

# MISSISSIPPI GRIDIRON GOLD



**SMALL TOWNS.  
BIG FOOTBALL.**

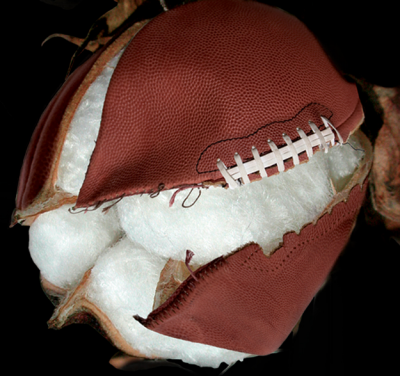
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**Inspiring Stories of Legendary Mississippi High School Coaches:**  
*Guardians of the Greatest Football Talent in America*

# MISSISSIPPI GRIDIRON GOLD

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## SYNOPSIS

In a 2006 study conducted by USA Football and the Wharton Business Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania, the state of Mississippi was cited as having the best high school football in America. In fact, Mississippi produces more college and professional football players per capita than any other state in the country. However, these two distinctions fall more than 100 years short of illustrating the true importance of football in Mississippi. High school football is more than just a sport to residents of the Magnolia State. It is a mechanism for teaching right and wrong; it is a platform for preaching the word of God; it is an outlet for escaping farming and pulpwood hauling; it is a source of civic pride and it is a way of honoring your ancestry. To Mississippians, high school football is a necessary obsession.

Gridiron Gold explores the many aspects that make high school football unique in the state of Mississippi. The film reflects the thoughts, stories, and philosophies of many of the state's greatest coaches, extracted from over ninety hours of film, over one hundred interviews, and over twenty-six hundred pages of transcripts. Some excerpts are funny, some sad, and some reflect deep history, tradition, and social change. All are pure football. Pure Mississippi.

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# Gridiron Movie Tells Mississippi's High School Football Story

By Andy Kanengiser

"Mississippi Gridiron Gold" is a new documentary film that captures the essence of what makes high school football such a vibrant part of the culture in communities across the Magnolia State.

With its premiere set for July 18th, "Mississippi Gridiron Gold" sheds light on the impact of high school football in the Magnolia State.

"Lovers of football everywhere will like these stories," says Mike Frascogna, the film's executive co-producer. "No other state has done this."

The all-star movie lineup ranges from national coach of the year Lance Pogue, four-time state champion at South Panola, to dynamic leaders like Willie Collins, the Provinefather figure for many young men from inner-city Jackson's neighborhoods.

Madison Central coach Bobby Hall, Pete Hurt of Northwest Rankin, Marcus Boyles at Petal, and retired coaches, including Wally Bumpas at Brandon and Jerry Alexander, a perennial winner with the Moss Point Tigers, are others spotlighted.

The film depicts how more than three-dozen of these prominent coaches served as mentors and role models to young men, many coming from single-parent households and troubled neighborhoods.

"If these coaches can teach you no more than Xs and Os, they are failures," says Frascogna, a Jackson attorney who's written several books on Mississippi high school football. "These coaches were surrogate fathers to these kids."

First developing his love for football as a high school player at St. Joseph Catholic School in Jackson in the early 1960s, Frascogna and his two sons, Mike and Marty, turned to writing about the sport with a blitz of books.

Starting a half-dozen years ago, they told compelling stories in books like "Gridiron Gold"



and later in "Y'all vs Us" in 2008. They tackled the state's junior college football powerhouses in 2011, devoting an entire book to a legendary junior college football coach, Bull Sullivan.

Mike Frascogna discovered Mississippi's prominence after reading a study by the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. Based on the number of kids playing football in Mississippi, the percentage making college rosters and those making it to the NFL, the study concluded that Mississippi high school football ranked best in America.

"You would think it would be Texas," he said. He wanted to dig a little deeper.

The Pennsylvania study sparked the Jackson attorney and his sons, who played college football at Notre Dame and Millsaps, to interview over 600 people for their first few books. The new movie takes their research beyond the written word. "Lovers of football anywhere will like these stories," Frascogna said.

