

17-week season!

Only the memories last longer



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U-MARY 39, Neb. Wesleyan 9

The campus was one giant construction zone with a new dorm going up and the "bowl" around the field freshly shaped. For NWU, however, the site was one of destruction.

Michael Wright picked off two interceptions (photo p. 49) and the defense held the visitors to 163 total yards.

For the home team, QB Paul Cronin threw three TDs in the season-opener, avenging a 12-16 loss in the 1994 season.

The offense racked up 495

yards; Rich Sigsworth and Neil MacDannald picked up 100 yards each in receptions. Jeremy Polson knocked in second-half field goals of 38, 20, and 34 yards.

MacDannald said, "I felt comfortable right away. I was surprised how comfortable I felt for a first game."

U-MARY 38, Black Hills 35

BHSU had one of the best offenses in the nation, U-Mary one of the best defenses.

Something would have to give.

What a nailbiter as the score ratcheted its way up! Defense held BHS to 59 rushing and Joel Lentz had two key interceptions (one of them in the endzone) – and a BHS clip saved a 70-yard fumble return.

In 31 carries Walker picked up 3 TDs and 152 yards; in 2 pass receptions he added 29. He was nicknamed "Silk" – so smooth he could squirt through the smallest of holes for big gains.

It wasn't a mistake-free game by any means. The team set one unenviable record – most fumbles in a game: 6. Yet it had found a strong offense. On that wave Polson led the nation in PATs.

U-MARY 56, Rocky Mt. 12

The team put on an offensive clinic as they rolled RMC. They did about everything right – on offense, defense, and special teams –

posting a school record for most points in a game.

By the end of first quarter U-Mary had 28; by the end of the first half RMC had completed more passes to the U-Mary defense than to its own receivers.

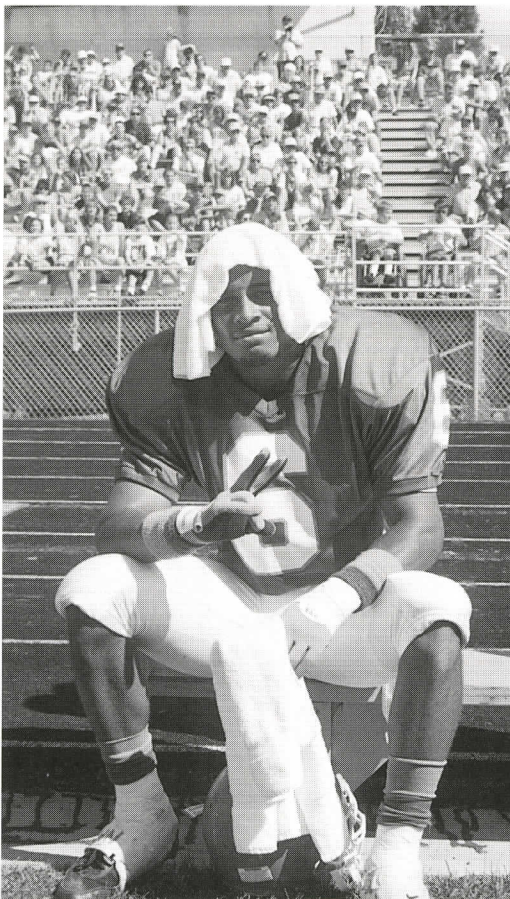
Nate Sutter pulled in one of those passes and returned the interception 35 yards for a TD; Lentz did the same three minutes later. U-Mary led 42-0 with ten minutes left in the second quarter.

Though U-Mary gave up 243 yards in total offense, most of it came long after the starters had departed.

U-MARY 45, Dak. Wesleyan 8

In Mitchell, SD, U-Mary took the opening kickoff and used a no-huddle offense to score on its first possession. The rest of the game was more of the same.

Cronin connected on 24 of 34 passes for 363 yards and 4



AL KNEW:
Between plays
senior DB Al
Demps flashed
the "big V."
Right he was.



REFLECTION: Senior David Delaplane made second team in the NDCAC.

THESE FEET MADE FOR WALKING: Steve Walker, RB, against Valley City: The #20 Jr. from Kansas was named to the NDCAC second team, as well as Player of the Week after 3 TDs against Black Hills. Season stats: 9 TDs; 900 yds rushing, 102 passing.



ENDZONE DANCE

TDs, using eight receivers. One of the passes was an 84-yarder to Darrin Johnson.

Sigsworth and MacDannald each notched 2 TDs. Eric Chinn picked up 121 yards in 23 carries. All part of a good game. Ask Steve Magazinovic, the “kamikaze kid.”

FB is not “battle” nor “war,” insisted Mags, veteran marine of the ’91 liberation of Kuwait and of the ’93 expedition to Somalia. He knows what wars do. FB is just a game – though one he puts his whole heart into.

Left: D-Line early in season: (front): Bill Vejtasa, Jon Ahneman, Scott Muir, Jason Aman, Steven Clooten, (back): James Schoales, Mike Priest, Jamie Van Horn, Justin Williams, Mike Williamson, Troy Nelson, Andy Johnson, Aaron Christopher.

U-MARY 14, Minot 7

Beforehand Minot grouched; they were not ranked high enough. Nationally, they were at #12; U-Mary was #8. Both knew a lot was at stake. Both staged goal line stands. Minot managed 143 yards offensively, U-Mary 206.

And it was like “Flag Day”

– the officials called 21 penalties (no! more – some were declined); 11 (96 yds) went against U-Mary, a team record in that category.

Yet it was two U-Mary interceptions that determined the game: Sutter’s in the 1st quarter (nine plays later U-Mary scored) and Lentz’ with 6:55 to

play.

Lentz – in the right place at the right time – stole a pass on the 2-yard line and preserved the 14-7 score. U-Mary stole the whole enchilada with that play.

Now the rankings game could go on again.

continues on next page

STUDENT COACHES (standing): Bob Brusven, Jerry Obenauer, Todd Sheldon, John Haley, Paul Golla, (front): Zack Reitzell, Mike Shafer, Tim Trokey. They brought with them years of invaluable experience.



A YEAR OF Breaking 1995 Records

U-MARY 28, Jamestown 6

It was Homecoming. It was a win. But it wasn't pretty. Cronin characterized it as "four quarters of nothing. We went from being totally dead to moving very slowly."

The defense saw to it that JC moved even slower. Led by Steve Clooten, Jason Aman and Jon Ahneman, U-Mary wrapped up JC's ground game, giving up a mere 8 yds. (+102 passing) for a record-setting 3 first downs.

