



**Jimmy Dean Williams**  
**ASU Linebacker**  
**'1981-1984**



# Arizona State Individual Football Statistics - Defense 1983 & 1984

Name: Jimmy Williams

DATE/OPPONENT	TACKLES	THROWN FOR LOSS	QB SACKS	PASSES	FUMBLES	INTRCPT	MISCELLANEOUS NOTES
YEAR: 1983	T S A	NO. YDS	NO. YDS	DEFLECTED	CAUSED REC'D	NO. YDS	
S UTAH STATE	6 2 4	— —	— —	—	1 —	—	
S UCLA	17 7 10	— —	— —	1	1 —	—	
S WICHITA STATE	16 5 11	— —	— —	1	— —	—	
S STANFORD	4 0 4	— —	— —	1	— —	—	
S SOUTHERN CAL	11 4 7	— —	— —	1	— —	—	
S WASHINGTON ST.	21 7 14	2 —	— —	—	— —	—	
S FLORIDA ST.	14 6 8	1 —	— —	—	— —	—	
S CALIFORNIA	18 5 13	1 —	— —	—	— —	—	
S OREGON STATE	7 2 5	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
S SAN JOSE STATE	14 9 5	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
S ARIZONA	17 5 12	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
SUMMARY:	145 52 93	4 —	0 0	4	2 0	0 0	
CAREER:	322 135 197	5 —	2 —	6	2 1	1 36	

YEAR: 1984

S Oklahoma St. 31/4	13 7 6	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
S San Jose St. 23/4	8 2 6	1 1/2 1 1/2	— —	—	— —	—	
S USC 40	22 2 20	2 1/2 3 1/2	1/2 2 1/2	—	— —	—	
S Stanford	6 1 5	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
California DN DRESS	1 N J	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
Oregon State DN DRESS	— —	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
UCLA DN DRESS	— —	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
Florida State DN DRESS	— —	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
Oregon Not on Trip	— —	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
Colorado State 10	3 2 1	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
ARIZONA	1 1 0	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
SUMMARY:	53 15 38	— —	— —	—	— —	—	
CAREER:	375 140 235	— —	— —	—	— —	—	

## Sun Devil football coaches land gem in home-grown product

By Michael Graham  
Sports writer

With the start of fall practice and the trials of Tontozona behind, ASU football coaches are now beginning to find out if their spring recruiting hours have panned out in the form of some quick learner who will step right in and make them look like geniuses.

Many of those recruiting hours were spent trying to lure talent from Louisiana to Los Angeles to pack their bags and bring their gridiron skills to Tempe.

However, one of those prospective first year phenoms was lurking right in ASU's own backyard in the form of a 6-foot-2, 208-pound linebacker named Jimmy Williams.

Williams, who was recruited by football heavyweights Nebraska, UCLA and Washington, attended Tempe High School and didn't have any trouble deciding to continue his much heralded football career in his own hometown.

"I've always wanted to play for ASU," Williams said, "ever since I was in junior high school and would come to the games here. I wanted to play in Sun Devil Stadium."

So with the combination of Williams' boyhood desire to play for ASU and a little recruiting on the part of Sun Devil linebacker Coach Dan Underwood, Williams soon found himself in a Sun Devil uniform.

But with the acquisition of his new uniform came the chores of learning a brand new highly complicated defensive system than he wasn't used to as a Tempe Buffalo.

"Everything is a lot more complex here," Williams said, "I think the biggest adjustment I need to make is getting used to all the new pass coverages they throw at you."

While Williams' analysis of his progress is somewhat critical, inside linebacker Coach Al Luginbill feels he is progressing well.

"Right now Jimmy is learning the defensive concepts we teach," Luginbill said, "although he is gifted with being very eager to learn and is very coachable."

Aside from his good attitude, examples of Williams' pure physical attributes are in abundance.

As a junior at Tempe H.S., he was named All-State honorable mention in football as well as winning the Arizona state 191-pound wrestling title. For an encore, during his senior year he earned first team All-State and All-American honors in football while capturing the state heavyweight wrestling title.

Williams also utilized his exceptional speed to lead his Tempe High team in rushing his senior year as a starting fullback.



"I've always wanted to play for ASU . . . I wanted to play in Sun Devil Stadium."

—Jimmy Williams

During the time he was being recruited by colleges, Williams was offered some tempting situations by various smaller programs who promised him a starting spot as a freshmen.

However, he remained determined to attend ASU — which returns last year's starting inside linebacking tandem of Joey Lumpkin and John Sprein.

"I didn't mind knowing that I wouldn't play very much in my first year," Williams said. "If I had gone to a smaller school and played right away, I would have never known if I could have played at this level."

While the competition for every spot on the team continues, Williams remains optimistic, yet conservative about his chances of seeing some playing time.

"The older guys are really helping me along," Williams said, "but it will be real tough to make a contribution right away."

While college football continues moving toward a bigger business-like structure and the recruiters hit the road in search of next year's stars, they might be wise to remember that the home-town boy can make good too.



# Tupper's off to rough start

By Doug McConnell  
The Phoenix Gazette

CAMP TONTOZONA — The first practice in full pads by the Arizona State Sun Devils was finished here Sunday and Darin Tupper didn't give himself much of a grade for his performance in it or earlier practices.

"I feel like I was constantly screwing up," said the unanimous choice as the 1981 Arizona high school player of the year.

Al Luginbill, the defensive coordinator and inside linebackers coach, laughed at the former Trevor Browne High star's concern.

"Those kids dominated high school football, but here they're one of many," said Luginbill. "It's typical of the freshmen to go through things like this, and they don't realize what it's like until they get here. The intensity level for 80 or 90 plays is the biggest thing they have to get used to."

Jimmy Williams, the starting quickside linebacker offered consolation. He remembers how he felt when he arrived here as a freshman one year ago.

"Darin is having a hard time staying down when he approaches the guards," said the former Tempe High star. "I had the same problem. I was probably stronger and quicker than the guards I was playing against and could get away with it. I'm certain he had the same thing."

Working with former ASU star and National Football League performer Ron Pritchard during his senior year of high school, Williams, feels, gave him an edge over most freshmen, "because the concepts were the same as here."



Jimmy Williams

Williams and Willie Green replaced Joey Lumpkin, now with the Buffalo Bills, and John Sprein, at the inside linebacker spots coming out of spring football, with junior college transfer Vyn Goodman the swing man behind Williams on the quick side and Green on the strong side.

Luginbill compares Williams to Lumpkin, calling them "very similar," and like Lumpkin, Williams is charged with calling the defensive signals.

It is in strength that Luginbill says Williams, two-time Arizona high school heavyweight wrestling champion, differs from Lumpkin.

"Jimmy is much stronger and much more physical than Joey," said Luginbill.

Williams has dropped four pounds since arriving here Wednesday and, at 211, is almost 15 pounds lighter than Lumpkin.

"The coaches want me at about 217," says Williams, "and I figure I can gain that back easy, especially when we get back down to the Valley. We won't be having two-a-days down there."

Williams played regularly on specialty teams, and had a 10-tackle game in a 26-7 victory over Colorado State, but has yet to start a game. Green owns one more letter than Williams, but no more playing experience.

The ability of his starters doesn't worry Luginbill. Depth does.

