

2005 PREVIEW

PITT FOOTBALL 2005



2005 PREVIEW

THE OFFENSE

QUARTERBACKS

WHO'S BACK: Tyler Palko evolved from an unsteady first-year starter into one of the nation's hottest quarterbacks by the end of last season. Palko threw for 3,067 yards and a Big East-leading 24 touchdowns against just seven interceptions. Incredibly, he threw just three picks in the final 10 games.

Palko's ascendance earned him All-Big East accolades. He was at his best during the Panthers' surprising run to the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl, averaging

314 passing yards over the final five regular-season contests. During that span Palko threw 16 touchdowns against just two picks, including an unprecedented five TD passes versus Notre Dame. He has also proven to be one of Pitt's most effective running quarterbacks in recent seasons.

Pitt additionally returns junior **Matt Flaus**, who enters his fourth season as a walk-on quarterback.

WHO'S NEW: Pitt welcomes two freshmen quarterbacks in **Shane Murray** and **Bill Stull**, both Pittsburgh products. Murray was a dual-threat QB at Pittsburgh Central Catholic, throwing for 1,485 yards and 20 TDs. Stull finished his prep career as one of the most prolific passers in Western Pennsylvania history. He threw for a WPIAL-record 3,310 yards to go with 40 TDs against just 15 interceptions as a senior at Seton-LaSalle.

NOTABLE: New offensive coordinator **Matt Cavanaugh** is a former Pitt quarterback who won a national championship in 1976 before embarking on a 14-year NFL playing career.

QUOTABLE: "Even with the return of Tyler Palko, this is an inexperienced group," Cavanaugh said. "Tyler has basically played one season and behind him are guys who have not played at all. Training camp will be crucial because that will help us decide who we feel comfortable with putting on the field."

RUNNING BACKS

WHO'S BACK: All the major cast members from last year's

backfield return. Senior **Tim Murphy** proved to be a

valuable hybrid player, capable of contributing at both tailback and fullback. A hard-nosed, straight-ahead runner, Murphy compiled 334 yards in eight games last year, missing four contests due to

an early season ankle injury. Senior

Raymond Kirkley started at tailback most of the year before missing the final two games due to a wrist injury. A hard-charging runner similar to Murphy, Kirkley rushed for a team-high 560 yards and six TDs. He is Pitt's most experienced back with 29 games played, including 23 starts. Senior **Marcus Furman** provided a change-of-pace option at tailback with his more elusive style. He netted 116 yards on 37 carries last year (3.1 avg.). Furman also was an effective receiving threat, finishing third on the team in receptions (27) and fourth in receiving yards (243). **Brandon Mason** played in five games during his true freshman season last year and could figure more prominently this year.

Senior walk-on **Kellen Campbell** elevated into a significant role last year when injuries depleted the fullback position. Campbell started seven of the final eight contests and will look to reclaim that role this year. He will be challenged by another senior walk-on, **Justin Acierno**, who played in 10 games with three starts. Sophomore **Mark Yezovich** is also in the fullback mix. Sophomore walk-on **John Pettiford** will provide tailback depth.

WHO'S NEW: **Rashad Jennings** rushed for nearly 2,000 yards as a high school senior at Lynchburg (Va.) Christian Academy in 2003. Jennings enrolled at Pitt in January and impressed during spring drills. He will have freshman eligibility this year. Four additional frosh running back prospects will join Pitt for fall camp, including **Shane Brooks**, **Irvan Brown**, **Conredge Collins** and **LaRod Stephens**. Brooks and Stephens ranked among Pennsylvania's best high school backs a year ago. Brown held the same status in New York, while Collins earned a national reputation as a prolific — and bruising — runner out of Miami, Fla.

NOTABLE: Coach **Dave Wannstedt** has put an emphasis on the rushing game since his arrival. ("You throw the ball to score points and run the ball to win," Wannstedt quipped.) Pitt averaged just 97.8 yards on the ground last season, ranking 105th nationally.

QUOTABLE: "This year's group has a lot of experience," said running backs coach **David Walker**. "We have five seniors who have played a lot of football at Pitt. We are going to depend on those players to set the pace and help us produce."

