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MAGAZINE

SHAWNEE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

NOVEMBER 2011



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Oops!

In the October issue's "Return to the 'Ship" article, Shawnee Heights' head volleyball coach was incorrectly named as Tara Simmons instead of Carolyn Raynes. We sincerely apologize to Coach Raynes for the article's mistake.

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- 2) #4 Jenna Sackman So., Seaman
- 3) #27 Chase Holford So., Topeka High
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- 4) #4 Erika Lane Jr., Washburn Rural
- 5) #14 Jasmine Martindale Jr., Topeka High
- #27 Chase Holford So., Topeka High



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Brooke Gettler, Senior, Topeka High



**Haley Flory, Freshman
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**KANSAS
FIRST NEWS**



Supporting the Team

By Karen Sipes

As the whistle blows to signal kickoff, the frenzy of Friday night football begins. Although the game may be the focal point of the evening, the high-intensity atmosphere would not be present without the support that takes place off the field.

The fight songs, the cheers and the battle cries resonate with one common goal – to keep the adrenaline pumping for both the team and the fans. It doesn't happen magically on game night. Like the football team, the bands, cheerleaders and dancers practice for the big event, passing off their knowledge of cheers and movements to fellow students. Parents get into the act as well, supporting the students beyond their cheers from the stands.

Loud and Proud: Topeka High

Topeka High football games pulse with the thundering beat of the school's drumline. They live up to their "Loud and Proud" slogan, setting the tone early by circling around the track with the band before playing the school fight song.

"It's an awesome atmosphere," Brandon McDonald, senior section leader, said of the drumline's pre-game performance. "It's an electric feeling for us. I'm sure that everybody gets excited."

Although the drumline has been around for 17 years under the direction of Sal Cruz, he says today's version is "considerably different from when we started."

In the drumline's early days, there was lit-

tle movement. Now, the percussionists rarely stand still, going as far as standing on their heads at times.

"They like to shock the crowd or come up with something they will remember," Cruz said.

The drumline's reputation has grown so much that the group performs at several community events in the Topeka area and recently made a trip to Chicago to perform before a convention of educators.

"We love performing for the community," McDonald said. "We're kind of a big family. We love to perform in front of little kids and for fundraisers. Performing and cheering people up – that's what we're mostly about."

Topeka High Drumline



Presenting the Flags: Highland Park

Another pre-game performance is the national anthem, and at Highland Park, the Junior Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (JAFROTC) executes precise movements in presenting the flags.

Four individuals make up the color guard unit. The commander carries the U.S. flag, while another cadet bears the Kansas flag. They are accompanied by two other individuals carrying rifles, representing the ceremonial guarding of the flags.

Cadets rotate on the color guard. Sometimes, the unit will have an all-female or all-male guard, said Sgt. Joyce Parker. Other times, the guard will be mixed. However, the pre-game routine is always the same.

"They march onto the field and do

movements to face the home team fans," said Parker. "Once they get into position, they present arms. That is when the Kansas flag is lowered. The American flag is always higher."

The color guard and other ROTC drill teams at Highland Park spend early mornings honing their skills, meeting at 6:30 a.m. four days a week, said Parker. However, the hard work has paid off for the unit.

Like Topeka High's drumline, Highland Park's color guard receives many requests for community appearances, especially at the Capitol building and for veterans' groups. The color guard is also responsible for leading all school parades.



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Rising Spirit: Shawnee Heights

As the game begins, cheerleaders and dancers take to the sidelines to keep the intensity level high for the players on the field.

In the last few years, spirit has been on the rise at Shawnee Heights, with the cheer squad at the forefront of the movement. Eleven girls make up football's varsity squad, while eight girls cheer for varsity basketball. Participants vary among seasons because some members compete in other sports.

"We consider them athletes," said cheerleader sponsor Renee Dexter. "They spend half an hour conditioning pretty hard at every practice."

In addition to cheer routines, tumbling and stunts on the sidelines, the cheerleaders lead school pep rallies.

"This year's cheer squads have made a strong connection to the student body," Dexter said.

Along with cheering at pep rallies and games, the squad participates in cheerleading competitions, earning

high marks. Seniors McKenzie Gifford and Alyssa Hilderman have also earned All-American status from these competitions.

As a school, Shawnee Heights earned the sportsmanship trophy from the Kansas State High School Activities Association during last year's state basketball tournament, a credit to both the cheerleaders and the fans.

For squad members, cheerleading is a year-round activity. They practice once a week during the summer, and they get involved in community activities and causes, such as helping with the Special Olympics and raising money for breast cancer awareness.

Show Time: Washburn Rural

During football games, Washburn Rural's dance team keeps the excitement going alongside the Junior Blues cheerleaders, but the group does its own thing as well. As the band plays throughout the game, the dance squad performs some of its routines. The dancers also put on a show at halftime.

The squad typically ranges from 18 to 22 members, said coach Jenny Tiller. This year, 19 girls are dancing for the team, including seniors and co-captains Taylor Clark and Brooke Beckler.

"It's fun to be at the games and help the crowd get involved and cheer on the team as well," Beckler said.

"We are pretty good at getting the spirit up," said Clark.

The dance team holds two-hour practices twice a week, and Clark and Beckler spend an additional eight hours each weekend working on new routines. Each routine takes about four hours to choreograph, they said.

In addition to performing at football and basketball games, the squad also attends at least one soccer game, Tiller said. The team also performs at dance competitions, consistently earning high ratings.

Of course, the main objective of the dance and cheer teams is to get their fellow students involved in cheering on their teams.





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Topeka West Mentor Program



Getting Involved: Topeka West

At Topeka West, the Boomerang Project aims to get freshmen involved in student life. The program, which first began at Topeka West six years ago, has since been implemented at Topeka High and Highland Park.

The program pairs 60 upper class mentors with incoming freshmen. Each of the mentors, who have to apply and be accepted to the program, works with four freshmen on the first day of school and once a week after that, said Amy Esquibel, the school's social worker and co-director of the program.

As part of the program, the mentors help new students with orientation and developing a sense of belonging in the school and com-

munity. They also help promote academic and social growth within the freshmen.

To promote school spirit, the program puts on a tailgate to kick off the fall sports season, and an event called Boomers, Burritos and Burlesque ushers in the winter sports season.

"We want the freshmen to feel connected to the school," Esquibel said. "They can come get painted up and learn the cheers. We really try to emphasize how important it is to get involved early."

The efforts have paid off for the school not only through increased student involvement at games, but also in higher graduation rates.

Fanatic Celebration: Hayden

Senior Tommy Kramer estimates that 90 percent of students at Hayden attend the football games.

"Everyone goes to the games," he said.

Senior Daniel Rineberg agrees.

"Hayden has a lot of spirit, and we show it – especially in the big games," he said.