"We felt we had three pretty good players coming into camp, but we have to find a fourth," said the defensive coordinator, grinning because he is aware the search is all but over.

Wayne Apuna hasn't played since 1979, and at 218 is 12 pounds lighter than when he was a freshman All-America, but has erased the time gap in short order.

"Wayne looks awfully good," said Luginbill, who has wondered out loud at the amount of publicity given a young man who has not played the last two years. "He's awfully physical, but he's awfully strong."

"Hopefully from the three freshmen, we can find a fifth and sixth."

The three freshmen inside backers are Tupper. Tim Casey, a *Blue Chip* magazine honoree from Tempe McClintock, and Greg Battle, the Los Angeles City Player of the Year.

Apuna was one of a couple of minor casualties in Sunday's first sanctioned "hitting," getting caught under 292-pound Mike White and suffering a slight ankle strain.

"It's not too bad," said Wayne. "I'll be back out there tomorrow."

**Sidelines** — Another of Sunday's injured was freshman defensive end Tulani Wright, who came off the field with a bruised big toe . . . All-America defensive back Mike Richardson, bothered by an ingrown toenail for some time, had half the large nail on his left foot removed Saturday and will be a spectator for the next few days . . . Curt Arons, a tight end JC transfer, caught a helmet on the knee Saturday and is also out another day or two . . . The field was so wet from an unusual amount of rain that head coach Darryl Rogers cut back to one practice Sunday and has considered moving the team back to the Valley, if conditions worsen.



# ASU linebacker plays big

Ex-Tempe High star intense, now starter

By Bob Eger  
Republic Staff

CAMP TONTOZONA — When you ask Arizona State football coach Darryl Rogers whether Jimmy Williams is big enough to play inside linebacker for a major-college football team, Rogers answers matter-of-factly, "No."

Rogers hastens to add: "But he doesn't know it."

And that, Rogers says, is good enough.

Williams, a 6-foot, 215-pound sophomore from Tempe High, will start at inside linebacker for Arizona State this season. He also will be the defensive signal caller.

That's not bad for a player who had college coaches scratching their heads, wondering whether to recruit him a couple of years ago.

Defensive coordinator Al Luginbill, who coaches the inside linebackers, admits there was some doubt about Williams, the only in-state recruit signed by ASU in the spring of 1981.

"He played both ways in high school, and he might have been better on offense (at fullback) his senior year," Luginbill said. "Because he played offense, he never really got a chance to dominate a game defensively."

But the minute Williams put on pads, Luginbill said, the coaches knew he would be good.

Williams said he never was concerned about his ability to play at ASU.

"You see guys 6-foot in the pros," he said, "so what's major-college football?"

"Besides, a lot of schools were showing interest in me. I figured they couldn't all be wrong."

Though he was recruited by national powers like Washington, UCLA and Michigan, Williams said there never was much doubt in his mind about choosing ASU.

He grew up practically in the shadow of Sun Devil Stadium. His high school coach, Jim Murphy, was a center for former ASU coach Frank Kush in 1963-64.

"I knew all along where I wanted to go," Williams said. "I didn't consider the other schools very seriously."

Luginbill, who admits that Williams doesn't fit the classic inside linebacker mold, said he "has a chance to be right up there with the great ones we've had at the position before his career is over."

It doesn't take long to determine that Williams is one of the most intense players in camp.

"Jimmy has excellent strength in his lower body, and he has good quickness," Luginbill said, "but his greatest asset probably is his intensity."

"Sometimes he gets out of position because he wants so badly to make the play. But I'd much rather teach him to correct that than try to teach intensity."

Williams said he always has been intense.

"I always had a real bad temper," he said. "Once when I was about seven, my mother told me I couldn't

do something. I ran out of the house and punched my hand through a window.

"In sports, my coaches started telling me to use my intensity in a positive way. I've gotten better at it."

Williams said he has a routine to psych himself up for a game.

"I sit and think about my opponent," he said. "I've seen him on film, so I know what he's like. I try to feature it like it will be in the game — me flattening him time after time. It's like a movie going through my head."

With seniors Joey Lumpkin and Darren Comeaux manning the inside linebacker positions last season, ASU was able to bring Williams along slowly.

Playing a series here and there and performing regularly on specialty teams, Williams participated in 24 tackles, 15 of them unassisted. He blocked a punt in ASU's 26-7 victory over Washington and made 10 tackles against Colorado State.

"His biggest negative right now is inexperience," Luginbill said. "He'll be a much better player five games into the season than he is now."

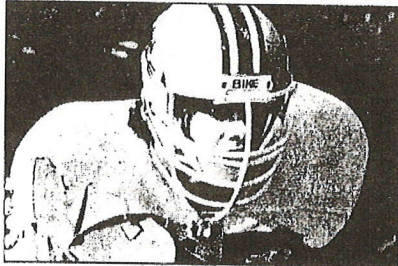
Williams, meanwhile, is showing the ropes to freshman linebacker Darin Tupper, from Trevor Browne High School. Williams played a major role in recruiting Tupper, who was selected Arizona Player of the Year by *The Arizona Republic*.

Williams said he had no reservations about helping to recruit a player who plays the same position.

"I want the competition," he said. "I get lazy if I don't have it. If I have somebody behind me, I push."



# Super sophomores add spunk to Sun Devil linebacking corps



Staff photo by Andy Arenz

Sophomore linebacker Jimmy Williams has shown evil eyes on defense. Williams, a graduate of Tempe High School, leads the Devils in tackles and anchors the middle of the defense.

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all the Cougar meat he could last week, after spelling starting outside linebacker Mark Hicks who went down with an ankle injury in the second quarter.

"He went out there and played like an All-American," Padilla said. "I didn't realize what he could do that until he did it."

The 6-foot-2, 205 pounds sophomore from Victorville, Calif., did not express the same type of surprise in his ability.

"Playing behind Mark (Hicks) and Vernon (Maxwell) is tough," Robinson said. "But I've always been ready to go."

"(My performance) wasn't a fluke," Robinson said.

The broadcasting major has been playing football since he was 10 years old and each day of playing is a new experience for him.

By Art Conner  
Sports writer

With all respect to singer John Cougar, here's a little ditty about Jimmy and Billy.

Two ASU kids growing up in the hot sun.

Little Jimmy is a football star.

And Billy 'bout to become one.

Oh yeah.

"When I die," says Jimmy Dean Williams, "what I want inscribed on my tombstone is this — 'Once living, Now he's not.'"

Look closely at the 6-foot, 215-pound sophomore and you might be able to ascertain whether he: (A) has

misplaced marbles; (B) possesses dry humor; or (C) has what it takes to be successful on the gridiron.

The starting inside linebacker's smile is the key. It's all of the above.

"He's such a competitor," said Bob Padilla, the Devils' defensive line coach. "When he gets knocked around he gets right back up and goes after them the next play."

The Tempe High School graduate "lives" each game as tough and crazy and funny as possible without "dying."

"It depends," Williams said. "Going up against a good team and doing good,

well, that's living.

"But if you are getting your butt kicked, that's dying."

"Lately," Williams said, "I've been living."

The statistics "bear" out the claim.

In the three games that ASU has played and won, Williams leads the team with 49 tackles, 22 of which came last week against the Houston Cougars.