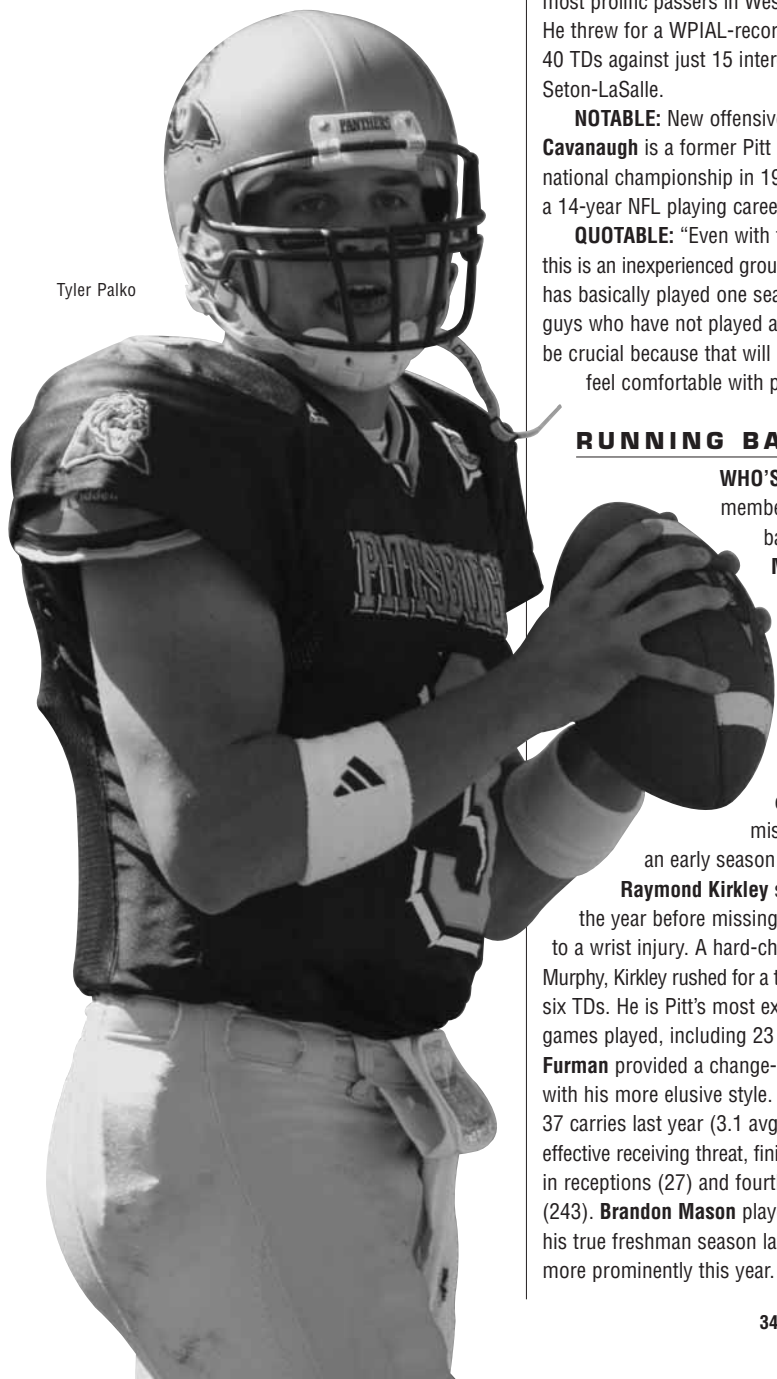
RECEIVERS

WHO'S BACK: Pitt received solid production from split end **Greg Lee** and flanker **Joe DeSardo** last season, their first in starting roles. Lee earned All-Big East after pacing the Panthers with 68 receptions for 1,297 yards and 10 touchdowns. He led all conference receivers and ranked sixth nationally with 108 receiving yards per game. While Lee stretched the field with his 19.1 yards per catch, DeSardo provided a nice complement as a possession receiver. Perhaps owning the most dependable hands on the team, he had 49 catches for 573 yards (11.7 avg.) and four TDs. Both enter their junior seasons.

Providing depth and competition behind Lee at split end will be sophomores **Derek Kinder** and **Kelvin Chandler**. Both players appeared in nine games last season to letter, mostly seeing time in multiple-receiver sets. Kinder had one catch that went for a three-yard touchdown at Notre Dame. Chandler totaled four receptions for 47 yards. Junior walk-on **Brandon Ballard** will also vie for time at this spot.

Pushing for time at flanker will be redshirt freshman **Marcel Pestano**, who impressed on the scout squad last season. Sophomore **Terrell Allen** returns to active duty after redshirting last year due to a wrist injury.

Tyler Palko





John Simonitis

Allen played extensively as a true freshman in 2003, seeing time as both a receiver and kickoff returner. Sophomore **Allen Richardson**, Pitt's primary punt returner last year, junior **Larry Moore**, a converted cornerback, and redshirt freshman **Austin Ransom** are also in the flanker mix.

WHO'S NEW: Pitt signed two freshmen receivers as part of its 2005 recruiting class. **Cedric McGee** was an All-Florida 6A honoree, averaging over 20 yards per catch his final two seasons. **Oderick Turner**, a New Jersey high jump champion, compiled over 1,600 receiving yards as a junior and senior.

NOTABLE: A Pitt receiver has led the Big East in receiving yards in seven of the last eight seasons.

QUOTABLE: "We are very young when you look at this group from top to bottom," receivers coach

Aubrey Hill said. "However, we have enough experience combined with talent and athletic ability to be a very competitive group this year."

TIGHT ENDS

WHO'S BACK: The Panthers' top two tight ends from last season return in senior starter **Erik Gill** and junior **Steve Buches**, the top reserve. Gill emerged as a viable receiving threat, compiling 25 catches for 433 yards (17.3 avg.) and four touchdowns. Buches contributed seven catches for 94 yards (13.4 avg.) and four scores. Sophomore **Darrell Strong** joined Pitt as a quarterback prospect but ended up playing in all 12 games last season as a reserve receiver. He moved to tight end this spring. **Robbie Agnone** redshirted as a true freshman last year.

WHO'S NEW: Incoming freshman **John Pelusi** was an all-state performer at Pittsburgh's Central Catholic, catching 45 passes for 803 yards (17.8 avg.) his final two seasons.

