

Jason Twomley - 2001



As the faithful of Red Raider football stood joyously in the frigid confines of Worcester State's Coughlin Field, and watched the game clock slowly work its way toward zero, the Raider players and coaches on the sidelines gleefully hugged. This was an all time great moment in the nearly 100 year history of FHS football. With their victory over Springfield Central, the Red and Gray would finish unbeaten with a 12-0 record, and be universally recognized throughout the state as the finest eleven in the Commonwealth. The season had been a team triumph through and throughout, one player had stepped forward as the team superstar that was Jason Twomley. But if one knows FHS sports, one knows that Jason was also a Hall of Famer on the baseball diamond for Fitchburg High.

Jason Twomley first became known to FHS football fans on a cold Thanksgiving morning at Doyle Field in 1997, when he made an unexpected appearance in the Turkey Day Classic. The Raiders entered the contest as a decided underdog against a very strong

Leominster eleven, which was led by strong defense, which featured an outstanding line backing corps. Early in the second quarter FHS' starting quarterback David Masciarelli was knocked out cold by the Leominster linebackers, and a young freshman wearing the number sixteen came onto the field to assume the quarterback position. All along the FHS side of Doyle Field the fans of Raider football looked at each other and said, "Who is this kid?" His name was Jason Twomley, and he would prove his mettle on that very difficult Thanksgiving morning in which FHS was down 28-6 to their archrivals. But FHS fans never again had to ask, "Who is Jason Twomley?" Shortly after Jason entered the

contest, FHS ran a pitch play in which the quarterback raced down the offensive line before passing the pigskin to the trailing halfback. He carried out his assignment perfectly, and then he was smashed to the ground where he laid motionlessly. A hush came over the crowd as the coaches rushed to their quarterback's side. After thirty seconds, the fifteen-year-old freshman rose to his feet and headed back to huddle and not to the sidelines. Thus began a Hall of Fame career!

Following that unique initiation in the 1997 Turkey Day Classic, Jason entered his sophomore season in a head to head competition with senior David Masciarelli for the starting quarterback job. After an intense competition in the pre-season Coach Cosenza decided to go with the senior signal caller so Jason had to patiently await his turn. Midway in the 1998 season, Jason would receive his starting nod when Masciarelli once again was sidelined with an injury. With a solid running attack that featured Dustin LeBlanc, Andy LeBlanc and Frank MacDonald and a solid defense spear headed by a massive Keith Leavitt, BJ Roy, Tom Snow and Dustin LeBlanc, Jason was not asked to carry a very heavy load. But when needed, young number sixteen could get the job done. Early on, Jason showed that he was a solid runner who would make the quarterback sneak an art form. He could also throw an accurate short pass, which kept enemy secondary on their toes. The Red and Gray did not miss a beat as they marched to an 11-0 regular season record. The southpaw quarterback proved throughout the

1998 season that he was the real deal who would make FHS a power to be reckoned with in his final two campaigns. Coach Cosenza had a real stud on his hands, and he knew it. In the Super Bowl contest held at WPI in early December FHS would lose 28 to 21 in a thrilling contest against a very classy Springfield Cathedral squad, and Jason came away with a bad taste in his mouth. He would not forget that feeling during his final two campaigns.

In the fall of 1990, the Red and Gray got out of the starting gate very slowly, as their record stood at 1-4 by mid-October. But their fourth loss to mighty Brockton 16-12 showed that this squad

and their junior signal caller, Jason Twomley were certainly not a losing eleven. Coach Cosenza told the local press that he was extremely pleased with the effort of Twomley and the rest of the squad against the Boxers, but behind closed doors, he told his kids that they would not lose again if they put forth the effort against the rest of their opponents. Jason and his halfback Frank MacDonald began to spearhead a ground offense which steam rolled the likes of Milford and Shrewsbury. On Thanksgiving morning at Doyle Field, the Red and Gray, who were a slight underdog to the Devils, road the coat tails of their junior quarterback and his bull like rushes and the slashing runner of the late emerging tailback Jason Quinn. The Blue Devils were no match for the rapidly emerging juggernaut as the Red Raiders captured a convincing 38-21 Turkey Day victory. But the best was yet to come!

In the summer of 1998 when Ray Cosenza had taken a group of baseball players to Holland and France which did include fifteen year olds, Jason Twomley, Mike Thomas, and Marcus DiNatale. Ray Cosenza had quietly predicted that this group and their fellow classmates could prove to be the best squad ever. Oh, how accurate was that prediction!

When the 2000 campaign opened for FHS in what would be a glorious season, the Red Raider faithful saw that Coach Cosenza had asked Jason to play defensive safety. He would be the Raider's last line of defense as well as their starting quarterback. Quite a load to carry for number sixteen, but he seemed to prosper with extra duties. Jason had ten pass interceptions, and was named to the All-State All-Star team for his defensive play. But his offensive efforts didn't falter in the 2000 campaign as the Raiders rolled over the competition. At mid-season the Red and Gray knocked off St. John's, Brockton and Xaverian in succession and laid claim to the number one spot in the state. Jason was all over the field with brilliant end sweeps, bulldozer quarterback sneaks and pinpoint passing. The whole 2000 squad was magnificent, but Jason's star seemed to shine just a little brighter.

Jason Twomley was selected to the Worcester Telegram and Gazette Super Team in his junior and senior season. Following that fantastic football campaign, the Gridiron Club of Greater Boston selected Jason to be a member of the "Super 26" All-Star team. The same Greater Boston Gridiron Club also named him the Defensive Player of the Year. Not bad for a kid who only played one year of defensive football at FHS.

But football may not have been Jason Twomley's best sport at FHS. When springtime rolled around Jason would take his spikes, leather glove and aluminum bat down to Crocker Field to play the national past time for the Red and Gray. Jason was your classic left-handed slugger, who also could make solid contact for a high batting average. He was very good, and as early as his sophomore season both college and professional scouts were watching him. He was a three time All-Star in the Mid- Wach League which was one of the most highly competitive leagues in Central Mass., and he also received All Star honors for the T&G Baseball Super Squad. His efforts would earn Jason a full scholarship to play baseball at UMASS. The fact that he was a Gold "F" winner and a member of the National Honor Society made UMASS an avid pursuer for his services at this time.

Jason Twomley had a tremendous baseball career at UMASS from 2002 through 2005, which culminated with his being drafted by the Boston Red Sox in 2005. In his senior season Jason was selected as a first team All-Star in the Atlantic 10 when he hit 16 homeruns with 98 total bases and slugging percentage near 700. For his efforts he was selected to play in the New England Inter- Collegiate Baseball Association All-Star Game at Fenway Park. This is a unique honor.

Jason then played two seasons in the Red Sox farm system at Lowell and Portland with the likes of Clay Bucholtz, Dustin Pedroia and Jacoby Ellsbury. His 2005 season was highlighted in Lowell with seven long-trippers, which led the Spinners that season. Following the 2006 season Jason decided to give up his baseball quest, and today he works for Equinox Fitness as a manager and resides in Watertown, MA with his wife Ashleigh. His athletic career at FHS is a rapidly receding memory, but today we can remember his Hall of Fame career as one of the very best in FHS history, which is really saying something. Congratulations Jason!