

Williams expected to play big role this football season

PIRATES PREVIEW

BY MALCOLM SHIELDS
The Daily Advance

Perquimans' Dwan Williams knew what was ahead of him for the upcoming football season.

With last season's all-area rusher and backfield teammate Reashun Warren graduating after the 2015 season, Williams went to work.

"People tell me that I have a lot of weight on my shoulders," Williams said. "I am just using that a motivation."

An off-season filled with

training produced fruit for the rising junior.

Williams, who is expected to be a starter this season, said that he added 23 pounds of muscle to prepare for the pounding at running back this upcoming season.

On defense, Williams, who played most of the season as a defensive back, had worked at linebacker early on at practice.

Wherever he ends up on defense, Williams is willing to play.

"He is one of those old school football players," Perquimans coach Elvin



STAFF PHOTO BY MALCOLM SHIELDS

Perquimans junior Dwan Williams (with ball) gained over 20 pounds of muscle to prepare himself to be the feature running back for the Pirates this season.

James said. "He will hit you in the mouth and won't apologize about it."

His team first mentality earned Williams the title of captain for the upcoming season. James said that Williams is one of six captains on the team.

"My dad always told me to be an action leader instead of a vocal leader," Williams said. "I just try to show the guys how to be respectful to the game and the coaches."

"He doesn't hesitate to encourage everybody else," James added.

Williams' talents were recognized last season as he

was selected as an All-Area player at defensive back where he recorded 80 tackles with six interceptions.

"It was a blessing," Williams said. "I knew that I was going to get action on defense, but I didn't know that I would on offense."

Williams rushed for nearly 1,000 yards and also contributed to the Pirates on special teams as a returner.

James has seen the progression of Williams since his freshman year.

"He understands the concepts of the game," James said.

Even with his individual

success, there is one contest from last season that still bothers Williams: the Camden game.

With Perquimans holding a 14-13 lead and deep in Bruins territory late in the third quarter, Williams lost the football on a carry inside the 10-yard line.

"It was a huge momentum shift," Williams said.

Camden rallied in the fourth quarter for the 19-14 victory.

"A lot of people said that if I would not have fumbled, we would have won," Williams said. "I took that to heart."

That moment made Williams put more focus on ball security.

A preview of what was to come for the Pirates occurred during the first round of the IAA state play-

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- November 4 Columbia Away

offs against East Carteret. With team moral low after trailing the Mariners at one point by 30 points in a 53-16 setback, Williams led by example.

"I tried to show the guys to keep fighting," Williams said.

With Warren sidelined with an injury, Williams accounted for more than 100 all-purpose yards with a touchdown in the loss.

The coach has faith in Williams' abilities.

"I knew that this year would be his time," James said. "Not to carry the total weight, but he is going to be the man."

Even with more responsibility, Williams' goal is to help Perquimans to a winning season.

"No man is more important than this program," Williams said. "I take that to heart."



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