The defense sparked the offense with a turnover, soon a TD via Walker. Sigsworth later ran in 2 TDs and Cronin walked one in.

U-MARY 55, Mayville 0

If Cronin spoke out against



the team's struggling offense in previous games, in this one U-Mary left Mayville speechless.

MSU's coach refused comment after the game – and really there wasn't much to say.

U-Mary scored on all but one of its 1st-half possessions en route to a 38-0 lead. The defense showed no sign of lightening up its stingy ways – it held the visitors to 66 rushing and 30 passing yards.

Into the endzone in the scoring blitz went Chinn (2), Walker, Willie Campbell, Jason Salz, Sigsworth, and Ray

BRRRRRR!
Single-digit temps at Crookston kept Cronin in front of the heater when not on the field. He was still hot: four passes for TDs (season to date: 28).

CALL FOR YOU: Also in Crookston game Coaches Todd Sheldon and Myron Schulz were perched above the fray for full wind chill effect (-12°)! Their calls still came through.

Emmanuel. Polson added 2 FGs, and 7 PATs (a record).

Other records set: Most first downs: 29; widest point spread: 55; and several by Cronin, who was named offensive player of the week.

U-MARY 43, Valley City 12

It was early Halloween. A gambling VC tried many tricks to unnerve and upset U-Mary's game plan. The defense was not fazed and managed to score the first two TDs – punt return by MacDannald and a fumble pickup by Lentz – and a safety.

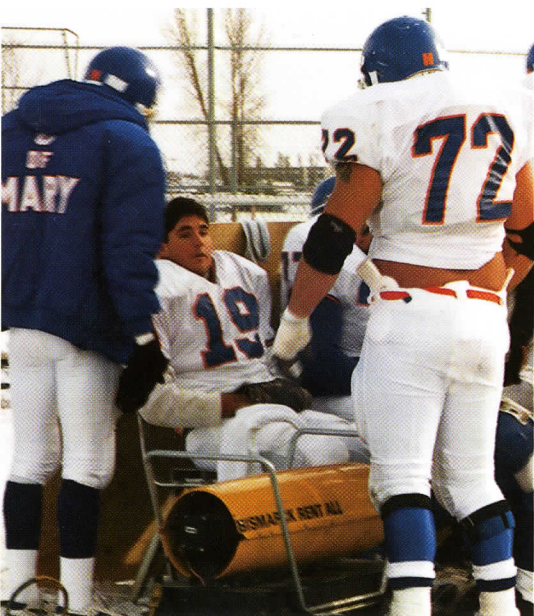
Not until 3:23 left in the half did Sigsworth's 60-yd. pass return notch the 1st offensive TD! He ended up with 176 yds.

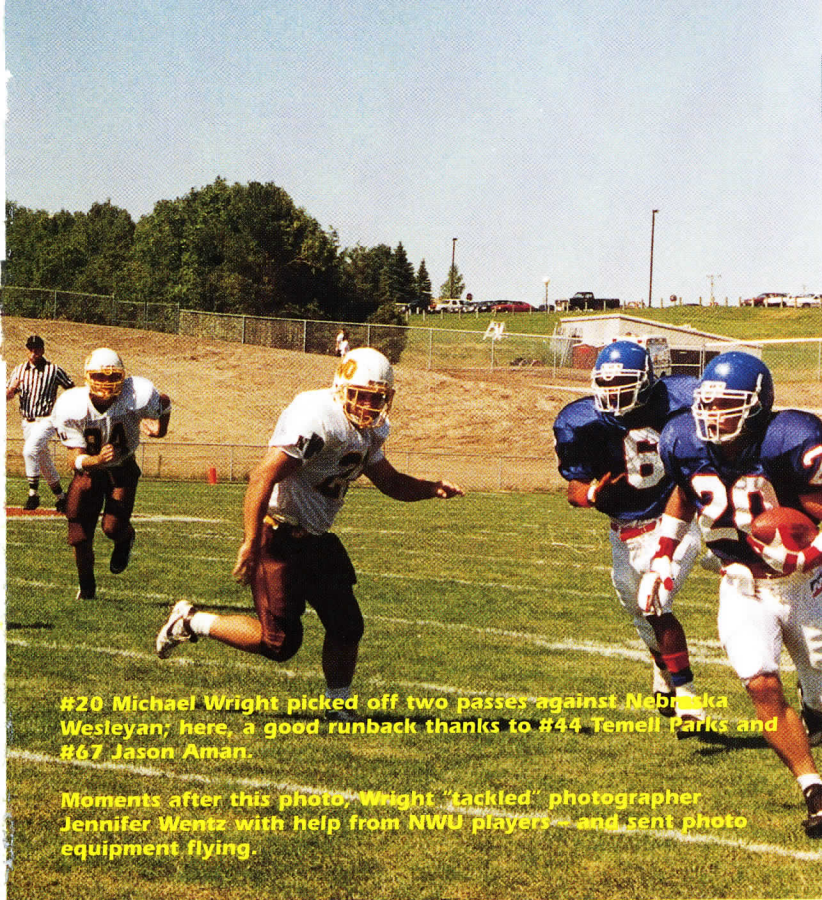
In the 4th quarter Walker scampered 45 yards to paydirt. Besides 2 FGs, Polson dutifully added 5 PATs.

U-MARY 7, Dickinson 10

Game so big KFYZ televised it. Two unbeaten (8-0) rated in the top 10 – both had stingy defenses and both wanted to win badly. That's good chemistry.

U-Mary's defense





#20 Michael Wright picked off two passes against Nebraska Wesleyan; here, a good runback thanks to #44 Temell Parks and #67 Jason Aman.

Moments after this photo, Wright "fackled" photographer Jennifer Wentz with help from NWU players – and sent photo equipment flying.



Above: MAGS & SIGS: Two movers and shakers. Magazinovic once said: "I'd be happy to be a part of this team even if they called it the packrats." Sigsworth led the receivers with 812 yards in 48 receptions, 12 TDs.



GO-TO MAN: Left: Eric Chinn, #33, led on the ground: 232 carries.

STEP HIGH: Grueling, but exhilarating, practices (above) paid off.

dominated the 1st half (DSU ended drives at its 7, 10, 11 yard lines), but its offense sputtered despite multiple opportunities.

U-Mary's only score came in the third quarter; DSU scored its 10 points in the last 12 minutes following costly U-Mary mistakes – including a fumble on the 6-yd line!

The only consolation to the hard loss was that the two might face each other again.

U-MARY 49, Crookston 23
Buffeted by the sub-zero

wind chills, U-Mary kept their playoff hopes alive with the NDCAC's newest member.