NOTABLE: Gill and Buches combined to catch eight of the team's 24 touchdown passes in 2004.

QUOTABLE: "With the depth we have at tight end, we expect this position to be a strength," said tight ends coach **Greg Gattuso**. "We have guys who can run, block and catch. They're good football players who are working hard to get even better."

OFFENSIVE LINE

WHO'S BACK: Pitt returns three starting offensive linemen. Senior **Charles Spencer** made a successful transition from defensive tackle to offensive guard last season and earned All-Big East. A starter at left guard in 2004, Spencer will work at left tackle this year as Pitt looks to replace departed three-time All-Big East honoree Rob Petitti. Junior **John Simonitis** returns at right guard with two years of full-time starting experience. Sophomore **Mike McGlynn** is the incumbent at right tackle after starting the final eight contests of his redshirt frosh season.

Beyond the returning starters, Pitt's most experienced offensive lineman is senior **Dale Williams**, a three-year letterman who will compete at left tackle. Williams, who has played both tackle spots during his career, made five starts last season. Redshirt freshman **Jerald Robinson** will also work at left tackle.

Competition for the starting center duties will revolve around three candidates — junior **Joe Villani**, sophomore **Chris Vangas** and junior **Eric Fritz**. Villani lettered on special teams and as a reserve tackle last year, while Vangas lettered as the chief backup at center.

Vying for the vacated left guard spot will be redshirt freshman **Dominic Williams** and sophomore **Mike DeLuca**. Redshirt frosh **Dave Weber** is slated to backup Simonitis at right guard.

Depth at right tackle will come from sophomore **Neal Tracey** and redshirt frosh **Chase Clowser**.

WHO'S NEW: Three freshman offensive linemen join the fold for fall training camp — **John Bachman**, **John Brown** and **C.J. Davis** — all products of Western Pennsylvania and first-team all-state honorees.

NOTABLE: **Paul Dunn**, a versatile guard for Pitt's impenetrable offensive fronts of the 1980s, is in his first season as offensive line coach.

QUOTABLE: "I was pleased with our players' work ethic and enthusiasm during the spring," Dunn said. "We are not a highly experienced line in terms of games played, but we do have some players with talent and the desire to be good. I'm looking forward to seeing their continued efforts and how we come together as a solid, productive unit."

2005 PREVIEW



H.B. Blades

THE DEFENSE

DEFENSIVE LINE

WHO'S BACK: Few players return with significant experience at their respective positions. This is particularly true at the tackle spots, where three-year fixtures Vince Crochunis and Dan Stephens have departed. The answer at left tackle could be **Thomas Smith**, who started the previous two seasons at end. Smith already boasts the requisite size (6-4, 300), which should help his transition. At right tackle, senior **Phil Tillman** owns the most experience, lettering last year as a chief reserve.

Pushing Smith will be redshirt freshmen **Corey Davis** and **Nick Williams**. Competition at right tackle will come from senior walk-on **Ron Idoko**, who emerged as a valuable player in the rotation last year.

At left defensive end, sophomore **Joe Clermond** will look to lock down a starting role after displaying promise as a reserve last year. Junior **Vernon Botts**, a returning letterman, will also vie for time. At right end, sophomore **Chris McKillop** enjoyed a highly impressive spring and will be a favorite for the starting nod. He will have to beat out junior **Charles Sallet**,

who started nine games last year. Sophomore **Michael Hearn** will also be in the mix at right end.

WHO'S NEW: Pitt adds four freshmen defensive linemen. **Craig Bokor** enrolled at Pitt in January after spending a prep season at Valley Forge Military Academy. Prior to Valley Forge, Bokor was a highly regarded prospect at nearby Hopewell High. He participated in spring drills and will have true frosh eligibility. Additionally, **Rashaad Duncan**, **Derrell Jones** and **Gus Mustakas** join the Panthers in August. Duncan and Mustakas were all-state honorees in the talent-rich state of Florida. Jones ranked among the elite prospects in Maryland last year.

NOTABLE: Pitt's

departed tackle tandem of Vince Crochunis and Dan Stephens started 36 of Pitt's 38 games together from 2002-04. Both were All-Big East selections last year.

QUOTABLE: "We may be more inexperienced compared to prior seasons, but we've added some significant athleticism inside," defensive tackles coach **Bob Junko** said. Added defensive ends coach **Charlie Partridge**: "We have a lot of guys competing for playing time and starting assignments. That competition should raise the level of play from everyone significantly."

LINEBACKERS

WHO'S BACK: A strength of Pitt's defense figures to be the linebacker position, where the Panthers welcome back proven experience in the form of two starters and six total lettermen.