The movie showcases the talented players and successful coaches, but also zeroes in on the significant contributions of the sport since the first high school football game was played in Winona, Mississippi in 1905.

After the high-definition film debuts in towns across Mississippi in July and August, there's a national audience that may get to see it. Frascogna believes this superb film will interest producers of the "30 for 30" sports documentaries series airing on ESPN.

# Mississippi High School Activities Association Leaders Boost New Movie

## By Andy Kanengiser

Ennis Proctor's vast knowledge about Mississippi's high school football scene was put into good use as an executive producer of the new film "Mississippi Gridiron Gold."

Examining the culture of high school football and life's lessons in many small towns, the movie documentary makes its debut in Mississippi theaters on July 18th.

The easy part for Proctor and others connected with the movie was making sure the cameras were rolling for candid interviews with standout coaches like Paul Pounds, who coached future Ole Miss and New Orleans Saints star quarterback Archie Manning as a teen at Drew. Convincing coaching legends like Warren Central's Lum Wright, Lance Pogue at South Panola or Willie Collins of Provine to talk about Mississippi's strengths as a football dynamo was no problem.

The tough part was editing extensive interviews with more than 40 current and retired coaches to a final product of merely eighty minutes.

"We had so much," Proctor said. After talking with film industry pros, he discovered that much of the material had to be carefully trimmed. "Ninety-five to 98 percent hits the floor. You have to be very selective."

Proctor was well-suited for the role. The former executive director of the Mississippi High School Activities Association for twenty years, also coached high school football, including stops in Jackson and Raymond in Mississippi and in Titusville, Florida. He knows coaches, referees, players, fans, business people and others who've worked hard to elevate Mississippi high school football to a shining star across the USA. "There's much more passion here," Proctor said. With less than three million people stretching from the suburbs of Memphis to the rural Delta and down to Gulf Coast communities, Mississippi isn't heavily populated. But per square inch, football fever is incredible. Sports



talk radio is huge in the Magnolia State, and most of the callers are football fanatics.

"We're not the Silicon Valley. We're not the big city," says Proctor, a Mississippi College graduate. "People really identify with high school football here."

Proctor believes one reason Mississippi is so potent when it comes to high school football is the junior college system. The state's 15 community and junior colleges offer an incentive for talented football players to get an education, and enable coaches to develop their job skills, Proctor said. The junior colleges routinely are ranked among the nation's leaders.

Comprising a largely rural state, many Mississippi communities are havens for high school football. Small towns practically shut down when fans travel to Mississippi Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson for high school championship games in December.

Co-executive producer Mike Frascogna has seen the passion. "The high school football team is the billboard of the community."

"Mississippi Gridiron Gold" puts the spotlight on the sport's value for 100-plus years and what the future may bring.

"The message will be clear and to the point for anybody who played high school football in Mississippi," Frascogna said. "They will walk out pumped up and pleased at what we are doing."

# Coach Willie Collins Encourages Players to Have Discipline and to Work Hard

By Jessica Simien

“Mississippi Gridiron Gold” is a documentary set to hit theaters this July, touting small towns with big football. As one of the most successful coaches in Mississippi high school history, Willie Collins knows a thing or two about small towns and big football.

Collins is a Jackson native and attended Jackson State where he played football under Coach Robert Hill in the 70’s, alongside Walter Payton and Jackie Slater. His football experience goes all the way back to his stomping grounds, Jackson’s Washington Addition neighborhood. He’s seen the incredible growth of high school football first hand.

“We used to always play football in the streets,” he said.

Collins, the head coach at Provine, has seen a lot of football in this state. He began his coaching career in Brandon, where he coached for three years before moving to Forest Hill. After leaving Forest Hill in 1982, he began coaching at Provine under the leadership of Stanley Blackmon and had an opportunity to help the team turn their losing streak around.

“Basically the program started under Coach Blackmon. He was the one who initially started changing the program around,” he said. “His first two years here I think they were 1-9 and then in his third year he changed it around. I came in during his fourth year.”

Collins recalls being a part of the leadership that Provine’s football program needed in order to become a better team.

“I had an opportunity to be a part of that. I was his assistant coach for about nine years before I got the opportunity to become the head coach.”

