

# Langi rolled as Miners' top gun



CHRIS DETRICK | The Salt Lake Tribune

Bingham running back Harvey Langi scored 17 touchdowns in 2010 and is being courted by the University of Utah, Stanford, USC and other schools.

Running back's cutback moves and speed made him stand out on the loaded Bingham title team.

By **BILL ORAM**  
The Salt Lake Tribune

Harvey Langi was inarguably the biggest star on Bingham's 14-0 championship team, whose dominance people will grumble about long after the running back has moved on to Stanford, Utah, Southern Cal or any of the other half-dozen schools begging him to attend classes on their campuses.

The most famous high schooler in Utah is, somehow, humble about all this attention, instead trying to deflect it to his teammates.

"We had weapons everywhere," he said. "We were like a soldier filled with different kinds of ammo and weapons."

But Langi was the Miners' top gun. His cutback moves made college coaches smile and his breakaway speed left defenders slapping the turf in disgust.

But 2010 season for Langi wasn't just about long runs and touchdowns — he had 17, by the way, despite rarely playing into the fourth

## 5A MVP » BINGHAM'S HARVEY LANGI

quarter. In October, Langi was suspended for the Miners' first playoff game after police cited him for trespassing and said he admitted to smoking marijuana. Langi subsequently passed a drug test.

Langi called that experience "a big eye opener" and "that all this stuff, I could have had drop in a second."

The opportunities presented to Langi, he seems to recognize, are too critical to mess up. "I don't want to be that guy people are like, 'Oh, I remember Harvey, he couldn't make it because he wasn't eligible for college,'" Langi said.

So he continues to focus on school and football, preparing to get better. He watches the great running backs — Adrian Peterson, LaDarian Tomlinson, even Walter Payton and Barry Sanders. Those are his college prep courses. "Everytime I watch them I get butterflies," Langi said, "like I could do that and I want to do that."

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## 4A MVP » HIGHLAND'S NATE FAKAHAFUA

# Rams' hero wouldn't let team lose title game

Fakahafua made game-saving plays on offense and defense to lead Highland in final.

By **BILL ORAM**  
The Salt Lake Tribune

Nate Fakahafua's final year of high school football will surely be remembered for his two game-saving catches that won Highland a state championship.

Unless, of course, it's remembered for his sacks late in the fourth quarter of the same game. Or his winning

touchdown catch at Pine View in the quarterfinals. Or...

Really, there are so many "will be remembered fors" that it's much easier to roll them all up into one big "won't be forgotten."

It's a good thing Fakahafua said he wanted to be the guy making big plays, because he was asked to countless times this season.

"You have a team with a lot of young guys and a lot of them are a little timid or scared to make the big play," Fakahafua said. "I want the ball when that opportunity presents itself."

As if coach Brody Benson had shone a bat symbol into

the Utah sky, Fakahafua, a 6-foot-4 hero, always emerged when needed.

Against Mountain Crest in the final, where Fakahafua carried Highland to its first state title since 1986, the senior caught a touchdown pass in the final minute of regulation to tie the game and, moments later, sacked Mustang quarterback Alex Kuresa on back-to-back plays to force overtime. On fourth down of overtime, Fakahafua caught a scoring pass to force a second overtime, where the Rams ultimately prevailed.

"I think you could arguably say he was the best wide



CHRIS DETRICK | The Salt Lake Tribune

Highland's Nate Fakahafua's 17 receiving touchdowns and 17.5 sacks were the best in the state.

receiver and the best defensive lineman in the state," Benson said.

His 17 receiving touchdowns and 17.5 sacks both led

the state, not to mention his 1,531 receiving yards.

A four year starter, Fakahafua has orally committed to play at Utah next season,

where he will have the opportunity to make the same big plays — just on a bigger stage.

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## 3A MVP » JUAN DIEGO'S TAYLOR CASSITA



CHRIS DETRICK | The Salt Lake Tribune

Juan Diego's Taylor Cassita earned 109 tackles in 2010, including 18 in a game against Morgan.

# LB has 'a knack for the ball'

By **BILL ORAM**  
The Salt Lake Tribune

If you were watching a Juan Diego football game, linebacker Taylor Cassita was always the easiest guy to find on the field. You didn't need to know the plays, or even be all that familiar with football.

Locate the ball, and there Cassita would be.

"I just have a good knack for the ball and I know when to find it," the senior said.

Even when other teams would run misdirection plays, Cassita wouldn't be fooled.

"If a team was running a reverse or a sweep, there he was and I'd think, 'Just how'd you get there? You were supposed to be going the other

direction,'" coach John Colosimo said.

During the team's 24-17 win at Morgan, even the home team's announcer was awed by Cassita's 18-tackle performance, his voice rising in excitement with each hit, Colosimo said.

His nose for the ball earned Cassita 109 tackles and, Colosimo said, was critical to the Soaring Eagle winning its third-straight 3A championship.

Cassita is brash, never afraid to yell out what's on his mind. And so it was at halftime of the championship game against Hurricane, his own team locked in a third straight title battle with the Tigers.

Going into the game, Cassita feared some younger players lacked confidence the Soaring Eagle had the talent for a third championship.

Cassita had little tolerance for that, and motivated his team at halftime by telling them, "We deserve this, we've worked harder than them."

Juan Diego went on to break the game's 7-7 tie and win on a field goal as time expired.

And that was one of the few times Cassita couldn't help his team. Instead, he kneeled on the sideline, watching the magic.

Just like everyone else had watched him up to that point.

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# Colts' Lyman made all the right choices

By **BILL ORAM**  
The Salt Lake Tribune

The most important thing to remember is that no one wanted Josh Lyman to be the head coach at Cottonwood.

Not this season, not like this. Not as a last minute substitute for a 41-year-old man who died from a heart attack less than a month before the season started.

But Lyman didn't have much of a choice, and he responded in as fine of a fashion as anyone could have asked, attracting success no one expected.

## COACH OF THE YEAR » COTTONWOOD'S JOSH LYMAN

Lyman became Cottonwood's interim coach after Teko Johnson, recently hired from Mountain View, unexpectedly died on July 21. Lyman, a former receiver at Skyline and the University of Utah, led the team to a 10-0 start before the Colts were upset by Jordan in the quarterfinals.

The results of Lyman's rookie year make it hard to believe he decided against applying for the job when it was open last winter.

"You never know when

you're ready for it," he said. "The fact I got thrown into it, in the long run, probably has made me better."

In addition to the dazzling record, and Lyman's ability to also coach special teams and receivers, the 31-year-old needs to be recognized for his swift and appropriate response to an incident he would rather hadn't happened.

Lyman suspended his two best defensive players for the Jordan game after they admitted to drinking the

weekend before.

Lyman admitted it was hard to punish the players, "especially when you're going into the biggest game of your career and the season. I think ultimately it was the right thing."

We're not the only ones who noticed Lyman's steady hand and firm grip. At the conclusion of the season, Cottonwood administrators officially hired Lyman as head coach, removing his interim title.

For a second time, they've



SCOTT SOMMERDORF | The Salt Lake Tribune

Cottonwood's Josh Lyman took over after the death of the head coach. The Colts went 10-0 before losing in the quarterfinals.

made the right choice putting him in charge.

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