

ROBERT TOOMBS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Spirit of the Crusaders

“I love deadlines. I like the whooshing sound they make as they fly by.”

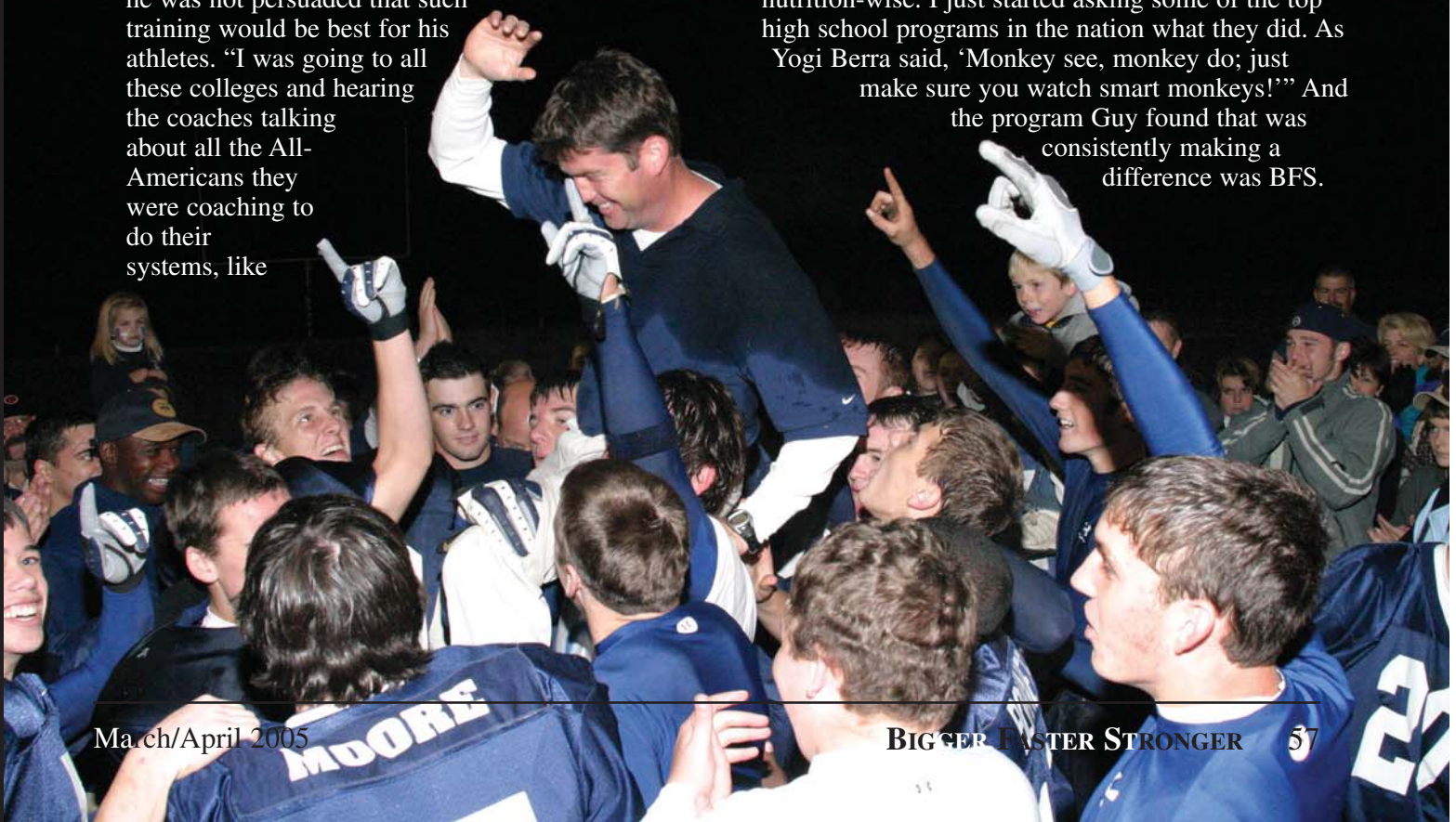
—Douglas Adams, author of *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*

Although this quote is certainly amusing, there was nothing funny about the deadline facing the football program at Robert Toombs Christian Academy in Lyons, Georgia. After a disappointing season in 1997, the academy’s board of directors decided to give the new head coach, L. M. Guy, one year to turn the program around or it would be cancelled.