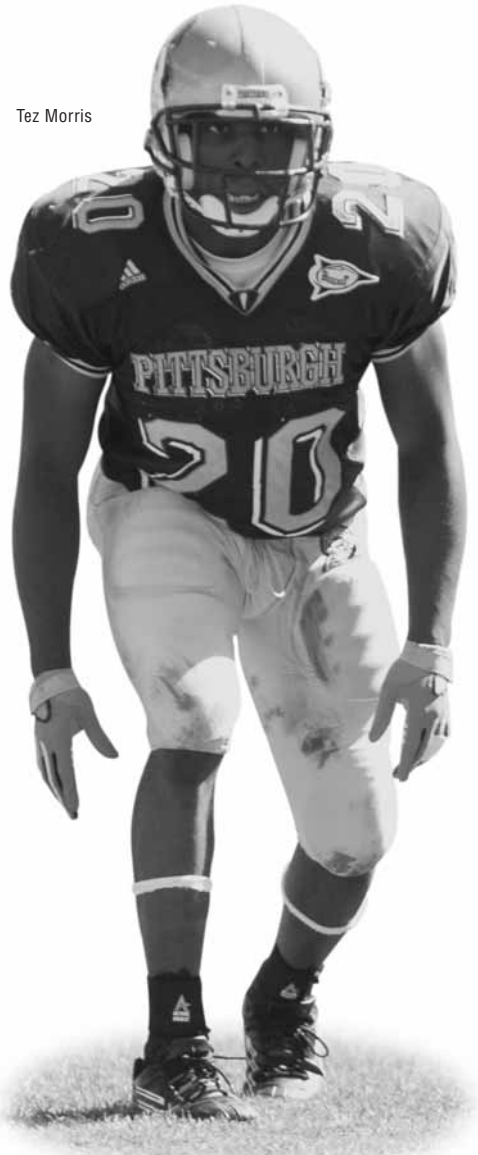
Junior **H.B. Blades** headlines the unit after earning first team All-Big East in 2004. Blades paced Pitt from his Sam linebacker position with 108 tackles and 10.5 tackles for losses. Looking to take advantage of his playmaking ability, the Pitt coaching staff worked Blades at middle linebacker during the spring and he may surface as the starter there this fall.

Junior **Clint Session** started at middle linebacker last year and was second on the team with 91 stops.

A devastating hitter, Session's 2005 contributions could come from either the Mike or Sam spots, giving Pitt greater flexibility and depth.

Providing depth in the middle will be redshirt freshman **Scott McKillop** and senior walk-on **Doug Roseberry**. Sophomore **Derron Thomas**, who lettered as a reserve last year, will be a major factor at the Sam with competition also coming from redshirt frosh **Tyler Tipton**.

One of Pitt's more intriguing positional battles will be at the Will, where senior **J.J. Horne** and junior **Brian Bennett** will compete. Horne lettered at the position each of the last two years and made four starts during that span. Bennett was a starter at the Sam two years ago before being supplanted by Blades in 2004. Also in the Will mix are redshirt frosh **Adam Gunn** and sophomore walk-on **Keith Malley**.



Tez Morris

WHO'S NEW: Florida product **Steve Dell** finished his high school graduation requirements early and enrolled at Pitt in January. After participating in spring drills, the freshman will vie for time in the middle. Dell will be joined by two other frosh linebackers in camp — All-New York performer **Doug Fulmer** and Ernest "**Mick**" **Williams**, an all-state linebacker at nearby Monessen High.

NOTABLE: H.B. Blades was the lone sophomore selected to the 2004 first-team All-Big East defense.

QUOTABLE: "We are very solid as a group with some depth," linebackers coach **Curtis Bray** said. "We are looking for the best four or five guys to play. We have at least five guys who have played a lot of football, and it's time for them to step up and lead the defense."

SECONDARY

WHO'S BACK: Pitt boasts one of its deepest defensive backfields in recent memory. Three of four starters return and eight total lettermen are back.

Both starting cornerbacks have all-star potential. At the right corner, **Bernard "Josh" Lay** earned All-Big East after compiling a team-high 15 passes defended with three interceptions. His dazzling 82-yard interception return for a touchdown against Rutgers last year was a highlight-film fixture. Across the field, **Darrelle Revis** drew praise as one of the nation's top true freshmen. Revis defended 14 passes and had two picks in earning Freshman All-America honors from *The Sporting News* and *Rivals*. Lay and Revis, incidentally, both hail from nearby Aliquippa High School. Returning lettermen in junior **Reggie Carter** and sophomore **Kennard Cox** figure to serve as the primary reserves.

Senior **Tez Morris** is the defense's elder statesman as a three-year starter at free safety. Morris has played in every game during his active career (38), making 35 starts. He was third on the team with 85 stops last year. Sophomore **Jemeel Brady** provided solid relief duty behind Morris last season. Brady could also see time at strong safety. Redshirt frosh **Eric Thatcher** will also compete at the free.

The lone graduation departure in the secondary came at strong safety, where Tyrone Gilliard started the prior three seasons. Junior **Sam Bryant** logged plenty of quality time behind Gilliard, appearing in 24 games the last two seasons. Sophomore **Mike Phillips** made six starts at cornerback last year but moved to strong safety during the spring and distinguished himself.

WHO'S NEW: Pitt signed **Tommie Campbell** out of Aliquippa (Pa.) High and **Bryan Williams** out of Buchtel (Ohio) High, two schools that have long served as productive pipelines for the Panthers. Both players were all-state performers as seniors.

NOTABLE: Pitt led the Big East and ranked ninth nationally with 17 interceptions last year. Four of those picks were returned for touchdowns, setting a school record.

