

## By Dr. Greg Shepard

How do you change pretty good into fantastic? Well, you could ask Nick Morris. He was a pretty good

professors. Academic assistance was always close by. This was very important to Nick. "I turned myself around academically." Indeed he did. Besides playing football, he

# NICK MORRIS

## UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

athlete at Mercer Island High School in the state of Washington. The football team went 10-3 his junior year and 9-0 in his senior year before losing in the first round of the playoffs. Nick was a catcher on the baseball team and was a .400 hitter. The basketball coach asked Nick to come out in his senior year and with no experience was the sixth man on the team. He did play in the East-West All-Star game at Quarterback but was overshadowed somewhat by a big name QB by the name of Drew Bledsoe. Nick also maintained a 3.3 GPA. He Bench 320 but didn't Squat much at 350 pounds and ran a 4.7 forty. So all in all, Nick Morris was pretty good. A pretty good athlete with pretty good grades with pretty good size, strength and speed. The average pretty good athlete like Nick could perhaps go on to junior college or a small college but certainly not a big time program. Academically speaking, colleges weren't banging on his doors either. So what do you do: Accept your fate and do the best you can at a pretty good institution. Nick chose a different route.

Nick's best friend went to Cornell which exposed him to thinking about schools in the East. He had another friend who went to a prep school in the New England area. "As a result," Nick remembered, "I made the best decision of my life." Nick went to Northfield Mount Herman, a prep school in Massachusetts. The students there actually live with their



**Nick Morris is outstanding on all counts. He's good enough to start both ways. Nick has got great physical qualities and a great work ethic. He also runs well. Nick has got the whole package.**

**Nick brings a leadership element to our program and he does it with maturity and intensity. When he does something, it's full speed. If anything, sometimes we have to calm him down.**

**Al Bagnoli  
Head Football Coach  
University of Pennsylvania**

was able to raise his grades to 3.8 average. Ivy League schools love prep school athletes with great grades and a strong work ethic. Nick Morris was accepted at Penn where he was enrolled in the Wharton School of Business and to play football. Now, you may ask yourself, "What the heck is Wharton School of Business?" No, Wharton is not a disease.

A new Penn student must be accepted to one of four schools: School of Nursing, School of Engineering & Applied Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences and the Wharton School. Wharton was founded in 1881 and was our nation's first business school. The school excels in the education of future managers and leaders in the area of business, the arts, government and health care or any profession that requires the efficient management of people and resources. Wharton chooses from 17 major areas of concentration and is ranked third among top American business schools. It the top school in finance, real estate, entrepreneurship and finance/risk management.

Nick receives the opportunity of a work experience in his major. He has sat on the Equity Trading Desk in New York City for three different firms. He has worked on the Philadelphia Stock Exchange. Right now he is looking for an internship and finish out his senior year of eligi-

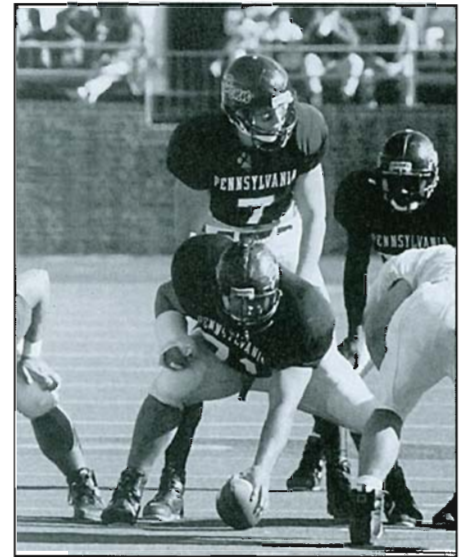


bility in the fall of next year. Nick has a solid 3.0 GPA and states, "I'm very proud of my GPA. It's very competitive here. We have some graduate students in my classes who are full time into school. Penn football spends about as much time preparing for games as do Division I school. So the players really have to be careful on playing around. Time management is the key." Nick chose Penn because he had an opportunity to play right away and Penn's commitment to winning was impressive. "At the time Penn was down a little," Nick said. "They got a new coach and staff. They wanted to win so bad and a new weight room was being planned."

The new 5,000-square-foot weight room facility was completed in August of 1993 at a cost of more than a half million dollars. The size and amount of equipment allows all 60 Penn football players to be completely trained together in one hour. "We've got the best weight room in the Ivy League," beamed Nick.

Rob Wagner is the full time strength coach. "Coach Wagner has done a tremendous job," offered Nick. "He is an awesome role model. Coach Wagner has squatted 800 pounds in the 181-pound class. You can't control what your opponents do but you can control your own strength development. Here at Penn I'm surrounded by teammates who are committed with tremendous dedication. We are just flat out stronger than our opponents. We also do plyometrics and box jumps."

Nick's best lifts are a 380 Bench, a 500 pound Squat and a 315 pound Clean. He can also run a 4.67 forty and vertical jump 34-inches. During the in-season, Nick lifts 3X per week and runs on Sundays by doing sprints a lot. "We try to maintain our strength during the season," explained Nick. "I do what Coach Wagner tells me. One other thing you should know. Every time you lift for a max, it has to be approved by Coach Wagner." Coach Wagner is a



great source as he has won the American Drug Free National Powerlifting Championship and the World Championship last year in the 181-pound class.

