

Amherst vs. Trinity • November 7, 2015 • Pratt Field • 1:00 p.m.

# AMHERST

*Family Weekend*



Football Illustrated

**In This Issue**

- Gameday Insider: In A Class of Their Own
- Eye on Athletics: Taking the Game to the Next Level

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# Gameday Insider

## In A Class of Their Own



Defensive backs Jimmy Fairfield-Sonn, Chris Gow and Jaymie Spears have etched their names in Amherst football history.

The back line of the Amherst stout defense features an experienced and highly talented trio of defensive backs that have started 13 games together over the past two seasons. This unit, consisting of Chris Gow, Jimmy Fairfield-Sonn and Jaymie Spears, has excelled over the course of their careers and has enabled the Purple & White to wreak havoc in the NESCAC.

Each individual boasts a different style that compliments the group exceptionally well.

### **The brains of the secondary: Chris Gow.**

Gow - a senior co-captain and the team's starting free safety since 2014 - has been playing football since the third grade. A student of the game, his intelligence on the gridiron has played a pivotal role in Amherst's defensive success.

"He's the general," says Spears. "He coordinates everything on the field - calls out formations; strengths; gets us aligned to where we have to be; and makes sure everyone is on the same page."

A quarterback and safety in high school, Gow was also a well-decorated lacrosse player throughout his four-year career, and played basketball as a senior as well. No stranger to success, he helped guide his high school football team - St. John's School - to consecutive conference championship games during his junior and senior seasons.

He may not play quarterback offensively anymore, but his ability to dissect defenses in high school has translated well to the other side of the ball. He greatly appreciates the position and admires the way quarterbacks get their guys in the right spots, and systematically take apart another team. He applies this approach to defense, and is characterized as the quarterback of the secondary.

"Chris is an incredibly intelligent football player," said head coach E.J. Mills. "He always gets us in the right call and possesses unbelievable instincts."

The son and younger brother of two Williams grads - both former Eph football players - has racked up 68 career tackles in 24 games played, including eight interceptions for 145 yards. In addition to his success on the field, Gow has been named to the NESCAC Fall All-Academic team all three years in which he's been eligible.

A member of the leadership team for Christian fellowship on campus, Gow also helps lead an athlete bible study and will look to fulfill a full-time Christian ministry upon graduation. On game days, he writes the verse - Nehemiah 4:14 - on his wrist for inspiration, which means 'Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers.'

### **The lock down corner: Jaymie Spears.**

A preseason All-America selection, Spears sparks fear in his opponents with his tenacity to attack the ball and shut down receivers. The very soft-spoken and humble cornerback isn't one to laud his preseason accolade, but he and his teammates have noticed the impact of the honor.

"Teams don't throw the ball towards Jaymie much," says Gow, while Fairfield-Sonn compares it to the 'Revis Effect' - named after NFL All-Pro cornerback Darrelle Revis - who shuts down nearly ever wide receiver he covers.

That ability to take away the opposing team's top wide receiver frees up opportunities for Fairfield-Sonn and Gow, and the rest of the Amherst defense, and allows them to take risks.

A First Team All-NESCAC selection as a junior, Spears finished the season with six interceptions - tied for second most in the conference - and eight break-ups - tied for the league-high. Having made an immediate impact since joining the Purple & White in the fall of 2012, he has seen action in all 30 games thus far, and has accumulated 11 interceptions for 227 yards, 20 break-ups, two blocked field goals and 113 tackles (89 solo).

Like Gow, Spears also has NESCAC family ties. His younger brother - John Spears - is a first-

Continued on pg. 5

## In A Class of Their Own continued...

year wide receiver for Trinity. Having played for different high schools that didn't compete against each other, Jaymie and John have an opportunity to square up on the field for the first time today.

### *The physical strong safety: Jimmy Fairfield-Sonn.*

Fairfield-Sonn - the team's starting strong safety since the 2013 season - prides himself on his physical play. He'll watch NFL safeties like the late Sean Taylor of the Washington Redskins or Tyrann Mathieu of the Arizona Cardinals, and hope to emulate their fearless and determined style of play.

Growing up an avid basketball fan, his true love transitioned to football during his freshman year at Old Lyme High School. It was there that the 5-10, Connecticut native blossomed into an exceptional safety, and quarterback, as his play helped guide the Wildcats to their first-ever playoff appearance in 2010. The team later reached the state semifinals in both his junior and senior seasons.