Eight boys paint themselves to spell out W-I-L-D-C-A-T-S for each game. If a ninth one is available, they add an exclamation mark.

"It gets pretty chilly," Rineberg said of going shirtless to display the body paint. "But we're always excited when we get touchdowns and interceptions, so it warms us up."

Touchdowns also cue another

form of celebration. The painted boys take a girl who volunteers from the stands, throw her in the air and catch her for every point on Hayden's side of the scoreboard.

The students also interact with the school's band. When certain songs are played, the students lean back and forth and dance along to the music.

"We have a really good band," Kramer said.

One tradition the students celebrate is the singing of Bon Jovi's "Livin' On A Prayer" during halftime. And when a game ends in victory, the cheerleaders start the V-I-C-T-O-R-Y chant with the freshmen, followed by the other classes.



Hayden Diehard Fans

Seaman
Marching Band



Pump Up the Sound: Seaman

Halftime may give a break to the players, but not to the marching band.

Seaman's 223-member marching band takes the field for every home football game to exhibit their precise movements and musical skills.

Before the game, the band plays the school song, the national anthem and "Anchors Aweigh," the school fight song.

"That gets everything started,"

said director Cary Stahly.

"I think we help the student body get more pumped up, along with the cheerleaders and hopefully the players," said Aaron Walker. As a senior, he gave up playing saxophone with the band to take on the responsibilities of drum major.

To promote student involvement, the band teaches students to do body movements with the drum cadences during the game.

The band also plays music to fit crucial game moments, like when the

opposing team is facing fourth down.

"We play 'Darth Vader' and try to intimidate them," Stahly said.

During halftime, the band plays and performs choreographed formations that will be performed at competitions. The band has earned the top field ranking in Class 5A for six of the last eight years at the Neewollah Marching Band Festival in Independence. Performance work begins in the summer at band camp and continues throughout the school year in class and practices.

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Nathan Ham
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Community Spirit: Rossville

In small towns, where loyalty is not divided among teams, school spirit morphs into community spirit. Rossville and Silver Lake are prime examples – and spirited rivals.

In Rossville, Bulldog flags adorn the downtown area on game days. Parents provide breakfast for senior athletes and a pre-game meal for the entire team on Fridays. They also put baskets of candy bars in the locker room.

“Everything is to bring in the spirit of the community,” said Kelly Brown, president of the Rossville Booster Club. That even includes community-wide pep rallies.

The parents display their spirit

through painted signs they hang around the field – even at away games.

“It just kind of makes the boys feel at home,” Brown said. The on-the-road display is made possible by parent volunteers who take the signs to the games.

At school, Rossville boosters make signs for each athlete and stake them along the walkway to school. They also decorate athletes’ lockers and their locker rooms.

During games, parents in the crowd use special hands signals and streamers to let Matt Taylor, a player who is deaf, know they are cheering for him as well.

Rossville Booster Club



Silver Lake Booster Club

Showing Support: Silver Lake

In Silver Lake, boosters are ready to “do anything we can to build team spirit,” said Shayla Boyd, co-president of the Silver Lake Booster Club. “We try to do something significant each year to boost the spirit.”

For fall and winter sports, the boosters print posters featuring senior athletes and schedules for various sports. The posters are then displayed in businesses around town.

Senior athletes are also recognized at the annual Dawg Roast, a community pep rally preceding the game against Rossville.

One of the booster club’s most visible accomplishments can be seen on the football field. The club purchased a stencil of the Eagle logo that volunteers paint at midfield for each home game.

Silver Lake t-shirts and other school apparel seen throughout the community are part of another endeavor by the boosters. The club has a committee create new designs for the apparel, especially when teams qualify for state.

Like their rivals, Silver Lake boosters display banners at games, and parents volunteer to take them to away games. The booster club has provided the school with state championship banners to hang in the gym, and a special banner was made for coach C.J. Hamilton’s 336th win, making him the state’s all-time winningest football coach.

Amid the frenzy of activity on Friday night, only one thing remains: Play ball!



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Once the pain and inflammation have decreased and tissue healing has begun, the team of sports medicine professionals will begin to improve the quality of the damaged tissues. This includes stretching restricted areas, strengthening surrounding musculature and ensuring proper joint or tissue mobility. Functional movements such as walking or reaching overhead should be included prior to returning to play.

Return to Play

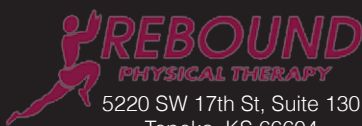
The final step involves getting the athlete back to full speed within a controlled setting. This is accomplished by breaking down and retraining sport-specific movement skills to pre-injury performance or better. The program would include movement-based flexibility, core strengthening, sport-specific speed and agility work and explosive strength.

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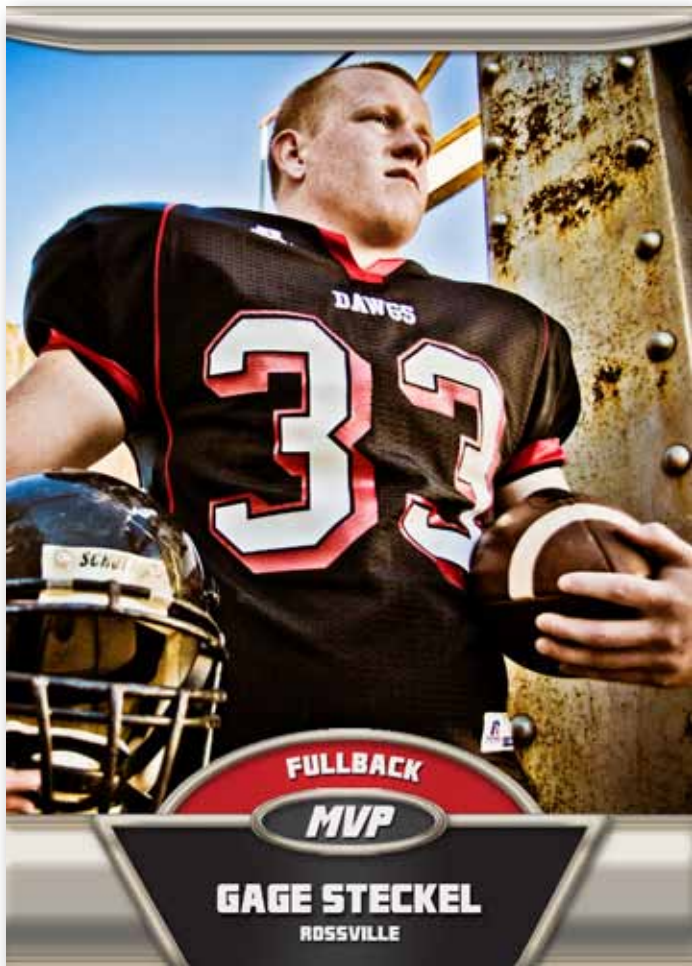
By Nicole Stejskal



THE GRIDIRON



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to motivate their team to succeed
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#33 GAGE STECKEL SENIOR

Years Playing Football: 8

Other Activities: Baseball; Take A Second, Make a Difference (TASMAD)

Favorite College Football Team: Kansas State Wildcats

Favorite Professional Football Team: Kansas City Chiefs

What qualities make for a great football player?

