

# The Mountaineers Climb New Heights



## *After fifty years of losses, a team turns champion*

**W**hen Wachusett Regional High School was built in 1952, the planners envisioned a school that would provide the community with a wonderful educational environment for their children. They achieved this goal, developing a beautiful school in the center of Massachusetts. What they didn't plan for was a football team that would muster only ten winning seasons over the next 50 years, and never a season with more than seven victories. At last, thanks to an aggressive new off-season conditioning program, the team broke tradition in a big way by going 12-0 this fall and winning the first state championship in school history.

With a student body of approximately 1,800 students,

Wachusett Regional High School serves five towns that surround the Wachusett Mountain. The Mountaineers have a strong track and cross-country program, winning numerous state championship meets in men's and women's outdoor track as well as cross-country. They also have a reputation for offering a strong soccer program, but as for football, the game just never took off. It was hoped that things would change in 1999 when the school hired Michael Dubzinski to coach the team.



**BFS Clinician,  
Ray Cosenza**

"Michael Dubzinski is the grandson of a legendary coach in our area, Walter Dubzinski, who coached Gardner High, which is to our north," says principal Tom Pandiscio. "We were looking for Mike to save our football program, and it was disappointing to see him go 1-9 his first year and 1-10 the following year. But in 2000 he really got his feet on the ground and went 6-5."

### **The BFS Factor**

Ray Cosenza is a football coach at nearby Fitchburg High School, Fitchburg, Massachusetts,



and has won five league championships. Pandiscio says Cosenza was a big factor in getting Wachusett on the BFS program. "Ray helped us in choosing equipment, setting up our program and convincing us about the importance of keeping records and consistently using the cards. Ray was invaluable to our efforts. We don't play him all the time, but it was great to have that much support from another coach."

Helping to make all this happen was John Belcher, president of the Mountaineer Booster Club. His efforts enabled the team to purchase a lethal weapon, four new benches, four new squat stations, hex bars, bumper plates, weight trees, two glute-ham developers and a four-way neck. "We told the booster club that lifting was helping us, but we had to get a program that we could live with year-round. The booster club trusted us enough to purchase the necessary equipment to perform the BFS program the way it should be."

Taking the help Cosenza had given them to heart, Wachusett players committed to the BFS program two years ago. The results were spectacular, and not just in football. "Under the leadership of Phil Jackson [assistant football coach and physical education teacher] and the commitment of our other coaches, we have seen BFS incorporated in the baseball, track, cross-country, boys' lacrosse and boys' basketball programs," says Pandiscio. "I

**During the first season after instituting the BFS program, the Mountaineers went 8-3 and narrowly missed winning the Central Massachusetts League Championship.**

Photo: Richard Orr Sports

knew BFS had taken root at our school when on a Friday night in July I counted 52 athletes and 7 coaches working in our weightroom.”

In the first six months of the program, the football team increased its squat as a team by 43 percent and its bench press by 26 percent. Coach Pandiscio says athletes from other sports have made similar gains. Illustrated in the chart on page 10 on are the results of several football players who have been with the program for two years.