Fairfield-Sonn has shined during his four-year career donning the Purple & White. Having played in 21 games to date, the senior defensive back has been one of the team's most consistent and prolific tacklers in each of the past three seasons. In his first year seeing game action, Fairfield-Sonn racked up 53 tackles (43 solo); and for his career, he has 135 (92 solo) with three fumble recoveries, six interceptions, 13 break-ups and three blocked kicks. This season, he's already returned two interceptions for touchdowns.

NESCAC affiliations also run in the Fairfield-Sonn family, with a younger brother that attends Tufts University. However, Jimmy is the only football player in the family.

Together, Gow, Spears and Fairfield-Sonn have a combined 13-0 record as a starting unit, and have made their mark in Amherst football history.

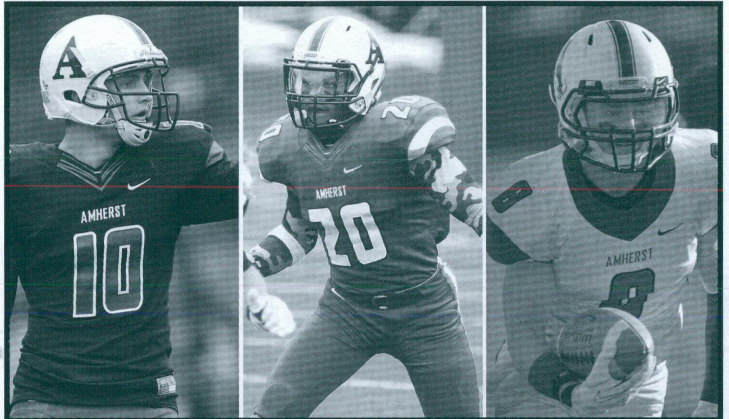
"We've played so much football together - practice, games, film studies, lifts together - that at this point there's almost an unspoken connection us three have on the field, where we can disguise our coverages, and know where we are supposed to be in our responsibility, and where we are supposed to cover," said Fairfield-Sonn. "These four years together have allowed us to build this relationship and trust, so that we can not only feed off each other's energy in the

game, but also know what kind of disguises we are doing without even having to say it."

"Just being through so many games and witnessing so many things; we have a lot of experience and there's really, at this point, not much we haven't seen," adds Spears. "On top of that, being able to have football conversations immediately on the sidelines or after a play really allows us to make adjustments, and is a big part of what we do."

With two more games remaining in their collegiate careers, the trio looks to go out on top and continue to do what they do best - win.

"Coming in freshman year at Amherst, I remember talking to Coach Mills and asking him who his greatest group of defensive backs, collectively, were," said Fairfield-Sonn. "By the time I leave Amherst, I want him to remember our class as the greatest defensive back class to ever come through here, and I want to leave our legacy in the history books."



*Chris Gow, Jaymie Spears and Jimmy Fairfield-Sonn*

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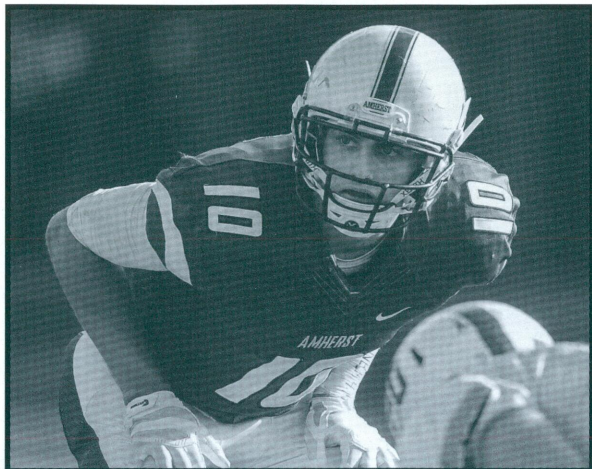
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# MEET *the* CAPTAINS

# 2015



## Chris Gow

*Houston, Texas/St. John's School*

Senior • DB • 6-2 • 200 lbs.

