



The *Tigers* Roar to the Top



BY MATT GILMER,
CLASS OF 2007

TOP LEFT & BOTTOM CENTER: Wide Receiver Mike Langfield TOP RIGHT: Running Back Tim Stockhausen

Somebody forgot to tell Holy Family High School they weren't supposed to win the state football championship

It was a dramatic end to an up-and-down season – just like in the movies. A wild card football team that had barely made the playoffs became the Cinderella team of the season. Our hopes became reality because of the structure, discipline and work ethic our team learned through the Bigger Faster Stronger program.



The Championship Tigers

Knowing that we were smaller and not as strong as our opponents, we began working as a newly energized team in June 2005 at a BFS Clinic conducted by Clinician Bob Bozied. Our undersized Holy Family Tiger football team had the majority of our athletes in attendance learning how to become bigger, faster and stronger, and we continued the program throughout the summer months.

Monday through Friday, starting at 8 a.m., the Tiger football team began the day in the weightroom. Lifting and conditioning for nearly 12 weeks in the summer helped our team

make great strides in speed and strength. The team not only gained strength and became better conditioned during the summer but also continued

physical education department.

The effects of this goal-setting program were evident from the beginning, with the Tigers having a successful scrim-

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with BFS during the school year after the program was integrated into the

mage and winning their first three games by a total score of 129-6. One of these victories came against Denver Christian, a preseason top-ten team and annual league contender. However, the Tiger's road would not prove to be an easy one. We lost our next game to unranked Platte Canyon by a score of 10-7. Attempting to rebound after this shocking loss, Holy Family came out and won the next two games, against Clear Creek and Middle Park.

Next up for the Tigers was rival Kent Denver and an opportunity to assure our eligibility for the league playoffs. Kent Denver had other plans, and handed the Tigers their second loss of the season, 28-20. Two losses meant that



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Proud Tigers

Holy Family would have to win their remaining two games to clinch a playoff berth in the Metro League, the strongest league in the state.

The Tigers took the first step towards that goal with a 62-0 victory over Sheridan High School. Looming ahead for the smaller Tigers was a pivotal game with our archrival, the Faith Christian Eagles, the defending state champions and the number-one-ranked team in the state. The year before, Faith Christian had defeated Holy Family, giving the Tigers our only loss in the 2004 season, in the state championship game at Holy Family's Mike G. Gabriel Stadium. In 2005, Faith Christian once again emerged victorious by a score of 42-14. The Tiger's third loss of the season put us in fourth place in the difficult Metro League and apparently

out of the playoffs.

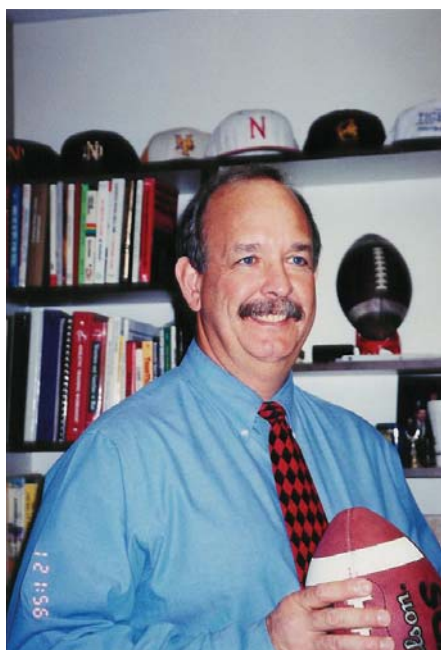
Fortunately, Holy Family earned the classification's only wild card by a margin of three-tenths of a point, and we entered the playoffs for the fifth consecutive year. The first round required a seven-hour bus ride to Pagosa Springs,



Quarterback Pat Chappell proved he had the character and physical talent to lead his team to the State Championships.

home of the fifth-ranked Pirates. The Tigers came from behind to win 45-27, and we moved on to play the Roosevelt Roughriders the following weekend. The second round of the state playoffs proved a much more difficult task. Holy Family had several turnovers, including three that resulted in touchdowns for the Roughriders. Two late fourth-quarter interceptions by the Tiger defense sealed the 21-19 victory.

Once again Holy Family faced a huge obstacle to continuing our miracle run at a state championship. The semifinal game was a rematch of the regular season finale against Faith Christian, again at Mike G. Gabriel Stadium. The Eagles had just finished a 20-game winning streak and in everyone's opinion were shoo-ins for a second-straight state title.



Head Football Coach Mike Gabriel

The Tigers proved everyone wrong though, with a superb defensive performance that held one of the classification's most prolific offenses to under 150 yards total offense and a single touchdown. The Tiger offense led a fourth-quarter drive that scored the winning touchdown on a reverse option with less than two minutes to play. The touchdown proved enough, giving the Tigers a 10-7 victory and an unexpected championship berth.

The state championship was Holy Family's third appearance in four years, including a win at the 2002 championship. The 2005 state championship was at Mike G. Gabriel Stadium against the second-ranked team, the Buena Vista Demons. The Demons had dominated the entire season, having what most considered the best offense, prolific in both rushing and passing, as well as a tough defense. The first quarter appeared to be a shootout, but scoring settled in the second quarter to a halftime score of 28-14 in favor of Holy Family. The deficit forced the Demons to play catch-up, and the Tiger defense once again shut down a topnotch offense. The Tigers

won their second state championship in four years, 35-20.

From the early days of summer through the last days of November, the Holy Family football team continued

ed the Tigers to pack up and move on. However, getting a second chance made us focus on our ultimate goal, and on the team's final step to that end – practice on Thanksgiving – meaning the Tigers

Through the discipline of the BFS program, our Holy Family Tigers regained our pride by winning the state title, and a lot of respect besides.

using Bigger Faster Stronger. The entire team made dramatic improvements in lifting and speed, giving Holy Family an advantage over their opponents. Our undersized Tigers team dominated both sides of the ball, even against Faith Christian, which had one of the biggest offensive and defensive lines in any of Colorado's classifications.

The Tigers, not even expected to make the playoffs, wound up winning the state championship. With three losses in the regular 2005 season, everyone expect-

would once again be in the state final.

The odds were against us, with our final four opponents having a total of only two losses among them and three outright league titles. But that didn't stop us. Through the discipline of the BFS program, our Holy Family Tigers regained our pride by winning the state title, and a lot of respect besides. **BFS**



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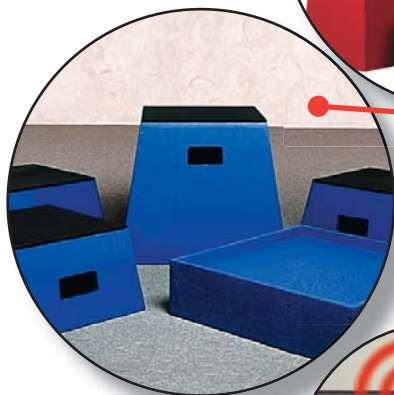
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