To Williams, that game is history and it is the California Golden Bears that is threatening to put a crimp in his quality of "living."

"They'll be a good test for us," Williams said. "The

new coach (Joe Kapp) brought a sense of winning to the team.

"He got them to believe in themselves, and they are really spirited," Williams added.

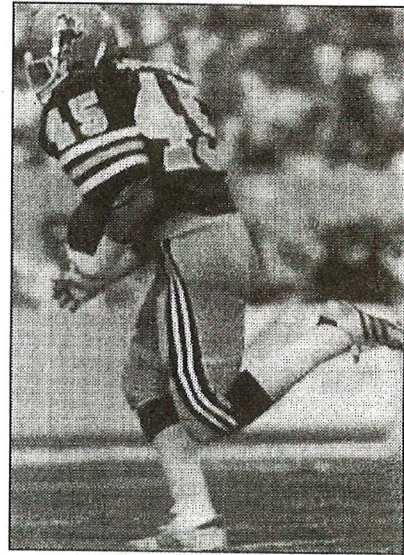
The defensive captain plans to eat lots of Bear meat on Saturday.

"We're hungry," Williams said, "for Bear meat — raw or 'kapped.'"

If Williams and the other members of the starting defensive team happen to bite off more than they can chew, there are others waiting for the "leftovers."

Billy Robinson gobbled up

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# Silent leader 11/5/82 TDN

## ASU linebacker thrives on quiet consistency

By Dave Neiberger  
Staff writer

In his own quiet way, Jimmy Williams is the leader of one of the leading defenses in the country.

The Arizona State inside linebacker isn't necessarily soft-spoken — his voice is heard frequently on the practice field and during games.

But the sophomore, a former Tempe High star, has an inconspicuous sort of playing style. He's not the straw that stirs the drink. He's the ingredient that makes the drink what it is.

All of this is a roundabout way of saying that Williams isn't flashy and doesn't have the big-play reputation that many of his defensive teammates have. But he does his job very consistently — if quietly.

Consequently, he doesn't get the attention that big-play people like Vernon Maxwell, Paul Moyer or Mike Richardson have received this season.

"That doesn't bother me," Williams said. "I just play the game. Maybe I'll make a big play and it won't happen

again for four or five games. But that's better than making a couple big plays every game and not doing anything else.

"I'd rather be consistent."

That, Williams has been. He has graded out about the same every game this season. He currently leads the team with 95 tackles — 16 ahead of Maxwell and Greg Battle, his closest pursuers.

Playing inside linebacker is one reason Williams doesn't make as many spectacular plays as other members of the defense.

"I have to be a little more controlled," he said. "I can't see the ball as well as the outside linebackers. They're right up on it."

But Williams always knows what's going on with the defense. He is a quarterback of sorts.

Williams gets the signal from ASU defensive coordinator Al Luginbill on the sideline and relays it to the players in the huddle.

But, like the quarterback on offense,

when the other team approaches the line, if he doesn't like what he sees, Williams must change the play.

"I've have to look for the backfield set and see how the receivers are set," he said. "If there's an unbalanced line, I have to call a shift."

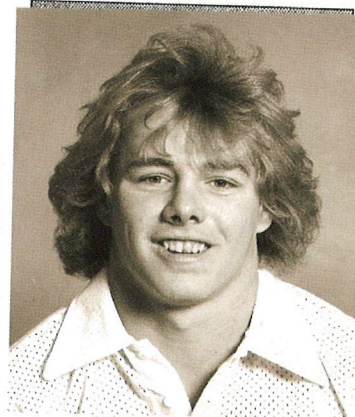
"At first it was tough. Sometimes at the start of the season I didn't pick things up soon enough and we had to go with the defense we were in."

But now Williams has adjusted to the task, and in a matter of the four or five seconds available to do all of this, he is able to make adjustments.

"Against a team like Stanford I had to do it a lot," he said. "Against some other teams, I haven't had to do it much at all. It depends on the type of team and what defensive package we're using for the game."

That might sound complicated, and it is. But it's just one of the things Williams has had to learn since he took over the starting spot last spring.

Another thing Williams has had to learn is how to prepare for football



games at the major college level. Last week's big game against Southern Cal — a 17-10 win for the Devils — was one of the toughest.

Williams described his own feeling before the game as "intense, but confident." He didn't change his game-day routine any, however.

"I usually get up about 9:30, sit back and watch whatever game is on television," he said.

Once the Sun Devils come off probation at the end of this season, lots of other people will be watching Williams.



# Return trip: Williams to get new view of Fiesta

Ph. Kay  
12/28/82

By Doug McConnell  
The Phoenix Gazette



Jimmy Williams has lived a mile or so north of Sun Devil Stadium since he was 10 years old, but Saturday's Fiesta Bowl will only be the second one he's ever seen.

This time his view will be a little different. He'll be calling the defensive signals for Arizona State University, something he's been doing all season, as the Sun Devils face Oklahoma in the Fiesta Bowl XII.

"The one I saw was the best one, too," said the 205-pound sophomore inside linebacker. "ASU beat Nebraska in that one."

ASU's 17-14 victory over the co-Big Eight champions in the 1975 Fiesta Bowl has been tagged the biggest victory in the school's history. It completed a 12-0 season and lifted the Sun Devils to a second-place finish in both wire-service polls.

Williams, then 13, has some vivid memories of that game, but they weren't of Fred Mortensen's 10-yard pass to John Jefferson followed by another pass to Larry Mucker for the two-point conversion to tie the game at 14-14. Nor were they of Danny Kusch's third field goal of the game, from 29 yards late in the fourth quarter for the winning margin.

"There was this farmer from Nebraska betting a guy from Tempe \$100 that Nebraska would win the game, right in front of me," Williams said. "The guy from Tempe said, 'The hell with that. Let's make it \$500,' so they bet \$500 and you should have seen the farmer from Nebraska when it was over."

The 9-2 Sun Devils meeting the 8-3 Sooners may not rival the ASU-Nebraska game as the biggest in the school's history, but as Dizzy Dean would have said, "It's up there amongst 'em."

ASU led the nation this year in defense and Oklahoma was second in rushing.

"They have, like everybody says, real quick backs and stuff," Williams said. "I think the key for us is up front, if our defensive line can beat their offensive line, because that's where I think we're a little quicker than they are."

"The main thing for us (linebackers) is not to let any of their backs, and I mean any of them, get behind us, because if they do, we're going to have a helluva time running them down. As a matter of fact, if they get behind us and we're in a man-to-man coverage, it's bye, bye."

Jimmy Williams: "The main thing for us is not to let any of their backs, and I mean any of them, get behind us."

Dan Milburn, The Phoenix Gazette



"I've watched films of all 11 of their games and they've been stopped. The thing that's hurt the teams playing them is they have one breakdown and it seems Oklahoma always has the right play called at that time when the breakdown occurs.

"Keeping the seams closed up is going to be important. I've watched (sensational freshman All-America running back) Marcus Dupree and he really accelerates when he sees a seam, but when he doesn't see a seam, he just sort of bounces down the line of scrimmage and that's what we need to do until finally we get everybody there and corral him and don't let him out."

