

## DRHS COACHES

RON WOITALEWICZ  
(HC/DC/LB)

JEREMIAH  
BEHRENDSEN (OC/QB)

DENNIS MAJEWSKI  
(STC/JV HC/RB)

TIERRE DURAN (DB)

CHRIS FLYNT (WR)

JEFF HINES (DL)

MARK LEON (DB)

ERIC NEYEN (LB)

MATT OSTERHAUS  
(OL)

JARED SCHULZ (OL)

PAUL SHEEHY (DL)

PAUL LUNA (FHC)

KEVIN CROGHAN (F)

MICHAEL DELEON (F)

AUSTIN GAYLORD (F)

JAKE IANNELLA (F)

## DRSA YOUTH FB DIRECTORS

JOEL MCMANN

MARK CUSICK

BILL STUBBLEFIELD

DAVID LOOMIS  
(LEAGUE REP)

## IN THIS ISSUE

### PAGE 2

• UPCOMING EVENTS/  
DATES

• CATCHING 101

### PAGE 3

• CATCHING 101  
CONTINUED

• DRHS PLAYER  
SPOTLIGHT

### PAGE 4

• YOUTH COACHES  
CORNER WITH  
COACH LOOMIS

# Navy Cardinal Insider

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## Coach Woj's Spotlight:

As the school year is coming to an end I just want to take some time and reflect on what a special year it has been for our football program at Dakota Ridge. Our varsity team finished the year 9-2 and won the Plains League Championship with an exciting win over Ponderosa in the last 2.5 seconds of the game with a 44 yard field goal by back-up kicker Harper Silliman. Our JV team posted an impressive 9-1 record winning the Plains JV league title, and our freshman finished with a record of 7-2-1. The freshman should have been 8-2, but the officials of the freshman game vs. Monarch would not allow them to play overtime so the game ended in a tie. I am so proud of our senior group of players who will be graduating on May 19 at Red Rocks. During their 3 years of varsity football at Dakota Ridge, they won 25 games, were co-league champions in 2014 and outright league champions in 2015. They are the first group who has been part of three consecutive playoff appearances in the history of our school. The great part is not only were they great athletes, but were also excellent students as well. We are fortunate that we have a few of them who signed to go play college football as student/athletes at the next level. Cale Ferrin is going to Bethel University in Minnesota, Aaron Lewis going to Simpson College in Iowa, Kyle Thomas is going to South Dakota School of Mines, and Matt Caesar is going to Nebraska Kearney to play. Congratulations to all of those fine young men and all of our seniors on a great career at Dakota Ridge. They have for sure left a legacy for future teams to follow. This season looks to be just as exciting as last year was. We have a great senior class coming up and they are backed up with a strong junior and sophomore class. That is a recipe for success in high school football. Great senior class, with

great leadership and talent, and add a very good junior and sophomore class and great things will happen. We are very excited that we have



**Coach Woj**  
**DRHS Head Coach**

had about 50 incoming freshman at lifting down at Summit Ridge and are excited for their future as well. There is strength in numbers and our numbers are looking great for all levels. Our incoming freshman will have their spring camp down at Summit Ridge on May 9-11 and the varsity and JV team will hold their spring camp May 16-19. The varsity and JV will begin summer lifting on June 1 and freshman will begin on June 6. Our summer speed camp for all grades 2-12 will also begin June 6. If you need a registration form please let me know.

Again I encourage all our players to play other sports. We do all our summer lifting and speed work in the mornings so our players do not have conflicts playing other sports with games in the evenings during the summer. I have seen a statistic that said that 28 of the 31 first round draft picks in the 2016 NFL draft played more than one sport in high school. It makes kids better to compete year round. It is the greatest time of their lives being young and energetic and all kids should take advantage of that. Put down the video games, cell phones, turn off

the television and get outside and play with your friends.

I will leave you with this:

*Winners take chances.  
Like everyone else, they fear failing,  
But they refuse to let fear control  
them.*

*Winners don't give up  
When life gets rough, they hang in  
until the going gets better.  
Winners are flexible.*

*They realize there is more than one  
way and are willing to try other  
ways.*

*Winners know they are not perfect.  
They respect their weaknesses while  
making the most of their strengths.  
Winners fall, but they don't stay  
down.*

*They stubbornly refuse to let a fall  
keep them from climbing...  
Winners don't blame fate their  
failures nor luck for their successes.  
Winners accept responsibility for  
their lives.*

*Winners are positive thinkers who  
see good in all things.*

*From the ordinary, they make the  
extraordinary.*

*Winners believe in the path they  
have chosen;*

*Even when it's hard, even when  
others can't see where they are  
going.*

*Winners are patient.*

*They know a goal is only worth as  
much as the effort that is required  
to achieve that goal.*

*Winners are people like you.*

*They make the world a better place  
to be.*

EMBRACE THE GRIND!

