

# *Rough Riders* Take First State Title

Action photos by Tom Slattery

# Rough Riders

be confident about meeting the Rough Riders in the University of South Dakota's DakotaDome, as the Knights had won 20 of their last 21 meetings with the Rough Riders.

According to Brent DeBoer, who has been the head football coach for the entire 16-year history of the Rough Riders, the first half of the title game was a hard-fought battle that had the teams tied at 14 points each. The biggest thorn in the side of the Rough Riders was the Knights' Danny Isaacson, who eventually rushed for a final record of 211 yards on 29 carries.

After the half, the Knights scored quickly and took a 21-14 lead, but quarterback Brad Iverson of the Rough Riders got his team into the end zone twice in the fourth quarter; and their defense held. They led 28-21 in the fourth, when an interception by Pat Wilka with two minutes to go gave the Knights another shot. Starting at their own 15, the Knights drove to the Rough Riders' 31-yard line with 27.2 seconds to play and a fourth-and-one. That was as close as they got. Final score: Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 28; Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 21.

## The Road to More Victories

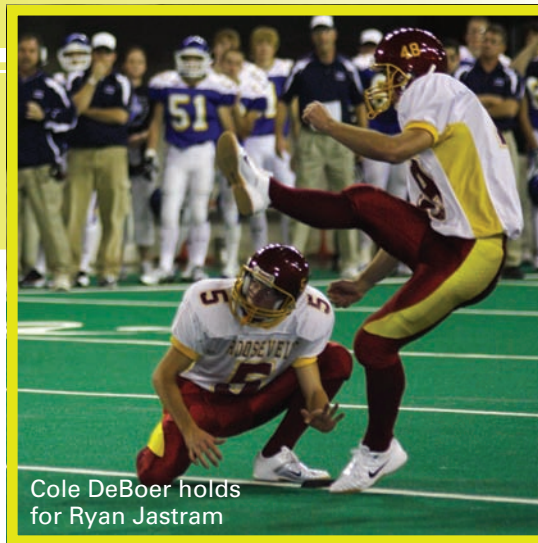
While the head football coach always gets the bulk of the media attention after a victory, DeBoer made sure to acknowledge the contributions of strength coach and offensive coordinator Craig Clayberg.

Now in his 10th year with the Rough Riders, Clayberg has worked hard to get his athletes bigger, faster and stronger with heavy emphasis on the basics: power cleans, squats, bench

presses and plyos, along with important auxiliaries such as towel benches and box squats. And to keep their motivation high, Clayberg maintains a record board for best results in the core lifts and encourages his athletes to compete in powerlifting competitions in the off-season.

Careful record keeping is an important aspect of Clayberg's coaching philosophy, and he says it's always gratifying to see kids work hard and improve. "We've had kids bench pressing 140 pounds as freshmen, and as seniors they are benching over 300 – we see quite a bit of improvement." He adds that he gives his athletes a choice as to whether to do the regular deadlift or the Hex bar deadlift in practice. "Personally, I think the Hex bar is a lot better for you because you're more over the center of gravity so you don't have to lean so far forward; but to get on the record board you have to do the regular deadlift."

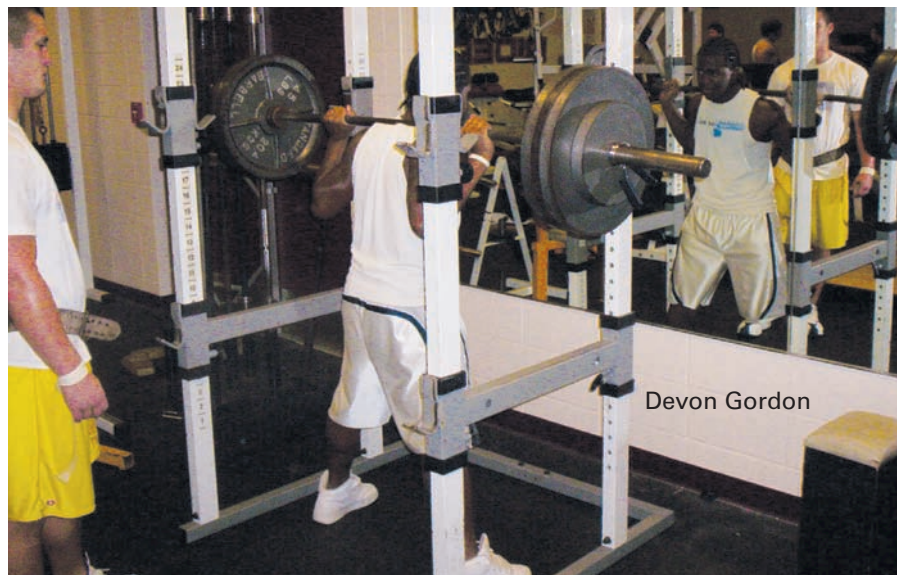
Asked what the difference was between this year's team and the teams



Cole DeBoer holds for Ryan Jastram

of previous years, Clayberg replied, "We have many more kids in the weight-room, and they did a lot of extra work on their own, with the captains basically calling the practices – we had very good leaders." He adds that this year's team was a close-knit group with a lot of team camaraderie.

