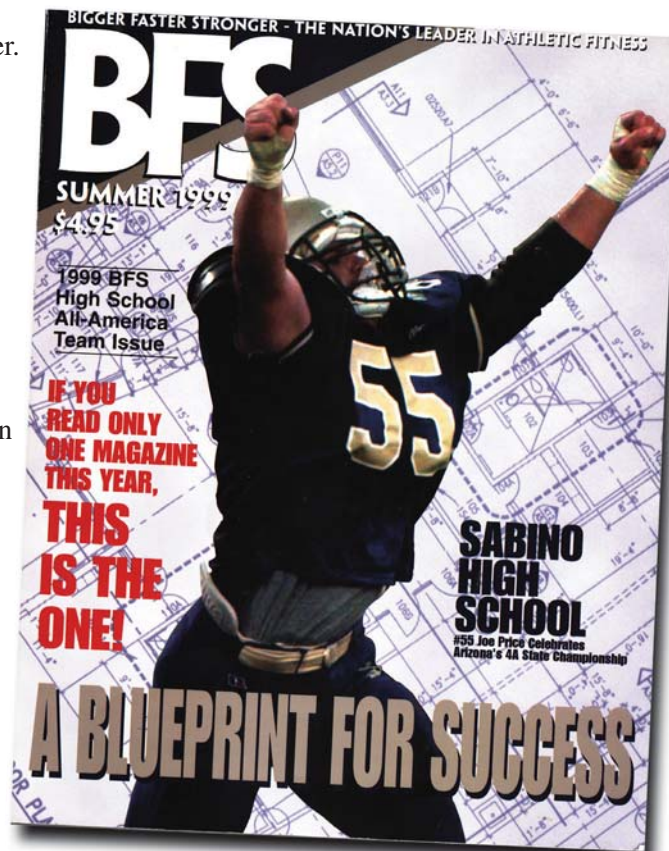
BFS: What about female athletes on the BFS program? How do they respond?

Scurran: Athletes are athletes, and female athletes now are getting into serious athletic development and understand that athletic training is not going to make them bulky. What's interesting is that often the girls will have a greater range of improvement than the boys, because so often they come from backgrounds where athletic development has never been touched on. And the distance you can travel with them in a shorter period of time is fantastic.

BFS: What is the difference between kids now versus when you first started coaching?



Scurran: Kids today are not really different; it's more that society is different. There are so many more choices for young people, both positive and negative, and a lot more distractions. When I do my Be an 11! clinics, I tell kids that everybody is



The Summer 1999 issue of BFS highlighted the accomplishments of Coach Scurran's team at Sabino High School.

born with all the tools it takes to achieve a high level of success, and that being a champion is a choice.


BFS: Do you consider TV watching and playing video games negative choices?

Scurran: Life is a participation sport, and I think it's a shame to become just a spectator in life by watching too much TV and playing video games. Now these activities have their place; but when they take up several hours a day, they become life consuming.

BFS: In regard to role models, there are many professional athletes who are definitely not setting good examples of sportsmanship. Does their behavior trickle down to the high school level?

Scurran: Yes, it can easily trickle down to a weak mind, to anyone who doesn't understand that nobody's responsible for you but you. Again, being a champion is a choice, and kids are free to choose to allow the type of behavior demonstrated by those athletes to influence their lives.

BFS: Being involved in BFS as long as you have, what changes have you seen in the company since when you first started?

Scurran: The magazine has become even better, and there's a lot of attention going to new developments such as the website. That being said, BFS has never changed its core values. That's where Dr. Greg Shepard has been such a great influence in my life. He's solid as a rock—there aren't a lot of people on the planet who are. Because of this, I'll work for BFS till I drop! 