The Sun Devils expect the Sooners to come out in the I-formation they adopted after a 1-2 start this season, said Williams, "but we hope to force them back into the wishbone, and it hasn't been working very effectively for them."

As for ASU's renowned blitz, "you can't really blitz an option team," Williams pointed out.

It was against Houston, running the veer option, that Williams had his best game of the season, making 22 tackles. He led ASU in tackles with 144 — 52 solo. His inside linebacking partner, Greg Battle, was second with 115.

Williams and Battle, the 6-1, 195-pound freshman, are not exactly the prototypes of the inside linebacker.

"I think we're about the smallest in the Pac-10," Williams said. "About the only time it's a handicap, though, is if we don't stay low on a base block."

"I watch a lot of other linebackers from other schools who are maybe 6-3, 6-4, and they can stand up and play a little bit more where I can't afford to do that. If I get too high, there's no way I can compete with the linemen. No way. But if I stay down and catch him under his pads, I can compete."

"As far as speed, Greg and I match anybody in the Pac-10."

Just about anywhere else, too.

**Asidelines** — Freshman quarterback Jeff Van Rasphorst, who was being redshirted by ASU and would not play in the Fiesta Bowl anyway, was sent home Monday night to recover from infectious mononucleosis.





# No defense? Ask these two Devils:

## Williams helps anchor ASU 'hit' squad



Staff photo by Andy Aranz

Junior linebacker Jimmy Williams is one of four returning starters on the ASU defense. Williams led the team in tackles in 1982.

By Ken Sain  
Sports writer

Jimmy Dean . . .

The name brings back memories for many Americans. The Jimmy Dean of the 1950s attacked the ideas and attitudes of an older generation.

Now, a new Jimmy Dean is emerging. This time he is on the ASU campus, a man who will be attacking quarterbacks and fullbacks—Jimmy Dean Williams.

When Jimmy Dean Williams was born in 1963, James Dean the actor had been dead for several years. But ASU's Williams seems to have the same charisma that made the actor such a star.

Williams, a 6-foot, 215-pound linebacker is the top returning starter off of last year's top-rated defensive team.

Last year's ASU defense was full of experience and talent. Heading into that season, however, the inside linebacking position was a question mark.

But by the end of the first game against Oregon, head coach Darryl Rogers had found two young men who proved they could compete in the Pac-10 playing that difficult position—Williams and Greg Battle.

Williams, as a sophomore, not only called the defensive

signals, but led the best defensive football team in the country in tackles.

The ASU defense gave up an average of only 228.9 yards a game last year, following the 1981 team that led the nation in offense with an average of 498.7 yards per game.

Now as a junior, Williams will be called upon to lead an inexperienced squad against a schedule that includes seven teams with winning records in '82.

Williams is one of only four returning starters from last year's defense.

"I don't mind calling the signals," Williams said. "I feel that I have to take charge on the field, but I don't thrive on that type of thing."

ASU's defensive coordinator, Al Luginbill, feels quite comfortable with Williams calling the signals.

"I think he's a natural leader, not by anything he says, but by his playing ability on the field," Luginbill said. "He's our defensive quarterback."

Despite losing all-Americans Vernon Maxwell and Mike Richardson and a first-round NFL draft choice in Jim Jeffcoat, Williams feels that the 1983 defense will be quite capable.

"It will take time for the new guys to learn their responsibilities," he said. "I think by the first game we will be ready. The only problem might come when they get out there and see the lights and all those people. But after a few plays they'll calm down."

The Tempe High School graduate enjoyed his best game last season against Houston. Williams recorded a career-high 22 tackles. In eight of the 12 games last year he led the team in that category.

He has blocked a punt in each of his first two years. Last year, his blocked punt against California resulted in an ASU safety. He also intercepted an errant Utah pass and returned it 36 yards.

"The Fiesta Bowl win would have to be my proudest memory of last season," Williams said. "(But) not going to the Rose Bowl was very disappointing."

He finished the year with 158 tackles, while his inside linebacker counterpart, freshman Battle, finished second with 128.

Both, with an added year's experience, are expected to repeat the feat again this year.

"One position we feel really secure at is the inside linebackers," Luginbill said. "But

we have to have all 11 guys playing well in order to be a good football team."

Williams was just a mild surprise to Luginbill. The liberal arts major was pretty set on attending ASU, and the coaches were happy to have him.

"We felt he had some great athletic talent and was a fine football player," Luginbill said. "Sometimes it's hard to tell how a player will develop, but in his case, we expected him to perform well."

Williams was a two-time state heavyweight wrestling champion for Tempe. He also earned a varsity letter in track. He was named to the Adidas All-American Team in football.

Playing at ASU is a dream realized for Williams.

"As a kid, the first college game I ever went to was ASU. I was in the sixth or seventh grade and these guys on the field were stars to me. All I ever saw was Arizona State football. So I guess it was just natural that I would grow up and play here."

Now, when the Devils take the field against Utah State on Sept. 10, there could be quite a few sixth graders looking down from the stands who consider Williams a star.

AS

By Bob Mc  
The Arizona

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# ASU linebacker becoming leader after strong rookie year

By Bob Moran  
The Arizona Daily Star

TEMPE — The enthusiasm of youth carried Jimmy Williams to a successful rookie season as a starting inside linebacker at Arizona State last year.

Now that he knows what he's doing, Williams, a junior, says he hopes to play even better this year.

"I feel older, a lot wiser to the game," Williams said yesterday. "Last year I was so excited, I just kind of knew where the ball would be, and all of sudden I was involved. Things won't be such a surprise this year."

Williams, a graduate of Tempe High School, was "involved" in many a play for

the Sun Devils, who led the nation in total defense during a 10-2 Fiesta Bowl championship year. His 153 tackles led ASU. He had a career-high 22 tackles against Houston.

He had 19 tackles against Washington, 18 against Arizona and 15 each against Kansas State and Oregon. He also blocked a punt against California and intercepted a pass against Utah.

Not bad for a 6-foot, 213-pound linebacker some thought was too small to compete in the Pacific 10 Conference.

Williams and his sidekick, Greg Battle, drew much attention in the preseason last year because they were the untested cogs in what appeared to be a powerful defensive machine.

Williams (as did Battle) refused to let his height and weight deter him.

He wasn't intimidated by the huge offensive linemen of USC, Washington and UCLA.

"I'm the kind of guy who gets more psyched playing those guys than little guys," Williams said. "I'm nervous when I play them (smaller players), because nobody talks about them."

So, naturally, Williams was more than a little apprehensive on opening day last fall, against unheralded Oregon in Eugene.

"I kind of knew I was going to be starting because we graduated seniors," Williams said. "But it really didn't hit me until right

before the Oregon game. It was a funny, nervous feeling."

Williams' status has changed from rookie to veteran in one season. He is to be joined by seven new starters Saturday night at 7:30 at Sun Devil Stadium, when ASU is to open its season against Utah State.

Whereas last year he was asking advice, this year he's giving it.

"Once in a while some guys who're not quite sure ask me questions," he said. "If I know the answer, I'll give it. If I don't, I tell them to go ask their coach, or someone who plays their position."

Williams' job might be more difficult. He

won't have defensive ends Jim Jeffcoat and Brian Caldwell, both of whom are playing for the Dallas Cowboys, to keep opposing linemen away from him. Sophomore letterman Fred Gaddis and redshirt freshman Teleni Wright are to start at defensive ends.