Six inches of snow had just fallen and the field was like cement. Warming at the heater often meant returning wet to play. Chicken broth instead of water was served on sidelines.

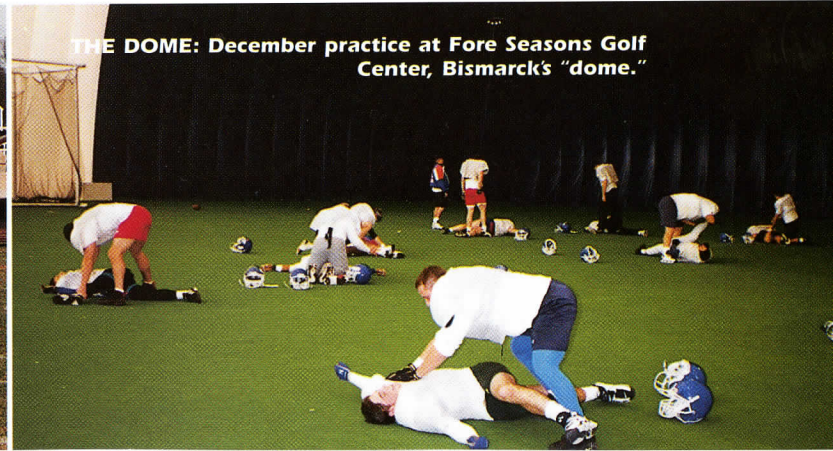
But the team took care of business. Big plays, including 3 interceptions that led to TDs, coasted U-Mary to a win. Hopes were alive for more.

PLAYOFFS? YES!
REMATCH WITH DSU

After the loss to Dickinson (the eventual NDCAC titlist and shoo-in for playoff action) U-Mary slipped from its #4 ranking to #9, where it stayed until the end of ratings.

U-Mary picked up one of the at-large spots and was seeded against DSU. It was what the U-Mary team had hoped for; their previous performance could not be their last word.

This was a rematch made in heaven.



THE DOME: December practice at Fore Seasons Golf Center, Bismarck's "dome."

U-MARY vs. Dix II

Speculation ended; the dream rematch became reality. Rival DSU and U-Mary would face off in the first-round of the 16-team NAIA playoffs.

U-Mary players remembered vividly their only loss three weeks earlier. This

time no pulling a helmet muscle!

The field was slick on top and frozen underneath. Sand had been spread to absorb the top moisture. The sun was out, 50° temps and a slight breeze.

The game brought out key

performances of many players, especially Chinn and Cronin.

The Dickinson Press stated that their team “took it on the Chinn.” For it was Eric Chinn, offensive player of the game, who pushed in both U-Mary TDs in the 14-8 win over Dickinson.

Before the game, DSU coach Hank Biesot had said of Chinn: “He scares me to death.” He had more reason than ever to feel that way afterwards.

Only notching a safety in the first half, Dickinson got close enough for two field goals in the second half. After the last they led 8-6.

Fifteen plays, 75 yards, and 4:05 later Chinn scored the winning TD with 53 seconds on the clock.

* * *

The game was especially urgent for Paul Cronin.

In his U-Mary career he had put in eminently forgettable efforts vs. DSU – two subpar performances that could not have come at worse times.

This was his last chance and he rose to the occasion.

Following the game Coach

Tom Shea said, “I don’t know what to say except give credit where credit is due. Paul called every play on the last drive. That was Paul’s drive.”

And what a drive – a drive of emotions – a drive of no tomorrow. Neither team nor fans would forget this game soon.

This was U-Mary’s first win at Dix. It was another step in the playoff circuit of 1995.

* * *

The price of victory? Top receiver Rich Sigsworth tore a ligament early in the game. Jeremy Polson, #3 nationally in kick scoring, pulled a groin muscle. Both were out for the season.

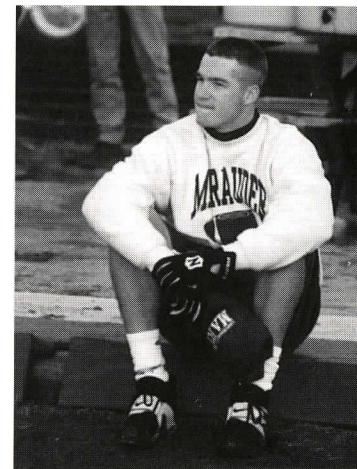
ROSTER

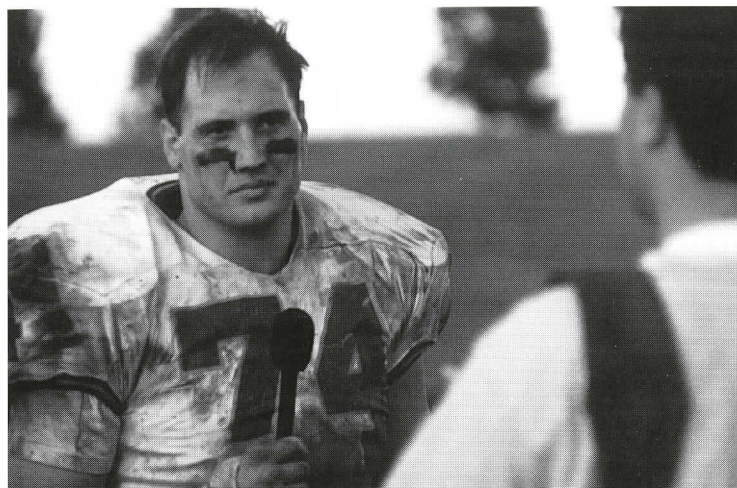
1 Steve Magazinovic	47 Nathan Krikorian
2 Gary Grad	48 Michael Priest
3 Ray Emmanuel	49 Jason Stewart
4 Neil MacDannald	50 Pat Piehl
5 Jeremy Waldo	51 Scott Muir
6 Alfred Demps	52 David Hall
7 Jeremy Polson	53 Scott Tomanek
8 Jarrod Herbers	54 Josh Will
9 Rich Sigsworth	55 Jeff LaFrance
10 Joel Lentz	58 Justin Williams
11 Brent Hysjulien	59 Ervin Speed
13 Nate Sutter	60 Ryan Gerdes
14 Willie Campbell	64 Darin Schlosser
15 Darrin Johnson	67 Jason Aman
16 Steve Wiseman	68 Matt Stahl
17 Peter Erri	70 James Olson
18 Brent Brannan	72 David Delaplane
19 Paul Cronin	73 Patrick Entzel
20 Michael Wright	74 Steve Clooten
21 Chris Witty	75 Eric Nelson
22 Ky Saylor	77 Mike Williamson
23 Chris Clements	78 Cory Churchill
24 Greg Paramore	79 Bryon Hoff
26 Steve Walker	80 Aaron Jenkins
27 Jeremy McPherson	81 Chance Sampsel
28 James Schoales	82 Chris Walker
29 Reed Fraase	83 Tim Heilman
30 Richard Jacobson	84 Mike Thorpe
31 Joe Girdner	85 Charles Colby
32 James Barrett	86 Wes Harens
33 Eric Chinn	87 Peter Nardelli
34 Jason Collopy	88 Jason Salz
35 Jeremy Schmidt	89 Kelly Fischer
36 Lance Dandliker	90 Bill Vejtasa
37 Brad Hauff	93 Spencer Long
38 Scott Faul	95 Jamisun VanHorn
39 Buck Olson	96 Aaron Christopher
40 Jon Ahneman	RS Brad Sinner
41 Brent Stebleton	RS Justin Lawrence
42 Darrick Johnson	RS Nathan Kupfer
43 Mike Rosas	RS Reggie Lawrence
44 Temell Parks	RS Ryan Sabin
45 Chad Austin	RS Seth Maier

