



A Football Mind

“When the number one school in the nation offers you a spot at the school and a chance for you to make a name for yourself in a football program that means so much to so many people, you don’t say no,” remarks Williams senior linebacker Russell Monyette. Monyette and other Eph football players have elicited that passion their whole careers. The difference this year is that a certain Mark Raymond provides rejuvenated motivation. Monyette noted, “Things have changed since Coach Raymond’s arrival. The focus and accountability the team has now is unlike any team I’ve played on, and Coach Raymond deserves credit for changing the mindset of the team and helping us to reanalyze who we want to be on and off the field.” To return Williams football back to its winning ways, the team will need to perform well under intense expectations. The Suwanee, Georgia native is no stranger to the spotlight, however. “High school games always had the stands filled. Our yearly rivalry game had some 8-9 thousand people show up,” recalls Monyette. He and fellow Georgia product, Alex Brandeis, look to lock things up on defense this season and lead the Ephs to multiple victories on Saturdays this fall.

Much of Monyette’s success on the field can be attributed to his keen ability to read offenses well. “I may not be the biggest or the fastest on the field, but if I can beat a pulling guard to his hole it doesn’t matter who’s bigger,” noted Monyette. At least a little of what he knows was taught to him by his dad as a youth player. “My dad coached me on defense until I was in the eighth grade and helped me to understand the mindset on the defensive side of the ball and how to make pre-snap reads.” Being an expert at reading offenses helped Monyette rack up 38 total tackles in 2015, including a nine-tackle game against Bates last October. He also had success wrapping up opponents in their own backfields last year, totalling 5.5 tackles for a loss in eight games.

Certainly, Monyette looks to better his output in 2016 and, much like the rest of his team, is yearning for his shot at a NESCAC title. “The biggest strength I see in this year’s team is hunger. It’s no secret that the team has underachieved in the last few seasons, and there is a focus and an understanding between the players this season that if we buy in we can change people’s perception of us throughout the NESCAC. The boys aren’t just committed to making a change, we’re hungry to bring the changes and the focus that we established during the offseason to the field,” Monyette stated. Additionally, he perceives a new level of commitment to to the program from every player - adopting, in one way or another, a “why not us?” attitude. Monyette explained, “It started this spring with the commitment the boys made to the coaches and, more importantly, their teammates and themselves to put in the work, the hard work, that we needed in order to come into the season ready. The summer has continued that trend and there has been no lull. If we can bring this tenacity to the field that we’ve had since Coach Raymond arrived, then I know this team is capable of making some noise in the NESCAC.”

Monyette spent his junior Spring abroad so he hasn’t been able to work with Coach Raymond yet, however from their correspondence, Raymond says that “Russell is ready to go. We’re both excited to get out there and compete.”

Monyette understands that this year his leadership skills need to be at their highest. The honor of serving as a senior leader on any Williams football team is humbling. Monyette stated, “This is a chance I have thought about and fought for the past three years at Williams, that when it came time for my last year I could be a player that made a difference for this squad. I’m going to give everything I have to this last season and do everything I can to show the underclassmen what it means to put on the purple and gold on Saturdays.”

Monyette’s career isn’t over yet, but it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out that this last season will undoubtedly be a special one. “I can’t put it into words yet as the end still seems so far away, all I can say for sure is that I love this game and I’m going to enjoy every last second I spend on the field this year, and I couldn’t ask for a better group of guys to do it with.” 🐾

Q + A FAVORITES

FOOD	Grilled Chicken
TV SHOW	Game of Thrones
CARTOON	South Park
BOOK	Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas
ACTOR	Tom Hardy
WILLIAMS PROFESSOR	Professor Scott Wong
PRO ATHLETE	Aaron Rodgers
SPORT OTHER THAN FOOTBALL	Soccer
NFL TEAM	Green Bay Packers