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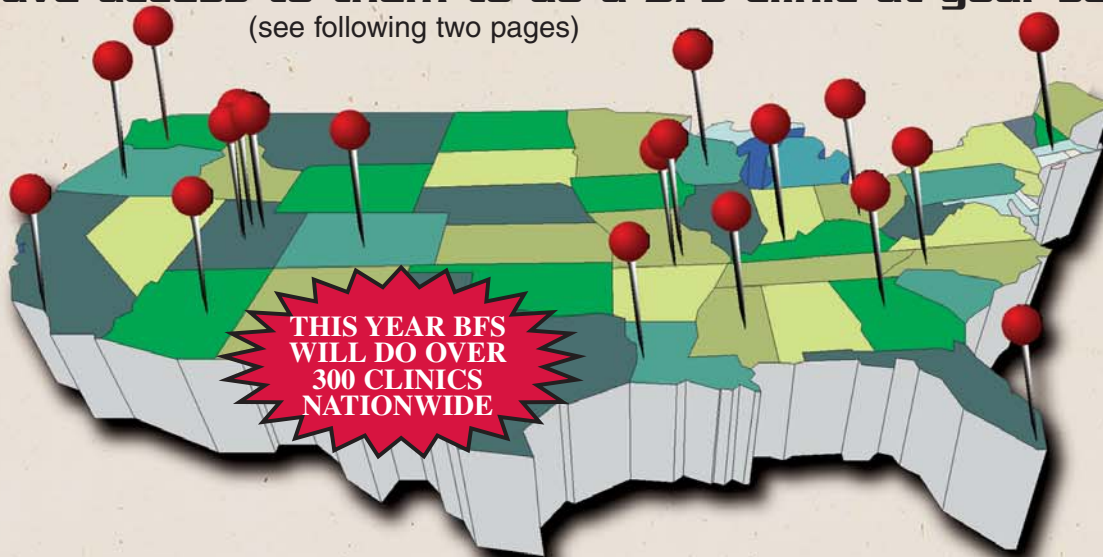
This group represents some of the best, most successful coaches in the country.



Back Row: Roger Freeborn (OR), John Rowbotham (UT), Bob Rowbotham (UT), Mark Beckham (CA), Ray Cosenza (MA), Rick Bojak (UT), Len Walencikowski (FL), Evan Ayres (WA), Rick Tomberlin (GA), Matt Merry (LA), Jeff Scurran (AZ), Bob Doyle (OH), **Middle Row:** Jeff Sellers (IN), Jim Brown (MO), Mandy Eakin (MO), Dennis Dunn (LA), Bobby Poss (NC), Rick Anderson (UT), Doug Ekmark (MN), **Front Row:** Bob Bozied (CO) BFS CEO, Dr. Greg Shepard (UT). Not Pictured: Patty Hagemeyer (CO), Doug Holland (LA), Lance Nevin (AL)

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(see following two pages)



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for up to 50 athletes; additional athletes only \$40 each. \$1,600 is due to reserve your date and the balance is due the day of the clinic

What's being said about BFS Clinics

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Ken Biegel, Head Football Coach
Northland Pines High School
Eagle River, Wisconsin

"I have had more positive comments on the BFS/Be An 11! presentation than any other single presentation in the 5 years I have been here as a Superintendent."

Ronald J. Dayton,
Superintendent of Schools
School District of Cambridge
Cambridge, Wisconsin

"Words like *extraordinary*, *inspirational*, and *terrific* come to mind when I begin to describe the BFS Clinic. We are always looking for programs that bring out the best in our students. In that regard, BFS was a grand slam homerun!"

Thomas G. Aycok, Headmaster
Trinity Episcopal School
Richmond, Virginia

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- Covers the basics
- Core lifts to plyometrics
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A clinic is broken down into three basic parts: an instructional section, a motivational section and a hands-on section. Safety is emphasized. The 1-day clinic will teach your coaches and athletes the basics of getting started immediately on a BFS total program. Includes a section on nutrition and a special coaches' clinic.

Price: \$1,600

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Price: \$1,950*

* Up to 50 athletes. Additional athletes only \$20 each.

Antioxidant Scan

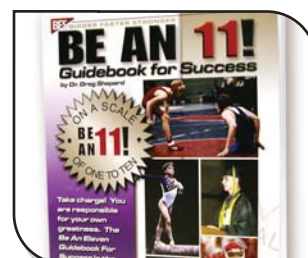


- Antioxidant scan
- How to Stay healthy
- The best supplements

BFS understands that proper nutrition is an absolutely critical component in any strength and conditioning program. But how do you know if you're eating correctly, or if those expensive supplements you're taking actually work? With the Pharmanex BioPhotonic Scanner, a non-invasive laser that accurately measures antioxidant levels, in just a few minutes your athletes get an accurate assessment of their nutritional status.

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- Inspires to reach beyond
- Set goals and values
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Are you interested in a motivational seminar that stresses character development? The Be An 11! Seminar will teach your athletes how to set goals, develop strategies to achieve them, and become leaders. Using the *Be an 11! Guidebook for Success* as its textbook, this seminar is the springboard for bringing out excellence in every area of life. A truly inspirational event.

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* Up to 50 athletes. Additional athletes only \$15 each.



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