As Provine’s head coach, Collins has had a hand in developing his players for life on and off



the field. He’s part of the history that makes movies like “Mississippi Gridiron Gold” possible. Developing character, understanding the importance of hard work and being disciplined are staples of his coaching method. He says the philosophy he uses with his team is the same one he used while in college.

“A guy named Robert Hill at JSU always instilled discipline in us, and that’s the biggest thing we try to do here at Provine. Actually, our motto is developing character through hard work and discipline. We feel like if we work hard enough and get kids to do the right thing, they’ll develop character and everything else will fall in place,” he said.

Coaching high school football is not easy, even for the veteran coaches. Collins has had challenges, but he’s seen the results of hard work, and the benefit of using football to teach life lessons that last.

“We tell kids all the time that if there is something else you can do besides hard work, then they should write a book and become a millionaire,” he laughed. “The bottom line is that to improve we have to go back to the basics, work hard and eventually good things will happen.”

# Mississippi College Football Coach Norman Joseph Brings Faith and Builds Leadership

By Andy Kanengiser

Norman Joseph is more than just a football coach at Mississippi College. A product of the Mississippi high school system, Joseph learned early the importance of mentoring young men on and off the football field.

“I feel this is my calling. I feel the Lord led me to coaching,” Joseph said. “I want to have an impact on our players.”

This July, fans will see the impact of football coaches on the lives of their players with the release of “Mississippi Gridiron Gold”. Joseph lived that out under top-notch coaches as a quarterback, receiver and defensive end at the former South Vicksburg High School. Playing in the old Big 8 Conference, Joseph was mentored himself by men such as Jerry Sullivan, Raymond Carter, and George Lee. Rush McKay and Glenn Slay also helped improve his skills on the field. Those skills were advanced under Mississippi State coach Bob Tyler during his playing days with the Bulldogs in 1977.

“Because of these men and many others, they impacted me as an athlete, student, and player. They were interested in me as a person,” Joseph said. “I never forgot that. Their influence and the Lord led me into coaching.”

Over the years in which coaching stops took him to California, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Texas, Joseph discovered Mississippi high school football has no equals.

“There is real passion for high school football in Mississippi,” says the Choctaws head coach. “Mississippi high school football coaches are as good as anybody in the nation.”

Selected as Mississippi College’s head football coach in 2005, Joseph led the team to an American Southwest Conference championship in 2009 as MC reached the NCAA playoffs for the first time since 1991. Former players believe



in his ability to lead, while staying true to his faith.

“The first thing is his high character,” said Marcus Arroyo, offensive coordinator for the Southern Miss Golden Eagles. The quarterback at San Jose State when Joseph was the team’s offensive coordinator, Arroyo calls himself fortunate to be “around a guy who was so much more than the scoreboard itself. Coach Joseph was such an inspiration. He cared about us as players, but could be critical. He was a leader. I have a lot of fond memories.”

Belhaven head coach Joe Thrasher was a fullback for the Blazers under Joseph, where faith and interest in the lives of players were always most important. “Coach Joseph took chances to start a program from scratch,” says Thrasher. “He’s at MC and I’m at Belhaven and our faith as at the forefront.”

With the 2013 season kicking off in a little more than two months, Coach Joseph has mapped out his priorities, the same four priorities he listed when he took the job.

They are for each player to finish college with a diploma, for players to end the season wearing a letter jacket, to leave MC with a conference championship ring on their fingers, and for the players to know Jesus Christ or to know him better.

Lessons learned on the Mississippi gridiron.

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BIG FOOTBALL.



## CREDITS

### EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

X.M. Frascogna, Jr.  
Ennis H. Proctor

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X.M. Frascogna, Jr.

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Ennis H. Proctor

### DIRECTOR OF POST PRODUCTION

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### BASED ON THE BOOK GRIDIRON GOLD

By

X.M. Frascogna, Jr.  
X.M. Frascogna, III  
Martin F. Frascogna

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1953-2012

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### NARRATOR

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aka "M3"

# SPONSORS



## State Farm

State Farm was founded in 1922 by retired farmer and insurance salesman George Jacob Mecherle, and now insures more cars and homes than any other insurer in the U.S. A mutual company owned by its policyholders, State Farm is currently ranked number 34 on the Fortune 500 list of largest companies. State Farm now offers nearly 100 products and services, in five different lines of business, to help customers manage today and prepare for tomorrow. A commitment to policyholders is best illustrated by handling nearly 35,000 claims per day. The company has grown to now include more than 17,000 agent offices.