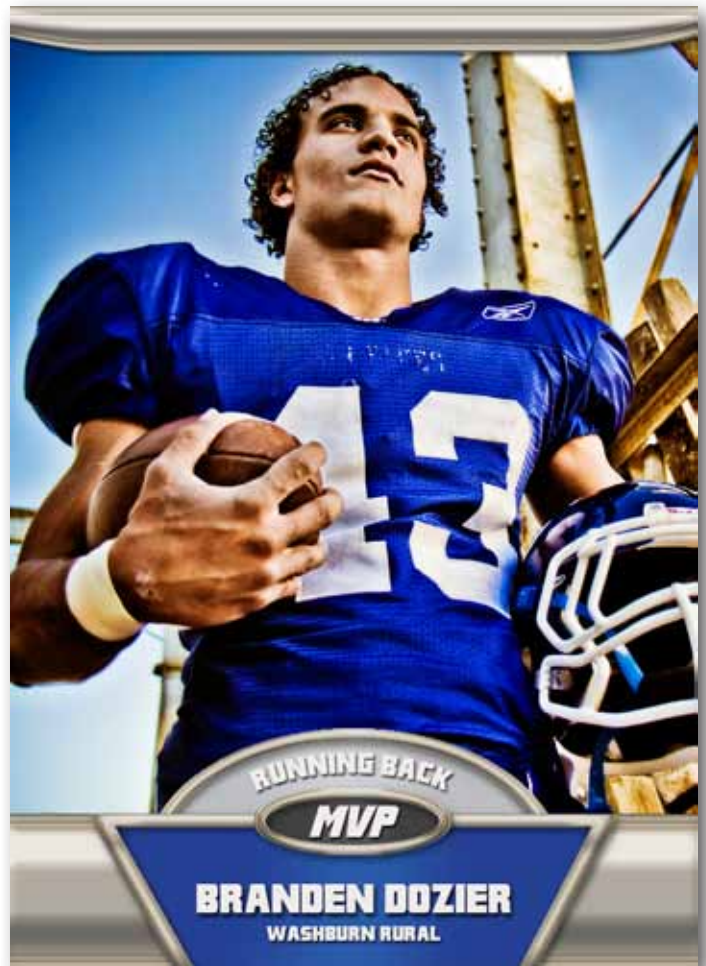
I think a player needs to be able to control himself during a game so that he doesn't let his emotions keep him from doing his job.

What role do you play on the team?

I feel like I'm a leader, and I think the guys trust in me. I try to set an example by doing positive things outside of school and being a good person.

"Gage has been the heart and soul of this team. His work ethic and intensity on the field have been infectious and have helped us achieve the success we've had so far."

- Coach Steve Buhler



#43 BRANDEN DOZIER SENIOR

Years Playing Football: 10

Other Activities: Track, Powerlifting

Favorite College Football Team: Georgia Bulldogs

Favorite Professional Football Team: Denver Broncos

What role do you play on the team?

I try to be a leader by steering the team in the right direction. I think if I work hard and perform at my best every game, then I'll set the example for everyone else.

Who do you look to as a leader/role model?

My dad – he played in the NFL as a fullback for the Packers and the Cardinals. I want to follow in his footsteps and get to the same level he was at, and then excel even further.

"Branden receives a lot of attention because of his play on the field, but I feel like his dedication and leadership in our program makes him deserving of that attention. He's looked up to by all of our players."

- Coach Derick Hammes

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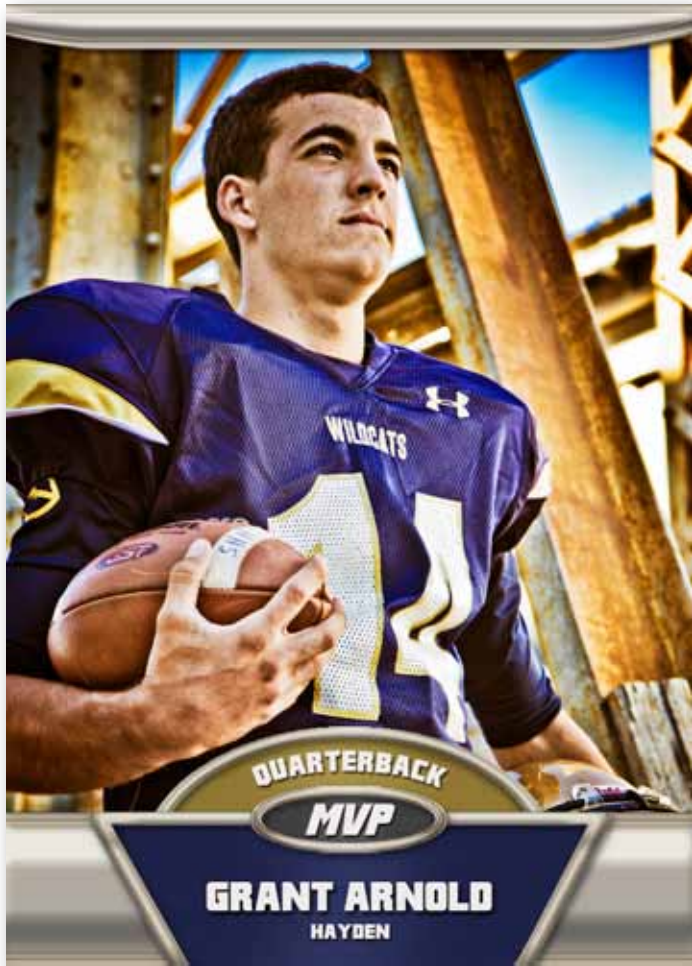

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#14 GRANT ARNOLD SENIOR

Years Playing Football: 12

Other Activities: Baseball, Chess Club

Favorite College Football Team: Oklahoma Sooners

Favorite Professional Football Team: Kansas City Chiefs

Who do you look to as a leader/role model?

