

Grant Darrington:

Lions' top tackler liked their fast start and relished Borah's winning season

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

Grant Darrington is fast. He runs on the Borah High School track team and has been timed at 11.5 seconds in the 100 meters. It's only natural that his favorite football memory of the Lions' 2011 football season was their fast start.

"Our opening game against Rocky Mountain ... last year, they beat us 44-0 and it felt good to get revenge," he said. "I'll never forget ... BAM ... we were up 20-0. We just steamrolled them in the first half."

The 41-28 victory got Borah off to a good start, and it didn't take long for others to notice. Darrington said the players gained confidence quickly, and their fellow students and alumni began to follow.

It resulted in a great year.

Darrington, a 5-foot-9, 170-pound defensive back, was Borah's leading tackler, and was an instrumental part of the team. Coach Darren Corpus called him a team player and a huge asset to Borah's defense, which was often tested by the league's offenses.

"Getting five wins in a season was our biggest accomplishment," Darrington said. "That's what I will remember."

Borah's 5-4 season was actually just one game better than 2010. However, Darrington felt it was the team's unity that felt so much different. It started the previous spring, when the school announced that Corpus would become the team's new coach, succeeding Chester Grey.

Coach Corpus was a former Borah player and continued to be involved in the game, coaching his son, Braden, virtually every year as he grew up. Darrington was also part of those teams. They lost



Grant Darrington and **Konnor Moden** discuss events on the field during an early season game.

just once during a four-year period and also claimed the city championship as ninth graders.

"I'm really good friends with Braden, and he told me about it the next day," Darrington said. "Coach showed up at lunch and we had a meeting. He talked about hitting the weights, the summer program and his football philosophy."

The summer program started the day after school ended, when Borah put several players in vans and drove to Salt Lake City to compete in the "Ute Shoot," a 7-on-7 tournament that featured 99 teams. Borah surprised a lot of people by defeating Eagle and reaching the semifinals.

The win over Eagle, who was predicted to be the favorite to win the 5A SIC, was especially sweet, but it wasn't what Darrington remembered most.

"We went down the night before and stayed the night on the turf in their indoor facility,"

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TOP: In one of his favorite memories of the season, **Grant Darrington** teams with a host of Borah defenders to bring down Capital RB Denis Popudnik late in the game.

RIGHT: **Darrington** runs across the Bronco Stadium turf to make a tackle on a Rocky Mountain ball carrier.

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he said. “We won seven or eight games and then lost one. It got our season off to a good start.”

After that, he couldn’t wait to start the season – and he wasn’t alone.

Darrington said the season was a thrill, starting from the win over Rocky Mountain, and it never stopped. He said he didn’t really have a favorite game, but appreciated the wins over Rocky and Centennial, and he’ll always recall helping stop Capital running back Denis Popudnik on a fourth-down play near the goal line that allowed Borah to get the ball.

He also had good memories of Borah’s game against Eagle, even though it was a 24-6 loss.

“We held them to their lowest total,” he said. “We were ahead 6-0 at halftime. I don’t think they were shut out in a half except for the game.”

With the season over, Darrington said he hoped to continue his playing career in college, but was uncertain if it would happen. He wanted to be part of the track team again in the spring and would see what might happen.

But if he doesn’t, there will be plenty of good memories from 2011 that will live on.