### *In his words...* his words:

*"I am honored to be selected as a captain of the 2015 football team. The Amherst football family has had a profound impact on my life for the last three years, and I look forward to building on the strong foundation of fortitude, passion, and excellence. Led by Coach Mills and a terrific staff, the 2015 team is eager to fulfill our potential and compete for a NESCAC championship."*



Class of  
2016



## Tom Kleyn

*Concord, Mass./Concord-Carlisle*

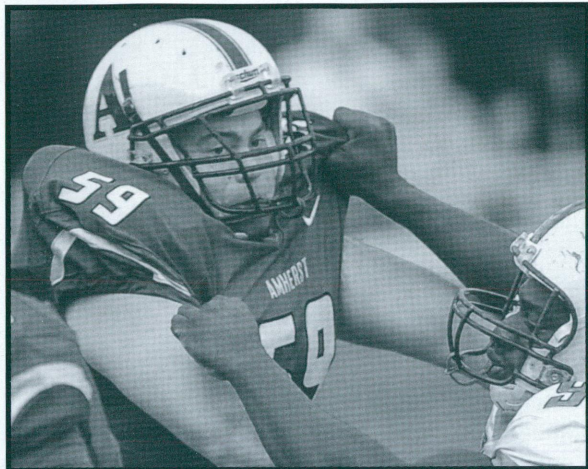
Senior • ILB • 6-0 • 215 lbs.

### *In his words...* his words:

*"It's a great honor to be named captain of the 2015 Amherst College football team. I've learned so much about leadership from previous captains, and I'm excited to have the opportunity to step into that role myself. Each team that I've played on the past three years has had a unique identity, but now that's the past and I can't wait to build our new identity for the 2015 season. As captain, I recognize my responsibility to not only better myself every day, but also to better those around me. I'm confident that under Coach Mills and his talented coaching staff, we are poised once again to make the most of the opportunity in front of us."*



Class of  
2016



## Jim Daniels

Chicago, Ill./Whitney Young

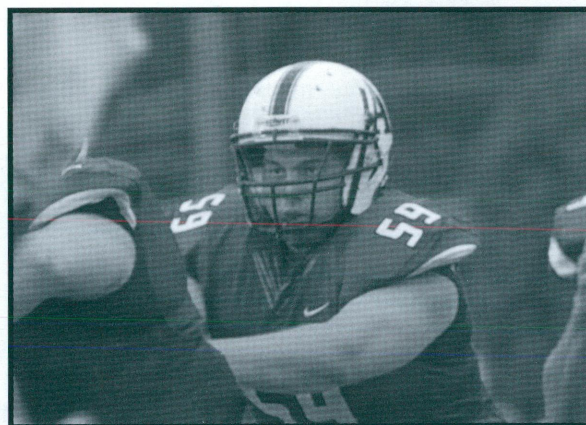
Senior • OL • 6-2 • 275 lbs.

### In his words:

*In his words...*

"It is a great honor to be selected by my coaches and teammates as a captain of the 2015 Amherst College football team. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to lead this team along with my co-captains and ensure that we reach our full potential. I understand that serving as a captain of this team comes with great responsibility, and I am excited to step forward and take on that challenge. This group has worked tirelessly throughout the offseason preparing to win our third consecutive NESCAC Championship, and I know that with the help of Coach Mills and his outstanding coaching staff, this season will be a very special one."

2016  
Class of



## Jackson McGonagle

New York, N.Y./The Taft School

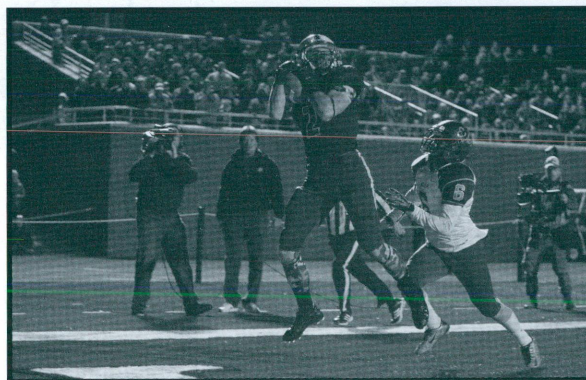
Senior • WR/P • 6-3 • 215 lbs.

