

► Inside the Rankings

Some fun facts and figures from our 10th annual preps list | by Doug Ottewill



High School Rankings. It's a concept that didn't exist prior to *Mile High Sports Magazine*. And it's a list that's helped define us as a publication.

Each and every February since 2004, *MHSM* has ranked every high school in the state, using a formula that we feel highlights the best, most-well-rounded high school athletic programs Colorado has to offer. It's become an institution, one we're very proud of every year.

But before you jump ahead to this year's Rankings (starting on page 66), here are a few facts, figures and misconceptions about our annual celebration of the preps.

FACT: In more than 10 years of High School Rankings, each CHSAA classification – 1A through 5A – has

fielded a winning school.

FACT: In this year's rankings, each classification is represented in our top-five schools.

MISCONCEPTION: "Schools that win state in football typically win the rankings." That's false. In our rankings, football is equal in importance to every other sport, and doesn't carry more or less weight. In fact, out of 10 winners, only two (Limon in 2005 and Mullen in 2004) have won state in football.

FIGURE: Of the 328 schools eligible for inclusion in High School Rankings X, 245 posted qualifying scores. Last year, 249 qualified.

FIGURE: The most common mascot in Colorado high school sports is the eagle (26 schools), followed by the bulldog (17), the tiger

(16) and the mustang (14).

FACT: Only one school has repeated as champion in back-to-back years (Cherry Creek; HS Rankings IV and V).

MISCONCEPTION: "There is a subjective element in the scoring." That's incorrect. Scores are only based on actual results and All-State lists determined by a third party. To point: The only *MHSM* employee who can claim his school finished atop the rankings is Will McKinlay, who attended both Cherry Creek and Regis. The Northglenn Norsemen – the alma mater to the publisher, editor and two senior editors – has never finished in the top 50.

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105.83

The highest score ever recorded in High School Rankings (Hi-Plains Patriots, HS Rankings VI)



In addition to 200 state championships, Cherry Creek has won three WellsFargo Cups as the All-Sport Champion in the state of Colorado. In 2005, *Sports Illustrated* named it the fifth-best high school athletics program in the nation. It was also appointed the top athletic high school in the state in both 2006 and 2007 by *Mile High Sports Magazine*. It is also well known for its successful tennis team that achieved the school's 200th state championship on September 13, 2012. – "Cherry Creek High School Athletics," as described on Wikipedia (Editor's note: Creek also earned top honors in Feb. 2011)

FAIRVIEW ALUM PUBLISHES BOOK

MHSM SCRIBE RELEASES THE GRINGO

Back in September of 2011, J. Grigsby Crawford entertained *Mile High Sports Magazine* readers with his tales of trying to follow the Denver Broncos while living in some of the remote areas of South America. As it turns out, there was much more to his journey than the challenges of keeping up with his favorite football team.

Recently, Crawford released a book – *The Gringo* – which chronicles all of his adventures in South America. "I went to test myself and I went for adventure, and that's what I got," said Crawford about his reason for joining Peace Corps and the South American adventure that followed. Intimately describing his harrowing journey through Ecuador, Crawford gives an in-depth look into the "danger, drugs, sex and alarming illness" that he encountered in South America.

The Gringo can be purchased at Amazon.com or at various bookstores throughout Colorado. Crawford is a 2004 graduate of Fairview High School. He served as the editor of the school's paper, *The Royal Banner*, and played football and baseball for the Knights.

