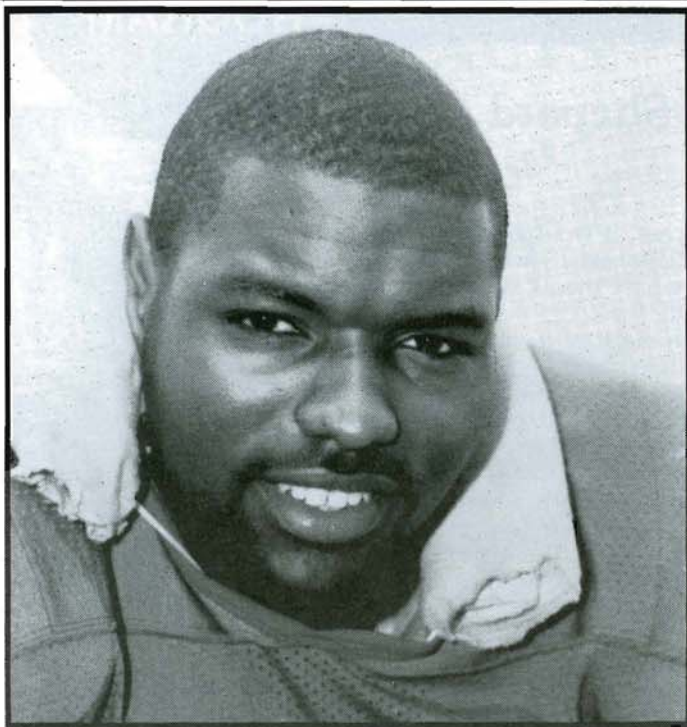
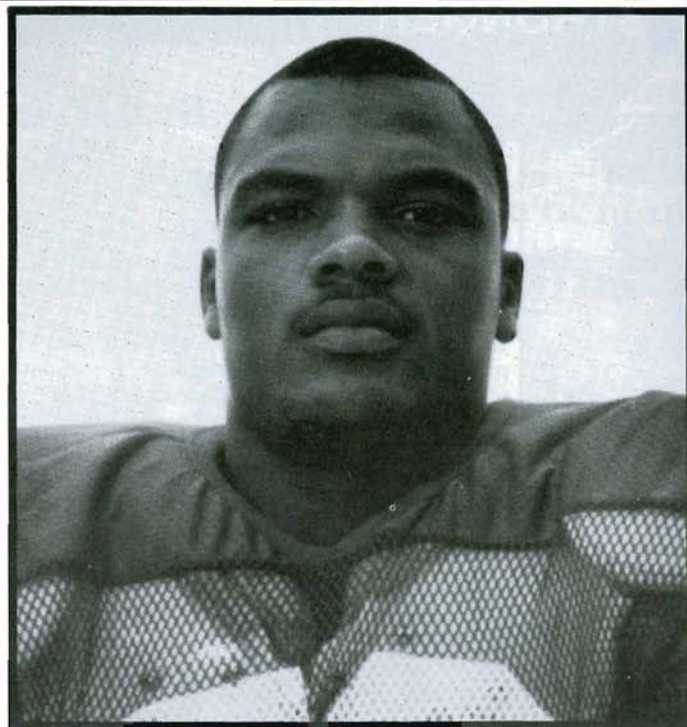


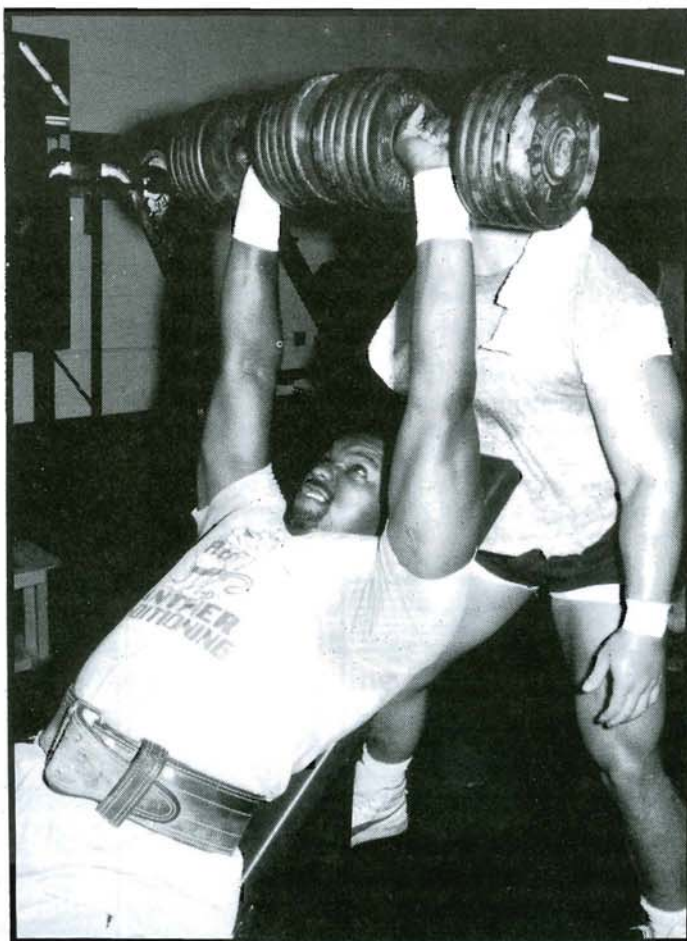
# THE FLORIDA CONNECTION



OT Randy Dixon, 6'4", 280



DT Walter Johnson, 6'2", 245



90 Randy Dixon: Dumbbell Inclines



Randy Close Grip Benches 450 Pounds. Spotting is Pittsburgh's Strength Coach, Buddy Morris.