Ron Woitalewicz  
Coach Woj  
Head Football Coach  
rwoitale@jeffco.k12.co.us

## Upcoming Events/Dates

### Events for DRHS Football

- Spring Camps
  - Freshman May 9-11
  - Freshman Player/Parent BBQ May 11th 5pm @ DRHS
  - V/JV May 16-19
- Summer Weight Training
  - JV/V(6/1) - Fresh(6/6)
- Summer Speed Camp
  - MWF June 6th - July 8th
- DRSA Annual Golf Tourney
  - Monday Aug. 1st

### More Events for DRHS Football

- Florida Fundraising \$ Due
  - June 1st
- Mattress Fundraiser
  - June 4th at DRHS
- CSU-P Team Camp
  - June 12-14
- Broncos 7on7 and Lineman Challenge
  - June 16th
- Hog Olympics Heritage HS
  - June 24th 8:00 am

### Events for DR Youth/Community

- **Youth FB Registration is OPEN!**
- Youth Speed & Agility Camp
  - MWF June 6th - July 8th
  - 9:00-10:15 am
- DRSA Youth Contact Camp
  - July 29th 6:00-7:30 pm
  - July 30th 9:00-10:30 am
  - DRHS Football Field
- DRSA Annual Golf Tourney
  - Monday Aug. 1st

### Events for DR Youth Coaches

- DRHS Spring Camp (open to all youth coaches)
  - May 16-19
- **DRHS Youth Coaches Clinic**
  - **Wed. May 18th**
- 1st Day of Youth Practice
  - August 1st
- DRSA Annual Golf Tourney
  - Monday Aug. 1st

## Coach Flynt: Catching 101

*“Too many times receivers will try to catch with their body resulting in drop balls or balls that get batted away by defenders.”*

Catching is one of the most important aspects of being a receiver. You can be one of the fastest players out there, you could be a great route runner, but if can't catch the ball it is all for not. Catching the ball seems pretty basic, however you see kids trapping the ball more times then actually catching the ball. Sometimes a player can catch everything above the waist and drops everything below the waist. Here are some rules and drills for catching the ball that should help with all types of catches.

### Rules for catching the ball

1. Always keep your eye on the tip of the football. Smaller focal points help heighten your level of focus. You should watch the football throughout the catch until the ball is tucked away. (Coaches tip: I watch my players' facemask to see if it goes down slightly while tucking the ball away. This ensures they have watched the ball throughout the catch and have secured the ball before running.)

2. Arms are extended out toward the ball. Too many times receivers will try to catch with their body resulting in drop balls or balls that get batted away by defenders. (Coaches tip: A great drill for this is to have the receiver stand behind the goal post or any pole and catch the ball with arms extended around the post or pole. This teaches the receiver to use nothing but hands.)

3. Hands should spread out wide with thumbs together if ball is thrown above the waist. There should be a triangle formed between the thumbs and index fingers. Any ball thrown below the waist should be caught with pinkies together palms facing out. (Coaches tip: A good drills for this is the Clock Drill. Have players extend their arms to the 12 o'clock position, thumbs should be together, have them rotate their arms clockwise and at about 3 o'clock position their hands should flip to pinkies together.

er. Continue around and at about 9 o'clock the players should flip back to having their hands with thumbs together. Keep rotating over and over, this gets players used to correct hand position when catching. This is an excellent drill to practice by yourself.)

4. Catch the front half of the football with finger tips.
5. Final step: **Watch the ball until the ball is put away and secured!** All too often receivers don't watch the ball until it is secured and this is when a lot drops happen. Additionally, try to focus on putting the ball in your outside arm after a catch. This helps protect you from fumbles that lead to turnovers.

There are always exceptions to some of these rules. Such as catching a ball over the shoulder. When catching a ball over the shoulder, pinkies should

## ...Catching 101 Continued

be together, not thumbs, even though it's above the waist. Of course if it's supposed to be an over the shoulder throw but is under-thrown you should come back to the ball, catch it at the highest point and your thumbs should be together.

**Catching Drills** (*Beside the ones already mentioned*)

1. Tennis ball drill: I like having receivers catch tennis balls one handed. Throw above and below the waist. Make sure they are catching with both hands. This allows the receiver to work on hand eye coordination. This is a great drill to do alone too. It also help the receiver get used to tightening their focal point when catching.
2. A very basic and easy drill is just having receivers run toward the thrower. The key in this drill is to have players not stop their feet. Receivers have a tendency to stop their feet when catching. *Run through the catch!*
3. Hand slap drill: Have 2 players on each side of the receiver. Have the receiver stand in place with arms moving back and forth as if they are running. The players on the side will lightly slap the hands and arms of the receiver. Throw the ball to the receiver. The receiver should shoot out their arms and catch the ball. This is a great drill to teach strong arms and to extend the arms. *DB's love to swat at arms.*
4. Back turned drill: I am sure most have done this drill. Have the player's back towards the thrower and on hike have player turn as you throw the ball. This teaches receivers to find the ball. I like this drill because receiver's often have their vision of the ball broken for a second, which happens more often than most imagine. When players run across the field defensive players often break up the vision of the ball to the receiver.
5. Another version of the Back turned drill: Same drill but put up a pad for a split second while the ball is in the air. This again achieves the desired effect of breaking up their vision.