Coach DeBoer says that with seven starters on both sides of the ball returning next year, the outlook for 2007 looks great. And when looking back at the 2006 season, he attributes much of the good that has happened to the Rough Riders to their attitude. "Last year they knew their 10-2 was good, but it wasn't good enough – they wanted to get to the next level. And they did!" **BES**



Devon Gordon



## A winning football program in South Dakota kicks it up a notch

The state championship victory of the Sioux Falls Roosevelt High School football team is not a story about a miracle season – that distinction is usually reserved for teams that are not used to winning. Fact is, this school has posted a 41-8 record over the past four years. And it's not that this team hasn't come close to the state title before. Last year they made it to the semifinals (losing against the team that eventually won the state title); and the year before that, they'd made it to the title game. No, the story about the Rough Riders is simply about how a very good football team improved enough to become the best Class 11AA football team in South Dakota.

Now don't get the wrong impression and start wondering if the teams on the Rough Riders' schedule are pushovers. Not by any means. Class 11AA is the highest level of classification in South Dakota, and the 2006 Rough Riders are the first football team

from a public school in Sioux Falls to win a state championship, which is why this state title means so much to the team, their school and their community.

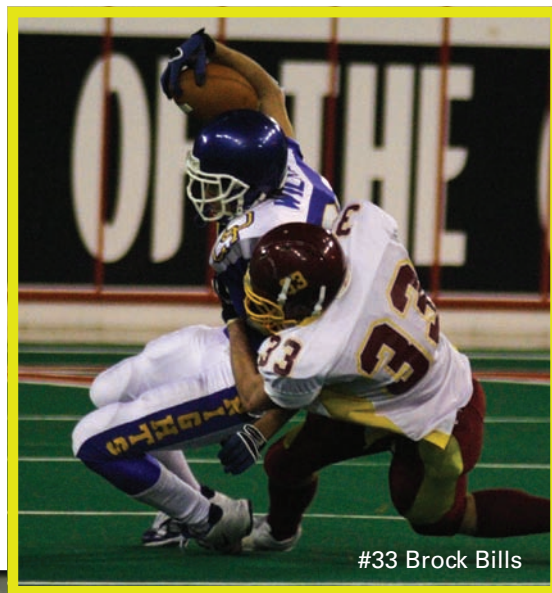
### Breaking Tradition

After finishing the 2006 regular season with only one loss, the Rough Riders put on a football clinic in their three playoff games, defeating Watertown 53-28, Aberdeen Central 48-7 and Brandon Valley 42-6. Clinching the state title game wasn't going to be anywhere near that easy, as they were facing the two-time defending state champions: Sioux Falls O'Gorman High School, a team that had beat them for the past three years and had kept them from the ultimate prize in the 2004 title game. What's more, the Knights had every reason to

Photo by Brad Dumtrie



Head Coach Brent DeBoer



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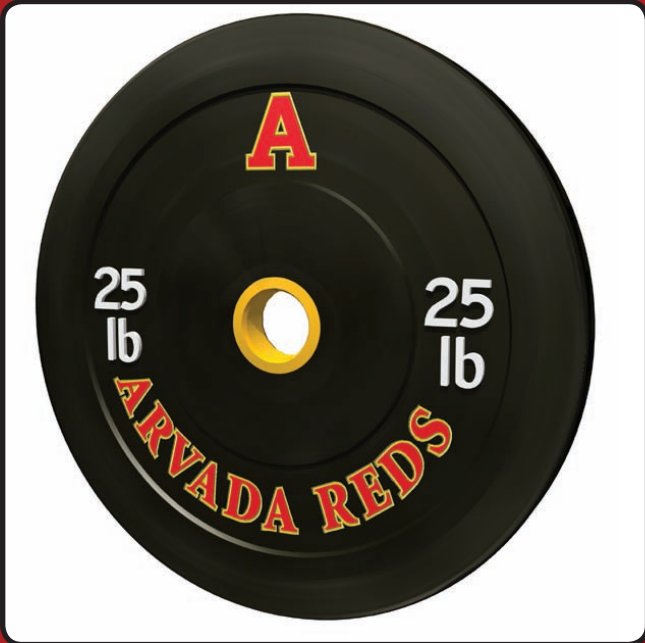


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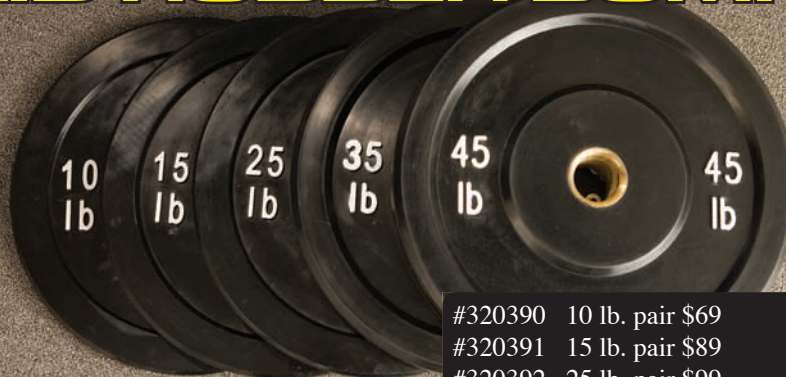
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