"I don't think it'll make that much difference," Williams said. "We're still playing the same defense. Maybe some teams might try to block us man-to-man, but I don't think they will. Besides, by the time they see their blocks and try to get to me, I'd have made my move."

"The only changes (in the defensive line) are the ones I mentioned. See WILLIAMS, Page

## Williams not a lightweight

Continued from Page 1E

rior) are in experience and weight. But these guys (Gaddis, Wright) might be a little quicker."

Weight is one thing Williams has on his mind. Toward the end of the season he was weighing 203 pounds, he said. Teamed with Battle, who weighed 197, and ASU probably had the lightest inside-linebacking pair in the country.

"I'm trying to maintain my weight," he said. "I'm at about 213 right now, and so far I've been able to maintain that. I don't know why."

Williams, a liberal arts major, said he and his teammates are eager to play Utah State.

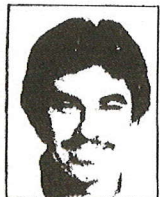
"We're tired of hitting our own players," he said, smiling. "We want to hit someone in a different color."

SUN DEVIL NOTES: Outside linebacker Mike Copeland, who had been injured, returned to practice this week and might be able to claim a starting position from Brian Noble or Billy Robinson, coach Darryl Rogers said. . . . Perhaps the biggest surprise of the preseason has been sophomore safety Kevin Graven, who has moved ahead of lettermen Nate Kling, a freshman starter in 1981, and Dale Walton. . . .

Junior college transfer Jim Meyer of Phoenix College and Phoenix Alhambra High has won the punting job from freshman Gordon Moss. . . . Meyer was given a trial, albeit brief, as place-kicker Luis Zendejas' holder, but Zendejas "fired" him because "he was nervous," Zendejas said.



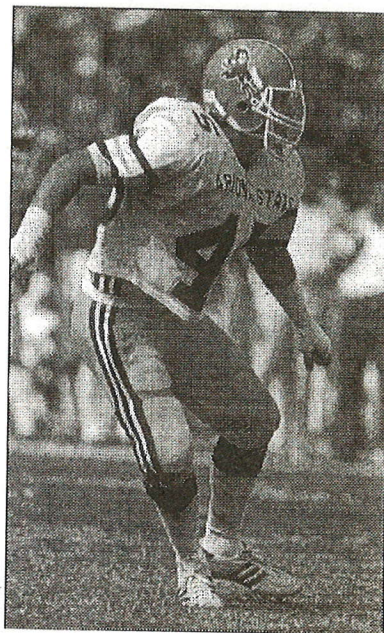
Jimmy Williams



Luis Zendejas



Greg Battle





# The leader: Williams finds new role has an unusual sound

By Doug McConnell  
The Phoenix Gazette

TEMPE — Jimmy Williams can't get over the way it sounds.

The junior inside linebacker is Arizona State's most experienced defensive football player.

"That's funny," said the former Tempe High star. "People come up to me and say, 'You're the veteran on the defensive team.'"

"I don't feel like a veteran. I still have this year and next year and there are a lot of things I still can learn."

Williams and his teammates will open the season at Sun Devil Stadium Saturday at 7:30 p.m. against Utah State.

Defensive coordinator Al Luginbill counts on Williams as "definitely our leader on defense."

Williams called all the defensive plays in the huddle and on the line of scrimmage last year, his first as a starter, and has the same duties this year, but Luginbill looks for more leadership than that.

Williams has noticed.

"If I come to practice flat and

don't really feel like doing things," Williams said, "it kind of rubs off on a few other guys and they're kind of blah, but if I come to practice and I'm ready and getting going, it seems they run to the ball."

"If that happens, Coach Luginbill lets me know about it, for sure."

Besides Williams and his inside backer partner Greg Battle, a sophomore, the only returning starters on defense are Mitch Callahan, who became the starting nose guard midway through last season, and cornerback Mario Montgomery.

Williams is confident the ASU defense "is going to surprise a lot of people."

"I think some people expect to be able to do a lot of things with their game and be successful with it, but I think they're going to be very surprised when the game is over."

Williams led the nation's top defensive team in tackles last year (153) but he expected to, and it was and is expected of him. Battle was second (128).

"If Greg or I don't lead a game in

tackles, I think I'd have to sit down and do some serious thinking about the way I was playing," Williams said. "We should lead in tackles in our defensive system. Most things are funneled to us. The guys up front keep you clean so you can make the tackles."

Of much concern is the fact that the guys up front no longer have names like Jim Jeffcoat, Bryan Caldwell, Walt Bowyer, Mike Langston, Vernon Maxwell and Mark Hicks — all gone to the pros.

"A lot of how well Jimmy plays," Luginbill said, "depends on the guys up front. We put the onus on the defensive end to make sure our linebackers are clean. That's their main job. If we're playing good defense, our linebackers will lead in tackles."

"Time will tell. Last year, Jimmy had experienced people in front of him. This year, we have inexperienced people who are playing extremely well (in practice)."

Williams grew up so close to campus that he used to cut through

See • Williams, E-11

## ● Williams

From E-1

Sun Devil Stadium on the way to school, dreaming: "Some day, maybe..."

But being a hometown boy hasn't made him feel he is under a microscope. The fans may be even more forgiving.

"Sometimes, somebody will come up and say, 'Good game,' and maybe they don't know what I'm supposed to be doing or what my responsibilities are."

"I might be running away from a play and supposed to be doing that, and they are saying, 'Oh, look at that man. He's going the wrong way.' On the other hand, if I run after the play and make the play, to them I'm great, but when I come back here (coaches' offices), it was wrong, no matter what. I'm not supposed to be there and I could have really messed up."

Williams and Battle may be the best pair of inside backers in the Pac-10, but they are also unquestionably the smallest.

Williams says it doesn't bother him, but when he watches NFL telecasts, he pays attention to heights and weights.

"Whenever I see a 6-foot linebacker," Williams said, "I just smile and say, 'Hey, he's playing, and if he can do it, I can do it.'"

Williams is 6-0, and has been managing to hold at 215 pounds, although he "hardly ever played at over 205 last year."

Battle, an inch taller, weighs 207, which is up 15 pounds over his weight for his early starts as a freshman.

Their lack of size is not a handicap, they and Luginbill insist,

when they take on the offensive guards. It could, naturally, be expected to be a problem when they are giving away 40 or 50 pounds, or 80 to 90 as they will against Utah State's All-Pacific Coast Athletic Association first teamer, 295-pound Dave Kuresa.

"It's not a problem for them," Luginbill said, "because of their tremendous strength. They were taking on the best guards in this conference a year ago and wilted them."

"Jimmy is one of the strongest lower leg people on this football team. He would rank in the top three. Greg is just a natural knee bender. He gets a pad under a pad. That's how they do it."

"It can be a problem," Williams said, "if you don't play with the proper technique. I can't afford to stand up a whole lot. I have to stay low, otherwise they're going to blow me away."

Williams was an all-state high school wrestling champion at 191 pounds as a junior and as a heavyweight in his senior year.

It is background that he finds helpful on a football field — "as far as leverage and helping me to get people off balance."

