

FAITH ACADEMY

Gordon: Rams 'one big family'

BY MARK R. KENT
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MOBILE — Roderick “Trey” Gordon III had one of the best viewpoints one could ask for on the biggest defensive play in Faith Academy’s biggest win ever, late in October in 2018.

With less than a minute to play Gordon and fellow defensive back Tim Cody backed up toward the end zone as Satsuma quarterback Karson Green wound up from around the Faith 36 yard line where he tossed a pass into the end zone to a Rams receiver. Satsuma was clinging desperately to a one-point lead at the time.

“I started off at nickel, and coach rolled me back to safety. It felt like everything was going in slow motion,” Gordon said. “The quarterback rolled out to their left but to my right, and I was going toward that side. He threw it up to our senior cornerback Tim Cody’s side, and he tips it and hits it out of bounds.

“As soon as that happened, it was like everything that happened was shocking to me, and it was like ‘We made the playoffs for the first time.’” Faith ended up winning 14-13 to secure the playoff berth.

Cody has since graduated, so now Gordon, a



Roderick “Trey” Gordon III, Faith Academy defensive back

senior, is the elder statesman of the Rams’ defensive backfield.

Gordon credits a lot of what happened earlier in the season with the success that came Faith’s way. And a lot of that success was a direct result of Jack French being hired as the Rams’ head coach, he said.

“Ever since my freshman year, we’ve been working and working with different head coaches, and we finally got one that was there to work with us and

push us even harder, so it is very exciting to be here,” Gordon said.

“Coach French, when he first came in, he asked all of us our names, and he asked me, ‘You play running back, don’t you?’ and I said yes. He said to be ready. So, the next day, we went to the cross-country course and ran two miles. From there on, he made us work even harder and harder every day.”

Gordon said the experience had a strong binding effect on the players. “We

went to the weight room and worked even 10 times harder, and we became very close, us and the coaches — it was like one big family,” Gordon said.

Gordon said now that the players know what making the playoffs requires, it is an attainable goal for the future.

And while Gordon is primarily a defensive back, there will be times, he said, when he’ll be expected to tote the rock as a running back. It’s something he’s

done before, so he said he’ll be ready.

Still, now that Cody has graduated, Gordon is the proverbial “next man up” as the only senior in a defensive backfield projected to have three juniors — Dakota Saranthus, Gabe Broadus and Peyton Bell — team up with him in the starting lineup.

Once the season is complete, he’ll be the one graduating. Gordon said he is trying to make clear in his mind what he wants to

do next. While his college plans at the moment haven’t been finalized, Gordon said he is looking at two career paths to pursue, sports management and pharmacy. As far as football, Gordon said he has made some contacts with Murray State, University of South Alabama and Alabama State among others, but those plans are still works in progress.

As far as his academic favorites, Gordon said the science subjects have always appealed to him.

“It meant a lot, because a lot of people left, but I stayed, and I have been here since the seventh grade. I’ve watched this program build ever since the ninth grade.”

Caullin Lacy is back to culminate Rams’ career

BY MARK R. KENT
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MOBILE — When Caullin Lacy was needed the most toward the end of last season he introduced himself well and produced what needed to be done to help get Faith Academy its first-ever AHSAA state playoff berth.

Jackson led Faith 14-7 in a road game for the Rams back on Oct. 17, 2018, when Rams quarterback Jack Flynn went down with what would be for him a season-ending leg injury.

“All year I was going in and out at quarterback for James,” Lacy said. “So at the time when James got hurt, to me it was like normal. I scored, right after he got hurt, on the next play.”

That 47-yard run and the successful extra point tied the game at 14-14 and it eventually led to overtime. Lacy scored again with Faith getting the first possession, but this time the extra point didn’t go, and Jackson took advantage, scoring and then kicking the extra point for a 21-20 win.

The following week, with head coach Jack French running what was

almost exclusively a running attack against Satsuma, the Rams erased the disappointment of the prior week and beat the Gators 14-13 to get into the playoffs.