QUOTABLE: "All four of our corners are very tall," defensive coordinator and secondary coach **Paul Rhoads** said. "They are all around six feet and have what I like to call long levers or arms. They use those levers well to play press coverage, re-route receivers or go high and get balls. They are all very versatile in that they can play either side. Our safeties might be as athletic as we've had here. At what level they can perform remains to be seen. Three of our top four safeties are untested and inexperienced."

SPECIALISTS

WHO'S BACK: The two top specialists in the Big East last season played for Pitt. Placekicker **Josh Cummings** and punter **Adam Graessle** were both first-team all-conference performers in 2004 and figure to rank among the nation's best in '05.

Cummings joined Pitt last season as a junior-college transfer and proceeded to lead the team with 89 points. His 18 field goals tied the 28-year-old Pitt single-season record and his point total was the second highest ever for a Panther kicker. On the year he connected on 18-of-27 field goals (.667) and 35-of-37 extra points (.946).

Graessle led the Big East and ranked 13th nationally with a 43.3 punting average. He complemented his strong leg with the ability to finesse punts deep in enemy territory as 17 of his punts were downed inside the 20. Graessle also serves as Pitt's kickoff specialist.

Junior **David Abdul** was Pitt's starting placekicker in 2002 and 2003. An automobile accident, however, prevented him from playing last year. Abdul displayed a good leg his initial two seasons and appeared strong and

confident during the spring. Redshirt frosh walk-on **Conor Lee** will also compete at placekicker.

Both of last season's long snappers return in **Steve Buches** (punts) and **Mike McGlynn** (field goals and extra points). Redshirt freshman walk-on **Mark Estermyer** should strongly figure in this area as well this year.

WHO'S NEW: While Pitt did not sign any new specialists this past year, it will have a new special teams coach in **Charlie Partridge**, who was assigned those duties when Dave Wannstedt took over in December. Additionally, first-year coach **Greg Gattuso** will oversee the specialists.

NOTABLE: Josh Cummings kicked three game-winning field goals in 2004. Adam Graessle had the Big East's longest punt last year, booming a 79-yarder versus Boston College.

QUOTABLE: "We have All-Big East talent for our specialists and that type of talent wins football games," said Gattuso. "I doubt many teams are as deep as we are at placekicker with Josh Cummings and the return of David Abdul."



Pitt's elite specialist duo of kicker Josh Cummings and punter Adam Graessle.

PRESEASON DEPTH CHART

THE FOLLOWING IS PITT'S DEPTH CHART HEADING INTO 2005 FALL TRAINING CAMP. NAMES IN BOLD CAPS DENOTE RETURNING STARTERS. MEMBERS OF THE PANTHERS' INCOMING RECRUITING CLASS ARE NOT INCLUDED. ASTERISK AFTER PLAYERS' CLASS DENOTES REDSHIRT SEASON. ASTERISK AFTER NAME DENOTES LETTERS EARNED.

OFFENSE

SPLIT END

86 **GREG LEE**** (6-2, 200, JR)
81 Derek Kinder* (6-1, 200, SO)
82 Kelvin Chandler* (6-2, 185, SO)
10 Branden Ballard (6-2, 200, JR)

LEFT TACKLE

56 **CHARLES SPENCER***** (6-5, 330, SR*)
66 Jerald Robinson (6-8, 330, FR*)
74 Dale Williams*** (6-6, 300, SR*)

LEFT GUARD

70 Dominic Williams (6-4, 300, FR*)
67 Mike DeLuca (6-3, 300, SO*)

CENTER

68 Joe Villani* (6-3, 300, JR*)
64 Chris Vangas* (6-2, 300, SO*)
61 Eric Fritz (6-3, 330, JR*)

RIGHT GUARD

60 **JOHN SIMONITIS**** (6-4, 325, JR*)
71 Dave Weber (6-3, 310, FR*)

RIGHT TACKLE

75 **MIKE McGLYNN*** (6-5, 325, SO*)
76 Neal Tracey (6-3, 295, SO*)
72 Chase Clowser (6-7, 340, FR*)

TIGHT END

45 **ERIK GILL***** (6-5, 275, SR*)
84 Steve Buches** (6-4, 250, JR*)
14 Darrell Strong* (6-5, 260, SO)
85 Robbie Agnone (6-6, 245, FR*)

QUARTERBACK

3 **TYLER PALKO**** (6-2, 220, JR*)
28 Matt Flaus (6-2, 190, JR*)

FULLBACK

23 Tim Murphy*** (5-10, 235, SR*)
48 **KELLEN CAMPBELL*** (6-0, 235, SR*)
49 Justin Acierno** (6-1, 235, SR*)
32 Mark Yezovich (6-0, 245, SO*)

TAILBACK

36 Rashad Jennings (6-1, 235, FR)
43 **RAYMOND KIRKLEY***** (5-10, 225, SR*) or
27 Brandon Mason* (6-1, 215, SO)
34 John Pettiford (5-11, 200, SO*)
2 Marcus Furman*** (5-9, 185, SR*)

FLANKER

4 **JOE DELSARDO**** (5-8, 195, JR)
87 Marcel Pestano (6-1, 190, FR*)
80 Terrell Allen* (6-0, 195, SO*)
7 Allen Richardson* (5-11, 185, SO)
19 Larry Moore (5-9, 180, JR*)
85 Austin Ransom (5-11, 195, FR*)