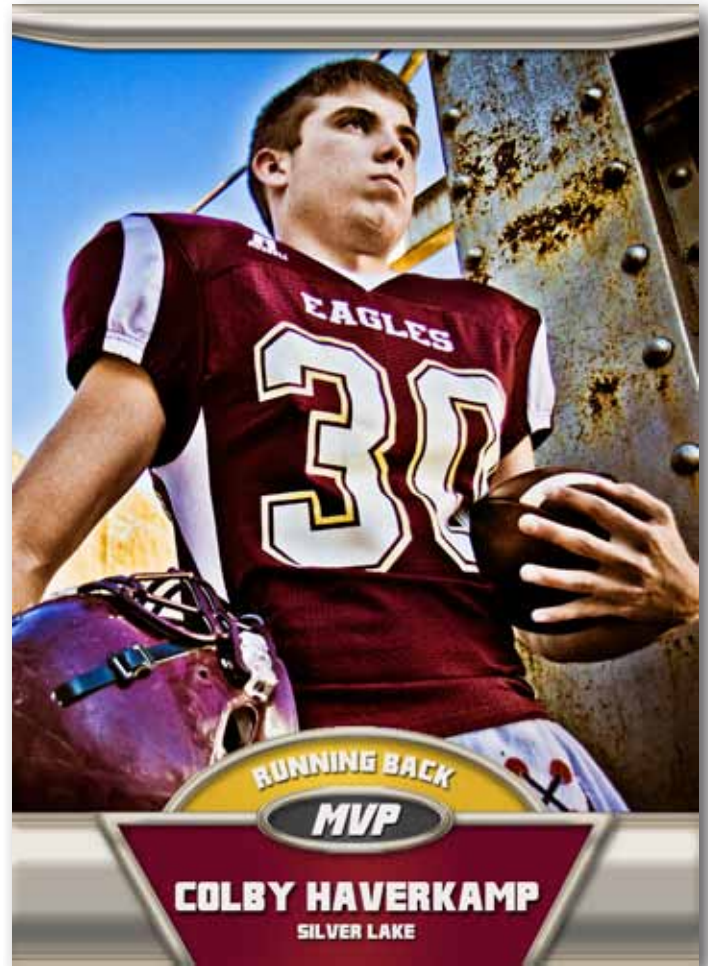
My grandpa – we’ve been best friends since I was little. He’s a really good guy and teaches me anything I need to know. He always makes sure nobody feels left out, and that’s something that’s very important to me.

What qualities make for a great football player?

I think a great football player is somebody who is positive and would do anything for the team to win. They need to be hard-working, have a lot of courage and be very brave.

“Grant has a strong desire to win. He gets enjoyment out of watching other guys excel around him, and he tries to make them better.”

- Coach Bill Arnold



#30 COLBY HAVERKAMP SENIOR

Years Playing Football: 11

Other Activities: Wrestling, Student Council President, Forensics, Choir, School Musical

Favorite College Football Team: Kansas State Wildcats

Favorite Professional Football Team: Kansas City Chiefs

What do you love most about playing football?

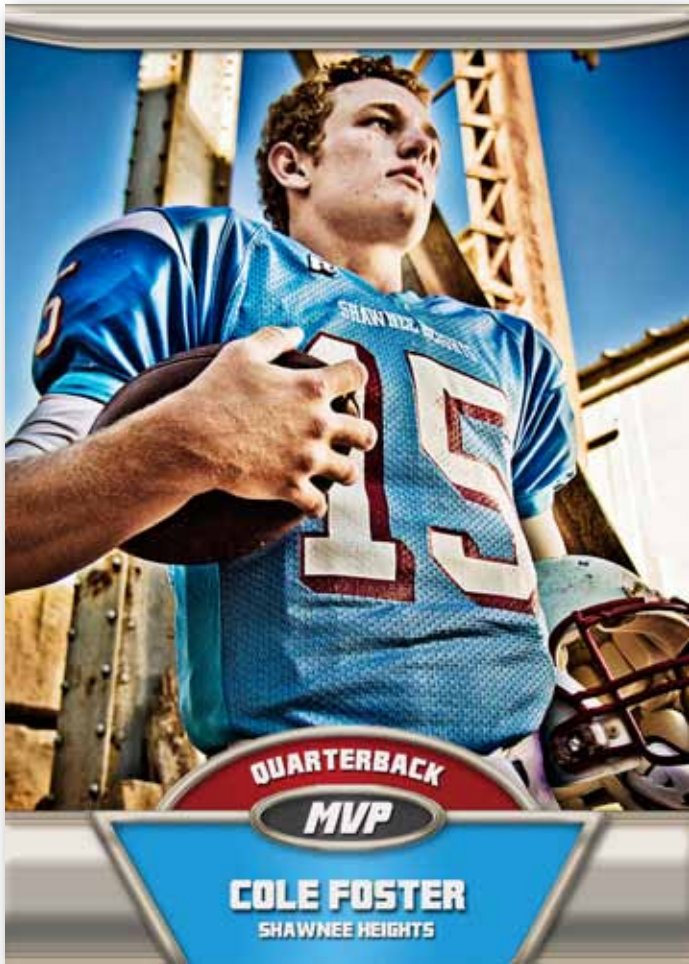
I love the community and the strong tradition we have at Silver Lake.

Who do you look to as a leader/role model?

My dad – he does everything for me. I feel like I can talk to him about anything, and he can tell me what I need to do. Coach Hamilton – he still gets all of us and can relate to us. I think he’s really humble for all the success he’s had.

“Colby is a hard working young man and has excellent leadership skills. He is involved in other activities outside of football, and he does great things for the school.”

- Coach C.J. Hamilton



#15 COLE FOSTER SENIOR

Years Playing Football: 7

Other Activities: Baseball, Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) Captain

Favorite College Football Team: Kansas State Wildcats

Favorite Professional Football Team: Kansas City Chiefs

Where do you get your inspiration for playing football?