### In his words:

*In his words...*

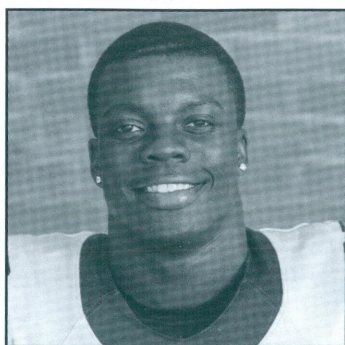
"I am honored to have been selected as a captain for the 2015 Amherst College football team. This team has an amazing bond and we are all lucky to be a part of this family. We are defending champs and I couldn't be more excited to help lead this team to another NESCAC Championship. This team has a foundation of success that is rooted in our focus on perfection and execution. The unwavering dedication that my brothers have towards the goals of Amherst football makes me confident that we will be prepared for anything that stands in our way. Football is the greatest game on earth, and I can't wait for us to strap the pads on. This 2015 squad will accomplish something great."

2016  
Class of



# MEET *the* SENIORS

Class of **2016**



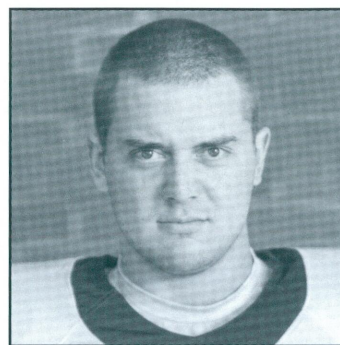
**Kenny Adinkra**

**Running Back**

Lynn, Mass.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Kenny was off to an incredible start last year and was running the football exceptionally well, but had a serious foot injury that sidelined him the last five games. He has worked extremely hard to get himself back to 100-percent, and I am thoroughly excited to see him back on the field for the 2015 season."



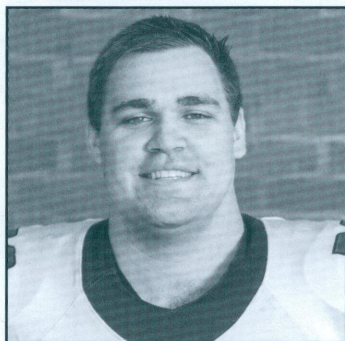
**Cole Boehmer**

**Offensive Line**

Broadview Heights, Ohio

*In Coach's Words...*

"Cole has been the 'first guy in' the last couple years, and I could not be more excited for him to have the chance to be a starter this year. We are expecting huge things from Cole, and certainly believe he's up for the challenge. This is an opportunity that is overdue, and I know he's ready to seize it."



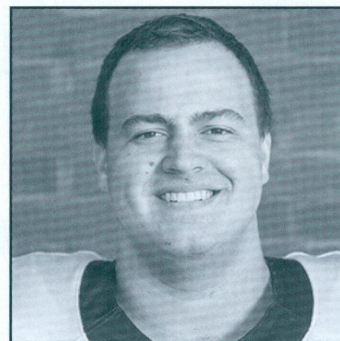
**Sam Caldwell**

**Defensive Line**

Charlotte, N.C.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Sam is an absolute grinder with a high motor; he's just a real football player. He's been a two-year starter and stalwart on our defensive line. I am expecting him to have a huge senior season and be a real leader in our defensive front."



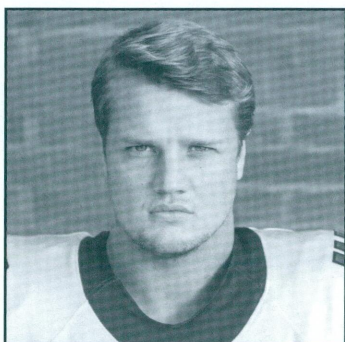
**Jim Daniels**

**Offensive Line**

Chicago, Ill.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Jimmy is a 'pack a lunch' type of guy. He's worked incredibly hard to put himself in a position to be a leader and a captain. He lost the starting nod as a sophomore, but came back with a vengeance last year and was a rock on the offensive line as our center. I expect Jim to have an outstanding season as both a player and a leader."



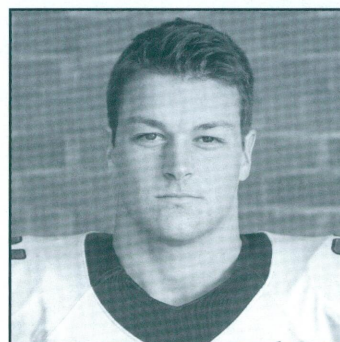
**Taylor Dean**

**Inside Linebacker**

Mt. Lebanon, Pa.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Taylor has been a very consistent player, primarily in a backup and special team's role, but he's going to be right in the mix to be a starter this year and I am eager to see what Taylor can do in his senior campaign."