## Blue Cross Blue Shield



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mississippi has a singular goal: to help the people of Mississippi be healthy and stay healthy. As Mississippi's health and wellness team, employees are focused on helping Mississippians address the health issues that face them in a way that not only improves health but also provides the greatest return on their healthcare dollars. Working with Network Providers, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mississippi is not only changing the conversation about healthcare in Mississippi, but is also changing the way healthcare is delivered in the state. Blue Cross Blue Shield combines service excellence, best in class technology, and provider partnerships with the ultimate goal of providing Mississippians with the products and services they need to be healthy. Mississippi Sports Medicine – Founded in 1984, Mississippi Sports Medicine and Orthopedic Center (MSMOC) was Mississippi's first full-service orthopedic specialty practice, and remains the states leading provider of orthopedic care today. One of its missions is to care for secondary and high school athletes throughout the state. This is accomplished through community athletic training outreach programs, game and event coverage by athletic trainers and orthopedic surgeons and corporate partnerships with the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA), Mississippi Association of Coaches (MAC) and the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS). MSMOC has been a proud partner with the MHSAA for over twenty years providing financial support as well as athletic trainer and orthopedic coverage for state championship events.

## Coca-Cola



The Coca-Cola Company has a history that dates all the way back to 1893 when Atlanta Pharmacist John Pemberton first invented the soft drink. Today, Coca-Cola is enjoyed in more than 200 countries around the world. With its bottling partners, the company reaches out to the local communities it serves, believing that Coca-Cola exists to benefit and refresh everyone it touches. Coca-Cola has grown to the world's most ubiquitous brand, with more than 1.7 billion beverage servings sold each day. The company has a long history in Mississippi, where it was first bottled back in 1894 in the city of Vicksburg.



## St. Dominic's Hospital

St. Dominic's is more than just a hospital. It is a family of services focused on fulfilling a mission of Christian healing to those in need. St. Dominic Health Services, Inc. is the parent company for a large group of subsidiary organizations and programs dedicated to the same mission. These include St. Dominic Hospital, the Community Health Services Clinic, St. Dominic Medical Associates (physician network), New Directions for Over 55, MEA Clinics, The Club at St. Dominic's, the School Nurse Program, St. Dominic's Foundation, St. Catherine's Village and Care-A-Van.

St. Dominic's is not only focused on acute care patients but also the wellbeing of the communities it serves. This is shown in partnerships with organizations such as The Club facilities as well as D1 Jackson. St. Dominic's, Capital Orthopaedic & Sports Medicine Center, Michael Oher, Antonio Johnson, are co-owners of D1 Jackson. D1 believes replicating top college and pro training environments is the best setting for athletes to reach their goals and specializes in making athletes faster, stronger, more agile, and explosive, while also building character.

St. Dominic Hospital is a 535-bed tertiary care hospital located in Jackson, MS serving all of central Mississippi and employs approximately 3,000 nurses, physicians, and skilled caregivers. The medical staff, of nearly 500 leading physicians and specialists, makes St. Dominic's one of the most comprehensive hospitals in Mississippi. Through nearly seven decades, St. Dominic's has remained true to its vision. St. Dominic's – a Christian healing community called to provide quality, compassionate care and an exceptional encounter every time.

## D1 Jackson



D1 Jackson is a new sports training facility opened this spring in Madison. D1 provides custom training programs, expert coaching and the latest in physical therapy, all in a motivating, high-energy environment. D1's athletic-based, motivating atmosphere is designed for student-athletes and adults to receive the D1 Experience via a replication of top college/pro training environments and facilities. D1 places a strong emphasis on developing positive character, core values and self-esteem, ingraining character building in every workout. Profanity, negativity and tardiness are prohibited at D1.