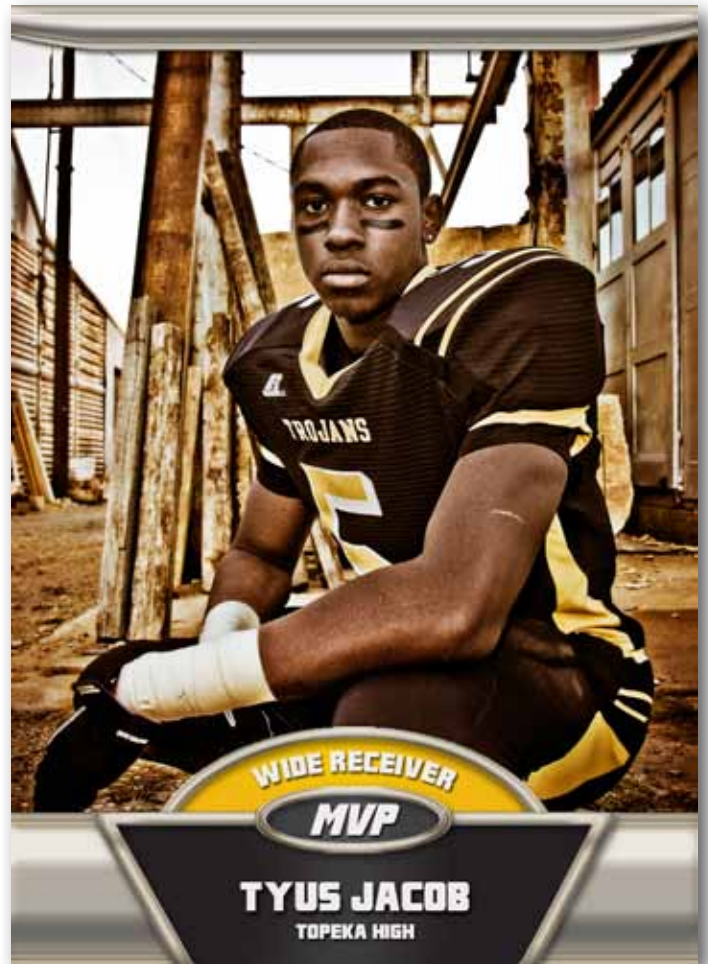
I like to worship the Lord through playing football. When people say, "Wow, Cole had a great game," I don't really think it's my credit to take. I want people to look at me and see God working through me.

Who do you look to as a leader/role model?

Tim Tebow, Denver Broncos quarterback – I look up to him because whatever team he plays for, they follow his lead.

"Cole is an outstanding young man. He is a leader not only on the football field, but in the school and community as well. He really makes a positive impact in our school."

- Coach Jason Swift



#5 TYUS JACOB SENIOR

Years Playing Football: 5

Other Activities: Basketball, Track

Favorite College Football Team: Texas Longhorns

Favorite Professional Football Team: New Orleans Saints

What qualities make for a great football player?

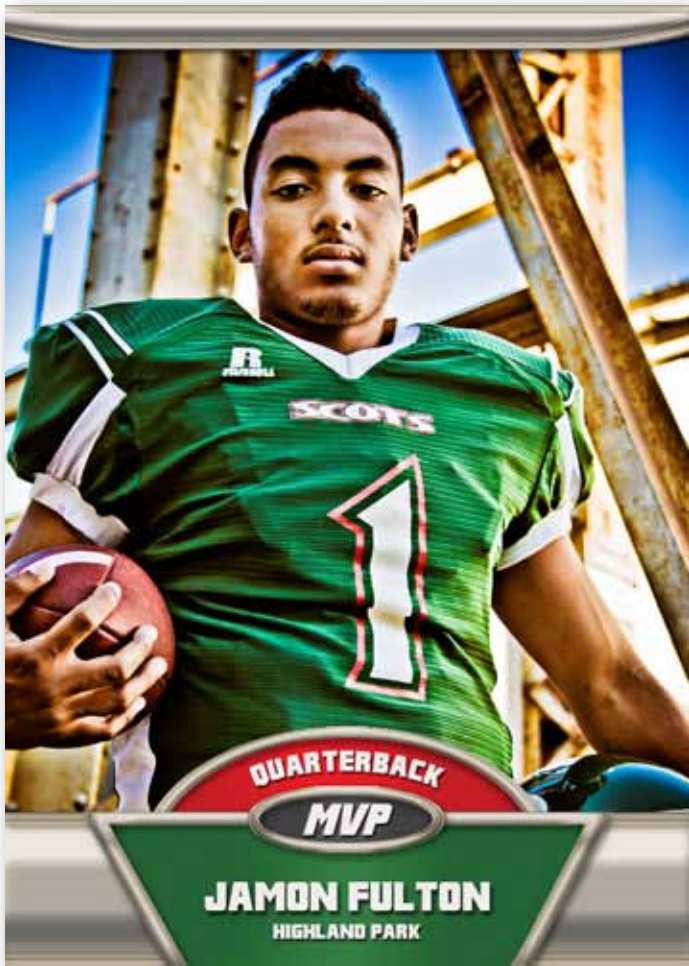
I think a great football player is someone who has to be dedicated, always focused and have a lot of heart and passion to play the game.

What role do you play on the team?

I try to lead the team by going hard every play in games and practices. I take everything seriously, even the little things, just to show the other players how to be focused.

"As a senior, Tyus is one of our best players, and he's been a contributor to our program for a long time. He is a very talented young man, and he is a good person both on and off the field."

- Coach Walt Alexander



#1 JAMON FULTON JUNIOR

Years Playing Football: 11

Other Activities: Basketball

Favorite College Football Team: Texas Longhorns

Favorite Professional Football Team: Dallas Cowboys

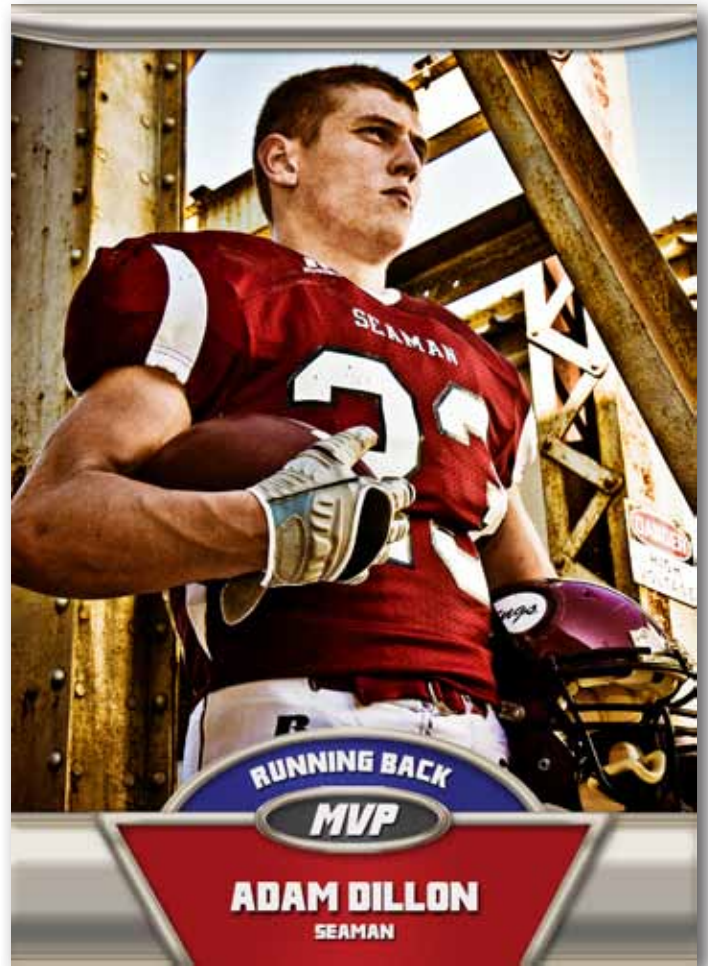
Where do you get your inspiration for playing football?
I think my inspiration comes from knowing that football can really take me to college and beyond.

