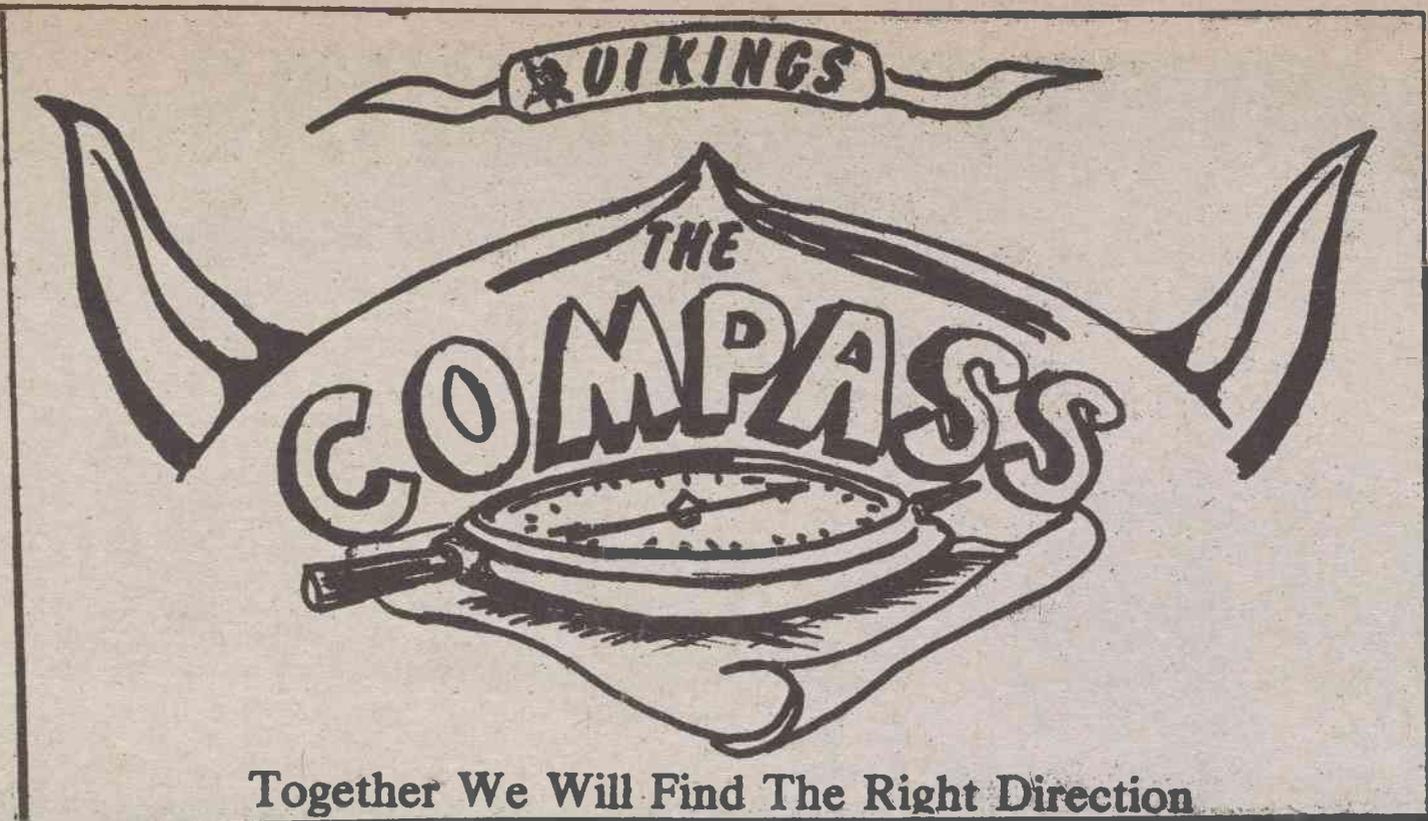


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Together We Will Find The Right Direction

Elizabeth City State University

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WALTON TAKES CHARGE

BY SIDNEY BEST

The 1980-81 football season brings a lot of new faces to the Elizabeth City State University Football Program. The face that will be most recognized is the face of Johnny Walton, who returns to Elizabeth City State University as the NEW Head Coach of the Viking Football Team. Yes, I did say "returns."

Walton, a former football player and a graduate of Elizabeth City State University, has been playing pro football off and on for the last ten years. Walton's pro career was stabilized with the Philadelphia Eagles. While with the Eagles Walton had some up and down moments.

Let's recall what in Coach Walton's mind was his most finest hour. It was Monday

Night Football, Dallas against Philadelphia. Philadelphia had been looking good all year and was motivated on the idea of defeating the Cowboys. With the first half drawing to a close, who should Coach Vermeil decide to insert into the game? None other than JOHNNY WALTON. With the seconds ticking away Walton completes a short pass; however, with enough time left for one play, Walton drops back, looks short, then pumps it and connects on a 29 yard touchdown pass to one of his teammates. The Eagles had beaten the Cowboys on the accurate passing of Quarterback Johnny Walton and not Jaworski.

