

Minico High School Turns the Corner

There's a new tradition developing at this small Idaho school

"Things used to be pretty rough around here," says Tim Perrigot, athletic director and vice principal at Minico High School in Rupert, Idaho. Coach Perrigot was speaking about the Spartans' reputation for finishing in the lower half of their conference and the struggles he had with the previous three-year format of the school. But after reaching the quarterfinals and winning seven games in 2005, their most wins since 1982, and receiving great support from the student body and community, there's a new tradition developing at Minico: *a tradition of winning.*

All Conference Wide Receiver and Defensive Back McCoy Worthington.

#76 Linebacker Kurtis Bessire, the team's leading tackle, is assisted by #81 Bryce Hafso. Both are All Conference selections.



“**W**hat we’ve accomplished this past season was great for our school and our community,” says Perrigot. When you look at the fact that we hadn’t won a conference championship since 1968 or even a high school playoff game, this was an incredible season. By the end of the year the stands were packed, and at the playoff games the atmosphere was just electric. I don’t think our kids have ever experienced anything like that before, and I think one of the reasons we continued to improve as the season went on was that there was so much energy in our program.”

Along with their team victories, the Spartans produced many outstanding individual honors, such as the first 1,000 wide receiver and the first 1,000 rusher

in school history. And with their quarterback having two years of eligibility remaining, the future certainly looks bright for Spartan football. But to discover how this was accomplished, you have to go back to 2002, a year when the Spartans were coming off a two-win season.

One of the problems with developing winning teams at Minico High School had been the organization of the schools in their district. Before 2002 the junior high schools used to include grades seven through nine, which meant the high school was left with grades ten through twelve. “We really felt that restructuring to have high schools include the ninth grade made a big difference in our program,” says Perrigot. “That meant we had the ability to work with our athletes

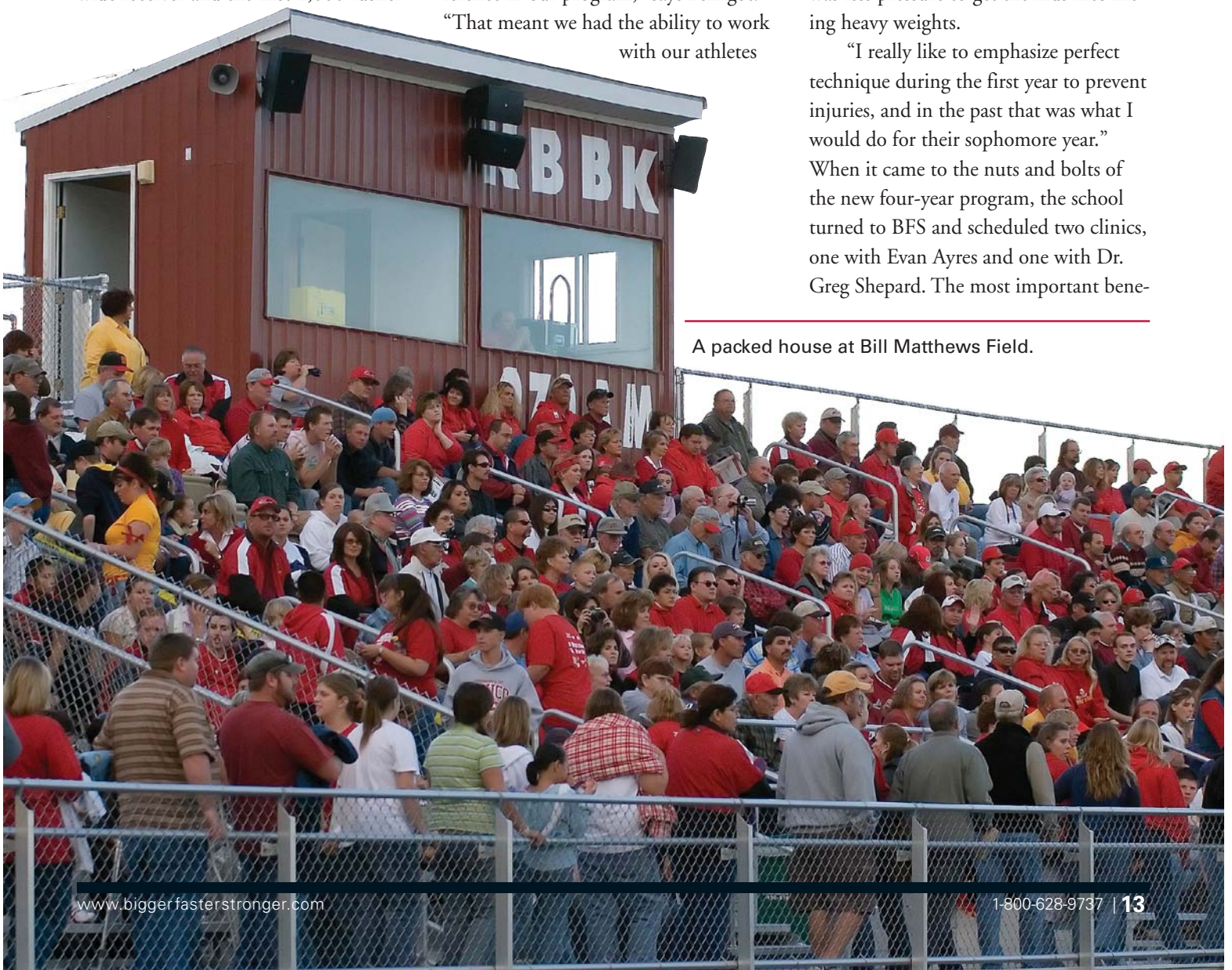
for a four-year period. This is especially important because we are basically a rural, farming community, so many of our athletes have to work in the summer and can’t be involved in athletics.”

