

Waller gets the most out of sports, academics



A leader in every way -- on and off the playing field

Winston-Salem State Linebacker Gregory Waller (53) made it his business to be in on all of the action during the Rams run for the CIAA championship. Waller proved to be one of the league's premier tacklers and was a major force in the development of WSSU's defense as the season came to a climax.

Photo by News Argus Sports

BY DUANE HACKNEY
STAFF WRITER

Maintaining good grades and helping Winston-Salem State win the CIAA football championship is not an easy task. For Greg Waller it's all in a day's work.

Waller is the recipient of the Toyota Leadership Award, which is given to those who display excellence in the classroom as well as on the field. Waller, a co-captain on the football team, has a 2.9 GPA and finished the season as the third leading tackler in the CIAA with 118.

"I am honored to win such an award," said Waller. "This award acknowledges both the academic and athletic achievements. This is the type of award that every athlete should look forward to receiving."

This 6'0, 215 pound senior linebacker from Martinsville, Va. started playing football at the age of 11.

"I've always been an aggressive player," stated Waller.

He has also been better than average on the gridiron. At Martinsville High School, he made the All-Conference and All-Region teams. He was also named Defensive Lineman Of The Year.

Waller finished his senior year of high school ranked 51 out of a class of 231 with a 2.8 GPA.

"I considered myself a good student throughout high school," said Waller. "I applied myself, but still found time to have fun."

Waller didn't receive any football scholarship offers coming out of high school. But he was invited to try-out at different universities.

Waller chose WSSU because he felt comfortable with its size and the coaching staff made him feel at home.

After experiencing complications with a scholarship at VMI, coach Bill Hayes, now at North Carolina A&T, gave Waller a fair shot to make the Rams' team. Being the type of aggressive player he is, Waller earned a scholarship and obtained a starting position by his sophomore year.

Waller gives sound advice about being a successful student-athlete. "Balancing your time is the key," he said. "Plan a schedule that allows you to do classwork between classes and practices and stick to it."

IF THEY LOOK LIKE COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYERS, YOU'RE ONLY SEEING PART OF THE PICTURE.

GREGORY WALLER of the WINSTON-SALEM STATE RAMS

Toyota honors senior Gregory Waller, linebacker of the Winston-Salem State Rams, as a recipient of the Toyota Leadership Award for demonstrating outstanding leadership in the fields of academics, athletics, and community service.

Gregory Waller will receive the Toyota Leadership Plaque, and Winston-Salem State University will receive a

\$1,000 contribution to its general scholarship fund.

The example Gregory Waller has set is an inspiration to us all. And as a leader in its own field, Toyota recognizes the discipline and unrelenting effort it takes to excel. So next time you watch a college football game, look a little closer. There's a lot more talent on the field than you realize.

"I love what you do for me."

