

FEBRUARY 6, 2008

VIKINGS SIGN BIGGEST RECRUIT IN SCHOOL HISTORY

Western gets huge offensive lineman and two more talented prep seniors

BELLINGHAM, Wash. --- A junior college transfer believed to be the biggest player ever recruited by Western Washington University has signed a National Letter of Intent. Making that announcement was Viking head coach Robin Ross.

Offensive tackle Chris Awambu, who stands 6-foot-6 and weighs 335 pounds, was a first-team all-Mid-Empire Conference pick at Laney College in Oakland, Calif., last fall. He helped the Eagles to a 10-1 record, a league championship and a Graffiti Bowl victory.

“We’re very excited to get a player of his stature,” said Ross. “Our goal was to get two junior college offensive linemen who could compete to start for us and with Chris and Travis Pierce (6-2, 295, from Reedley JC) we’ve done that.”

As a freshman at Laney, Awambu played on a 9-2 squad that also took a post-season bowl victory. He graduated from Tennyson High School in Hayward, Calif.

Two other Thursday signees for Western, bringing its total to 19, were wide receiver Kirt Terry-Springs and defensive lineman Lepon Mamea.

Terry-Springs is a senior at Evergreen High School where he earned first-team all-Seamount League honors. He caught 31 passes for 507 yards and 11 touchdowns as the Wolverines finished 9-2, won a league title and reached the first round of the Class 3A state playoffs.

Mamea is a senior at Lincoln High School in Tacoma. The 290-pounder was a second-team Tacoma News Tribune all-area choice and a first-team all-Narrows League Bridge Division pick on both defense as a tackle and offense as a guard. He helped the Abes to three straight first-round Class 4A state playoff appearances.

CHRIS AWAMBU (pronounced Ah-wam-boo), Offensive Tackle, Junior, 6-6, 335, 20, 9/6/87, Hayward, CA

COLLEGE: First-team all-Mid-Empire Conference choice as sophomore at Laney Junior College (Oakland, CA) ... Helped Eagles to 10-1 record, league title and Graffiti Bowl victory ... As freshman, played on 9-2 team that took bowl victory ... Started one year and lettered two.

HIGH SCHOOL: Starter as senior at Tennyson High School ... Lettered two years.

PERSONAL: Major is engineering.

LEPON MAMEA (pronounced Lah-pawn Ma-me-ah), Defensive Lineman, Freshman, 6-0, 290, 18, 10/9/89, Tacoma, WA

HIGH SCHOOL: Second-team Tacoma News Tribune all-Area choice as senior at Lincoln High School ... First-team all-Narrows League Bridge Division on defense (tackle) and offense (guard) ... Missed three games with knee strain ... Team co-captain three years ... Helped Abes to three straight first-round Class 4A

state playoff appearances prior to senior season, earning second-team all-league honors as sophomore ... Started and lettered four years ... Also earned three letters in track.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in education.

**KIRT TERRY-SPRINGS, Wide Receiver,
Freshman, 5-8, 165, 18, 4/10/90, White Center, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-Seamount League selection as senior at Evergreen High School ... Helped Wolverines to 9-2 record, league title and first round of Class 3A state playoffs ... Caught 31 passes for 507 yards and 11 touchdowns ... Honorable mention all-league as junior on 8-2 squad ... Started two years and lettered four ... Also earned four letters in track, going to state in triple jump as junior, and one in basketball.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in sports medicine.

2008 WWU football NLI signees

Dustin Adams, DB, 5-10, 180, Fr., Lake Stevens, WA (Lake Stevens)

Tyrone Alualu, DT, 6-1, 280, Jr., Honolulu, HI (St. Louis HS/Laney JC)

Chris Awambu, OT, 6-6, 335, Jr., Hayward, CA (Tennyson HS/Laney JC)

Erick Cheadle, LB, 6-1, 205, Fr., Spokane, WA (Ferris HS)

Donovan Cunningham, FB/LB, 5-10, 210, Fr., Vancouver, WA (Heritage HS)

