

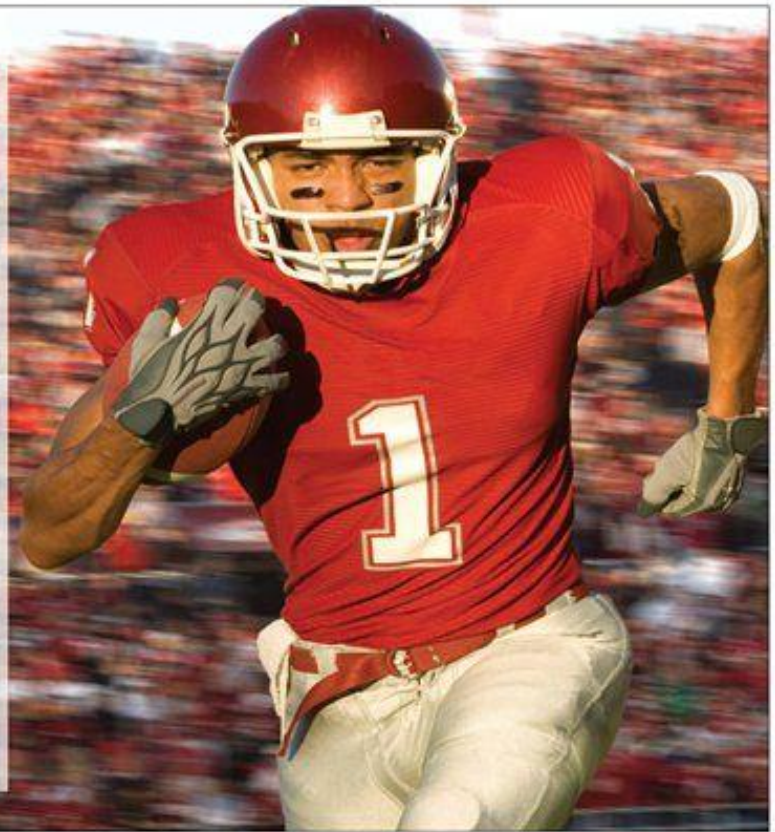
## **Running Back**

by Jacqueline Jules

**He's on the big screen again,  
with padded shoulders,  
and shiny tight pants.  
The number on his jersey  
identifies him clearly  
for the cameras and the crowd,  
as he clamps a strap under his chin,  
without ever looking up.  
I watch from my living room,  
sometimes booing,  
sometimes cheering,  
but always wishing  
I could put on a helmet  
and run like that—  
past all those guys  
trying to knock me down—  
not caring a bit  
who's booing or who's cheering,  
'cause I've got the ball in my hand.**

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After you read the poem, "Running Back," answer the questions below.

1. What is the running back wearing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why does the running back have a number on his jersey? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How does the author of the poem react to the football game? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What does the author of the poem wish? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the overall feeling of this poem? \_\_\_\_\_

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