## THE ASSOCIATIONS



# MISSISSIPPI GRIDIRON GOLD

SMALL TOWNS ★ BIG FOOTBALL

## PURCHASE



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NETFLIX



redbox

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# BIOS

## AUTHORS

### X.M. Frascogna, Jr.



“Mike” is a 1965 graduate of St. Joe High School in Jackson, Mississippi. While at St. Joe, Mike played halfback for legendary Coach Bill Raphael. Mike then attended Mississippi State University where he competed as a sprinter on the track team. He began practicing law in 1972 and established a specialized practice in the area of Entertainment and Sports Law. Mike now teaches a similarly styled course at the Mississippi College School of Law and his firm, Frascogna Courtney, remains as the only firm in the state with such a specialty. A lifelong high school football enthusiast, Mike has attended every Mississippi high school football championship game since the playoffs were implemented in 1981 and has 14 years of experience coaching youth football. In addition, Mike’s football coaching articles have appeared in publications such as Texas Coach Magazine and Scholastic Coach Magazine.

### X.M. Frascogna, III



“M3” played high school football at Jackson Academy in Jackson, Mississippi for Coach Sammy Dantone from 1988-1990. He then spent his freshman year of college at Millsaps College before transferring to the University of Notre Dame where he played for Coach Lou Holtz for the 1992-1995 seasons. M3 coached wide receivers at Millsaps College from 1995-1997. He also authored the article “Speed Training for Combines” published in American Football Coach Magazine.

### Marty Frascogna



Marty played high school football for Coach John McInnis at Jackson Prep in Jackson, Mississippi from 1993-1995. Marty then played at Millsaps College from 1996-1999 as a defensive back and kick returner for Coach Ron Journey and Coach Bob Tyler. Marty now practices law as part of the Entertainment and Sports Law division of Frascogna Courtney law firm in its Jackson, Mississippi office.

# DIRECTOR

## Terry D. Duffie



Terry D. Duffie owned, operated and developed radio properties and promotion/marketing companies for over 35 years, handling all aspects of marketing and advertising. Duffie holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Marketing and Business Economics from Jacksonville State University. He also studied basic electronics at Opelika Technical School, designed and worked as general contractor on numerous 100kw FM transmitter sites and directed construction of several 1000 foot tall tower projects. In his earlier career Duffie worked for ABC Wide World of Sports providing graphics at live sporting events. Currently, Duffie is President/CEO of Scenic Cable Network & Productions since March 1992 to present. Scenic Productions produces local, regional and national TV ads, music videos, movies, corporate videos, digital advertising signage and provides network acquisitions. A partial client list includes: The Discovery Channel, History Channel, ABC Family Channel, Montel Williams Show, Sony, Fox News Channel, The Food Network, and Oliver North War Stories. Scenic has received numerous "ADDY" Awards for producing TV ads.



# FILMMAKERS

## EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

### Ennis Proctor



Dr. Ennis Proctor has devoted 47 years of his life to public education, including 20 years as the executive director of the Mississippi High School Activities Association. After taking over the position in 1991, Dr. Proctor helped grow the association from 15 sports to 24 and raised millions of dollars to improve high school activities in Mississippi. He has received numerous honors over the years, including designation as the only Mississippian to serve as President of the National Federation of State High School Associations. He is a member of the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and was named as Outstanding Executive Director by the All-American Football Foundation. He is also a member of the Mississippi Association of Coaches Hall of Fame and a recipient of the Tom Landry Award from the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He contributed with the Mississippi Sports Council on several publications covering football in the Magnolia State. Dr. Proctor retired as executive director of the MHSAA in 2011.