U-MARY PLAYOFF PAST

1993: beat
Minot 31-20
and then lost
to
Hardin-
Simmons (TX)
20-30

CALL FOR
#15: Darrin
Johnson (477
yds in 29
rec.) talks to
offensive
co-ordinators.
Student
coach Zack
Reitzell,
(above)
savors the
post-game
moments of
victory – one
that eluded
him in 1994.





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Bringing DSU to its knees

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Dickinson Press
November 26, 1995

On Saturday, Nov. 18, I ... had the opportunity to return to Dickinson & attend the DSU vs. Mary football game. What I experienced at the "mouths" of the DSU fans made me sick.

There they were, Dickinson State's finest sitting on the ... field, cheering/chanting such catching

lines as - "Mary sucks s--t," "(player's name) sucks s--t" and of course, "Bulls--t."

An otherwise great game was ruined by these socially inept individuals ... such juvenility has no place at the college ... too bad the officials did not charge the Hawks with an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty courtesy of their "fans."

Carson D. Fleck
Bismarck

WHICH WAY?
Left: Neil MacDannald takes a punt.

THE MEDIA:
Steve Clooten (top) bore the marks of a rough-and-tumble game as he talked to TV.

CELEBRATING: Jubilant players around Fr. Blaine Cook: Steve Walker, Erv Speed, Al Demps, Temell Parks, Eric Chinn and Mike Wright. Chinn "carried the ball" for the big win. (Wright had come to SDSU but was ready to return to CA. On the phone Nate Sutter invited him to try U-Mary. As they say, the rest is history.)

Dickinson's catalog does not list a major in bad taste. The closest to the shit fixation comes in the varsity sport rodeo - where all expect a lot of bull.

NEXT: SIOUX FALLS



NICE CATCH: #4 Neil MacDannald makes a perfect catch a yard from the endzone – and then does it again 15 seconds later.

BY NUMBER: Pre-game intros: Steve Magazinovic, Gary Grad, Roby Monroe, and MacDannald.



31 seconds of glory

U-Mary, the state's last FB team still playing, learned on the bus from Dickinson that the University of Sioux Falls would be their next opponent. Soon they learned that the game would be at home.

Undefeated and ranked #2 in the final NAIA poll – and the highest ranked still playing – SF came stomping onto Hegeholz Field on December 2.

The coach had begun whining to the media about the field as soon as the pairings and sites were announced.

SF players talked trash to the media – and to the line in the game's opening minutes – about how easy a win it'd be.

U-Mary went about the business of football. As a result, when SF left Bismarck they really had something to talk about.

* * *

Thirty-one seconds sums up the game. A lot can happen in thirty-one seconds. In this game 21 points did.

Late in the 4th quarter, with a 21-17 lead, U-Mary methodically marched 67 yards into the endzone with a one-yard tip to Jason Salz. SF fumbled the ensuing kickoff; Michael Priest covered it on the SF 29.

On the next play Neil MacDannald hauled in a TD pass from Paul Cronin. There was 6:38 remaining to play. Extra point, kickoff.

SF fumbled again and Priest again covered the ball. Cronin stepped up and threw the same pass; MacDannald caught it again. Alas, he was downed a half yard short. The next play Cronin himself walked in a TD. Still 6:18 to play.

From Nailbiter to blowout

So much excitement took place in 31 seconds that the three touchdowns that got the first 21 points are nearly forgotten – a Chinn run, a Walker pass, a Chinn pass.

The last especially was artful. *The Bismarck Tribune* said: “After two reverse plays and a couple of dives, Chinn crept out of the backfield and waited for Cronin to carry out a

A lot can happen in thirty-one seconds. In this game 21 points did.

fake. The entire Sioux Falls defense bit, and Chinn ran untouched until he reached the goal line.”

The offense had sparked: 273 yds rushing and 260 passing – 162 of them by MacDannald in 8 carries. And no fumbles.

In the game that went from nailbiter to blowout in 31 seconds Sioux Falls stopped talking trash.

And U-Mary, victorious in its second playoff game of 1995, had made it as far as any NDCAC team had – into...

HANDS UP! It was stick-up time often in the U-Mary win over unbeaten Sioux Falls. Here Darrin Johnson, Mike Schafer, Paul Golla, Jerrod Herbers and Coach Roger Haug celebrate another six points.

GETTING A KICK out of FOOTBALL: Roby Monroe, recruit from post-season soccer team after Jeremy Polson was injured, puts up one of 6 PATS in the game.

GOING ANYWHERE? The defense shut down the nation's #2 offense, giving up only 240 yds; SF had averaged twice that.



1995 PLAYOFFS: Game 3



LEADING For several minutes in the 2nd quarter U-Mary held a 7-6 lead.

DOMINOES Eric Chinn (below) attempts to teach James Schoales the world of dominoes on the flight to Sea-Tac.

Into every life some rain must fall.

Following the Sioux Falls blowout, U-Mary played Central Washington University of Ellensburg for a semifinal.

(CWU, 10,000+ students, was in its last year of NAIA play; in 1996 its whole conference joins NCAA II.)

All but three seats were filled on the 90-seat charter to Tacoma. Passengers left a blustery ND and were welcomed to a typically rainy day in the Pacific Northwest.

If turnabout is fair play, this was a fair game! U-Mary had done *to* them what they did

to Sioux Falls the week before.

In the 3rd quarter CWU put up 20 points in 1H minutes and with the momentum added another 13 for a 33-point quarter.