It should also be of use, in the future, to freshman linebacker Mike Davies, a former world school-boy wrestling champion who is a candidate for a gold medal in the 1984 Olympics.

Almost identical in size, 5-11, 213, and with the same blond hair and fair features, he is something of a look-alike for Williams.

"Naw," Williams decided. "I'm better looking."

2

By Dave Neiber  
Assistant sports

CAMP TONTO  
Arizona State's

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# 2 vets will anchor defense

By Dave Neibergall  
Assistant sports editor

**CAMP TONTOZONA** — The heart of Arizona State's defense has plenty of heart.

Inside linebackers Jimmy Williams and Greg Battle are two of the three returning starters on the defense.

Both played big roles on ASU's 1982 defense which was the best in the country.

And both know that they'll be counted on to lead this year's inexperienced defense.

"The coaches have told me I'm going to have to be a leader this year," says Williams, the 6-foot, 215-pound Tempe High product.

"I don't mind it, but I don't go headstrong into it. I don't think of it as pressure either. All I can do is play."

Williams did that quite well last year, leading the powerful Sun Devil defense with 123 tackles. But he says that's all part of his job.

"That's something that should be done by

an inside linebacker, since everything is funnelled to us," he says.

Williams' running mate, Battle, is a 6-foot-1, 192-pound sophomore from Los Angeles. He finished second on the team last year with 128 tackles.

"Every year is different," says Battle, who was the L.A. City Player of the Year in 1981. "I'm going to try to put my experience to work."

"This year, the defensive linemen need a little help. Last year, they were experienced and helped us out. This year it's the other way around."

Having played together for a year, Williams and Battle say they work well together as a team in the all-important middle of the defense.

"Inside linebackers are like the quarterbacks of the defense," Battle says. "We communicate with each other. We also can joke around together and we go out once in awhile."

Williams says the more the two get to know each other, the

better they both can become.

"We communicate and let each other know what's going on," Williams says. "That makes it easier for both of us, even though I still have my responsibilities and he has his."

Battle was not recruited out of high school by hometown power Southern Cal. While growing up, he always thought he wanted to play for Ohio State or Michigan.

But he was impressed with the ASU program and coaching staff and decided to stay in the West.

While he holds no grudges against USC, because "I didn't want to go there anyway," one of Battle's finest memories from last season was the Devils' 17-10 win over the Trojans in Sun Devil Stadium.

Another was his 18-tackle effort at Houston, when he received the highest grade of the season for

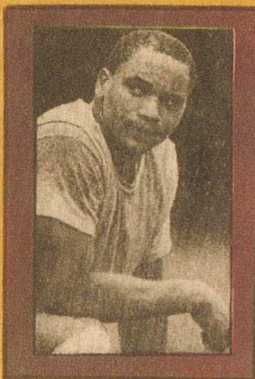
an inside linebacker.

Williams, who calls the defensive signals, recorded 22 stops against Houston, 19 against Washington and 18 against Arizona. He led the team eight times.

"I feel good about our defense this year, even though we're inexperienced," Williams says. "Everybody's saying the defense isn't as good. But I'm not worried about pleasing other people. If we do well in the games, I'll be satisfied."

And so will almost everyone else.

**SUN DEVIL NOTES:** Fortunately for the Devils, injuries have been virtually nonexistent so far. The exception Tuesday was defensive back Mario Montgomery, who suffered a bruised thigh. It's not expected to be serious, though. Tight end Don Kern missed the morning workout after having a fever, but returned in the afternoon.



Greg Battle



Jimmy Williams



5/3/85

Doug  
McConnell



## Heading north

**W**innipeg is a long way from Tempe but Jimmy Williams was well-scouted by the Canadian Football League champion Blue Bombers.

Williams, who started 27 consecutive games for Arizona State, signed a two-year contract with an option year with the Blue Bombers last month.

Cal Murphy, the Bombers coach, has a brother, Bill, living in the Valley and coordinated visits to take in ASU spring drills last year. Besides, Murphy was on former Sun Devil Coach Darryl Rogers' staff at San Jose State with defensive line coach Bob Padilla.

Murphy compared notes with Rogers, now coach of the Detroit Lions, and Padilla, who left ASU a year ago to coach the Houston Oilers' defensive line.

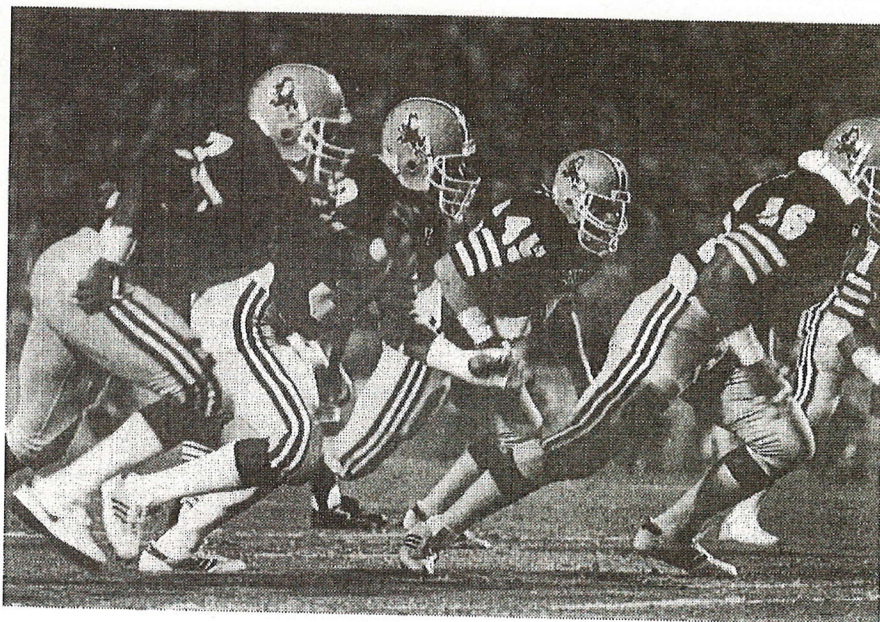
"Jimmy would be an undersized linebacker in the NFL," Rogers said of the 6-foot, 215-pound Williams. "He fits the style of the Canadian Football League better with its wider field."

"But Jimmy wouldn't have been overlooked in the NFL draft. I wouldn't have overlooked him."

Williams, who led the Sun Devils in tackles in the games he started, felt his knee injury last season hurt his stock in the draft. "I figure I can go up there, get established in a couple of years, and if I want to come back to play in the NFL, that's what I'll do," Williams said.

"Here he has a chance to start," Murphy said. "He can run, and that's important to the Canadian game. Having been a wrestler (two-time state heavyweight champion at Tempe High School) helped make him a sure tackler, but particularly helpful in our defense is the fact that he can blitz well."

"Our defense doesn't call for a lot of reading, like some. We just get after the quarterback because the Canadian game is so much more of a passing game than a running game."



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# Outlaws tab 6 Sun Devils as territorial picks

By BRAD HALVORSEN  
Sports Writer

Only two months after ending their football careers at ASU, six seniors are considering returning to Sun Devil Stadium for a career in professional football with the USFL's Arizona Outlaws.