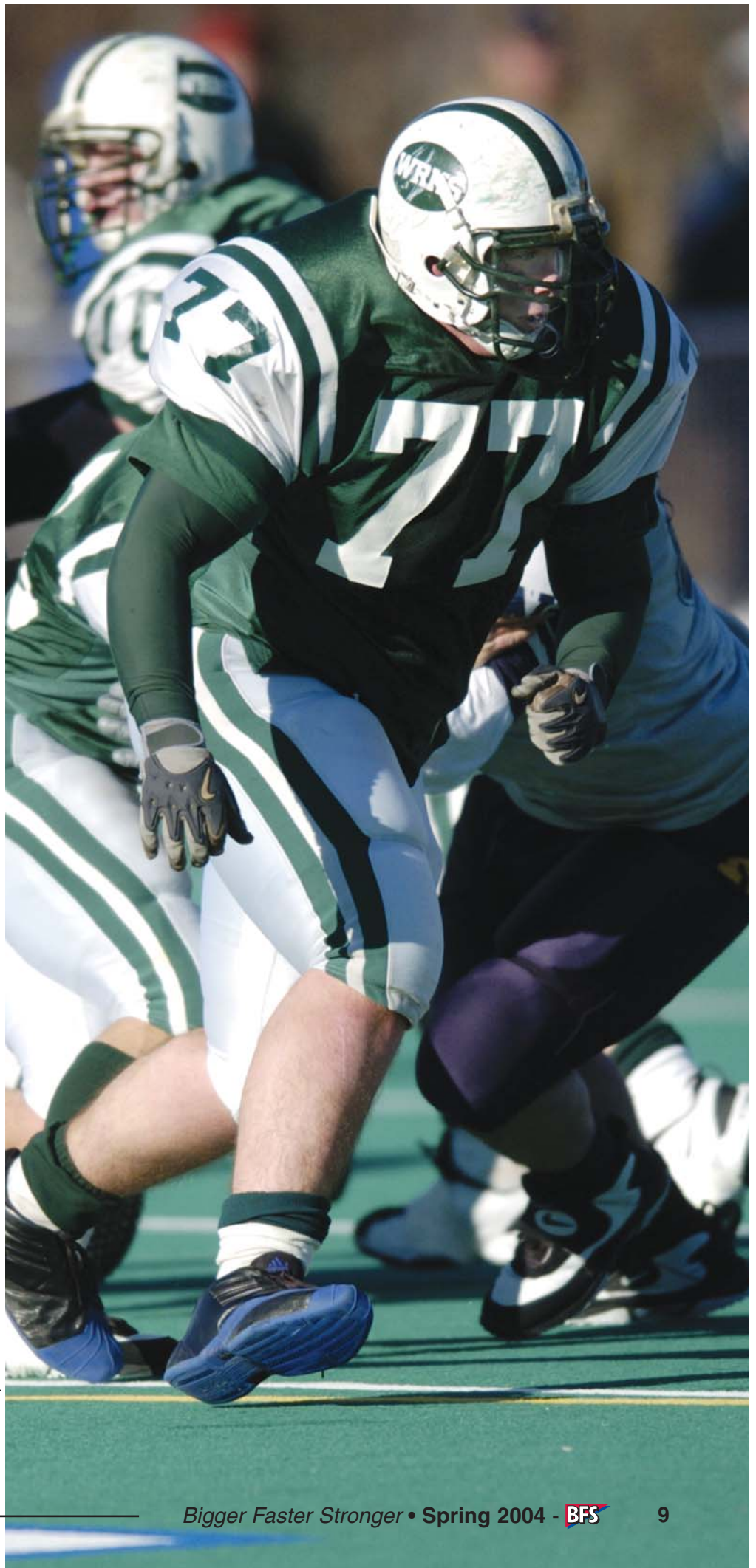
During the first season after instituting the BFS program, the Mountaineers went 8-3 and narrowly missed winning the Central Massachusetts League Championship. The next season they finished 12-0, and represented their league in the Central/Western Massachusetts Division 1A Super Bowl Championship, a special post-season game against another of the state’s best teams. The Mountaineers won that game 26-0 against North Hampton High School in North Hampton, Massachusetts.

“This season in 12 games we gave up only about 73 points,” says Pandiscio. “We had a very balanced team, and the scores of our games were usually about 28-6, but we had a couple of shutouts and a blowout on Thanksgiving, winning 53-10. Our kids hustled; they were in good shape and had very few injuries—all the things that happen when you take care of your body and work out hard.”