Those 15 minutes blew any chance of U-Mary advancing to the finals out of the water. When it rains, it pours!

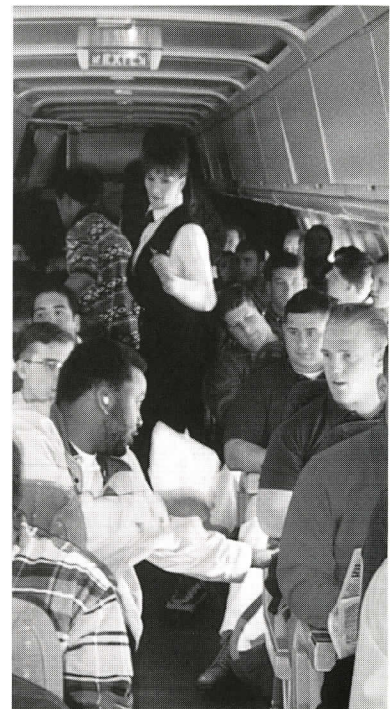
To that point the game had been carefully played. Eric Chinn had run in U-Mary's lone score early in the 2nd quarter; CWU kicked a FG to take a 9-7 lead into the half.

Final: 48-7. No Game 4 –

no final – for U-Mary. This was the end of the line.

A bitter end. Time would bring perspective. Memories of the teamwork and friendship never to be lost. The game, after all, was still a game.

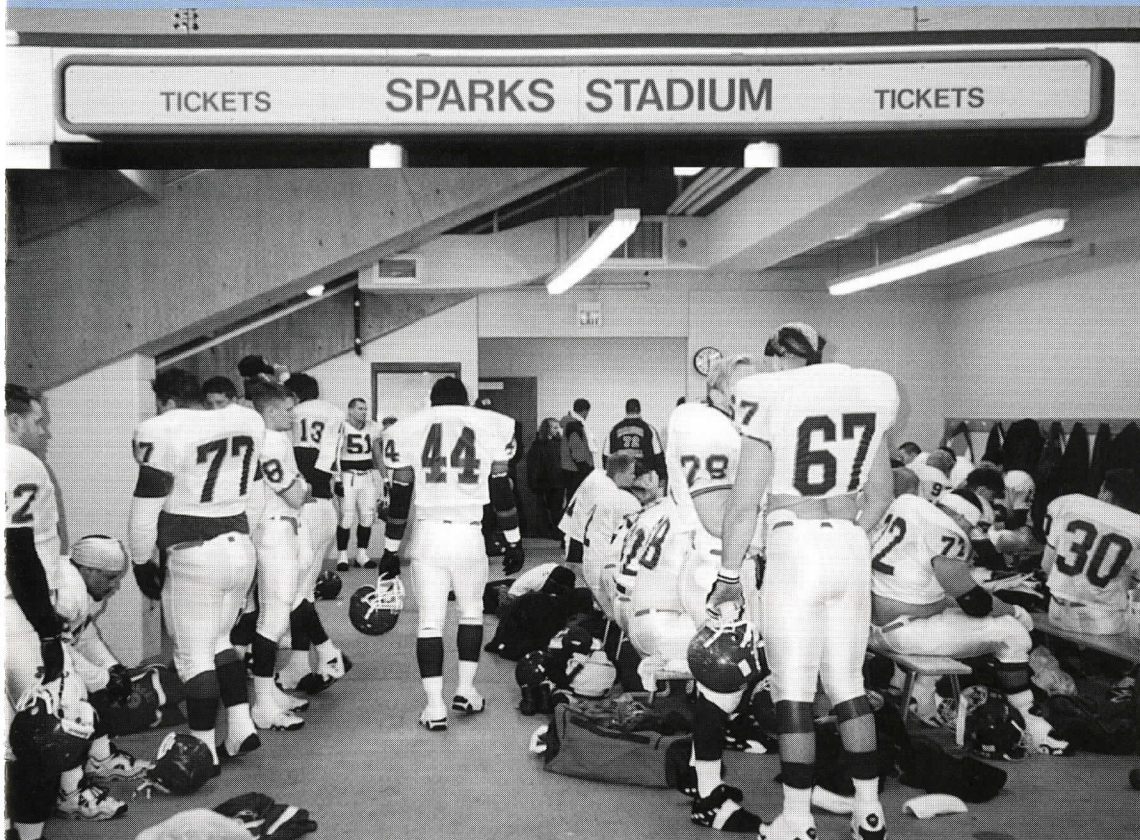
(The next week CWU played Findlay (OH) to a 24-24 tie. With no NAIA tie-breaking formula, the two shared the title of co-champions.)



WEATHER REPORT The team took the field for a day of off-and-on drizzle. In Bismarck (right) they had boarded the charter on a gusty day with -60° windchills.



U-MARY shares Third Place nationally with Lambuth (TN)



NAIA II PLAYOFFS

First Round
Saturday, Nov. 18
 U-Mary 14, Dickinson St. 8
 Findlay, Ohio, 21, Pacific Lutheran,
 Wash. 14
 Malone, Ohio 24, Geneva 23
 Sioux Falls 41, Hastings 23
 Bethany, Kan. 30, Benedictine, Kan. 29
 Lambuth, Tenn. 49, Clinch Valley, Va. 0
 Hardin-Simmons 17, Howard Payne 6
 Cent. Washington 28, W. Washington 21

Quarterfinals
Saturday, Dec. 2
 U-Mary 42, Sioux Falls 17
 Findlay, Ohio 15, Malone, Ohio 7
 Lambuth, Tenn. 63, Bethany, Kan. 28
 Central Washington 40, Hardin-Sim-
 mons, Texas 20

Semifinals
Saturday, Dec. 9
 Cent. Washington 48, U-Mary 7
 Findlay, Ohio 63, Lambuth, Tenn. 13

Championship
Saturday, Dec. 16
At The Tacoma Dome
Tacoma, Wash.
 Findlay, Ohio 21, Central Washington 21

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**1995: year of
 11 wins**

U-MARY FOOTBALL: A TOP STORY IN NORTH DAKOTA SPORTS

Annually *The Bismarck Tribune* picks the top sports stories in North Dakota. For 1995 U-Mary football made the list.

The *Tribune* named it as the #7 ND sports story for its advance to the semifinals of the NAIA Div. II playoffs.

Individual sportswriters also pick the top five area stories. These included:

* * *

Rob Lien:

#3. *U-Mary Football*: They keep "climbing the playoff ladder. It's enough to make one imagine what would have been unthinkable not so long ago – a

national college football championship in Bismarck."