Prior to the start of the USFL open college draft on Jan. 3 in New York City, the Outlaws secured the rights of split end Doug Allen, offensive tackle Tom Magazzeni, punter Jim Meyer, outside linebacker Brian Noble, inside linebacker Jimmy Williams and place-kicker Luis Zendejas in the territorial draft.

Nineteen other territorial picks were also made, with 10 coming from U of A, four from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, two each from New Mexico and New Mexico State universities and one from NAU.

"There's no question about it, there's talent in this group (of former ASU players)," Outlaw coach Frank Kush said. "Just about every one of them certainly could be of some help to us. I think the big factor is going to be signing them."

Under USFL rules, the prospective player

must work out a deal with the team and then sign over his rights to the organization before practicing with the squad in pre-season drills.

None of the six have signed any papers yet, although Kush said negotiations with Zendejas may be successful.

"We're talking with Zendejas and we'd certainly like to have him," Kush said. "There's a good possibility he may sign in the immediate future."

Zendejas, the all-time leading NCAA scorer, was not available for comment.

The USFL's Arizona branch has not had much luck signing Arizona State territorial picks in the past. In the league's first draft in 1983, only one player out of 12, offensive guard Ron Sowers, came to terms with the then-Wranglers. One of the '83 picks, tight end Ron Wetzel, recently signed a contract with the club two years after being selected.

Allen, who set ASU records last year for most touchdown receptions in a single season (14) and most touchdown receptions in a career (25).

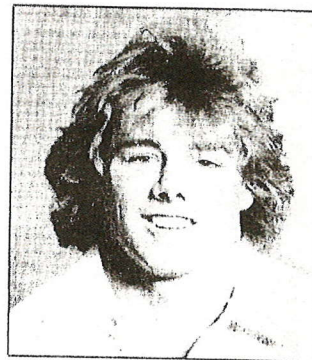
"Otherwise, I'll just wait around until April for the NFL draft. But right now I just want to work on negotiating with the USFL."

Williams said he would seriously consider signing if the Outlaws offer him a contract.

"If it's decent, I wouldn't mind," Williams said. "But if not, I'll just wait and see if the NFL has anything to offer."

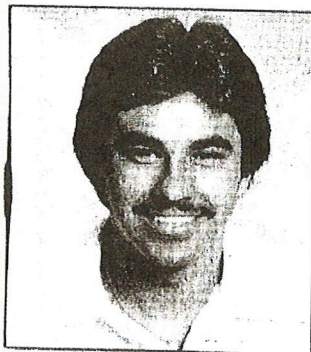
"At this point I'm not going to say anything. I've been talking with them and we're trying to work out something. But it might be well into camp before I sign anything."

Williams said he has no preference toward playing in the NFL or the USFL, and is willing to leave his hometown, Tempe, for



Jimmy Williams

Meyer: 'Even if you don't get drafted, you can get a free-agent tryout. I think I'm a pretty good athlete and I think I'll be able to hold up as far as the NFL goes.'



Luis Zendejas

In 1984, the Wranglers chose seven former Sun Devils; but only one, quarterback Sandy Osiecki, signed. Osiecki failed to make the team, however, and is now with the Kansas City Chiefs. Offensive tackle James Keyton finally came to terms this year, after holding out for the NFL draft and playing briefly with the New England Patriots.

"I think signing them depends on the status of the player and how he feels about getting into pro ball," Kush said. "A lot of times they'll be thinking about waiting for the NFL. That's the prerogative a youngster has."

The three players the *State Press* was able to get in touch with — Allen, Meyer and Williams — all stated intentions of negotiating with the Outlaws but did not rule out the possibility of waiting for the NFL.

"If things work out right, I'll sign," said

a former contract.

"It would be nice to stay home, but football is a short-lived game," Williams said. "When you come right down to it, you've got to go with the money."

Whereas Allen felt confident the Outlaws would secure his rights, Williams had mixed feelings, primarily due to sitting out the majority of last season with a bad knee.

"No doubt about it, the leg made a difference," Williams said. "At this point, I just have to go to camp and test it, see how I move. It's fine now, but I could use more work on building it up for strength and endurance."

Meyer, a two-time all-Pac 10 punter, would rather play in the NFL, but will still consider the Outlaws' offer.

"The benefits are better in the NFL," Meyer said. "The USFL is pretty much a

cut-and-dried system. You go out and do your stuff and get paid, but there's really nothing to back you up."

Meyer's future with the Outlaws depends on his confrontation with the Oklahoma Outlaws 1984 punter, Case DeBrujin, who is looking to preserve his starting role.

"I can't say what will happen," Meyer said. "I'll just have to see how things are going with the other punter and decide then."

"They really wouldn't sign two punters, so if things don't work out I'll go somewhere else. But I wouldn't mind playing here."

Meyer believes there are only seven or eight quality punters in the NFL, and many teams will be looking to draft one. The Seattle Seahawks, Dallas Cowboys and New York Jets already have been looking at him.

"Even if you don't get drafted, you can get a free-agent tryout," Meyer said. "I think I'm a pretty good athlete and I think I'll be able to hold up as far as the NFL goes. Hopefully, I'll be another Ray Guy some day."









**UCLA FOOTBALL '83**

7:30 P.M.  
SATURDAY  
SEPT. 17  
1983

**\$12.50**  
ROSE BOWL

**ARIZONA STATE**

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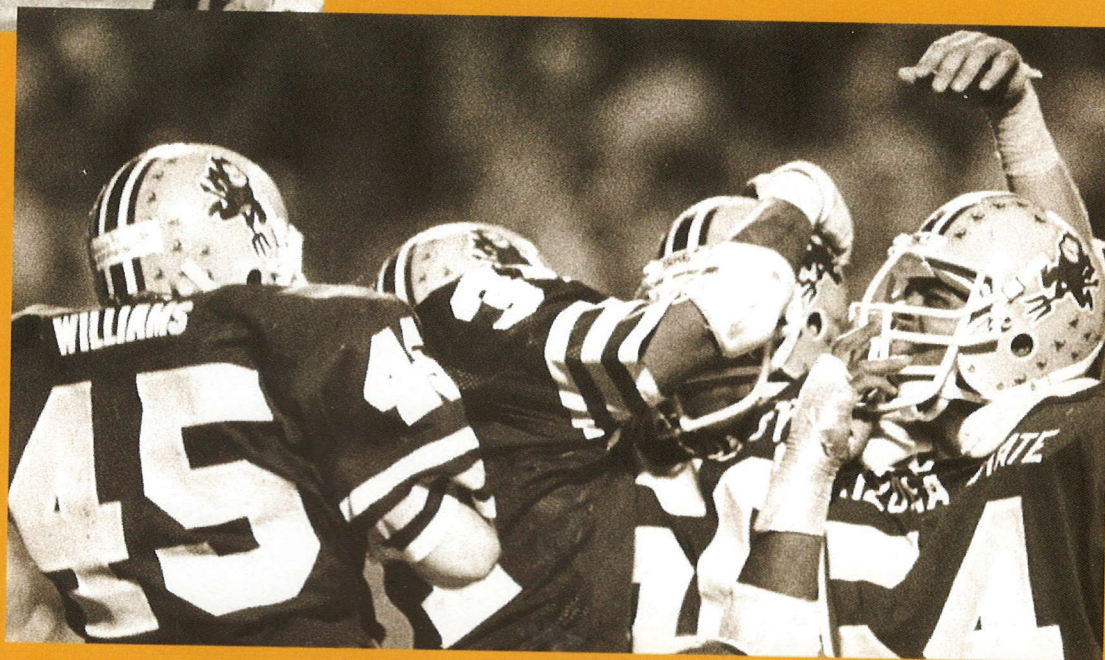
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**Fiesta Bowl XIII**