**Jack Drew**

**Outside Linebacker**

Chestnut Hill, Mass.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Jack had an outstanding junior season and has been a versatile player for us. I am anticipating a remarkable senior season for Jack. He possesses all the tools to succeed, and is relentless in his approach to the game. I am excited for him to be a leader on our defense this season."

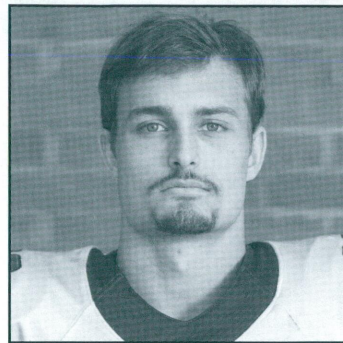


## Jimmy Fairfield-Sonn

**Defensive Back**  
Old Lyme, Conn.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Jimmy is the ultimate playmaker and will be starting in the secondary for the third-consecutive season. He's a dynamic performer and I'm expecting huge things from him in his senior year. Jimmy is a real catalyst for us, and our success will depend greatly on Jimmy playing at a high level."

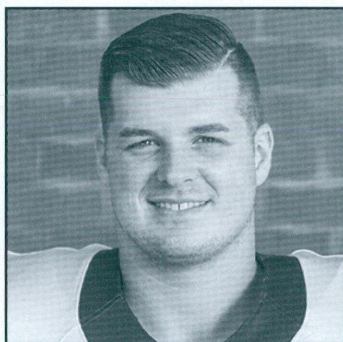


## Chris Gow

**Defensive Back**  
Houston, Texas

*In Coach's Words...*

"Chris is the brains of the back end. He's an incredibly intelligent football player who always gets us in the right call. He possesses incredible instincts, and most importantly, he's one of the better human beings that I've ever met. There's not a conversation that you have with Chris that you don't walk away feeling a little bit better. He has a genuine kindness and goodness about him that puts everybody at ease. He's an incredible leader who impacts every room that he enters."



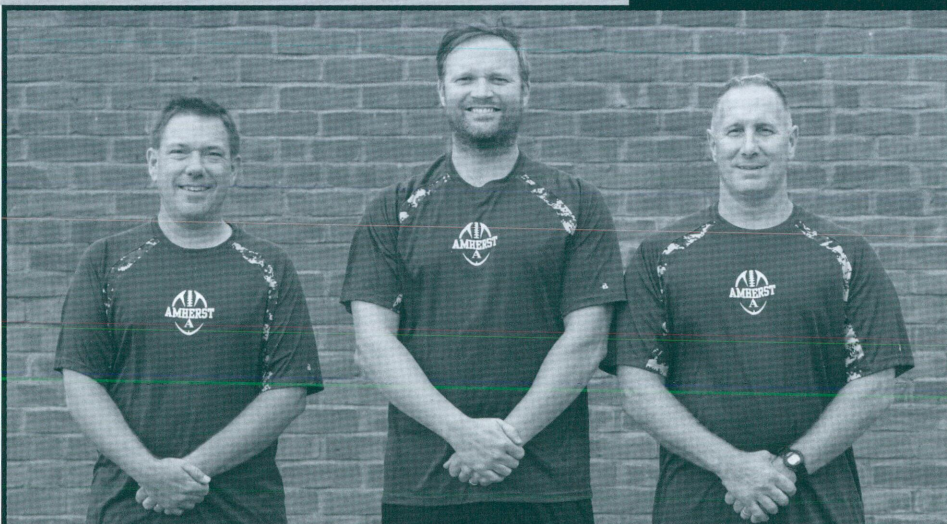
## Sam Hart

**Offensive Line**  
Amherst, Mass.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Sam is the 'blind side' guy. He's the consummate left tackle – he's big, he's strong, and plays with tremendous technique. I am anticipating a dominant year for Sam, and look for him to continue the type of play he's provided us thus far. He had a phenomenal junior season and I believe Sam will carry that into the 2015 campaign."

