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True Grit

Seven years later, Arnold Thornton still feels the tingle of amazement. He remembers that late August day in 2001, gawking with his brother at the flickering images on ESPN: "Is that really David — our David — putting a lickin' on the defending national champs?"

It was. The name on the back of his jersey was the giveaway. Otherwise, Arnold would have had his doubts. Sure, his son had been a gifted three-sport athlete at Goldsboro (N.C.) High, but Arnold had never seen David fly around the football field like this before.



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