Although Walton felt he should have gotten more playing time, he didn't grumble and mumble about it. He was patient because he knew his day would come, and it was important that he be ready to produce; and HE WAS. Coach Walton feels that his decision to quit pro football is one that he'll always find hard to accept.

He feels that it will really dawn on him this season how much he really misses playing football. Coach Walton also reflected on how nice the people in Philadelphia were to him and also how the players got along so well together. When asked, Coach Walton said, "there aren't any greater fans than those of the Eagles."

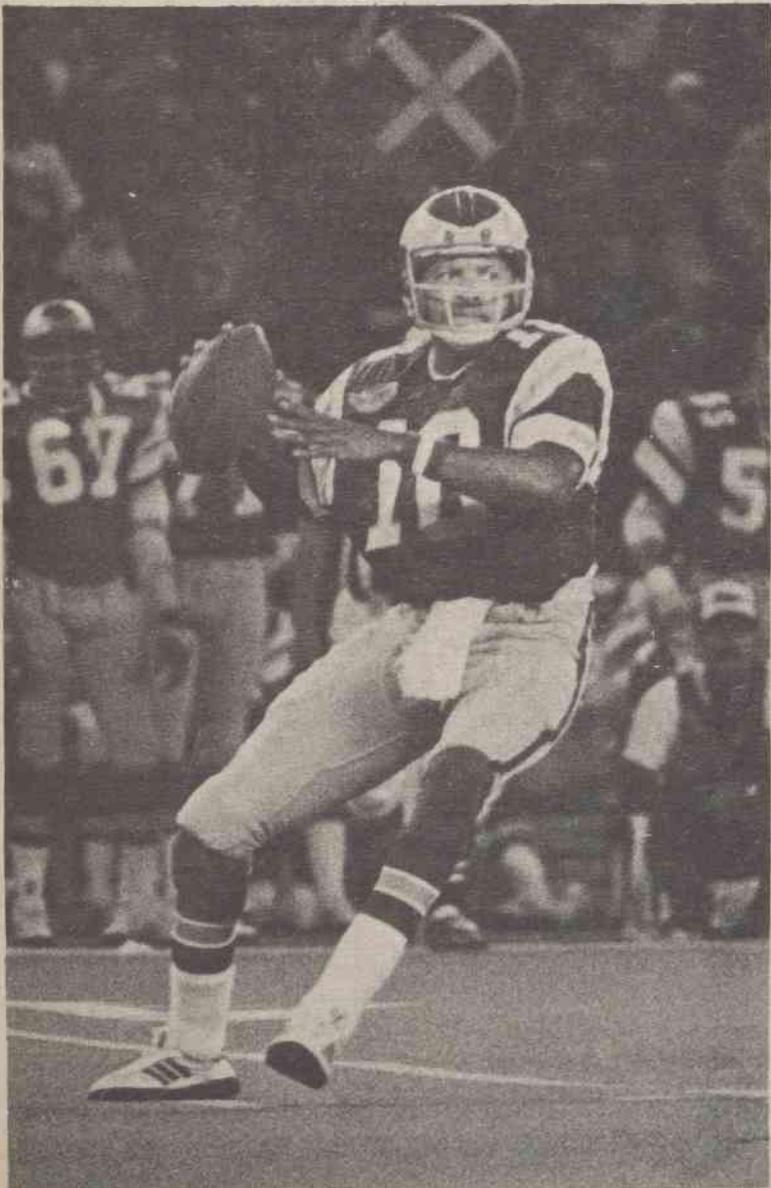
Walton's decision to take over the coaching job at Elizabeth City State University is one involving opportunities. Coach Walton viewed this as a chance for him to help motivate the lives of forty or more young men. Also this job allows him a chance for security and position, an opportunity that probably would never come again. No one in Philadelphia downed Walton for his decision; in fact, his fellow teammates and coaches congratulated him and said if there was anything they could do to help, feel free to ask.

For Walton, Elizabeth City State University is the place for him. "It's where my friends are and I know this," he said. He's really pleased at his school and the many

positive advancements he noticed that have been made. He mainly pointed out that the living conditions have changed and the facilities are much better for the students. Coach Walton also made note of the fact that the general attitude of the campus has changed greatly. "To come in on a new job and already know almost everybody and not have to get to know a whole staff of people is a good feeling," Walton said.

Coach Walton feels the Vikings of 1980-81 are going to be a very disciplined team. The Vikings are returning approximately 40 players from last year's squad. Of that 40 players seven or eight will be seniors and juniors and sophomores will make up the difference.

Coach Walton stated that he'll stress discipline and promptness most of all, because he is not a repeater. The Vikings tied their first game and won their second and are looking very good as a whole. If you ask any member of the Viking Squad where they're going, I'm sure he'll reply "to the top of WALTON'S MOUNTAIN."



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A REMINDER:

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