Domenique Hill, RB, 5-11, 220, Fr., Portland, OR (Mountain View)

Sean Hurlbut, RB/DB, 5-10, 180, Fr., Bellingham, WA (Meridian)

Johnny Jackson, DB, 6-0, 180, Fr., Seattle, WA (Evergreen)

Kelly Kurisu, OL, 6-3, 260, Fr., Lake Stevens, WA (Lake Stevens)

Marcus Law, LB, 5-11, 205, Fr., Sylmar, CA (Birmingham)

Lepon Mamea, DL, 6-0, 290, Fr., Tacoma, WA (Lincoln)

Adrian Milsap, LB, 5-11, 190, Fr., Spokane, WA (Ferris)

Sean McDonald, DL, 6-2, 270, Fr., Kalama, WA (Kalama)

Travis Pierce, OL, 6-2, 295, Jr., Redmond, WA (Redmond/Reedley JC)

David Slingwine, OL, 6-4, 280, Fr., Duvall, WA (Interlake HS)

Jordy Spriggs, WR/DB, 5-11, 155, Fr., Renton, WA (Kentrige)

Kirt Terry-Springs, WR, 5-8, 165, Fr., White Center, WA (Evergreen)

Kyle Tunney, RB, 5-7, 175, Fr., Seattle, WA (Evergreen)

Nick Wallace, FB/DL, 6-1, 255, Fr., Bellingham, WA (Squalicum)

FEBRUARY 5, 2008

VIKINGS INK 16 STUDENT-ATHLETES ON SIGNING DAY

Western gets faster and bigger, fills holes at linebacker and offensive line

BELLINGHAM, Wash. --- Western Washington University head football coach Robin Ross announced today the signing of 16 student-athletes to National Letters of Intent to play for the Vikings next fall.

Fourteen of the newcomers are freshmen, and two are junior college transfers. The transfers are both linemen as are four of the freshmen. Four of those six players are 290 pounds or more.

“I think we filled a lot of needs that we had,” said Ross. “The transfers especially will give us immediate help.”

“We need to be more physical. I know that we’re not playing in the North Central Conference, but to be a top Division II team you have to be like the NCC. Big is better. I really felt that there were more linemen available to us this year, and it’s tough not to take a good lineman when you see one.”

The transfers are junior defensive tackle Tyrone Alualu from Laney JC in Oakland, Calif., and Travis Pierce, a Redmond High graduate from Reedley (Calif.) JC. Alualu is 6-foot-1, 280 pounds and twice earned honorable-mention all-conference honors as a juco, and Pierce is 6-2, 295 pounds. Pierce, who signed in the mid-year junior college transfer period in January, will enroll at Western spring quarter.

Two freshmen offensive linemen signed NLI’s – David Slingwine from Duvall (Interlake High School) and Kelly Kurisu from Lake Stevens. Kurisu was a first-team Everett Herald all-area pick and Slingwine was a second-team KingCo 3A Conference all-star.

“We wanted to get four offensive linemen and so far we’ve got three with one transfer and two high school players,” said Ross. “We feel very good about that.”

The incoming freshman defensive lineman is Sean McDonald from Kalama. McDonald was a three-time first-team Class 1A all-state pick, and as a senior was MVP of the Tri-County League and the Longview Daily News Defensive Player of the Year.

Another player who could end up on the defensive line is Nick Wallace from Squalicum High School in Bellingham, one of three White Chip selections in the Seattle Times Top 100 signed by the Vikings. Wallace also played fullback in high school, rushing for 600 yards and having 200 yards pass receiving as a senior as well as being credited with 120 tackles on defense.

The other White Chip picks are Jordy Spriggs from Renton (Kentridge High School) and Dustin Adams of Lake Stevens. Spriggs caught 16 passes for 284 yards as a senior, with four of the catches going for touchdowns, and intercepted three passes. Adams had nine pass interceptions and 10 touchdown receptions as a senior.

Four of the recruits earned area Player of the Year honors. Along with McDonald, the others were fullback/linebacker Donovan Cunningham from Vancouver (Heritage High School), running back/defensive back Sean Hurlbut

from Bellingham (Meridian High School) and running back Kyle Tunney from Seattle (Evergreen High School).