Pumping Up, and Pumping Early

Perrigot says that besides having the advantage of an extra year of learning Spartan football philosophy, the athletes now have an extra year in the weightroom because they hadn’t lifted in junior high. “Last year was the first time we had kids who had been with us for the entire four-year period.” Perrigot says that one of the benefits of having the extra year in the weightroom was there was less pressure to get the kids into lifting heavy weights.

“I really like to emphasize perfect technique during the first year to prevent injuries, and in the past that was what I would do for their sophomore year.” When it came to the nuts and bolts of the new four-year program, the school turned to BFS and scheduled two clinics, one with Evan Ayres and one with Dr. Greg Shepard. The most important bene-

A packed house at Bill Matthews Field.





The Spartan defense celebrates a turnover.

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Running Back Dale Sayles, #34, was named MVP of the Conference. He was the first 1,000-yard rusher in school history.

fit they gained from these clinics, says Perrigot, was unification.

“When I first started coaching here everybody was doing their own thing. The baseball coach was teaching wrist curls all day, the track coach was doing lunges, everybody was doing their own stretching routine, and some coaches did-



Bryce Hafso was the first 1,000-yard receiver in school history.

n't want the athletes doing any of that during their own season. “What we decided was to bring someone in to help us straighten this thing out. So we brought in BFS, and it was the best thing that ever happened to our school because it put everybody on the same page.” That emphasis on unification has enhanced all sport programs at Minico.

“We just won the state championship in wrestling, and that's the first one we've won since 1970. Our baseball team won the state championship last spring, and that was the first one since 1982. Our girls' basketball team placed third last year in the state tournament, as did our girls' softball team. A lot of good things are happening here at Minico.”

In addition to being the athletic director at Minico, Perrigot is also the vice principal and says often the biggest



The Minico cheerleaders had plenty to cheer about this season.

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administrative challenge he faces is getting good help. “One of the trends I’m seeing at the high school level is that it is becoming more and more difficult to find quality, energetic people to work with our kids, especially those with teaching backgrounds. There just doesn’t seem to be a lot of young kids going to college with the idea that they are going to be a teacher and a coach.”

As for his future goals for the Spartans, Perrigot says, “We’re trying to develop some tradition here, so we are continually emphasizing to our kids that we have to stay focused on doing the things we need to do to continue to be winners. And it’s paying off. Right now our kids are doing what hasn’t happened around here for a long time: They are showing they believe in themselves and in each other.” **BFS**



The Minico cheerleaders made great signs such as this one before every game.

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