* * *

Steve Thomas:

#5. *U-Mary's march to the NAIA Semifinals*. "Any year that includes wins over Dickinson State and Minot State has to be satisfying for U-Mary. Add two playoff wins for an 11-2 season."

* * *

Scoter Pursley:

#3. *U-Mary Football*: They "made it to the NAIA II national semifinals, proving a number of things along the way."

**PREGAME IN
 THE LOCKER
 ROOM at
 Sparks
 Stadium in
 Puyallup,
 Washington.
 Outside, 3000
 fans were on
 hand; fewer
 than 100
 were U-Mary's.
 Back in ND
 play-by-play
 coverage was
 provided on
 KLXX 1270
 radio by Rog
 Higgins as he
 had done all
 season long.
 U-Mary's 324
 offensive yds
 – including
 a 56-yd
 reception by
 MacDannald –
 did not
 translate into
 points.**

sUmMARY

date	opponent	U-Mary	score
Sep. 2	Nebraska Wesleyan	9	39 W
Sep. 9	Black Hills	35	38 W
Sep. 16	Rocky Mountain	12	56 W
Sep. 23	Dakota Wesleyan	8	45 W
Sep. 30	Minot State	7	14 W
Oct. 7	Jamestown	6	28 W
Oct. 14	Mayville State	0	55 W
Oct. 21	Valley City State	12	43 W
Oct. 28	Dickinson State	10	7 L
Nov. 11	Crookston	23	49 W
Nov. 18	*Dickinson State	8	14 W
Dec. 2	*Sioux Falls	17	42 W
Dec. 9	*Central Washington	48	7 L
	* NAIA Playoffs		

Record: 11-2



The AH-men

Jon Ahneman DE was, with Jason Aman DL (*below right*), one of the team's *AH-men* – or was it *awe-men*?

These two, along with Scott Muir and Steve Clooten, are arguably the best front four U-Mary has ever seen. They all graduate in 1996.

All four were on the field as time ticked away on their college careers. They could have been on the sidelines, but they chose to stay on the field

together.

Ahneman was part of the bone-crunching, sack-city team that wreaked havoc with QBs throughout the conference. A knee injury put him out several games, but he was back the last one. No way would he miss that.

Aman made it a mission to stop the run. Sidelined by a broken thumb last season (hardship year), he was back this year adding experience. AH!

AWESOME!

Bill Vejtasa

When U-Mary lost to Dickinson, it was Bill Vejtasa (*left*) who was named NDCAC Defensive Player of the Week – he who was just subbing for Ahneman.

This DE had 6 tackles, 5 assists, and a sack. It was his first start in four years. He was Exhibit A on the team's depth. It was clear he was more than a fill-in.

He stuck to it because "I enjoy football too much to quit." Recalling days as a frosh, he said, "I remember our first meeting. Coach [Shea] told us if he keeps 20 of us freshmen here, when we're seniors something good will happen." Something good did happen.

And Bill Vejtasa was a big part of the reason why it did.



Standouts

Pages 56 to 59 "drop names" and feature players who made the 1995 football team something quite special.



Chris Clements

Nobody ran well against the U-Mary squad. LB Clements and many others saw to that.

Already before the Sioux Falls game he had tallied 12 tackles and 38 assists – and broken up 5 passes. U-Mary's third-place national ranking for its defense was built on performances such as that.

Cronin makes his 'marck

He holds 11 of the school's 12 passing records

It has been impossible to attend a U-Mary football game in the past two years without seeing a lot of #19. For most, the more they saw, the better they liked what they saw.

Paul Cronin, quarterback from Santa Rosa (CA), wore that number. Within a few games in Bismarck at Hegeholtz Field he became the "air apparent" of the team.

In 1994 he was 142 of 282 – 2035 yards, 23 TDs (8 int.). In 1995 the figures were 218 of 398 (55%) – 2935 yards, and 32 TDs (7 int.). Without a doubt, the U-Mary team had the stamp of *air-de-Cronin*.

As Cronin tells it, he had little to do with U-Mary's success. He never forgot that it was a team effort. His holding school records in 11 of the 12 passing categories, however, underscores the modesty.

* * *

MVP: Before the Sioux

Falls playoff game, Cronin was named Most Valuable Player in the NDCAC by the media, receiving 9 of the 18 first-place votes.

From such an honor one might get the idea that Cronin was the darling of the media. If it was true, the media was not the darling of Cronin.

As a matter of fact, he preferred not talking to the media. In many a game as the final seconds ticked away, he'd slip off his jersey so as to wander anonymously.

Sometimes it helped, but enterprising reporters were able to corner him for a quote, even without his identifying #19.

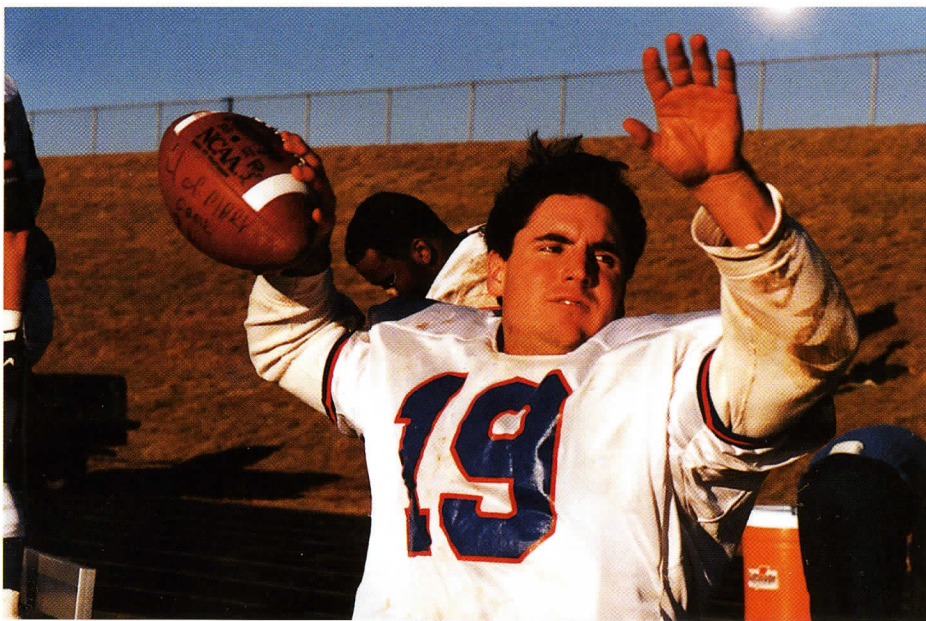
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Cronin began quarterbacking in high school. His interest in football, however, dates back to fourth grade – "grandmother got me into it."