*"Randy is the best Offensive Tackle in America. He is super strong and a great example to everybody." Walter is one of the best Defensive Linemen in the country. He has unbelievable upper-body strength and you'll never meet a finer person. Buddy Morris, Strength Coach, University of Pittsburgh.*



# FOR THE PITT PANTHERS

Walter and Randy are called the Florida Connection because they grew up in rural Florida 20 miles apart. They are both seniors and chose to go all the way to Pittsburgh to attend college and play football.

Walter went to Pahokee High School in Southern Florida where he was an All-Stater, Blue Chip All-American and played in the Florida All-Star game. "Pahokee is a 2A school with about an 80% black population. My senior year we had a 7-4 record. My high school coach was James Hayman. Anyway, I was heavily recruited but chose Pitt because of two friends that played for Pitt. I also just liked the atmosphere," remembered Walter.

Walter started lifting amazingly in the 5th grade. "But not seriously until the 8th grade," affirmed Walter. I almost fell out of my chair when Walter said he Bench 330 pounds as an 8th grader! No wonder he started on the Varsity when he was in the 9th grade.

Criminal Justice is Walter's Major and he wants to work with juveniles with problems after football. He will graduate on time which is great for only being in school for four years. Walter also has a solid GPA of 2.45.

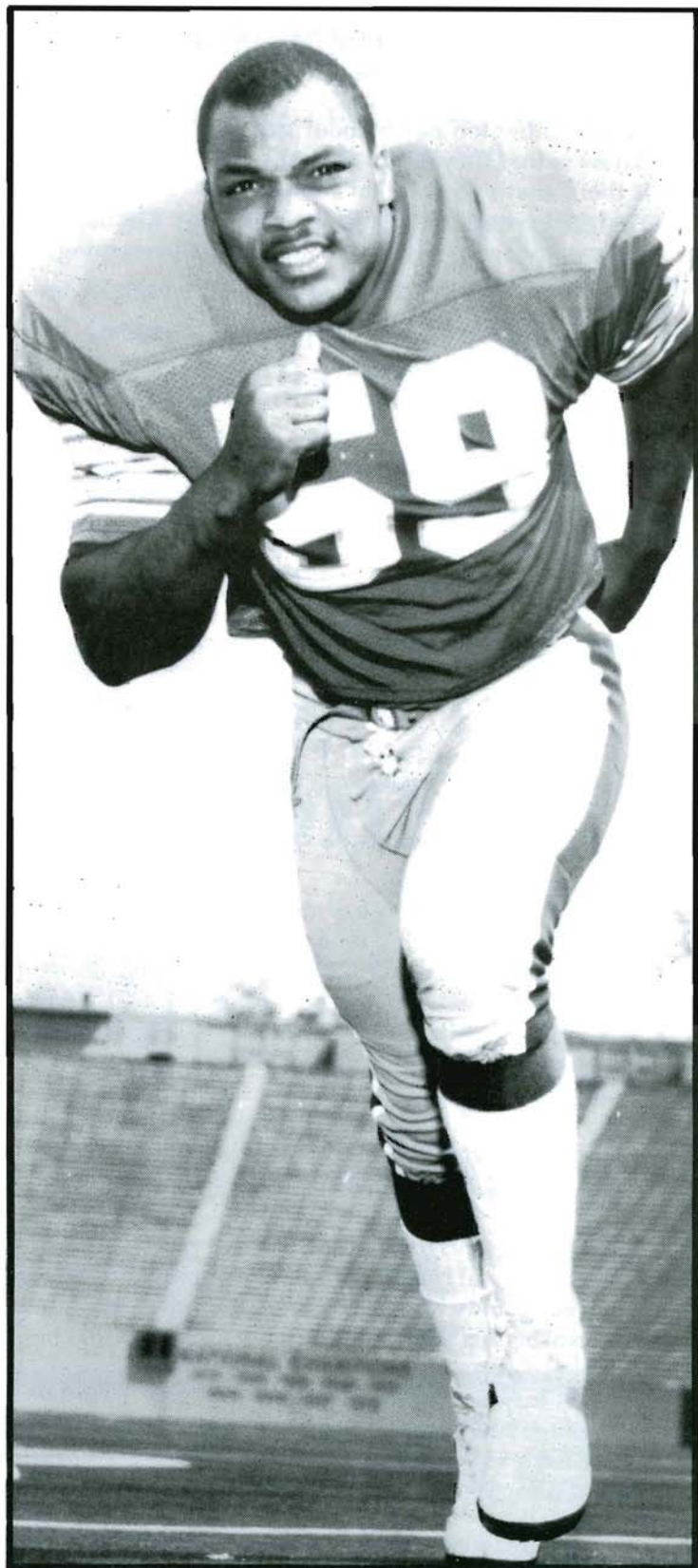
I asked Walter if he skips classes. He laughed, "No way! I can't afford to skip. You only hurt yourself if you miss." Walter would like to play Pro football but if it doesn't work out or when it's over, he knows he's always got his degree.