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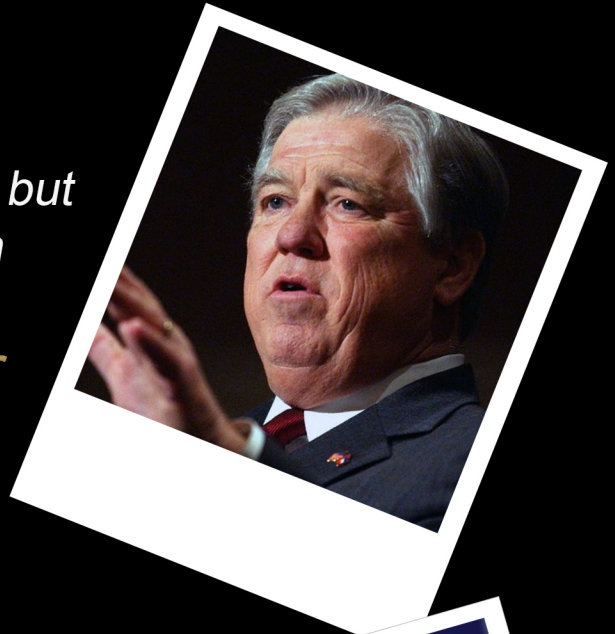


Outside of his legal career, Mike Frascogna has always been active in the creation of his own intellectual property in the music, film and book genres of the entertainment business. He was recognized by The Recording Academy at the 47th Grammy Awards for his executive producer's role in the 2004 Best Traditional Soul Gospel Album nomination. From 2007 to 2011 Frascogna and his two sons, Mike and Marty, co-authored five books [Mississippi JUCOs – The Toughest Football League in America, 2011; Gridiron Glory – Celebrating Over 100 Years of Mississippi High School Football, 2010; Bull Sullivan and the Lions of Scooba, Mississippi, 2010; Y'all vs Us – Thrilling Tales of Mississippi's Hottest High School Football Rivalries, 2008; and Gridiron Gold – Inspiring Stories of Legendary Mississippi High School Coaches, 2007] about the unique culture surrounding high school and junior college football in Mississippi. In 2012, Frascogna produced a full length motion picture entitled Mississippi JUCO's, The Toughest Football League in America and recently completed a second film entitled Mississippi Gridiron Gold which is scheduled for release Summer 2013.

# PERSONAL STATEMENTS

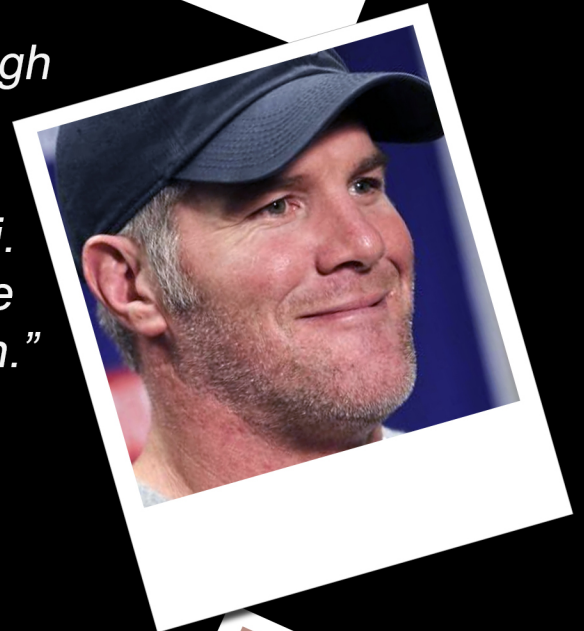
*“Mississippi has much to be proud of, but possibly nothing more so than its high school football.”*

**Former Governor Haley Barbour**



*“It was a wonderful experience playing high school football for my father. The high school coach is an incredibly important figure in small towns like Kiln, Mississippi. Sometimes my dad seemed more like the mayor of the town than the football coach.”*

**Brett Favre**



*“There were two important events during the week: Friday night football and Sunday church. In many cases the coach and the preacher were saying the same things. There is a fuzzy line between the two. You talk a lot of football at church and learn a lot about God at football practice.”*

**Jerry Rice**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# MISSISSIPPI GRIDIRON GOLD SMALL TOWNS ★ BIG FOOTBALL ★ IN THEATERS JULY 2013 ★

Jackson, Miss. (May 28, 2013) – The Mississippi Sports Council has announced the upcoming release of Mississippi Gridiron Gold (MGG), a full-length documentary celebrating the history of football in the Magnolia State. Based on the popular book Gridiron Gold, MGG captures the passion of Mississippi high school football and tells the unique story of how a small state with less than three million residents has built a national reputation for titanic football. The announcement press conference is set for Monday, June 3, at 1:00 p.m. at the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum.