Cunningham rushed for 1,458 yards and 17 touchdowns and added 404 yards and two scores receiving in earning Offensive MVP honors on the Vancouver Columbian all-area team. Hurlbut, a first-team Class 1A all-state pick, rushed for 1,735 yards and 30 touchdowns, earning Bellingham Herald Whatcom County Player of the Year and Northwest Conference Offensive MVP honors. Tunney was the offensive MVP of the Seamount League, rushing for 1,391 yards and 13 touchdowns.

“I believe that shows the quality of this class as these players were recognized as the best in their area of the state,” Ross said.

Tunney is one of two Evergreen High signees, the other being defensive back Johnny Jackson.

Another running back is Domenique Hill from Mountain View High School in Vancouver, who rushed for 1,250 yards and 16 touchdowns as a senior.

One area of emphasis for Western was linebacker, where five players completed their eligibility. Two of the new linebackers were first-team all-Greater Spokane League picks for Ferris High School in Spokane – Erick Cheadle, who had 145 tackles, and Adrian Milsap, who had 102 stops and was the squad’s Special Teams Player of the Year. Another linebacker is Marcus Law from Sylmar, Calif. (Birmingham High School), who had 80 tackles in helping his school to a Los Angeles city championship.

“This is the first phase of recruiting,” said Ross. “There are some transfers out there that we’re still talking to as we try to upgrade positions.”

2008 WWU football NLI signees

Dustin Adams, DB, 5-10, 180, Fr., Lake Stevens, WA (Lake Stevens)
Tyrone Alualu, DT, 6-1, 280, Jr., Honolulu, HI (St. Louis HS/Laney JC)
Erick Cheadle, LB, 6-1, 205, Fr., Spokane, WA (Ferris HS)
Donovan Cunningham, FB/LB, 5-10, 210, Fr., Vancouver, WA (Heritage HS)
Domenique Hill, RB, 5-11, 220, Fr., Portland, OR (Mountain View)
Sean Hurlbut, RB/DB, 5-10, 180, Fr., Bellingham, WA (Meridian)
Johnny Jackson, DB, 6-0, 180, Fr., Seattle, WA (Evergreen)
Kelly Kurisu, OL, 6-3, 260, Fr., Lake Stevens, WA (Lake Stevens)
Marcus Law, LB, 5-11, 205, Fr., Sylmar, CA (Birmingham)
Adrian Milsap, LB, 5-11, 190, Fr., Spokane, WA (Ferris)
Sean McDonald, DL, 6-2, 270, Fr., Kalama, WA (Kalama)
Travis Pierce, OL, 6-2, 295, Jr., Redmond, WA (Redmond/Reedley JC)
David Slingwine, OL, 6-4, 280, Fr., Duvall, WA (Interlake HS)
Jordy Spriggs, WR/DB, 5-11, 155, Fr., Renton, WA (Kentrige)
Kyle Tunney, RB, 5-7, 175, Fr., Seattle, WA (Evergreen)
Nick Wallace, FB/DL, 6-1, 255, Fr., Bellingham, WA (Squalicum)

**DUSTIN ADAMS, Defensive Back,
Freshman, 5-10, 180, 18, 9/21/89, Lake Stevens, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team Everett Herald all-Area pick on defense and second-team on offense (wide receiver) and special teams (kick returner) as senior at Lake Stevens High School ... Also first-team all-Western Conference North Division choice on offense, defense and special teams ... Listed among Seattle Times Top 100 (White Chip) state high school seniors ... Tied school record with 10 touchdown receptions, making 28 catches for 765 yards, and broke school record for interceptions with nine and tied career mark with 12 ... Credited with 48 tackles, forcing two fumbles and recovering another ... Had 88-yard punt return for touchdown, longest in school history ... Touched ball four times in 41-14 win over Stanwood and scored touchdown on each, three on pass receptions and another on recovered fumble in end zone ... Had three pass interceptions in each of two games, including one with seven seconds remaining to secure 18-14 victory over Arlington ... Part-time starter as junior on team that reached first round of Class 4A state playoffs ... Started one year and lettered three ... Also earned two letters in basketball and three in track, competing at state as a junior.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in exercise science or business management.

