

Miners' latest title was a great ride



Bingham dominates 5A opponents and puts itself among Utah's best ever

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

There's no doubt that in the last eight years, Bingham High School has been the most successful 5A football program in Utah.

The dynasty started in 2006 with the school's first championship since 1946. More titles came in 2009 and 2010. The 2013 team got it going again, dominating their opponents so thoroughly that some called it one of the best ever.

It certainly was among the most enjoyable.

"This team is right there with the best I've coached and the most fun I've had," said coach Dave Peck. "This was a great group of kids who were much like the 2006 team, where nobody cared who got the credit."

The Miners averaged 41.1 points per game and recorded three shutouts. On a cool evening just before Thanksgiving, Bingham put the finishing touch on the season with a 38-13 victory over Brighton at Rice-Eccles Stadium.

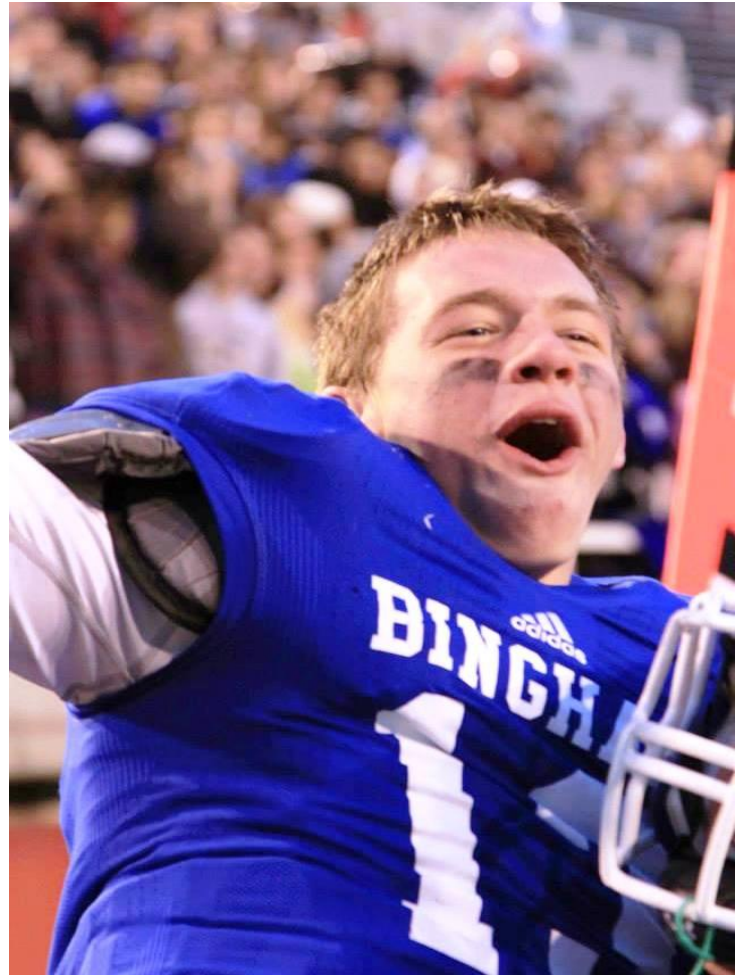
"I'm going to remember them for being a team that dared to be great and put us back into that elite status instead of just being a good team," Peck said.

Bingham ended the year with a No. 12 national ranking by MaxPreps and recognition at No. 20 by *USA Today*.

Among the season highlights was a nationally televised cable contest against Bonneville (Idaho) in the opener and a 450-mile trip to the Denver area two weeks later, where Bingham defeated Colorado powerhouse Valor Christian.

The Miners spent all season ranked No. 1 by the local media.

How did they do it? A gutsy rushing game led



Sione Finefeuiaki (above) and Kyle Gearig (below) celebrate after Bingham's 5A championship-game victory.

by senior Scott Nichols, who broke the school's single-season rushing record (1,832 yards), a junior quarterback that continued to surprise everyone as the season progressed with his play and more.