This season, Lacy will be back playing multiple positions for the Rams, spelling Flynn as needed, playing as an occasional running back and wide-out, with a little bit of defensive back tossed in as well.

But the moment he contributed to late in 2018 meant quite a lot to Lacy, considering the time he put in over the years to make it happen.

“It meant a lot, because a lot of people left, but I stayed, and I have been here since the seventh grade,” Lacy said. “I’ve watched this program build ever since the ninth grade.”

Lacy has seen his share of coaches come through the Faith program in his time, and he speaks well of French as the team’s top mentor now. “He knows how to get there, and he’s been there many a time. He’s always talking about how to be a championship team.”

After this season is finished, Lacy has sights on stepping up a level to

play in college. “I committed early in June to South Alabama and I will be going there. I want to study mechanical engineering,” Lacy said.

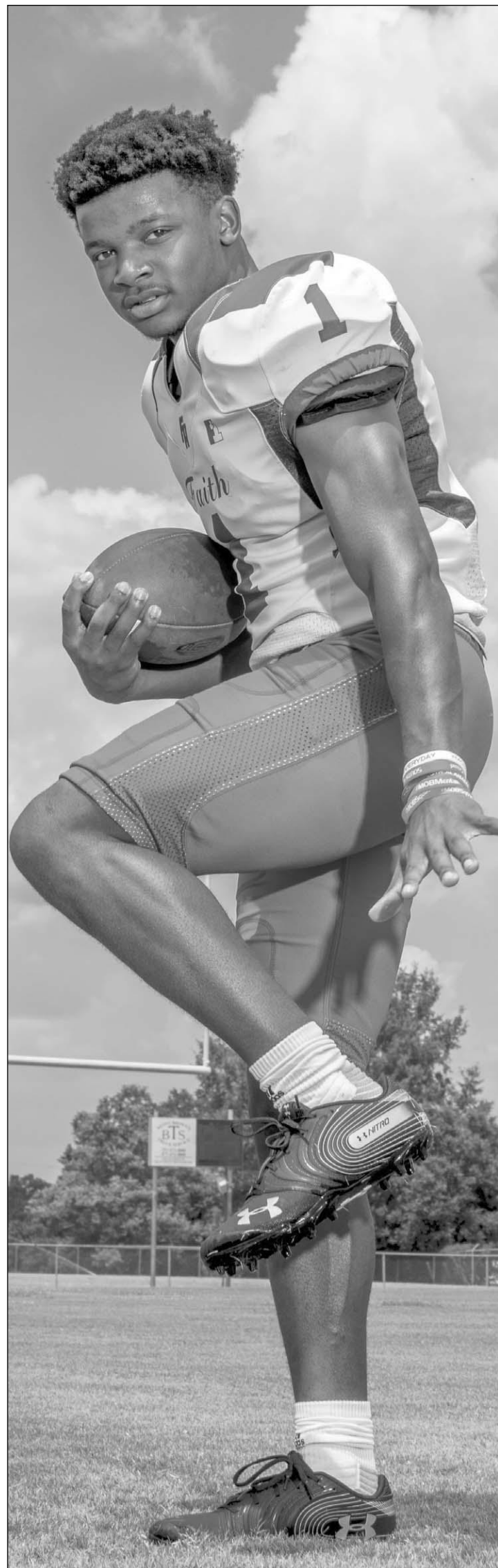
He also noted he’ll be a member of the first Jaguars team to play in the new on-campus stadium USA currently has under construction. “My first year. I’m ready for it,” Lacy said.

Lacy said once football is over at Faith this year, he’ll make a quick uniform change and play another season of basketball under head coach Chad Applin.

Lacy has been with the varsity basketball team since his freshman year and was a member of the last Faith team to play in a state championship game, the 2016 game won by Mae Jemison with current University of Alabama starter John Petty leading the way.

In the classroom, Lacy said math is a favorite set of subjects for him.

But for the rest of this fall, you can look for Lacy to take on whatever role French and his staff needs him to play as the Rams try to repeat as state playoff participants.



Caullin Lacy, multi-position standout for Faith Academy

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SMRU1713827 (Exp. 07/30/2020)
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