MGG is filled with interviews from many of the legendary coaches responsible for building the tradition of high school football success. More than 80 hours of footage collected over the last three years have been packed into the 80-minute movie.

“It’s faith, family, and football down here and sometimes we get those priorities skewed a little”, says Madison Central Head Coach Bobby Hall. “It’s 365 days a year. When football season is over people literally start counting down until it comes back again.”

Executive producers of the film are former longtime Mississippi High School Activities Association executive director Ennis Proctor, and noted attorney and author Mike Frascogna, Jr.

“Everybody is used to putting their nose to the grindstone and putting out an effort to make a living in Mississippi”, said Dr. Proctor. “Being a blue-collar state helps us in every regard, I think, as far as being a good athletic state. This is a story that needed to be told on screen.”

The film’s highly anticipated release is scheduled for this July in theatres and screenings around Mississippi. The film has been made possible through partnering sponsorships with State Farm, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi, Mississippi Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Center, Coca-Cola, St. Dominic Hospital and D1 Jackson.

BankPlus is the official host sponsor of the movie announcement press conference. Along with the producers of the movie and sponsors, many college and high school coaches from around the state will be in attendance, along with top football prospects for the upcoming season. Video excerpts from the movie and trailers will be shown at the press conference.

**BankPlus**<sup>®</sup>

[www.msgridirongold.com](http://www.msgridirongold.com)

### **About the Executive Producers**

**Ennis Proctor** – Dr. Ennis Proctor has devoted 47 years of his life to public education, including 20 years as the executive director of the Mississippi High School Activities Association. After taking over the position in 1991, Dr. Proctor helped grow the association from 15 sports to 24 and raised millions of dollars to improve high school activities in Mississippi. He has received numerous honors over the years, including designation as the only Mississippian to serve as President of the National Federation of State High School Associations. He is a member of the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and was named as Outstanding Executive Director by the All-American Football Foundation. He is also a member of the Mississippi Association of Coaches Hall of Fame and a recipient of the Tom Landry Award from the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He contributed with the Mississippi Sports Council on several publications covering football in the Magnolia State. Dr. Proctor retired as executive director of the MHSAA in 2011.

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**Mississippi Sports Medicine** – Founded in 1984, Mississippi Sports Medicine and Orthopaedic Center (MSMOC) was Mississippi’s first full-service orthopaedic specialty practice, and remains the states leading provider of orthopaedic care today. One of its missions is to care for secondary and high school athletes throughout the state. This is accomplished through community athletic training outreach programs, game and event coverage by athletic trainers and orthopaedic surgeons and corporate partnerships with the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA), Mississippi Association of Coaches (MAC) and the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS). MSMOC has been a proud partner with the MHSAA for over twenty years providing financial support as well as athletic trainer and orthopaedic coverage for state championship events.

**Coca-Cola** – The Coca-Cola Company has a history that dates all the way back to 1893 when Atlanta Pharmacist John Pemberton first invented the soft drink. Today, Coca-Cola is enjoyed in more than 200 countries around the world. With its bottling partners, the company reaches out to the local communities it serves, believing that Coca-Cola exists to benefit and refresh everyone it touches. Coca-Cola has grown to the world’s most ubiquitous brand, with more than 1.7 billion beverage servings sold each day. The company has a long history in Mississippi, where it was first bottled back in 1894 in the city of Vicksburg.

**St. Dominic Hospital** – St. Dominic’s is more than just a hospital. It is a family of services focused on fulfilling a mission of Christian healing to those in need. St. Dominic Health Services, Inc. is the parent company for a large group of subsidiary organizations and programs dedicated to the same mission. These include St. Dominic Hospital, the Community Health Services Clinic, St. Dominic Medical Associates (physician network), New Directions for Over 55, MEA Clinics, The Club at St. Dominic’s, the School Nurse Program, St. Dominic’s Foundation, St. Catherine’s Village and Care-A-Van.