DEFENSE

LEFT END

58 Joe Clermond* (6-2, 250, SO*)
98 Vernon Botts* (6-4, 260, JR*)

LEFT TACKLE

55 **THOMAS SMITH***** (6-4, 300, SR*)
97 Corey Davis (6-1, 300, FR*) or
47 Nick Williams (6-2, 275, FR*)

RIGHT TACKLE

91 Phil Tillman* (6-1, 315, SR)
52 Ron Idoko* (6-2, 300, SR*)
90 Craig Bokor (6-3, 290, FR)

RIGHT END

41 Chris McKillop* (6-3, 245, SO*) or
54 **CHARLES SALLET**** (6-0, 235, JR*)
92 Michael Hearn (6-5, 265, SO*)

SAM LINEBACKER

17 **CLINT SESSION**** (6-0, 235, JR)
39 Derron Thomas* (6-1, 235, SO*) or
30 Tyler Tipton (6-2, 245, FR*)

MIDDLE LINEBACKER

51 **H.B. BLADES**** (6-0, 240, JR)
40 Scott McKillop (6-2, 240, FR*)
6 Steve Dell (6-1, 230, FR)
35 Doug Roseberry* (6-0, 225, SR*)

WILL LINEBACKER

44 Brian Bennett** (6-0, 235, JR*) or
9 J.J. Horne*** (6-3, 230, SR*)
8 Adam Gunn (6-1, 215, FR*)
19 Keith Malley (6-1, 200, SR)

LEFT CORNERBACK

25 **DARRELLE REVIS*** (6-0, 190, SO)
21 Reggie Carter* (6-0, 185, JR*)

FREE SAFETY

20 **TEZ MORRIS***** (5-10, 190, SR*) or
24 Jemeel Brady* (6-0, 205, SO*)
28 Eric Thatcher (5-9, 190, FR*)

STRONG SAFETY

10 Mike Phillips* (5-11, 195, SO*) or
46 Sam Bryant** (6-0, 230, JR*) or
24 Jemeel Brady* (6-0, 205, SO*)

RIGHT CORNERBACK

12 **BERNARD "JOSH" LAY***** (6-2, 195, SR)
5 Kennard Cox* (6-1, 195, SO*)

SPECIALISTS

PUNTER

18 **ADAM GRAESSLE**** (6-4, 225, JR)

PLACEKICKER

22 **JOSH CUMMINGS*** (5-11, 205, SR)
16 David Abdul** (5-10, 200, JR*)
36 Conor Lee (5-11, 195, FR*)

HOLDER

18 **ADAM GRAESSLE**** (6-4, 225, JR)
3 Tyler Palko** (6-2, 220, JR*)

LONG SNAPPER

PUNT:

59 Mark Estermyer (6-2, 240, FR*)
84 **STEVE BUCHES**** (6-4, 250, JR*)

FIELD GOALS/PATs:

75 **MIKE McGLYNN*** (6-5, 325, SO*)
59 Mark Estermyer (6-2, 240, FR*)

PUNT RETURNER

25 Darrelle Revis* (6-0, 190, SO)
80 Terrell Allen* (6-0, 195, SO*) or
7 **ALLEN RICHARDSON*** (5-11, 185, SO)

KICKOFF RETURNER

2 **MARCUS FURMAN***** (5-9, 185, SR*) and
80 Terrell Allen* (6-0, 195, SO*)
25 Darrelle Revis* (6-0, 190, SO) and
7 Allen Richardson* (5-11, 185, SO)

PERSONNEL

RETURNING PERSONNEL

OFFENSE (24)

Wide Receiver (7): GREG LEE**, JOE DELSARDO**, Terrell Allen*, Kelvin Chandler*, Derek Kinder*, Allen Richardson*, Darrell Strong*

Tackle (3): MIKE McGLYNN*, Dale Williams***, Joe Villani*

Guard (2): CHARLES SPENCER***, JOHN SIMONITIS**

Center (1): Chris Vangas*

Tight End (3): ERIK GILL***, Steve Buches**, Vernon Botts*

Quarterback (1): TYLER PALKO**

Tailback (3): RAYMOND KIRKLEY***, Marcus Furman***, Brandon Mason*

Fullback (4): KELLEN CAMPBELL*, Tim Murphy***, Justin Acierno**, Chris McKillop*

DEFENSE (19)

End (3): THOMAS SMITH***, CHARLES SALLET**, Joe Clermond*

Tackle (2): Ron Idoko*, Phil Tillman*

Linebacker (6): H.B. BLADES**, CLINT SESSION**, J.J. Horne***, Brian Bennett**, Doug Roseberry*, Derron Thomas*

Strong Safety (1): Sam Bryant**

Free Safety (2): TEZ MORRIS***, Jemeel Brady*

Cornerback (5): BERNARD "JOSH" LAY***, DARRELLE REVIS*, Reggie Carter*, Kennard Cox*, Mike Phillips*

SPECIALISTS (3)

Kicker (2): JOSH CUMMINGS*, David Abdul**

Punter (1): ADAM GRAESSLE**

PERSONNEL LOST

OFFENSE (7)