**TYRONE ALUALU (pronounced Ah-lou-ah-lou), Defensive Tackle,
Junior, 6-1, 280, 21, 10/31/86, Honolulu, HI**

COLLEGE: Honorable mention Mid-Empire Conference all-star as sophomore at Laney Junior College (Oakland, CA) ... Helped Eagles to 10-1 record, league title and Graffiti Bowl victory ... As freshman, received all-Bay Valley Conference honorable mention at Yuba Junior College.

HIGH SCHOOL: Honorable mention all-state as senior at St. Louis High School ... Credited with 30 tackles, including 8 quarterback sacks ... Helped Crusaders to three straight state championship game appearances, winning title as junior ... Started one year and lettered three ... Also earned two letters in track & field.

PERSONAL: Major is communications ... Married to former Talia Tupua ... His brother, Tyson, is currently playing football (defensive end) at Cal Berkeley, and his brother, Ben, played football (defensive tackle) at University of Arizona ... His uncle, Tupu, played football (running back) at University of Hawaii.

**ERICK CHEADLE, Linebacker,
Freshman, 6-1, 205, 18, 10/4/89, Spokane, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-Greater Spokane League choice as senior at Ferris High School ... Credited with 145 tackles, 11 for losses, intercepted 1 pass and returned it for touchdown, forced 3 fumbles and recovered 2 on team that finished 12-1, won first league title in school history and reached semifinals at Class 4A state playoffs ... Team co-captain ... First-team all-league as junior on 9-2 squad that reached state quarterfinals ... Started and lettered three years ... Also earned three letters in basketball and two in track ... Honorable mention all-league guard as junior, averaging 10.0 points on undefeated 29-0 team that won state championship.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in business ... His father, Rick, played football at Washington State University.

**DONOVAN CUNNINGHAM, Fullback/Linebacker,
Freshman, 5-10, 210, 18, 2/23/90, Vancouver, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: Offensive Most Valuable Player on Vancouver Columbian all-area team as senior at Heritage High School ... First-team all-Greater St. Helens League choice ... Selected to play in East-West all-star game ... Helped Timberwolves to 7-3 record and first round of Class 4A state playoffs ... Ran for 1,458 yards and 17 touchdowns, averaging 9.3 yards per carry and 141.6 yards per game ... Also caught 28 passes for 404 yards and 2 touchdowns ... In all, had 19 touchdowns and scored 114 points ... Had seven 100-yard rushing games, running for career-high 194 yards in 26-25 win over Crater ... Ran for 131 yards and caught 8 passes for 129 yards in 55-28 victory over Skyview ... Credited with 105 tackles with 1 interception and 2 fumble recoveries ... Team co-captain ... As junior was squad's defensive MVP ... Started both ways and lettered three years ... Also earned four letters each in wrestling and track and field ... Has overall record of 112-24 in wrestling, reaching state tournament as junior ... Has school track record of 159-5 in discus and ranks third in shot put at 51-9.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in chemistry ... Received scholarship from National Football Foundation ... His father, Floyd, played middle linebacker for NFL Baltimore Colts.

**DOMENIQUE HILL, Running Back,
Freshman, 5-11, 220, 18, 10/3/89, Portland, OR**

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-Greater St. Helens League choice on offense and second-team as kick returner and honorable mention Vancouver Columbian All-Area as senior at Mountain View High School ... Ran for 1,250 yards and scored 16 touchdowns in eight games ... Returned kickoff school-record 94 yards for touchdown ... Offensive Player of the Year for Thunder ... Played just four games as junior because of broken arm ... Started one year and lettered two ... Also played two years at Benson Tech, starting one year and lettering two.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in business.