St. Dominic’s is not only focused on acute care patients but also the wellbeing of the communities it serves. This is shown in partnerships with organizations such as The Club facilities as well as D1 Jackson. St. Dominic’s, Capital Orthopaedic & Sports Medicine Center, Michael Oher, Antonio Johnson, are co-owners of D1 Jackson. D1 believes replicating top college and pro training environments is the best setting for athletes to reach their goals and specializes in making athletes faster, stronger, more agile, and explosive, while also building character.

St. Dominic Hospital is a 535-bed tertiary care hospital located in Jackson, MS serving all of central Mississippi and employs approximately 3,000 nurses, physicians, and skilled caregivers. The medical staff, of nearly 500 leading physicians and specialists, makes St. Dominic’s one of the most comprehensive hospitals in Mississippi. Through nearly seven decades, St. Dominic’s has remained true to its vision. St. Dominic’s – a Christian healing community called to provide quality, compassionate care and an exceptional encounter every time.

**D1 Jackson** – D1 Jackson is a new sports training facility opened this spring in Madison. D1 provides custom training programs, expert coaching and the latest in physical therapy, all in a motivating, high-energy environment. D1’s athletic-based, motivating atmosphere is designed for student-athletes and adults to receive the D1 Experience via a replication of top college/pro training environments and facilities. D1 places a strong emphasis on developing positive character, core values and self-esteem, ingraining character building in every workout. Profanity, negativity and tardiness are prohibited at D1.

### **About the Press Conference Host**

**BankPlus** – BankPlus, with total assets of more than \$2 billion, has over 60 banking offices in 33 Mississippi communities. BankPlus offices are located in Belzoni, Bentonia, Brandon, Byram, Canton, Clinton, D'Iberville, Durant, Flora, Flowood, Gluckstadt, Hernando, Holly Bluff, Horn Lake, Isola, Jackson, Lexington, Madison, Meridian, Newton, Olive Branch, Pearl, Picayune, Pickens, Poplarville, Quitman, Ridgeland, Shubuta, Southaven, Stonewall, Tchula, Waynesboro and Yazoo City. For additional information on BankPlus, please visit [www.BankPlus.net](http://www.BankPlus.net).

### **About the Associations**

**Mississippi High School Activities Association** – The Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) is a nonprofit, nondiscriminatory association, run by the secondary schools in the state of Mississippi. The Association is responsible for both academic and athletic competitions. The academic competitions include debate, drama, speech, writing--prose, poetry, short stories, essays--and music--band and choral. The athletic competitions include the following sixteen sports listed in order of season: football, swimming, slowpitch softball, volleyball, cross country, soccer, basketball, boys powerlifting, girls powerlifting, tennis, boys golf, girls golf, track, baseball, fastpitch softball, wrestling, bowling, and archery. The Association is responsible for approximately 4,000 officials, who are registered and certified. The welfare and relationships of 530,000 students are promoted through the association.

**Mississippi Association of Independent Schools** – The Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) is a collective membership of private schools in Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas. It is responsible for accreditation of its member schools as well as governing athletic competition. The organization also operates two other organizations, the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools Educational Association and the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools Coaches Association.

**Mississippi Association of Coaches** – The Mississippi Association of Coaches (MAC) is a membership organization that has served the needs of athletic coaches throughout the state of Mississippi for decades. Led by Executive Director Johnny Mims, the association represents a variety of coaching specialties including football, basketball, soccer, softball, volleyball, and tennis.

**Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame** –The Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum exists to tell — and preserve — the stories of Mississippi's greatest athletes and coaches, who are some of the world's greatest athletes and coaches. The museum is under the direction of award-winning author and writer Rick Cleveland, who became executive director May 1, 2012. The museum is located at 1152 Lakeland Drive in Jackson, and can be reached at 601-982-8264.

**Mississippi Sports Council** – Organized in 1994 the Mississippi Sports Council (MSC) has long been involved with the promotion of athletics in Mississippi. The MSC helped organize an NFL exhibition game for the Jackson area in 1995 when the New York Jets faced the Philadelphia Eagles. A second exhibition game between the New York Jets and Houston Oilers was organized the following season. The MSC also helped bring back the football rivalry between Mississippi College and Millsaps College in the annual Backyard Brawl. Last year the MSC produced a feature film called Mississippi JUCO: The Toughest Football League in America and has published a number of books about high school and college football in Mississippi.