*"We Provide the Match; All You Have to do is Strike it!"*  
Coach Buddy Morris

Strength Coach, Buddy Morris believes in a Close Grip Bench Press. "I feel it more simulates the hand and arm position as it relates to Walter's defensive position," states Morris. Walter's 505 effort may very well be the tops in college football for that close grip position. Last year, we featured Outland Trophy Winner, Mike Ruth. Mike had the best Bench in the country with a 580 effort. However, considering Walter's relatively light weight of 263 and the Close Grip, this editor feels even Mike Ruth might have a hard time under those circumstances.

"Well Walter," I asked, you gotta great Bench but what about your legs?" He answered, "Buddy makes me work on Squats. To tell you the truth, I like upper body work a whole lot better, but you gotta do squats to keep your strength development balanced."

I asked Walter what was important in this life. His answer gave me a very warm feeling towards him as he said, "My family is most important. My father died when I was only one, so my mother had to raise the family. I remember her getting up at 4:00 every morning to support us. I didn't like that. I felt it was important to be responsible for doing my best job. There is no way I wanted to be a loser. I didn't want to let her down. Anyway, I feel that I've been very lucky." I told Walter that sometimes you make your own luck by working hard and doing the things you should be doing.



All-East Player, Walter Johnson, University of Pittsburgh.



I asked Walter if he had any advice for young people. "Go as far as you can," Walter responded. "Get your education! Try to be somebody."

"How about drugs?"

Walter emphatically answered, "Stay away from them. It's dangerous. Remember Len Bias. I've never been associated with a party that had drugs."

"Any comment on steroids?"

"I don't know too much about steroids," said Walter. All I know is that they're not for me."

"Is there anything else that's important?"

"Yes, the spiritual side of life is important. I'm Baptist and I pray every night. I just thank the Lord for everything," concluded Walter in soft tones.

## WALTER JOHNSON PROGRESS CHART

	HT	WT	40	Bench	Squat
8th	5-11	190	X	330	X
9th	5-11	210	X	340	X
10th	6-0	235	4.8	355	X
11th	6-1	245	4.8	385	360
12th	6-2	250	4.79	400	400
FR	6-2	250	4.79	425	405
SO	6-2	250	4.76	430	415
JR	6-2	250	4.76	455	405(8)
SR	6-2	263	*4.76	**505	405(9)

\*Pro Scout Time      \*\*Close Grip

\*\*\*Inclines 330

## RANDY DIXON'S STORY

Randy played high school ball at Clewiston, a 3A school, for Coach Al Morrell. His senior year, Clewiston tied for the Florida State Championship with a 13-1-1 record. Randy was All-State for 3 years and played in the All-Star game with Walter. In fact, they were also rivals in high school. The rivalry came to an end during recruiting trips they happened to take together.

Randy chose Pitt because of the opportunity to play earlier. He was heavily recruited because at 6'3", 270 Randy had a 360 Bench, ran a 5.0 Forty and could play great football.

I asked Randy if his present speed of 4.9 was fast. "Well 4.9 is pretty good but I think I can get down to a 4.8 Forty," he answered. Randy stretches everyday and as he continues increasing his leg strength, I have no doubt that he can.

Randy is majoring in Administration Justice. "I'd like to work with juveniles as a counselor," offered Randy. He has a 2.6 GPA and is on schedule to graduate in his fourth year next Spring. Like Walter, Randy makes it to every class.

Randy would like to play Pro ball. "However, right now I'm just trying to stay healthy, do the best I possibly can in football and graduate. After Pro ball, I should be able to get a job with my degree."

"What should a player do to be his best?"

Randy charged, "The main thing, you must lift. In high school, I didn't work on my legs which was a mistake. I had natural strength but you can't sit back and rely on it. You need strength all over to compete at a high level and to prevent injury."

Then I just let Randy explain how he felt about life and how he might counsel younger players.

"My family is important. Fortunately, I've got a mother, father, sister and brother. I call 'em once a week. Incidentally, I'm the only one in the family that's big. I go to my Baptist church whenever I can. As far as drugs, I'm like Walter, I haven't been to parties that have drugs. I don't associate with people that do drugs. I've never used steroids. I don't need it myself."

Randy concluded, "I'd like to tell kids to take things serious. Keep working hard and believe in yourself."

We thank Coach Buddy Morris and the Florida Connection of Walter Johnson and Randy Dixon for being such great examples.



All-American Pitt Panther Football, Randy Dixon.