# MEET *the* STAFF 2015



*L to R: Dale Gurek (Equipment Manager), Matt Cook (Assistant Trainer),  
Mark Klingensmith (Head Trainer)*

## Class of 2016

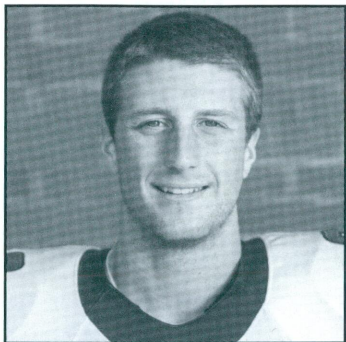
**Overall Record: 22-3**

**2-Time**

**NESCAC Champs**



# SENIORS *continued...*

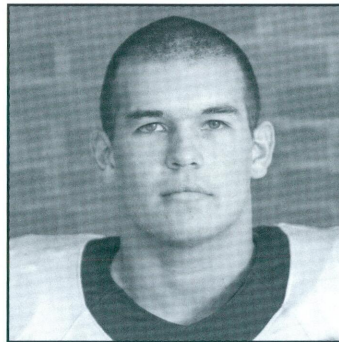


**Mike Johnson**

**Tight End**  
Ridgewood, N.J.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Michael served as a student assistant last season due to injury and proved to be an invaluable asset to the coaching staff. I am really looking forward to Michael being back on the field and having a breakout senior season."

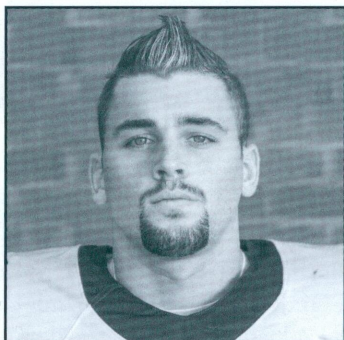


**Tom Kleyn**

**Inside Linebacker**  
Concord, Mass.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Tommy has a relentless motor and is an elite NESCAC player. He is incredibly difficult to block, and has a burst and natural instincts that really set him apart. Tommy is the quintessential captain, leader and inside linebacker, and I cannot wait to watch him perform on the field in 2015."

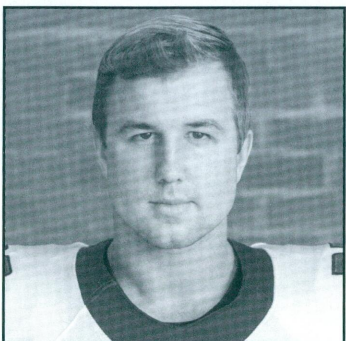


**Jackson McGonagle**

**Wide Receiver/Punter**  
New York, N.Y.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Jackson is an incredible athlete and football player. He's a prospect at the next level as a punter, and potentially as a wide receiver. The sky is the limit for Jackson. I couldn't be more proud of his development; as a person, student and athlete. He earned the right to be voted captain by his peers. I'm extremely proud of his growth, and expect him to be an incredible leader both on and off the field this season."

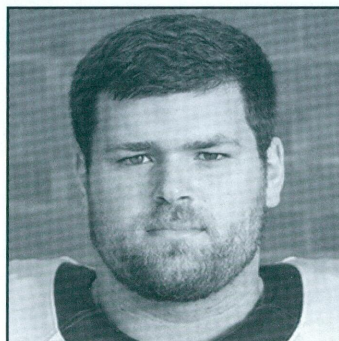


**Tyler Mordas**

**Outside Linebacker**  
Wayland, Mass.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Tyler had a phenomenal sophomore year, but injury forced him to the sideline as a junior. I'm looking for him to bounce back, and I'm expecting big things from Tyler in his senior season. I'm hoping he can stay healthy and get back to doing the things that made him such an exceptional player his sophomore campaign."



**Robert Perdoni**

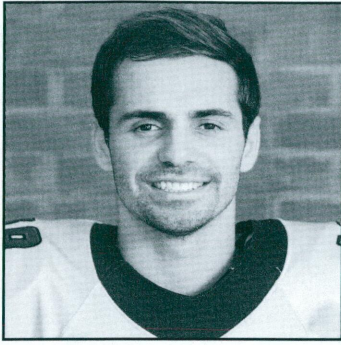
**Defensive Line**  
Natick, Mass.

*In Coach's Words...*

"I'm incredibly excited for Robert to get back on the field. Injury erased his entire junior campaign, but he's worked unbelievably hard to put himself in a position to have a standout senior year, and I expect nothing but great things from Robert this season."