**SEAN HURLBUT, Running back/Defensive Back,
Freshman, 5-10, 180, 17, 5/2/90, Bellingham, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team Associated Press Class 1A all-State on offense and honorable mention on defense as senior at Meridian High School ... Selected to play in East-West all-star game ... Bellingham Herald Player of the Year ... Northwest League Offensive MVP ... First-team all-Northwest Conference on offense and defense ... Helped Trojans to 11-1 record, league title and quarterfinal round of state playoffs, the loss ending a 25-game winning streak ... Led league in rushing with school-record 1,735 yards and scored 30 touchdowns (194 points) ... Ran for 100 or more yards nine times, and reached 200 yards or more three times ... Scored at least one touchdown in every game and crossed the goal line six times against Sehome ... Team co-captain ... Honorable mention all-state on defense and special teams as junior on team that finished 14-0 and won state championship ... First-team all-conference on defense and second-team on offense ... Had 1,785 all-purpose yards and 16 touchdowns ... Started three

years and lettered four ... Also earned one letter each in basketball and track.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in business or education.

**JOHNNY JACKSON, Defensive Back,
Freshman, 6-0, 180, 18, 1/5/90, Seattle, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: Honorable mention Seamount League all-star as senior at Evergreen High School ... Helped Wolverines to 9-2 record, league title and first round of Class 3A state playoffs ... Credited with 55 tackles and intercepted 4 passes ... Also averaged 10.0 yards per carry (600 total) as running back and scored 6 touchdowns ... Team co-captain ... Second-team all-league as junior on 8-2 squad ... Honorable mention all-league as freshman, making 3 interceptions ... Started and lettered in four years ... Also earned one letter in baseball.

PERSONAL: Plans to take program in pre-law.

**KELLY KURISU, Offensive Lineman,
Freshman, 6-3, 260, 18, 11/5/89, Lake Stevens, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: First team Everett Herald all-Area and all-Western Conference North Division selection as senior at Lake Stevens High School ... Team co-captain ... Honorable mention all-league as junior on team that reached first round of Class 4A state playoffs ... Started and lettered three years ... Also earned three letters in basketball and four in track ... Team co-captain as senior in basketball and placed ninth at state in shot put as junior.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in engineering.

**MARCUS LAW, Linebacker,
Freshman, 5-11, 205, 18, 2/6/90, Sylmar, Calif.**

HIGH SCHOOL: Second-team all-West Valley League and all-City selection as senior at Birmingham High School ... Helped Patriots to 13-1 record and Los Angeles city championship ... Credited with 80 tackles, including 5 quarterback sacks ... Also returned interception for touchdown and forced 2 fumbles ... Had career-high 12 tackles in 28-21 win over Notre Dame ... Team co-captain ... Second-team all-league and honorable mention all-city as junior on 11-3 team that won city title ... Credited with 78 tackles ... Started and lettered three years.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in business ... His father, Marcus Sr., played football at Washington State University.

**ADRIAN MILSAP, Linebacker,
Freshman, 5-11, 190, 18, 3/10/90, Spokane, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team all-Greater Spokane League pick as senior at Ferris High School ... Named Saxons' Special Teams Player of the Year ... Blocked 4.5 punts, returning three for touchdowns ... Also credited with 102 tackles, 10 for losses, intercepted 1 pass and forced 1 fumble on team that finished 12-1, won first league title in school history and reached semifinals at Class 4A state playoffs ... Team co-captain ... Second-team all-league as junior on 9-2 squad that reached

state quarterfinals ... Started and lettered three years ... Also earned three letters in track.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in art.