She was a Dallas fan and, while they did the milking on their dairy farm (Windsor, CA), wanted to know how *her* team was doing. Paul's job was to watch and report back.



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STRONG ARM OF THE LAW
Cronin's performance in Dix II was unforgettable. Down 8-7, Coach Shea let Paul call the plays. In 4 minutes he marched the ball 75 yards up the field for the go-ahead TD.

His rural California roots are still with him – he threw bales around all summer to improve his throwing arm.

* * *

Cronin's major in physical education will bring him back into the classroom. He hopes to be "a kind, caring person in the area of teaching and coaching, especially football."

In sports, if the category is gentleman, Cronin qualifies as *world* class.

But this California native is at home *here* – where he made his 'marck.

Clooten leads quietly

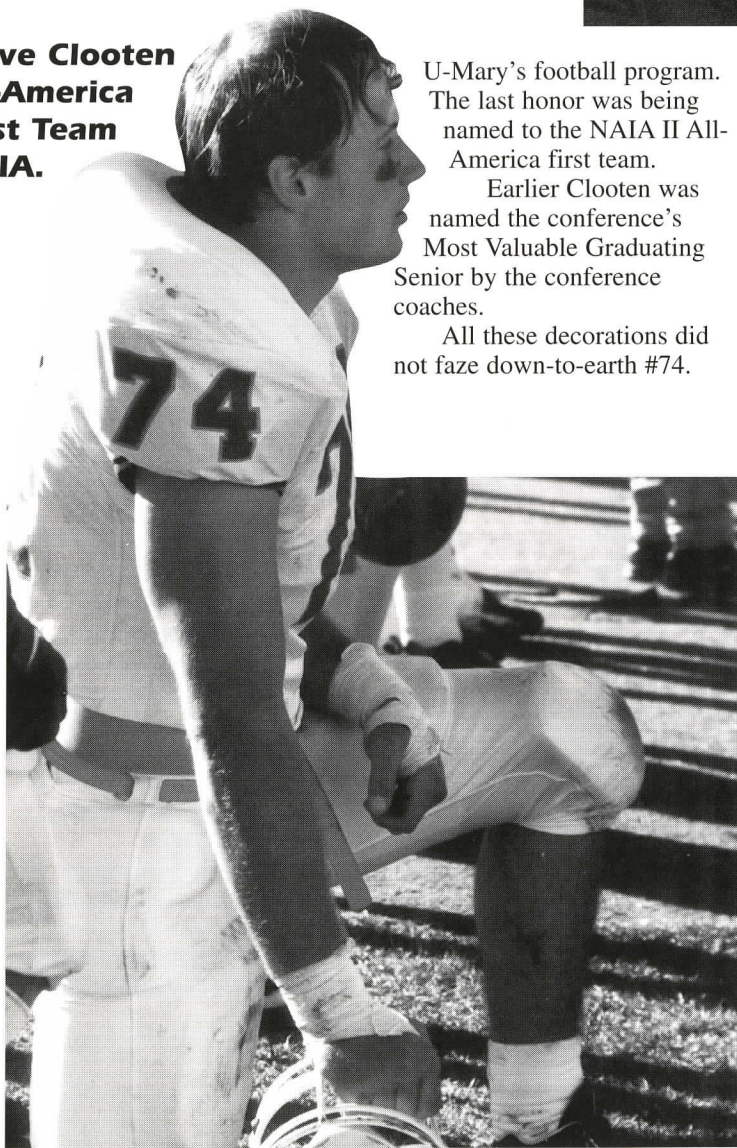
Business is his business, but football has been Steve Clooten's passion for years. This Bismarck native was an intense player and a great tactician.

Clooten leaves the team as one of the most decorated players in the 8-year history of

THE MEDIA
Clooten often talked to the cameras after a game – here following the Sioux Falls playoff win.



Steve Clooten All-America First Team NAIA.



U-Mary's football program. The last honor was being named to the NAIA II All-America first team.

Earlier Clooten was named the conference's Most Valuable Graduating Senior by the conference coaches.

All these decorations did not faze down-to-earth #74.

"It's a great honor, a great way to finish a senior season," he said, adding: "As long as I played my hardest – and I think I did – I don't think I could have done any better."

* * *

In mid-season, after the Minot game, Steve was the NAIA's (and the NDCAC's) Defensive Player of the Week. The 6-5, 245-pound senior had 6 solo tackles, 7 assists, and a QB sack to highlight the 14-7 victory.

In a rare feat for a *defensive* player, Clooten led the team in tackles with 117 (57 solos and 60 assists). He also broke up three passes, had 6½ quarterback sacks and 6 tackles for a loss.

* * *

The youngest of 12 (he has 27 nieces and nephews already), Steve learned early to listen and "to eat fast." After two years at the University of Wyoming he came into a starting position at Hegeholt Field.

One of his guiding mantras

A history of NAIA honors at U-Mary

First Team

1990 Toby Schweitzer
1992 Jason Arenz
1995 Steve Clooten

Second Team

1993 Bobby Wagner
1995 Bryon Hoff
1995 Jeremy Polson

has been "do what you love." Up to now football has been a lot of that.

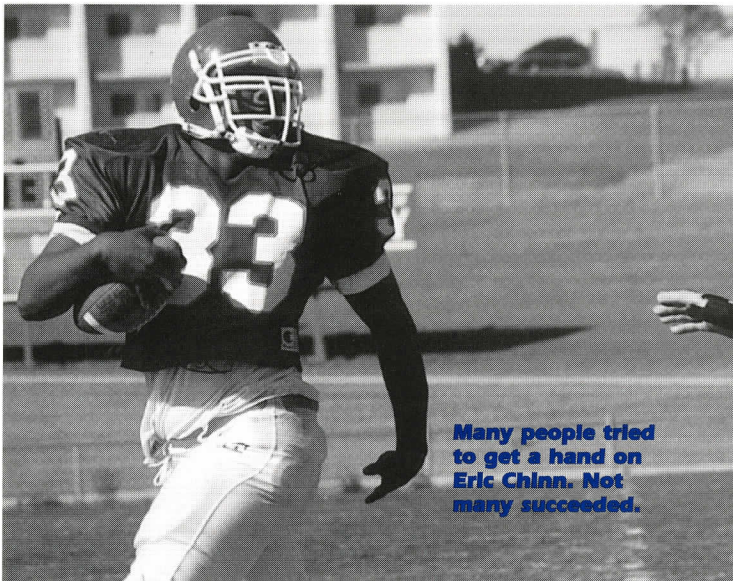
* * *

Fellow lineman Jason Aman identified Clooten as the unmistakable leader on the line: "He's 240 pounds, but he plays like he's 280. He's got this confidence that nobody can block him and that rubs off."