If you could trade places with a professional football player, who would it be?

Michael Vick, Philadelphia Eagles quarterback – he's a great football player, and he's overcome challenges to get back to the NFL.

"Jamon is a winner. He's used to being a winner in basketball, so when he plays football, he helps the other players understand what it takes to be successful. He practices hard and has a good work ethic."

- Coach Nick Cummings



#23 ADAM DILLON SENIOR

Years Playing Football: 13

Other Activities: Track, Math Club, Seaman High Academic Recognition Program (SHARP)

Favorite College Football Team: Ohio State Buckeyes

Favorite Professional Football Team: Green Bay Packers

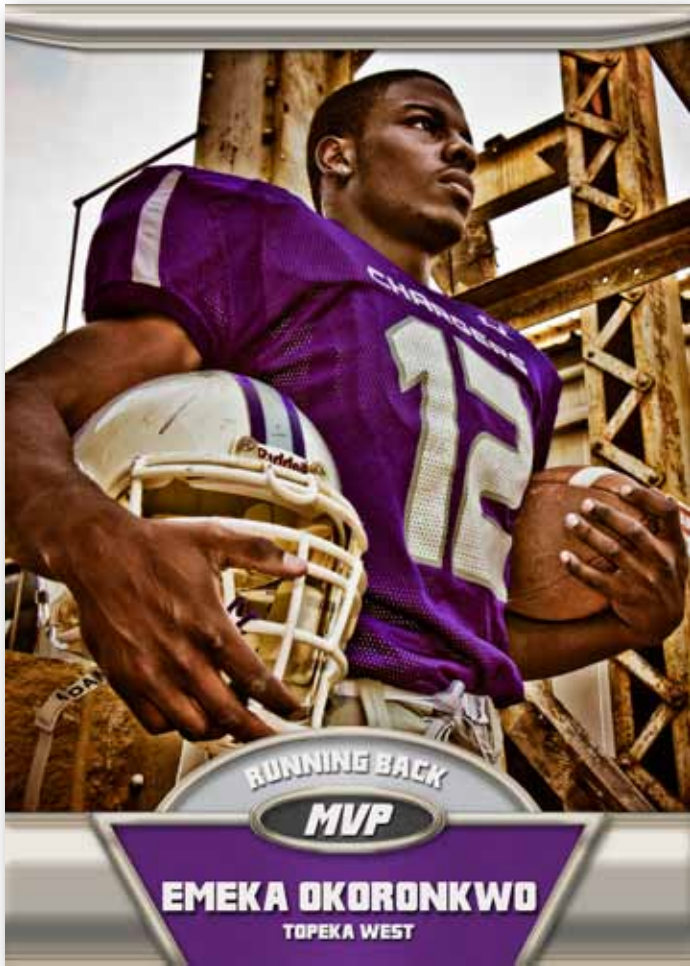
Where do you get your inspiration for playing football?
My dad – he's really been the driving force for me to play football and has really encouraged me the entire time I've been playing. That's where I got my love for football from.

What qualities make for a great football player?

I believe a great football player has to have a positive attitude, a drive to win and a love for the sport. Football is not just about talent, it's about having heart as well.

"Adam demonstrates all of the qualities we like in a student athlete. He exhibits the discipline, desire and drive necessary to be a good football player."

- Coach Blake Pierce



**#12 EMEKA OKORONKWO
SENIOR**

Years Playing Football: 10

Other Activities: Basketball, Track, Spanish Club, School Talent Show

Favorite College Football Team: Oklahoma Sooners

Favorite Professional Football Team: Minnesota Vikings

What do you love most about playing football?
I love the feeling of being a leader and having people look up to you. I like to be in a position where I can lead people and do anything to help them out.

Who do you look to as a leader/role model?
Coach Perry, former Topeka West football coach – he’s really helpful, and he gives great advice. I’ve asked him a lot of questions that I wouldn’t ask anybody else.

“Emeka plays with a lot of heart and passion. He gives everything he’s got when he’s on the field. He’s a good overall athlete and a well-rounded student.”

- Coach Tom Brian

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What is the toughest call you've had to make?

One of the toughest calls I've made came in the 3A state championship game between Silver Lake and Smith Center in 1997. Smith Center was going for a two-point conversion, and they were stopped just short of the goal line. The spot was difficult to make, but it ended up giving Silver Lake the victory.



KIRK SIMONE
"HOLDING"

What is one thing you wish spectators knew about officials and officiating?

The most important thing for football fans is that they realize how tough it is for officials when fans get the rules mixed up between high school, college and professional football. Fans watch so much college and professional football on TV that they think the rules apply to the high school game, and they don't. I wish the fans had the opportunity to be educated in the rules of high school, college and professional football, just to know the difference.

What is the toughest call you've had to make?

The toughest calls in football always involve pass plays. One of the toughest calls I remember was in a game between Topeka West and Seaman. The Topeka West quarterback threw a pass into the end zone, and a Topeka West receiver caught the ball in the air. He came down to the ground on his feet, but then immediately dropped the ball. I ruled the play a catch since his feet touched the ground, but Seaman didn't agree with the call.



RANDY GREGG
"ILLEGAL MOTION"

What is the funniest incident you've witnessed during a football game?

Some of the funniest incidents come in middle school games, because you never know what's going to happen. In one game a little guy, whose pants were way too big, was running along the sideline and his pants fell down to his ankles. My referee and I could not keep a straight face.

What made you decide to become a high school official?

I had a friend that asked me to officiate a football game while I was living in southwest Kansas. I just thought it would be a fun thing to do. I've been officiating since that time, and it's become a passion for me. Being out there with the kids is fun, and I enjoy teaching younger officials how to do things.



JIM BLAAUW
"PERSONAL FOUL"

What is one thing you wish spectators knew about officials and officiating?

One thing I wish they knew was the amount of time we put into officiating. I think a lot of times the perception is that we throw on our uniform and just walk out to the field, but that's not the case. For a high school game that starts at 7 p.m., we're there by 5:30 p.m. or before, so that may mean getting off work early if you have to travel. All of the meetings we go to and the time we spend studying the rules and taking tests factors into that time as well.

How much time do you put into officiating in a week?

We spend about four to five hours between traveling, studying and attending meetings. We also spend at least 10 hours on the field, so we're looking at about 14-15 hours each week devoted to officiating.



RENE POORT
"EQUIPMENT VIOLATION"

What is the funniest incident you've witnessed during a football game?