Faced with the task of salvaging the football program in the space of only one season, Coach Guy started by taking a look at a number of college conditioning programs. However, he was not persuaded that such training would be best for his athletes. “I was going to all these colleges and hearing the coaches talking about all the All-Americans they were coaching to do their systems, like

teaching 320-pounders to run backwards and pass-block. Me, I’m trying to teach 160-pounders to go forward! I have a 180-pound guard. I don’t have a problem getting him to backpedal—my problem is getting him to go forward!”

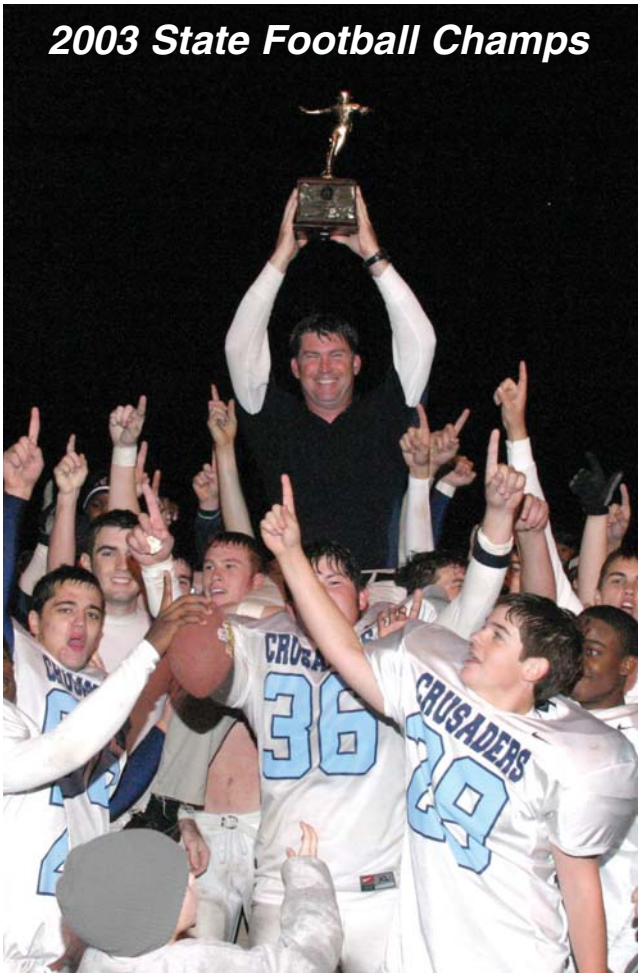
For Coach Guy, the answer to his deadline proved to be a good conditioning program. “Every offense in the world has won a championship; every defense in the world has won a championship. What I wanted to know was what the top high school teams were doing outside their football program: what they were doing in the weightroom, what they were doing nutrition-wise. I just started asking some of the top high school programs in the nation what they did. As Yogi Berra said, ‘Monkey see, monkey do; just make sure you watch smart monkeys!’” And the program Guy found that was consistently making a difference was BFS.

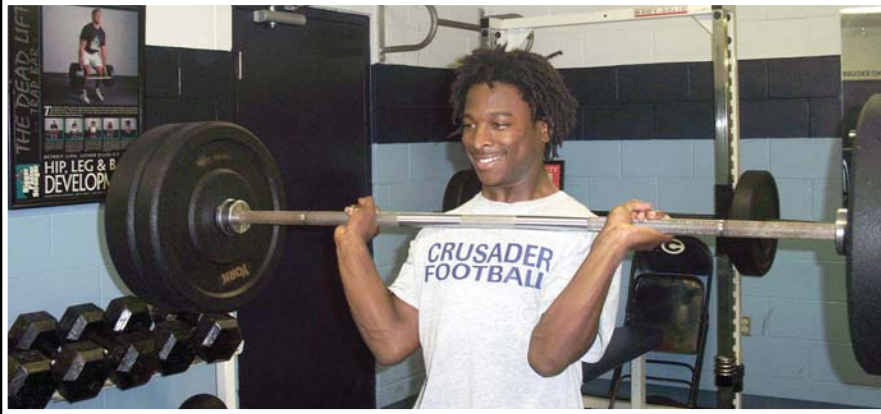




A special ceremony was held at the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in Macon, GA, to recognize the Crusaders 2003 State Championship.

