



**Westwood High School Football
Nominated by: Gene Clemons (Coach)**

Dress The Champions!

Fort Pierce Westwood High School has had a long-standing tradition of excellence which spans academics, athletics, and community service. However, over time the level of excellence has to dipped as community growth, economic depravity, and inconsistency seemed to permeate through the city of Fort Pierce. Through it all, the football team has remained a symbol of pride and honor for the neighborhood, alumni, and current students. Westwood football players remain leaders in the community. They strive for excellence in the classroom, and they hope to be an inspiration to those who have, and will, dawn the Gray and Maroon. This past season, the football team achieved an undefeated regular season which culminated with a win over our rival, and also undefeated, Fort Pierce Central High School.

In addition to accomplishing a feat that had not been seen at Westwood since 1989, the football team currently has thirty-seven members who have a G.P.A. of 2.5 or higher. Now as the school begins an internal overhaul and restructuring in hopes of returning to the academic and athletic dominance enjoyed in years gone by, the football team wants to lead the way. We have implemented a 3.0 baseline G.P.A. for all of our young men to strive for. We will reach that goal! Many of our young men are actively involved in their church and some have seen their talents branch out from the football field. We have young men who are active in the band, concert choir, vet program, marine and oceanic academy, and are working part-time jobs. Players are involved in everything from fashion shows to FFA exhibits. We not only encourage them to be great on the field, but in everything they do, and they have responded admirably.

Our school's community, which is comprised of many students from low-income neighborhoods, enjoys a healthy amount of physical support from family and alumni. They come to home and away games and they have been known to be rowdier than the packed homes of our opponents! They are always present at school functions regardless of the time of day. However, we do not have the luxury of the monetary support that many of our contemporaries enjoy. As you have already stated financing uniforms can be a costly endeavor, one that if we undertook at this time would wipe out most of our budget.

Here at Westwood the passion on the field is unmistakable and the level of talent is remarkable. We want this passion to be exhibited outwardly and we would like our uniforms to

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represent us as one of the top programs in Florida and especially on the Treasure Coast. Our young men deserve to look good and feel good about their affiliation with Westwood and our community. Westwood students and alumni deserve to smile and cheer with pride as they see the Panthers run into Lawnwood Stadium. Our young men are champions because every time they are told they cannot achieve they prove people wrong. Whenever they are told it's too hard, they find a way to persevere. They will continue to do so and it makes me proud to be their coach and a part of the Westwood community.

Gene Clemons M.Ed.

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