I was officiating football at a youth center, and often times, the kids that played there would argue amongst themselves in the huddle. They left the huddle one time after they had been arguing a lot during the game and came up to the line of scrimmage. One of the linemen went down into his stance, and then turned around and said, "Hey LeRoy, you better run fast, because nobody's going to block for you anymore in this game!"

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL

November 27	2011 Lower, Inc. Kanza Bowl	1 pm
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The third annual Lower, Inc. Kanza Bowl, in association with Bryant Heating and Cooling and presented by Parrish Hotel Corporation, returns to Hummer Sports Park on Sunday, November 27. Teams from the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Association and the Lone Star Conference will compete for the 2011 Kanza Bowl Championship. For more information, visit www.kanzabowl.com.



www.hummersportspark.com



Rossville

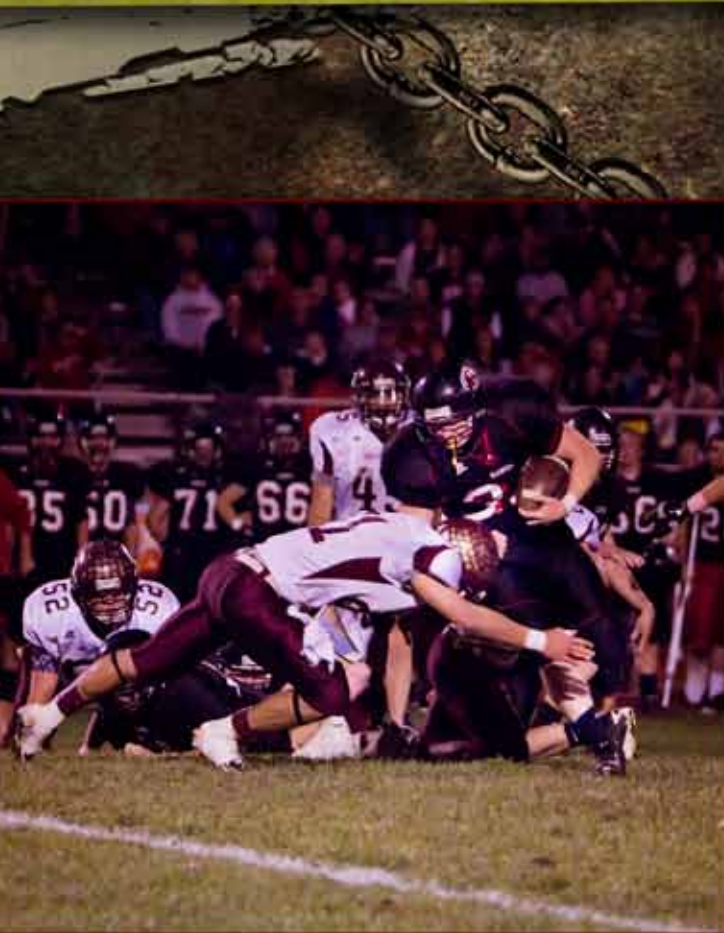
VS

Silver Lake





#21 Peter Pfannenstiel crosses the goal line for a Silver Lake touchdown





The Aspiring Neurosurgeon

By Max Rothman

After living in Ghana, impoverished and hungry, Emmanuel sees opportunity in this new country.

When John Opuku returned home from school in Ghana, he often never thought about what he had learned that day. He didn't think about girls, soccer or chores – he thought about what he was going to eat.

He walked to a nearby forest in search of a mango. When he found one, he bit into the moist fruit. He knew it was the first and last thing he would eat that day as the juices slid down his throat.

John never wanted his family to know that kind of hunger. That's why he brought his son, Emmanuel, to Topeka on March 5, 2009.

Emmanuel knows the date off the tip of his tongue. It's when he called his mother to wish her a happy birthday and tell her that he was in the United States.

Now, the Atlantic Ocean separates him from the clay houses and mud roads of his home village of Kumasi, Ghana.

"It was much different from how we go to high school now," Emmanuel said of his home country's academics.

Ten tests at the end of each month on ten daily subjects. Success or ridicule in the classroom. That was the daily life of school in Ghana. The people of Highland Park and Kansas are a significant change for Emmanuel.

Emmanuel gets straight A's in all of his classes and wants to go to Yale University to be a neurosurgeon, like one of his main influences, Benjamin Carson.

Emmanuel is now a senior and a forward for Highland Park's soccer team. His teammates call him "Ghana" and shout directions in Spanish that he doesn't understand. They know that he's unique.

"Most of the kids I'm pushing to read any book," said Jeremy Hall, Highland Park soccer coach. "[With Emmanuel], I'm trying to get him to read a book other than a classic."

Emmanuel has a constant thirst for knowledge, but he's also a skilled forward on the soccer field. With long strides, lightning speed and a thinking man's approach, he pressures defenses and races toward goalkeepers, rarely slowing down.

"Seeing him challenge every ball makes me want to do that, too," said goalkeeper Victor Ortega.

Emmanuel has a different, yet rewarding, lifestyle compared to his teammates, and he's well aware of it. He doesn't mind that his peers view academics differently. He believes that what you get from school is up to you and the teacher, not the classmates. So, Emmanuel studies on Saturday nights at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library and prefers discussing classes when with his friends. It's a different life, and an intellectually rewarding one.

After living in Ghana, impoverished and hungry like his father, Emmanuel sees opportunity in this new country, and he doesn't want to throw it away. It's a truth that most people his age seem to forget, but he never does.

"If a student wants something for himself, he has to work for it," said Emmanuel. "If you work for it, opportunities will come."

So Emmanuel works all the time. But to him, work is a pleasure. He reads and studies to acquire knowledge and reach his goal of attending Yale. He sees no boundaries in this country, and he's grateful to be in Topeka.



A COACH, A TRADITION, A LEGACY

336

Number of wins it took Coach Hamilton to pass Ed Buller as the all-time winningest football coach in state history.

MVP Magazine salutes Coach Hamilton on becoming the state's winningest football coach.

SEVEN

Number of state titles Coach Hamilton's teams have won over the course of four decades. ('81, '84, '89, '91, '97, '06 & '10)

15

Number of trips Coach Hamilton's teams have made to the state championship.

THIRTY-SIX

Number of years Coach Hamilton has been coaching football.