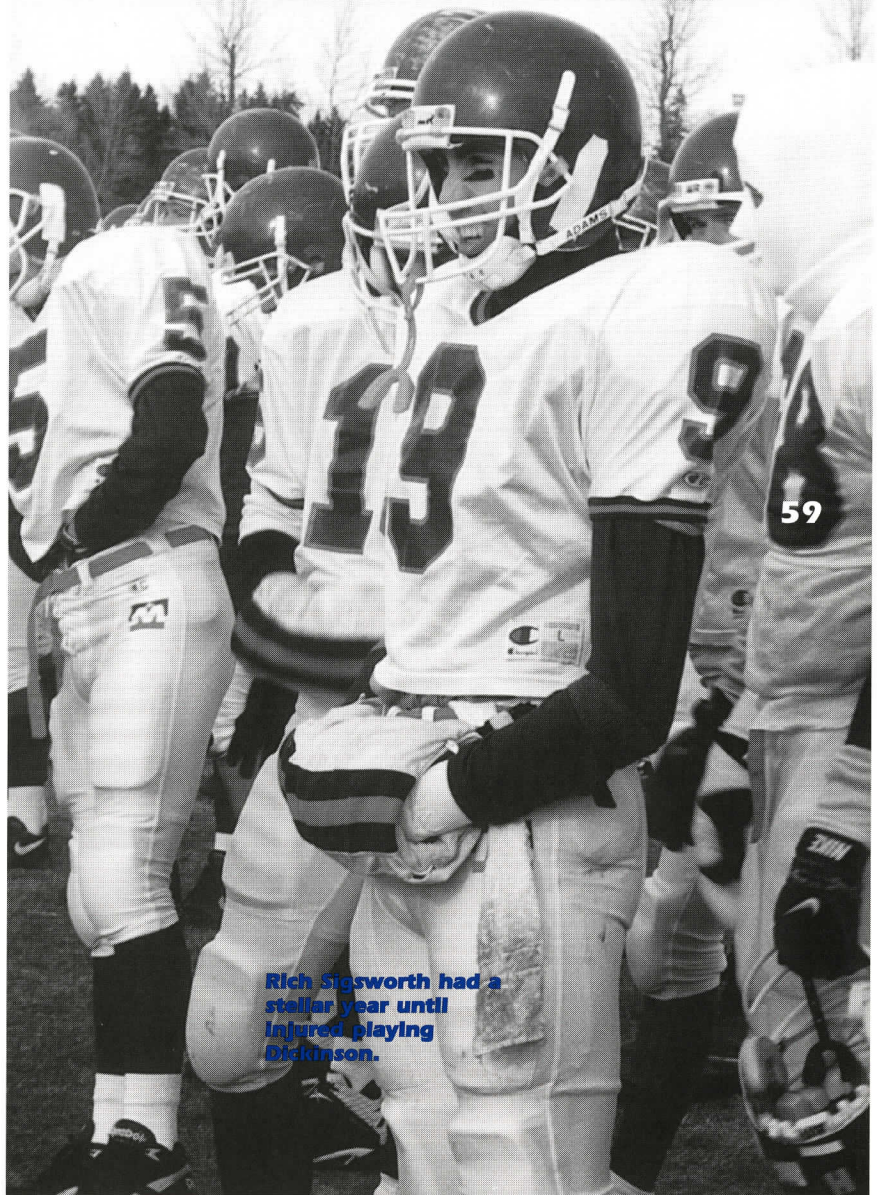
Steve Clooten was at home on the football field. No doubt about it: he was a leader at the grassroots.

What a team!

It would not have happened at all – let alone as well as it did – if it were not for the extraordinary efforts of a great number of people.



Many people tried to get a hand on Eric Chinn. Not many succeeded.



Rich Sigsworth had a stellar year until injured playing Dickinson.

AII-NDCAC

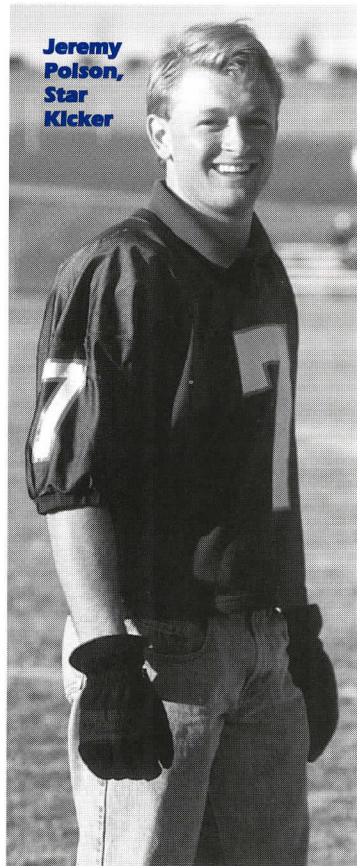
Most Valuable
Graduating Senior
Steve Clooten

First Team

WR Rich Sigsworth
OL Bryon Hoff
QB Paul Cronin
DL Jason Aman
DL Steve Clooten
DB Joel Lentz
RB Eric Chinn
K Jeremy Polson

Second Team

OL David Delaplaine
RB Steve Walker
SB Neil MacDannald
DL Jon Ahneman
LB Temell Parks



Jeremy Polson,
Star
Kicker

TEAM LEADERS

CAPTAINS

Jon Ahneman
Chris Clements
Steve Clooten
Paul Cronin

TEAM STATS

Total offense: 5352

Total points: 437

52 TDs (32 pass, 12 rush)

50 Kick PATs, 4 Pass PATs

9 Field Goals, 2 Safeties

INDIVIDUAL STATS

Rushing yards (carries)

1108 (232) Eric Chinn

900 (194) Steve Walker*

*longest: 45

Receiving yards (receptions)

812 (48) Rich Sigsworth

812 (56) Neil MacDannald

477 (29) Darrin Johnson*

420 (41) Jason Salz

*longest: 84

Kick Return yards (attempts)

324 (13) Ky Saylor*

170 (11) Steve Magazinovic

150 (8) Steve Walker

*longest: 62

Points (all TDs except *)

78 Eric Chinn

72 Rich Sigsworth

72 Jeremy Polson*

*43 PAT, 9FG, 2-pt PAT

58 Neil MacDannald

54 Steve Walker

24 Jason Salz