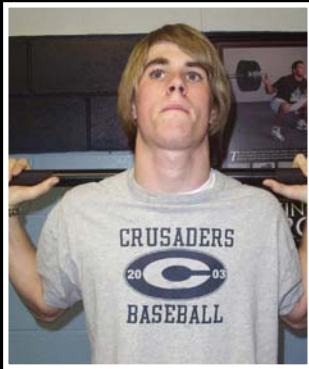
2003 State Football Champs





Theodore Roundtree

“The Bigger Faster Stronger program tells you every single thing you need to do in your weight program. It is a great, great resource,” says Head Coach L.M. Guy



Cannan Banks



Johnathan Phelan



Photo:David Tootle

“The Bigger Faster Stronger program tells you every single thing you need to do in your weight program. It is a great, great resource,” says Guy. In fact, the school’s headmistress, Ann Wilkes, and the board of directors were so impressed with Guy’s progress that they passed a school bylaw that students participating in varsity sports had to use the BFS program year-round.

In addition to instituting a sound conditioning program, Coach Guy had to instill discipline to turn around the Crusaders’ football program. But whereas Guy was a novice as a weightroom coach, his experience in discipline was another matter. Prior to becoming a football coach, Guy had worked for the Georgia Department of Corrections.

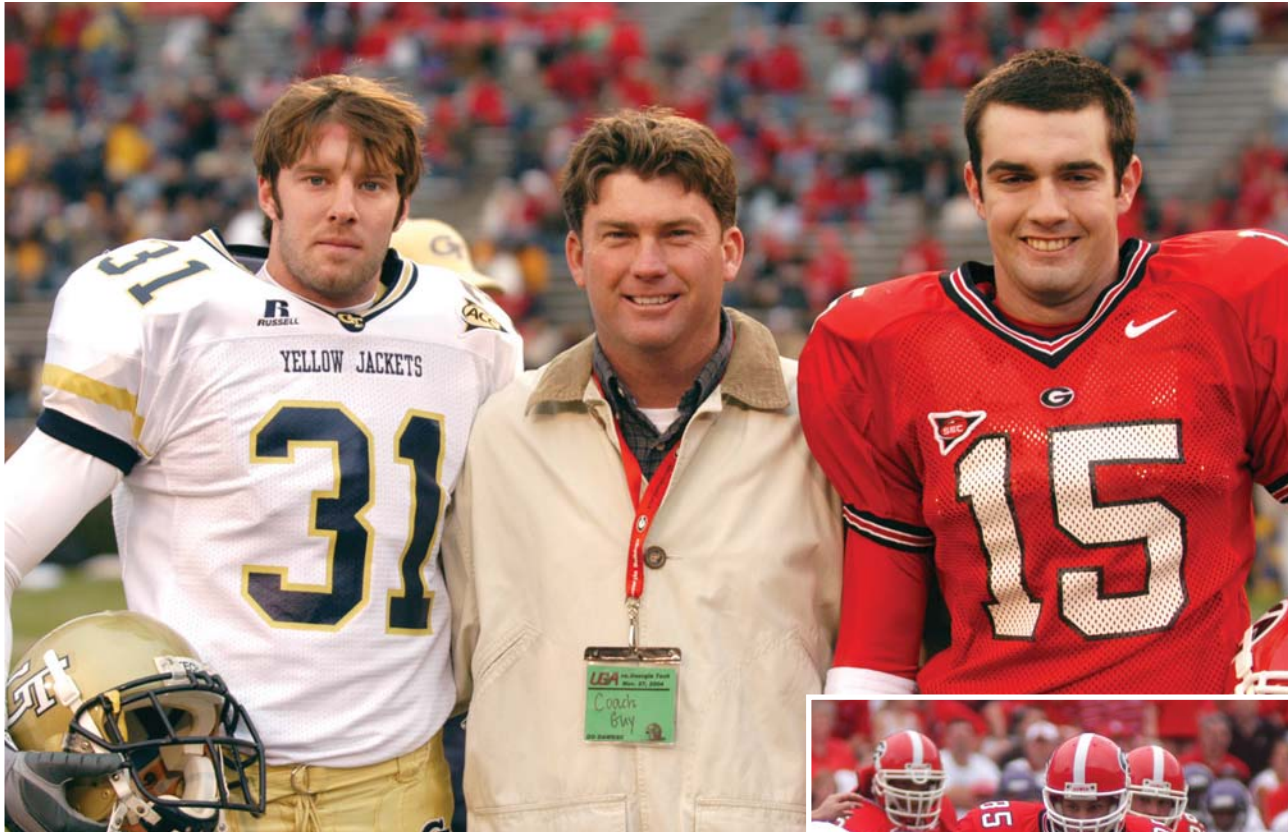
“When I was 18 years old I began working at Georgia State Prison, which is probably one of the worst prisons in the United States. It’s where the ‘baddest’ criminals are incarcerated.” In addition to working as a counselor, Guy also worked as a tactical officer whose duties included riot control and hostage rescue. But Guy loved football just about more than