January 2, 11:30 a.m.  
Sun Devil Stadium  
Tempe, Arizona

11:30 AM \$ 3503 TEAM TICKETS







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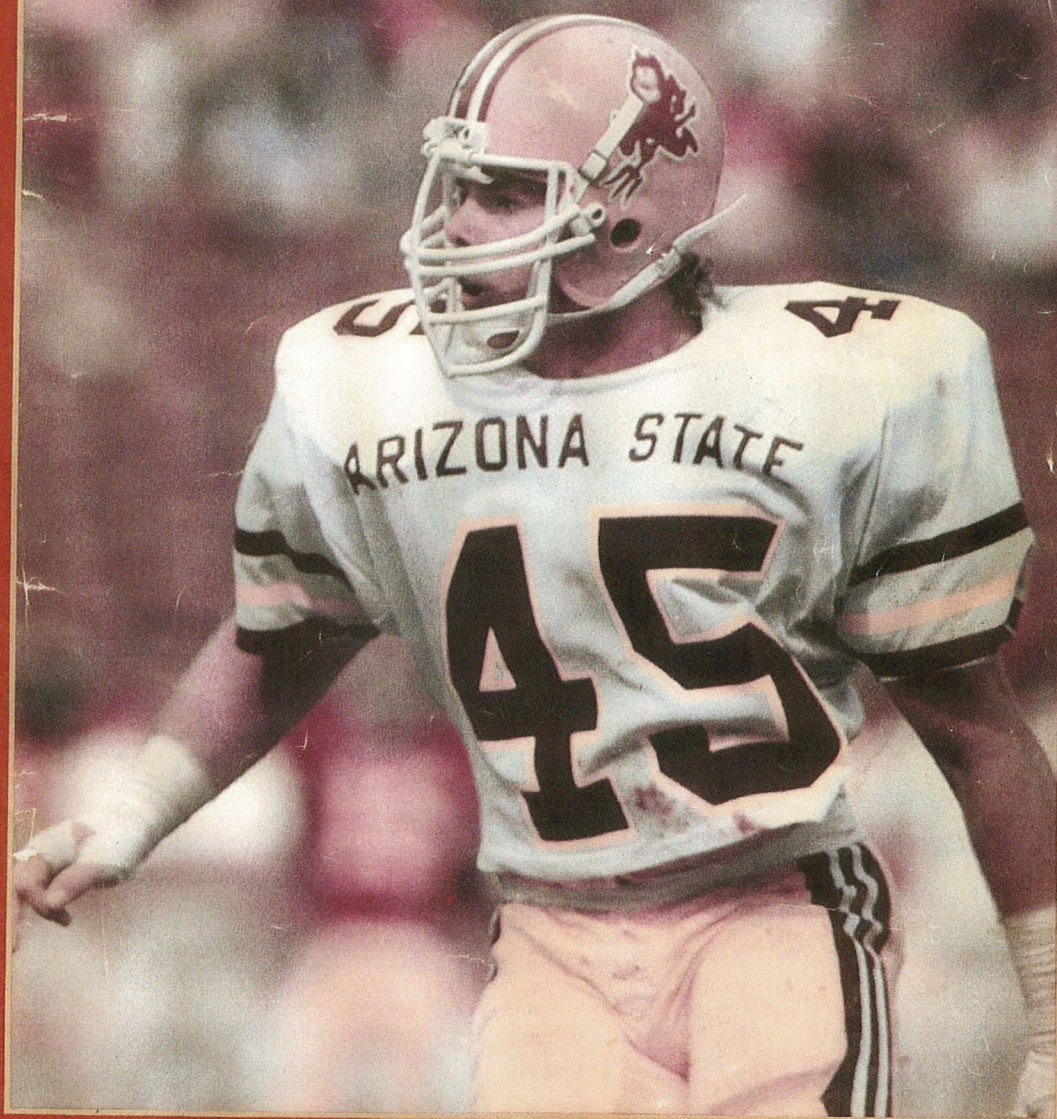
**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**



**PACIFIC-10 CONFERENCE**



# ARIZONA STATE VS. SAN JOSE STATE





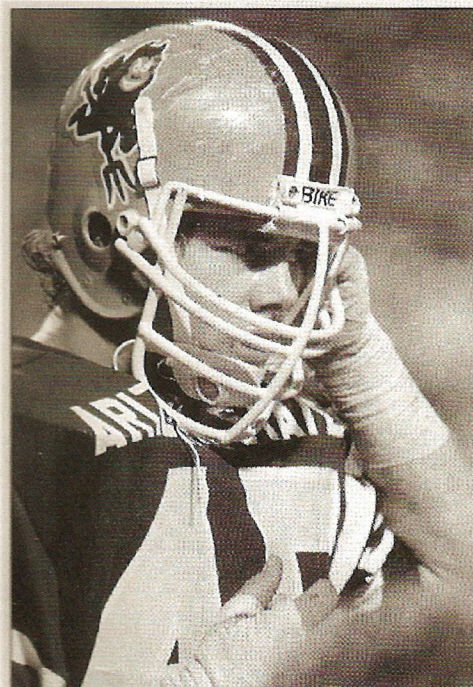
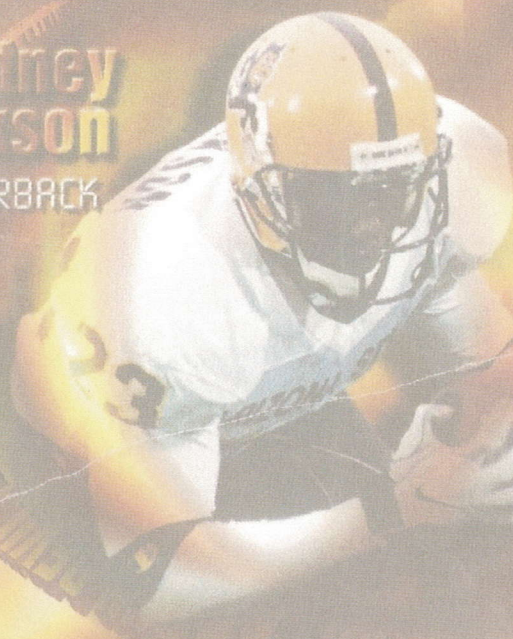
LEFT TACKLE

ARIZONA STATE

71

Courtney  
Jackson

CORNERBACK



### In Memoriam

The 1999 Arizona State University Football Media Guide is dedicated to the memory of Jimmy Williams, a four-year letterman from 1981-84. Williams was a three-year starter at linebacker for the Sun Devils. Williams was honorable mention all-Pacific-10 Conference in 1983 and stands No. 3 on the all-time ASU career tackles list with 375. Williams, a teacher and coach at Desert Vista High School in Phoenix, passed away last Spring. He is survived by his wife Linda and two children.

# 1999 Media Guide