**SEAN McDONALD, Defensive Lineman,
Freshman, 6-2, 270, 18, 9/16/89, Kalama, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: First-team Associated Press and WashingtonPreps.com Class 1A all-State choice for third straight year as senior at Kalama High School ... Longview Daily News Defensive Player of the Year and first-team all-area pick for third consecutive season ... Tri-County League overall MVP as senior and offensive MVP as junior ... First-team all-league three times on offense and twice on defense ... Two-time team captain, being voted overall team MVP as senior and defensive MVP as junior ... Led Chinooks to 10-2 record, third-straight league title and state quarterfinals as senior, being credited with 140 tackles, 6 quarterback sacks, 4 forced fumbles, 5 blocked passes and 1 blocked kick ... Defensive unit did not allow more than 14 points in any of its 12 games ... Helped KHS to overall record of 41-7 during four-year record with four state playoff appearances, reaching semifinals once and quarterfinals three times ... Started and lettered four years ... Also earned three letters in both track and wrestling ... Placed fourth at state in heavyweight division as junior, sixth as sophomore and eighth as freshman ... Also three-time state participant in track & field, placing seventh as junior ... Personal best is 151-0.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in business ... His father, Jeffrey, played football at California State University Maritime Academy.

**TRAVIS PIERCE, Offensive Lineman
Junior, 6-2, 295, 20, 1/3/88, Redmond, WA**

COLLEGE: Transfer from Reedley (Calif.) College ... Helped Tigers to 8-3 record and 29-27 victory over Santa Rosa JC in State Center Bowl ... Reedley had 253 yards rushing in that contest ... Media Player of the Week for game against Santa Rosa JC ... As freshman, played on 6-4 team, losing 21-20 to Santa Rosa JC in State Center Bowl ... Team Player of the Week against Delta JC.

HIGH SCHOOL: Honorable mention all-KingCo 4A League choice as senior at Redmond High School ... Started two years for Mustangs and lettered three ... Also earned one letter in track.

PERSONAL: Major is kinesiology.

**DAVID SLINGWINE, Offensive Lineman,
Freshman, 6-4, 280, 18, 12/10/89, Duvall, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: Second-team all-KingCo 3A League selection and WashingtonPreps.com honorable mention all-league as senior at Interlake High School ... Selected to play in East-West all-star game ... Team co-captain ... Honorable mention all-league as junior ... Four-year starter and letter winner ... Also earned two letters in wrestling and three in track ... Reached state in wrestling as junior in heavyweight division and, winning league title and placing third at regionals.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in psychology and business ... His grandfather, Donald Hatch, played football at University of Florida.

**JORDY SPRIGGS, Wide Receiver/Defensive Back,
Freshman, 5-11, 155, 17, 3/1/90, Renton, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: Second-team South Puget Sound League pick on defense and honorable mention on offense as senior at Kentridge High School ... Listed among Seattle Times Top 100 (White Chip) state high school seniors ... Helped Chargers to 6-4 record and first round of Class 4A state playoffs ... Caught 16 passes for 284 yards and 4 touchdowns, and intercepted 3 passes ... As junior, played on 7-3 squad that reached first round of playoffs, missing three games with shoulder injury ... Honorable mention all-league as sophomore ... Started and lettered three years ... Also earned three letters in track.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in business management.

**KYLE TUNNEY, Running Back,
Freshman, 5-7, 175, 18, 9/25/89, Seattle, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: Seamount League offensive MVP as senior at Evergreen High School ... Helped Wolverines to 9-2 record, league title and first round of Class 3A state playoffs ... Ran for 1,391 yards, scored 13 touchdowns and returned kicks 675 yards ... Honorable mention all-league as junior on 8-2 squad ... Started two years and lettered three ... Also earned two letters in track and one in baseball.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in computer-science.

**NICK WALLACE, Fullback/Defensive Lineman,
Freshman, 6-1, 255, 18, 10/16/89, Bellingham, WA**

HIGH SCHOOL: Second-team all-Northwest Conference choice as running back and linebacker as senior at Squalicum High School ... Also first-team Bellingham Herald all-Whatcom County pick ... Listed among Seattle Times Top 100 (White Chip) state high school seniors ... Credited with 120 tackles, 8 for loss with 5 forced fumbles, 2 recoveries and 1 interception ... Also had over 800 yards all-purpose yards for Storm, 600 rushing and 200 pass-receiving ... Team co-captain ... Second team all-conference on offense and defense and first-team all-county as junior ... Started (both ways) and lettered three years ... Also earned three letters in basketball, two in soccer and two in track.

PERSONAL: Plans to major in physical therapy.