Wide Receiver (1): Joe Stephens**

Tackle (2): ROB PETITTI****, Kevin Harris*

Guard (2): Rob Frederick*, Matt Maiers*

Center (1): JUSTIN BELARSKI****

Tight End (0):

Quarterback (0):

Tailback (1): Darren McCray*

Fullback (0):

DEFENSE (9)

End (3): Keith Hill**, Azzie Beagnyam*, Kyle Smith*

Tackle (3): VINCE CROCHUNIS****, DAN STEPHENS****, Jake Holthaus****

Linebacker (1): MALCOLM POSTELL****

Strong Safety (1): TYRONE GILLIARD****

Free Safety (0):

Cornerback (1): Tuazama Edwards*

SPECIALISTS (1)

Kicker (1): J.B. Gibboney**

Punter (0):

LETTERMEN RETURNING: 46

STARTERS RETURNING: 18

24 Offense (9 starters)

19 Defense (7 starters)

3 Specialists (2 starters)

LETTERMEN LOST: 17

STARTERS LOST: 6

7 Offense (2 starters)

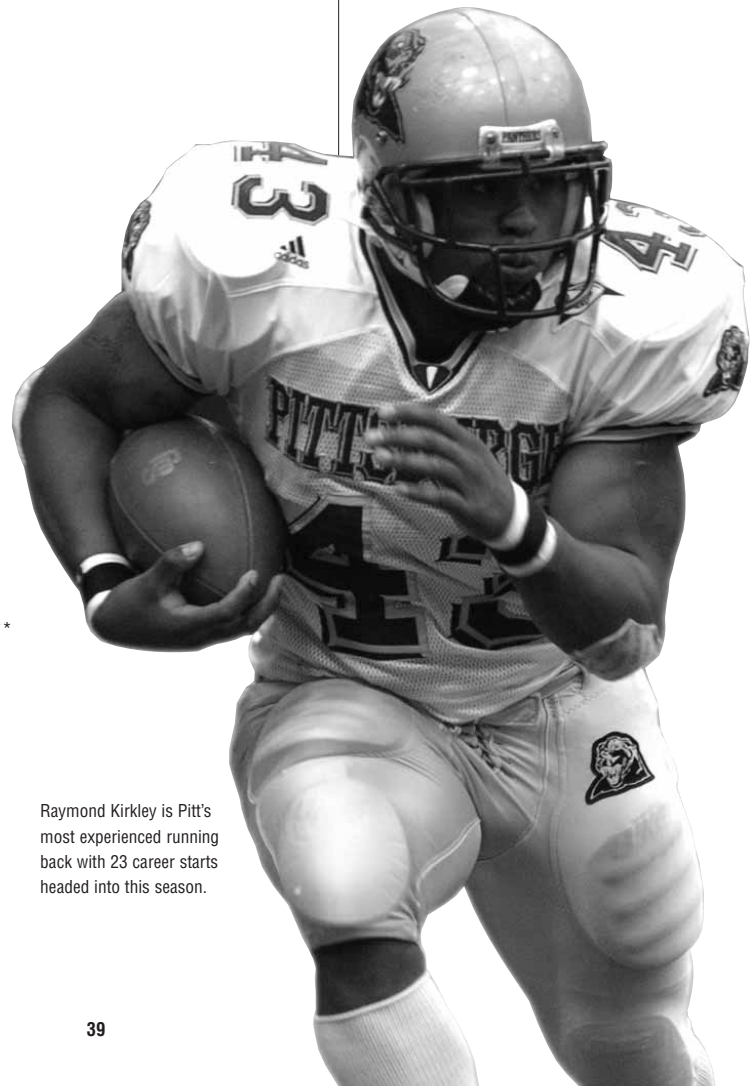
9 Defense (4 starters)

1 Specialist (0 starters)

NOTE: Players are listed under 2004 positions. This listing does not reflect any position changes for the 2005 season.

CAPS indicate returning starters.

* indicates letters earned.



Raymond Kirkley is Pitt's most experienced running back with 23 career starts headed into this season.

PRESEASON HONORS

PRESEASON TOP 25 RANKINGS

Athlon Sports: 23rd
Lindy's: 19th
Street & Smith's: 23rd
Football Action: 25th

PRESEASON BIG EAST PREDICTIONS

Athlon Sports: 2nd
Lindy's: 2nd
Street & Smith's: 2nd
The Sporting News: 2nd
Phil Steele's College Football Preview: 2nd

NATIONAL UNIT RANKINGS

Athlon Sports No. 3 Receivers/Tight Ends
Athlon Sports No. 4 Defensive Backs
Athlon Sports No. 7 Quarterbacks
The Sporting News No. 10 Secondary
Phil Steele's College Football Preview No. 12 Quarterbacks
Phil Steele's College Football Preview No. 17 Receivers
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
No. 21 Defensive Backs
Phil Steele's College Football Preview No. 22 Linebackers
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
No. 27 Special Teams

BIG EAST UNIT RANKINGS

Athlon Sports "Best Quarterbacks"
Athlon Sports "Best Receivers/Tight Ends"