anything and decided to do something about it.

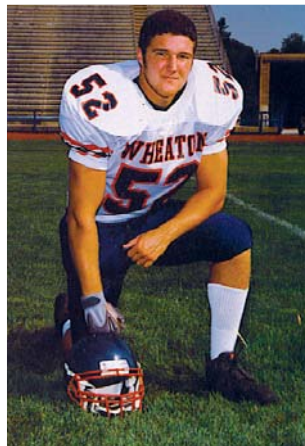
“When I was about 25 I spent some time volunteering with the local high school football teams, so I went back to school and got my teacher’s certificate. The next thing I knew, I got a job offer from Robert Toombs Christian Academy in 1998.” He also got the challenge of his life.

Meeting Deadlines

Although he loves football and has a great attitude, Guy knew he had his work cut out for him if he was going to keep the school’s football program alive, much less make them champions. He was inheriting a young team – half of the previous year’s team had been seniors – and the school didn’t have a great football tradition: The Crusaders hadn’t won a state championship since 1974. “Robert Toombs was considered a transition school for young coaches starting out,” says Guy. “Before me, they’d had five coaches in four years – I guess it just wasn’t a place where most coaches thought they could be



In addition to achieving great team success, many of Guy's athletes have gone on to win scholarships and play at many colleges. In the top photo coach Guy poses with Robbie Rollins of Georgia Tech and Mitchell Pittman. At right Trey Andrew played for Wheaton College and Jarrett Berry played for the University of Georgia.



successful." Guy thought differently, and he set out to prove the naysayers wrong.

In Coach Guy's first season the Crusaders rocketed up in the standings: They played in the state title games in both 1998 and 2000, coming up short by a total of only three points. Not satisfied, they came back and won the state championship in 2003 and again in 2004. Says Coach Guy, "I'm as competitive as anybody and I want to win a championship every year, but this game is really about teaching kids how to do things the right way through hard work. That's been our focus."

In addition to achieving great team success, many of Guy's athletes have gone on to win scholarships and play at many colleges, including University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, Furman, Valdosta, Carson-Newman, Wheaton, Presbyterian, North Greenville, Middle Georgia, University of the

South, Piedmont, Brewton-Parker, Berry and Clarke-Atlanta. These placements are even more remarkable when you consider that the size of the average senior class at Robert Toombs is only 16 students.

Guy attributes much of his success with his players to the lessons he learned from working in the Georgia corrections system. "I really appreciate and enjoy the kids I coach. When I was working in the prison environment, I saw a lot of the end results of kids choosing the wrong path. Every day I hear people say how bad some kids are today. What they seem to forget is that these kids are being raised by us! Young men crave discipline and love, and they want to be a part of something great. Football fulfills these needs by enabling young men to be part of a team, a brotherhood working together for a common goal." **BFS**

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