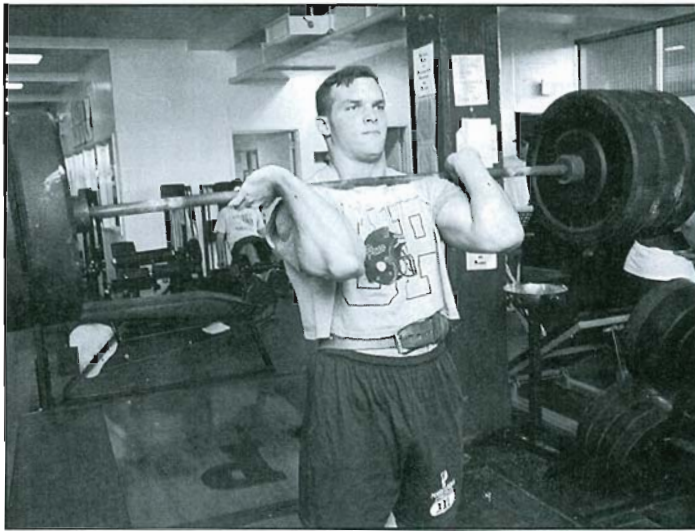
Are you starting to get the idea that Nick is in more than just a pretty good environment. As for the University of Pennsylvania, it was founded in 1740 by Benjamin Franklin and is the fourth oldest college in the nation. It is located only two miles from the center of Philadelphia and has just over 9,400 students. They come from all 50 states and 79 foreign countries. The student-faculty ratio is seven-to-one. Nearly 75% of all Penn students receive financial assistance.

The Quakers play on Franklin

Nick Morris is not a unique athlete when you look at the testing results of our starting defense. Seven starters Squat over 500 pounds, six starters Power Clean over 300 and Bench Press over 350 pounds. What does make Nick unique is that he is a member of this group and he plays in the secondary.

Nick has done an outstanding job of setting realistic goals and then achieving them. As a freshman he Squatted 365 pounds, Power Cleaned 230 and Benched 320 pounds. By his junior year he had moved these maxes to 500, 315 and 375 pounds respectively and all those lifts were done for singles. This is one of his ways of challenging himself and he believes that singles are the best indicator of what an individual is capable of in the weight room. Nick's strong mental approach to his training and his consistency in the weight room and on the track have given him a sub 4.7 40- yard time and a 34-inch Vertical Jump. He is also a strong believer in our philosophy that lifting technique is the primary concern and not the amount of weight lifted. I feel that the combination of Nick's belief in our training system and his own mental toughness has made him a unique asset here at Penn.

Robert Wagner: Penn Strength Coach



Field and was originally opened in 1895 at a cost of \$100,000. The field has been the site of the nation's first scoreboard (1895), the first two-tiered stadium (1922), first football radio broadcast (1922) and the first football telecast in 1939. The stadium has been newly refurbished and now holds 60,546 people. Pennsylvania was unquestionably the Ivy League's team of the decade in the 1980,s but may be headed for even greater heights in the 1990's. Heading this surge of success is head coach Al Bagnoli who has the fourth-best winning percentage (82.4 percent) among all active collegiate coaches. Last year Bagnoli led his Quakers to a perfect 10-0 season and brought Penn its eighth Ivy championship and a #16 final season national ranking.

The Ivy League schools are Harvard, Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Princeton, Pennsylvania and Yale. Ivy League rules state that everyone must play freshman football. There is no such thing as red-shirting like other schools. Nick was the team co-MVP as QB of his freshman team. He threw 67 times and completed 34 for 451 yards and four scores. He also carried the ball 39 times for 220 yards.

The following year, as a sophomore, Nick tore some ligaments on

his throwing fingers. He had trouble throwing the ball. The doctors recommended surgery. Consequently, Nick was given a medical red-shirt year. "Not getting to play was really frustrating," recalled Nick. The surgery was not entirely suc-

cessful and still was not right the next year. Jimmy McGeehan was the top QB and Nick wanted to play. It was finally settled that he was going to try out as a free safety. Things worked out and he had an outstanding year. This year Nick has been moved to strong safety. Nick laughed, "I've always had the mentality of a defensive player. I like hitting. It's a good feeling."

Nick believes that dedication is the key to being successful. "You have really got to want it. The weights will give you an advantage. You have got to be disciplined in all areas. I've never been into partying. You just stay away from alcohol. Don't let yourself or your team down. I've never experienced drugs and I've never seen steroids. It's just not part of my world. None of my friends do it. It's nothing but bad. I know there are times when people are going out. If you go out and you have classes or meetings the next day - - well, maybe you shouldn't. You have to make good choices. My teammates and I don't mess around too much. It just takes one weak link. If you do something negative you'll let your team down."

Nick has also learned a proper life perspective as to what is really important in life. "Money is definitely not it. I've learned how great friendship really is. My best friend is

actually from prep school. The football team has helped me with close friendships. However, my family is the most important. I talk to my parents every night on the phone during the week. My dad is great. He comes all the way from Washington to see most of my games. My mom also comes to some."

We thank Nick for sharing his Upper Limit perspectives. Nick's favorite BFS story when he was going to high school was about the one-legged football player named Andrew. Now, it's Nick's turn to inspire. The University of Pennsylvania is full of its own inspiration. John Heisman (Heisman Trophy) coached at Penn from 1920-22 and John Outland (Outland Trophy) was a two-time All-American for the Quakers. Obviously some of that Penn greatness has rubbed off on Nick and, just like magic, he has turned pretty good into fantastic.....□

### FLASH UPDATE

At this writing, Nick has 32 total tackles, 19 of which are unassisted: Ranked 3rd on team. Penn is on a 17 game winning streak. This years record stands at 5-0.