TWENTY-TWO

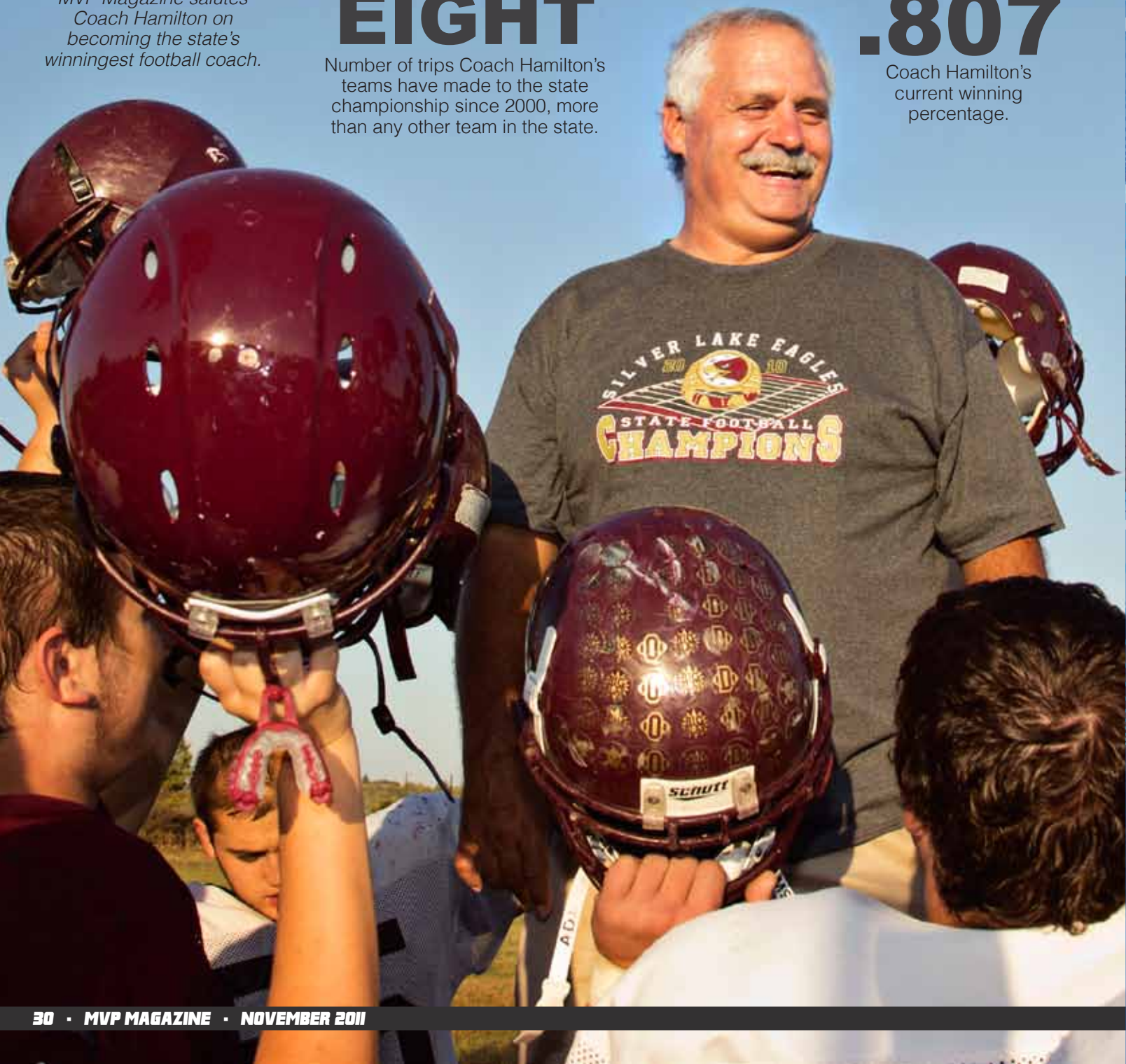
Number of Mid-East League titles Coach Hamilton's teams have won.

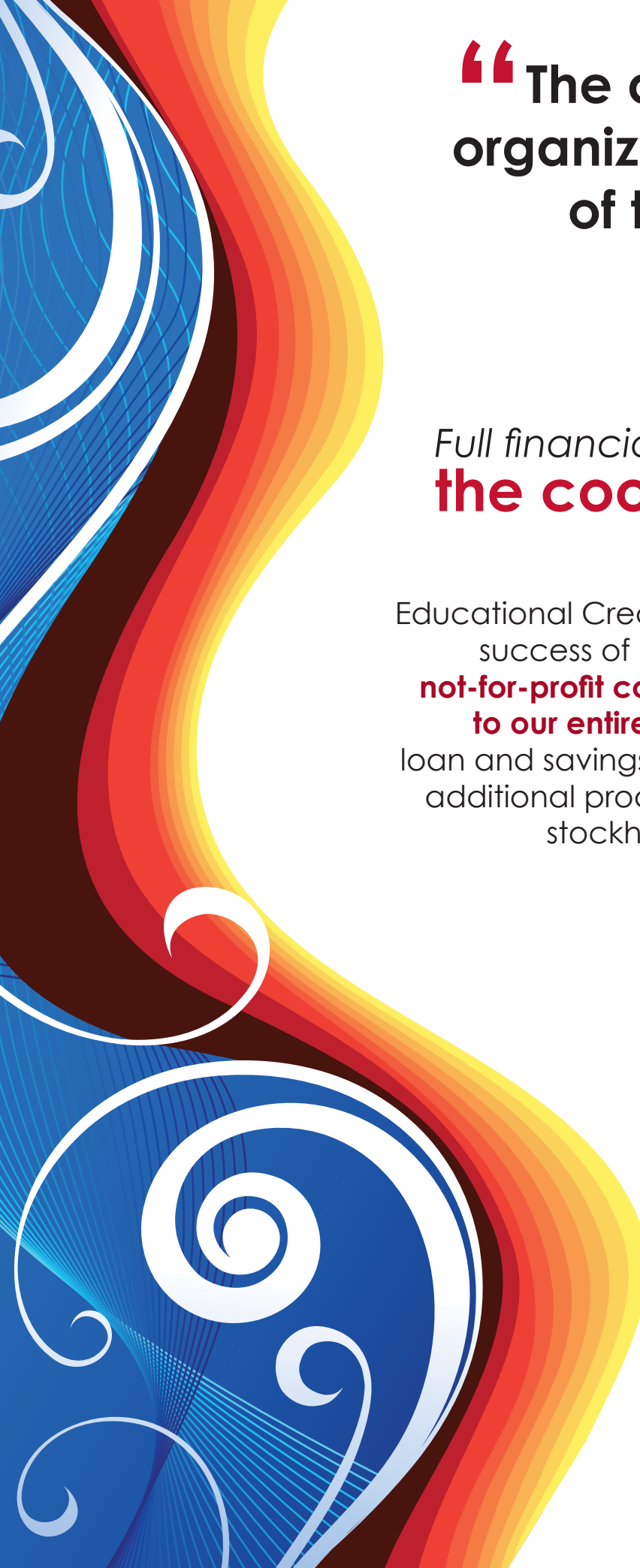
EIGHT

Number of trips Coach Hamilton's teams have made to the state championship since 2000, more than any other team in the state.

.807

Coach Hamilton's current winning percentage.





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--Vince Lombardi

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