INDIVIDUAL HONORS

H.B. BLADES Linebackers

Rotary Lombardi Award Watch List
Bronko Nagurski Trophy Watch List
Chuck Bednarik Award Watch List
Athlon Sports All-Big East (first team)
Football Action All-American (first team)
Lindy's No. 5 Outside Linebacker (National)
Lindy's Big East Defensive Player of the Year
Lindy's All-Big East (first team)
The Sporting News No. 8 Inside Linebacker (National)
The Sporting News All-American (first team)
Street & Smith's Butkus Award Candidate
Street & Smith's All-Big East
Street & Smith's Big East's "Hardest Hitter"
Street & Smith's Big East's "Top NFL Prospect"
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
No. 14 Outside Linebacker (National)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview All-Big East (first team)

CRAIG BOKOR Defensive Lineman

Athlon Sports "Big East Future Stars" No. 9

SHANE BROOKS Running Back

Athlon Sports "Big East Future Stars" No. 10

CONREDGE COLLINS Running Back

Athlon Sports "Big East Future Stars" No. 20

JOSH CUMMINGS Placekicker

Athlon Sports All-Big East (first team)
Lindy's All-Big East (first team)
The Sporting News No. 3 Placekicker (National)
The Sporting News All-Big East (first team)
Street & Smith's Honorable Mention All-American
Street & Smith's All-Big East
Phil Steele's College Football Preview All-Big East (first team)

MARCUS FURMAN Kick Returner

Athlon Sports All-Big East (second team)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
All-Big East (third team)

ERIK GILL Tight End

Athlon Sports All-Big East (third team)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
No. 25 Tight End (National)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
All-Big East (second team)

ADAM GRAESSLE Punter

Athlon Sports All-Big East (first team)
Lindy's No. 10 Punter (National)
Lindy's All-Big East (first team)
The Sporting News No. 3 Punter (National)
The Sporting News All-Big East (first team)
Street & Smith's Ray Guy Award Candidate
Street & Smith's Honorable Mention All-American
Street & Smith's All-Big East
Phil Steele's College Football Preview All-Big East (third team)

BERNARD "JOSH" LAY Defensive Back

Athlon Sports All-Big East (first team)
Lindy's No. 9 Cornerback (National)
Lindy's All-Big East (first team)
The Sporting News No. 16 Cornerback (National)
The Sporting News All-Big East (first team)
The Sporting News Big East's "Fastest Defensive Back"
Street & Smith's All-Big East
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
No. 19 Cornerback (National)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview All-Big East (first team)

GREG LEE Wide Receiver

Athlon Sports All-American (second team)
Athlon Sports All-Big East (first team)
Football Action All-American (second team)
Lindy's All-American (second team)
Lindy's No. 4 Receiver (National)
Lindy's All-Big East (first team)
Lindy's Big East's "Most Dangerous Deep Threat"
The Sporting News All-American (second team)
The Sporting News No. 3 Receiver (National)
The Sporting News Nation's "Best Deep Threats"
The Sporting News Big East Offensive Player of the Year
The Sporting News All-Big East (first team)
The Sporting News Big East's "Surest Hands"
Street & Smith's All-American (third team)
Street & Smith's Biletnikoff Award Candidate
Street & Smith's All-Big East
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
No. 16 Receiver (National)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview All-Big East (first team)

TEZ MORRIS Defensive Back

Athlon Sports All-Big East (second team)
The Sporting News All-Big East (second team)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview All-Big East (third team)

TYLER PALKO Quarterback

Maxwell Award Watch List
Athlon Sports All-Big East (first team)
Lindy's No. 9 Quarterback (National)
Lindy's Big East Offensive Player of the Year
Lindy's All-Big East (first team)
Lindy's Big East's "Strongest Arm"
The Sporting News No. 9 Quarterback (National)
The Sporting News Nation's "Best QBs in Two-Minute Drill"
The Sporting News All-Big East (first team)
Street & Smith's Honorable Mention All-American
Street & Smith's Big East's "Best Under Pressure"
Street & Smith's All-Big East
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
No. 9 Quarterback (National)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
All-Big East (second team)

JOHN PELUSI Tight End

Athlon Sports "Big East Future Stars" No. 8

DARRELLE REVIS Defensive Back

Athlon Sports All-Big East (second team)
Lindy's All-Big East (second team)
Lindy's Big East's "Best Cover Corner"
The Sporting News All-Big East (second team)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
All-Big East (second team)

ALLEN RICHARDSON Punt Returner

Athlon Sports All-Big East (third team)

CLINT SESSION Linebacker

Athlon Sports All-Big East (third team)

JOHN SIMONITIS Offensive Lineman

Phil Steele's College Football Preview
No. 27 Guard (National)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview
All-Big East (second team)

THOMAS SMITH Defensive Lineman

Athlon Sports All-Big East (third team)
Lindy's All-Big East (second team)
The Sporting News All-Big East (second team)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview All-Big East (first team)

CHARLES SPENCER Offensive Lineman

Athlon Sports All-Big East (first team)
Lindy's All-Big East (first team)
The Sporting News All-Big East (first team)
Phil Steele's College Football Preview All-Big East (first team)

LaROD STEPHENS Running Back

Athlon Sports "Big East Future Stars" No. 14

BILL STULL Quarterback

Athlon Sports "Big East Future Stars" No. 6



Bernard "Josh" Lay (left) and Darrelle Revis lead a secondary ranked fourth nationally by *Athlon Sports*.