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**A**

Photo: Richard Orr Sports



# Mountaineer Weightroom Gains

	2002	2004
<b>Brad Bagdis, Sr, DE</b>		
Bodyweight	190	215
Bench	155	265
Squat	225	335
Clean	115	205
Hex Bar	250	460
<b>Jon Valeri, Jr, DB</b>		
Bodyweight	143	168
Bench	145	235
Squat	200	275
Clean	95	165
Hex Bar	210	360
<b>Pat Murray, Jr, T</b>		
Bodyweight	250	290
Bench	165	255
Squat	255	385
Clean	95	175
Hex Bar	250	430
<b>Zak Raskett, Sr, HB</b>		
Bodyweight	155	182
Bench	175	275
Squat	225	365
Clean	115	205
Hex Bar	225	390
<b>Jesse Petersen, Jr, LB</b>		
Bodyweight	140	190
Bench	200	305
Squat	235	325
Clean	115	210
Hex Bar	215	380
	2002 Total 4,543	
		2004 Total 7,045
<b>An increase of 2,502 lbs!</b>		

## New Tradition of Excellence

The weightroom at Wachusett Regional High School is designed with four BFS stations and a Dot Drill area. However, the school is currently expanding the athletic facilities with another 100,000 square feet that will enable them to expand their weightroom and add another BFS station to accommodate all the athletes who now want to train.

Although you'd expect more kids would be interested in getting on the team, Pandiscio says this year he had fewer kids come out, even fewer than the year before. In fact, they dropped from 75 players on the 8-3 team to about 59 players this year. But there was a good reason for this.

"There's a state rule that you cannot prevent students from coming out for sports because they didn't participate in an off-season conditioning program," says Pandiscio. "In our first year of BFS, some students who hadn't really worked out all winter and all summer found out that they had a hard time competing athletically and physically with kids who had trained. Those students, many who had been on the team as



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sophomores then came back as juniors, didn't come back out their senior year because they weren't prepared to put in what it takes to train hard enough to win. This year we had a big group of freshman who jumped right into the BFS program, and so we're rebounding. I think our turnout will be in the 80s or 90s next season." He's undoubtedly right, because the Mountaineers' third year with BFS is looking great.

Another aspect of the program is the motto "The football season starts today." Says Pandiscio, "After we won our Super Bowl and when we were getting pretty close to Christmas vacation, we told the kids to take two weeks off—it had been a long season, because we started in the middle of August. I was in the cafeteria doing lunch duty, and I said, "Boys, what are we doing this afternoon?" And a couple of the kids said, 'Football season starts today—we're gonna lift!'" **BFS**

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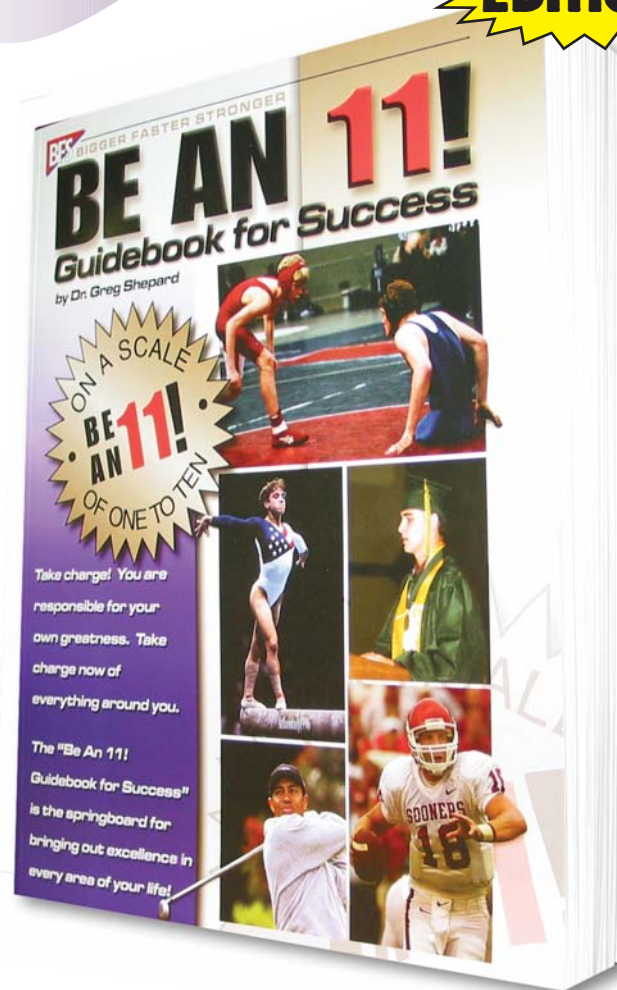
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