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The next level

ON FEB. 5, nine Bingham players accepted college football scholarship offers. They were:

Dalton Schultz (Stanford)
Riley Culley (Dixie State)
Spencer Tauteoli (Dixie State)
Sky Manu (Dixie State)
Scott Nichols (Weber State)
Landen Measom (Southern Utah)
Noa Taeatafa (Southern Utah)
Nick Heninger (Mesa CC)
Mahonrai Toki (Mesa CC)

BINGHAM FOOTBALL: 2013 season recap



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Only a few teams managed to stay with them (Valor, Brighton, Alta). Bingham's amazing depth also likely set up the Miners for the future.

During the playoffs, Bingham defeated West behind three touchdown hookups between Kyle Gearig and senior wide receiver Landen Measom. Nichols had three rushing TDs and led the Miners to a 43-10 win over Riverton. In the semifinal game against Lone Peak, Gearig and Nichols combined for five TDs to take a 29-point halftime lead and coast to victory.

In the 5A title game, Bingham led the entire way. Near the end of the first half, Gearig was knocked out of the game with a concussion and replaced by Kade Jensen, but Peck said there was no panic on the Bingham sidelines.

"We had been dominating every team in the second half this season," Peck said. "We just told everybody to step it up a little bit more.

"This whole year's been about team," he added. "It was great to see everyone come out in the second half and just play to the level that they are capable of."

Nichols' remarkable season was helped by an impressive offensive line and he received several post-season accolades, including being named Gatorade's MVP for Utah and the Deseret News 5A MVP. He also joined several other Miners in earning college football scholarships.

Defensively, junior linebacker Daniel Langi led the team with 101 tackles. Senior defensive linemen Spencer Tauteoli and Mahonrai Toki had seven sacks each. Senior defensive back Sky Manu broke a school record with nine interceptions and 13 for his career. His favorite was likely his 62-yard return that put the finishing touch on the championship game.

Senior linebackers Nick Heninger, Vaka Vehikite and junior defensive back Kade Cloward also provided significant contributions for the Miners.

Off the field, Peck was proud that the Miners sported a 3.44 average GPA among the 96 players on the varsity roster for the first quarter. Nineteen of those players achieved a 4.0, including Measom and senior Nate Naylor, who were named Academic All-State.

"You win championships when your best players are your best leaders," Peck said.

The South Valley Journal contributed to this story.

Season results

Date	Opponent	W/L	Score
Aug. 24	BONNEVILLE (Idaho)	W	42-7
Aug. 30	at Herriman	W	37-24
Sept. 7	at Valor Christian (Colo.)	W (OT)	24-21
Sept. 13	HUNTER	W	48-13
Sept. 19	at Granger	W	42-0
Sept. 27	WEST JORDAN*	W	42-0
Oct. 4	BRIGHTON*	W	38-27
Oct. 11	at Jordan*	W	48-27
Oct. 16	at Copper Hills*	W	52-0
Oct. 23	ALTA*	W	33-27
Nov. 1	WEST#	W	41-10
Nov. 8	RIVERTON#	W	43-10
Nov. 15	vs. Lone Peak#	W	48-13
Nov. 22	vs. Brighton#	W	38-13

* - Region 3 games. Home games in CAPS
- 5A playoff games

TOP LEFT:

Coach

Dave Peck

TOP

MIDDLE:

Aaron

Amaama

LOWER

RIGHT:

Scott

Nichols

Utah's top teams

Final team rankings, according to the Deseret News:

- 1. BINGHAM (14-0)**
2. East (13-1)
3. Logan (11-1)
4. Brighton (12-2)
5. Davis (9-1)
6. Timpview (13-1)
7. Riverton (8-3)
8. Syracuse (8-2)
9. Woods Cross (11-2)
10. Jordan (7-6)