# SENIORS *continued...*



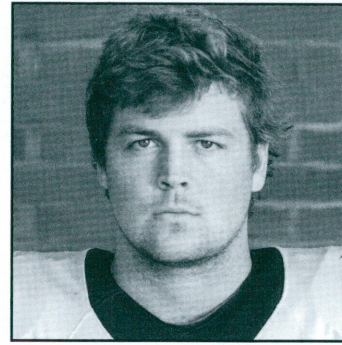
**Brian Ragone**

**Wide Receiver**

Sarasota, Fla.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Brian is the consummate football player – he possesses an incredible football IQ, and works exceptionally hard at his craft. Brian has been a consistent performer the past three seasons, but I'm looking forward to him making his mark in the NESCAC in 2015."



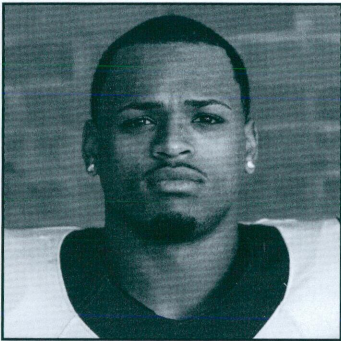
**Colby Smith**

**Tight End**

Lilburn, Ga.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Health issues have held Colby back to date, but his attitude and his approach have put him in a position to compete for playing time as a senior. He possesses an extremely positive approach to everything he does, and I'm certain he will continue to be an important member of the Amherst College football family."



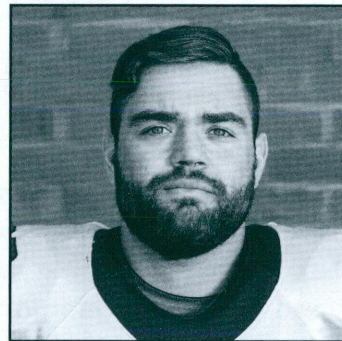
**Jaymie Spears**

**Defensive Back**

Haverhill, Mass.

*In Coach's Words...*

"The preseason All-America honor is well deserved, but I am more excited to watch Jaymie perform at an All-American level in 2015. He's certainly one of the top performers in the NESCAC, both as a shutdown corner and a playmaker on special teams. Jaymie is a big-time player who plays his best in the biggest games. He's been a huge part of our team's past success and I'm confident Jaymie will leave an indelible mark on the Amherst College football program."



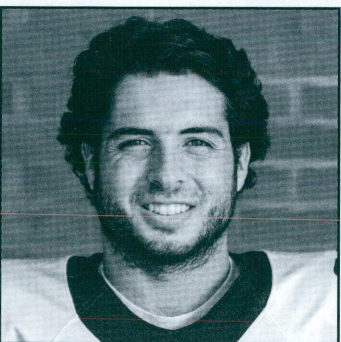
**Reid Singer**

**Defensive Line**

Lyndhurst, Ohio

*In Coach's Words...*

"Reid possesses an incredible work ethic – a guy that grinds it out every single day and finds a way to get it done on the field. He had an outstanding junior season, and we feel he'll be an integral part of our defensive line as he enters his senior campaign."



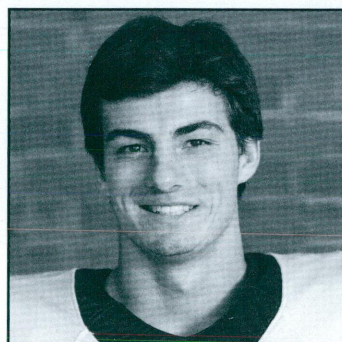
**Adam Wallace**

**Wide Receiver**

Austin, Texas

*In Coach's Words...*

"Adam consistently improved throughout his junior season and eventually broke into the starting lineup. He's worked extremely hard for this opportunity, and I'm excited to see how all his tireless effort will pay off in his senior campaign. I'm anticipating great things from Adam."



**Greg Williams**

**Wide Receiver**

Duxbury, Mass.

*In Coach's Words...*

"Greg is the ultimate team player. He has yet to find the field on a consistent basis, but the intangibles he brings to our team are immeasurable. Greg possesses a remarkable attitude and I'm certain he will continue to play a pivotal role on the 2015 Amherst College football team."



**The whole family  
is cheering for  
YOU Christopher!  
We are so  
proud of you!**

*May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father,  
who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement  
and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you  
in every good deed and word.*



**GO AMHERST!  
Good luck  
to the Jeffs!  
#52**

*Thomas, we are so proud of you!  
Love, Mom, Dad, Tristan & Toby*