In closing, catching is just one part of the receiver's job, but a very important part! If a receiver can't catch, it's hard to throw their way. They may want to think of moving to DB... just kidding. There are other aspects that do make up a great receiver: such as a quick first step, running great routes, ball security, and the ability to block. Blocking is an aspect that often gets over looked at receiver. However, it's a big part of being a receiver, but that's a topic for another day.

If you have any questions about anything in this article, the drills I've discussed, or if you want more drills don't hesitate to shoot me an email at [cflynt447@gmail.com](mailto:cflynt447@gmail.com)

*"There are other aspects that do make up a great receiver: such as a quick first step, running great routes, ball security, and the ability to block. Blocking is an aspect that often gets over looked at receiver. However, it's a big part of being a receiver, but that's a topic for another day."*

## Player Spotlight: Dawson Gorton

Dawson is #53 for the Eagles and spent last season starting on a very strong defensive line.

As a junior Dawson was selected as a 1st team All Conference player!

That was no surprise as he was in the top 10 for tackles, in the top 4 for sacks, #2 for the Eagles in tackles for loss and QB hurries, and he caused the

most fumbles of any Eagles' defender on the year!

As the only returning starter on the defensive line, the team will be looking for Dawson to take on a larger role in helping to stop the run and put pressure on opposing QB's!

Check out Dawson's highlights at:

<http://www.hudl.com/athlete/2674843/dawson-gorton>





## LITTLETON, CO DAKOTA RIDGE SPORTS ASSOCIATION

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*Soaring High  
with Eagle Pride*

Dakota Ridge Football works hand in hand with Dakota Ridge Youth Football. Our youth football program falls under our youth sport organization, the DRSA. The DRSA's mission is to make a positive impact in the community and the lives of our children and youth by providing a quality sports development program for the Dakota Ridge area and high school. They also strive to create an environment of leadership and role models, and they recognize the importance of shaping the lives of our children and future leaders.

[www.dakotaridgesports.org](http://www.dakotaridgesports.org)

## Youth Coaches Corner by David Loomis

How do you view mistakes? More importantly, how do you teach young athletes to view them? Watch your most competitive players to see how they react when they make a mistake. Do they completely lose their mind? Do they immediately hunch their shoulders and drop their eyes to the ground? How about the ever popular turning toward the sidelines and throwing both hands in the air making the universal sign for, "AAAAUUGH!!!!"?

Think about these reactions and ask yourself if you think the athletes responding in these ways are likely to immediately improve as a result of the mistake that they just made. More than likely they are so focused on what just happened that their attention is not on the next play which will result in another mistake or failure - compounding errors, or what some might call a snowball effect.

We often hear top level athletes talk about having short memories; this doesn't necessarily mean that they truly forget what just happened. What they excel at though is moving past mistakes and not dwelling on them. When asked why he didn't get more upset about his high percentage of strikeouts, Babe Ruth responded that he didn't mind them so

much because each strikeout got him one at-bat closer to his next home run.

So how can we as coaches and parents help our young athletes use mistakes as a learning tool and not an obstacle that they can't get past? A couple of things that I've tried or I have witnessed that definitely don't work:

Coaches and parents screaming at the athlete that just made a mistake; if you've done your job as a coach the player is likely very aware that they just made a mistake. They are feeling embarrassed and like they just let their teammates, coaches, parents and football family down. Yelling at them publicly and further humiliating them probably isn't going to put them in a mental state where they have much chance of experiencing success on subsequent plays.

Calling time out and singing "DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A SNOWMAN?" in your best Anna voice from Frozen to get them to stop flipping out because they just made a mistake. I know, sounds like it should be a good way to avoid the snowball effect, but it really, really doesn't work. Live and learn I guess.

So what can we do instead?

Teach players that mistakes and failures are an important part of the learning process. Also make sure that you teach them the importance of moving forward and focusing on the next play or what's in front of them rather than beating themselves up over a single mistake. If the coaching staff and the sidelines start losing their minds when a mistake is made your message will be lost. It's a good idea to take athletes aside, quietly make sure that they recognize the mistake and how to avoid it in the future then move on, get them back in the game as quickly as possible. Work on maintaining a solution style approach to mistakes rather than focusing on what went wrong. Make sure that they know how to deal with similar situations moving forward then encourage them to "Let It Go". Watch those high notes though; they can be a real challenge and can make or break the song. (Apologies to anyone not familiar with Disney's Frozen).

This season Coach Loomis led the Dakota Ridge 5th grade team to a playoff appearance in their first year playing at the division I level, and is a year removed from Dakota Ridge's first ever Carnation Bowl championship. He will be providing an article each month to help address some of the situations and concerns that youth coaches encounter.





## I AM A COACH BECAUSE...

I am a coach because of the **kids** and the **passion** I have for the sport itself. There is no other feeling quite like **helping** young athletes further develop their natural **persistence, determination, discipline, dedication, resiliency, work ethic, heart, leadership skills, connection** with, and **respect** for, others, not only in competition, but in **life!**