

# EPH LEGEND – DICK FARLEY

by Dick Quinn, Director Sports Information



No one has ever said as many negative things about so many great young men and women and been as beloved as Dick Farley.

Farley's 114 wins, 19 losses, and three ties (.849), as well as 127 consecutive games without back-to-back losses in 17 years as the Eph head coach earned him enshrinement in the College Football Hall of Fame (2006).

His blunt assessments, terse descriptions, and homespun wisdom earned him a place in the hearts and memories of all who know him.

Two years, max. That was how long Farley expected to stay at Williams before moving up the football-coaching ladder, ending in the NFL.

Growing up in Danvers, MA, he had heard plenty about Harvard, but not Williams. When Farley arrived at Williams in the fall of 1972 he was three years removed from starting as a defensive back for the San Diego Chargers.

Eph wide receiver Marcus Hummon '84 the country music artist who wrote the popular song, "Bless the Broken Road," remembers, "Quite frankly, everyone was intimidated by Coach Farley. His

*"If you can't play here you can't play anywhere. There is no Division IV."*

preparation was intense, his comments in practice were intense, and we all knew he knew what he was talking about."

It may have been being able to also coach track & field that kept Farley at Williams 43 years. He came as an assistant football and assistant track & field coach, later becoming head coach both of football and men's and women's track and field.

"If you were any good you wouldn't be here," Farley would throw out at his athletes without so much as a hint of hesitation, reminding them that they were not on scholarship in NCAA Division I. Often that zinger would be followed by his famous, "If you can't play here you can't play anywhere. There is no Division IV."

There was a method to Farley's bluntness. "It took me about five years to realize that every one of these kids was a hell of a lot smarter than I am," said Farley. "All of these kids were here because they excelled before they got to Williams, and I didn't want them to settle for their prior success."

Farley challenged every athlete who ever stepped on the practice field or track at Williams, and it worked. "He would be so negative about the defense all week long, we'd get fired up and show his ass up on Saturdays," recalled former defensive lineman Rob Watkins '98.

Sometimes a Farley negative would really be a positive. Asked in the preseason in 2001 how the football Ephs looked, Farley scoffed, "One day the offense can't score and the next day the defense can't stop them." That was one of five 8-0-0 seasons Farley rang up at Williams.

Farley authored the first perfect football season in Williams' history in the 108th year of Williams football back in 1989, when his Ephs overcame a 14-0 deficit five

minutes into the season finale, winning 17-14 over archrival Amherst on Weston Field.

Typical of Farley, when the Ephs recovered an Amherst fumble with just 57 seconds left and Amherst was unable to stop the clock with timeouts, Farley was not smiling or leaping in the air. "You saw the game," he said. "We dropped it twice to start the game. I wasn't sure we could hold onto it for five seconds never mind 57."

Farley learned early in his Williams career from legendary Eph track & field and cross country coach Tony Plansky that, "nothing good happens after midnight," which reminded Farley to tell his charges after many a game, "Go out and celebrate like you're a good team, but look after each other. I don't want to hear about anyone getting into trouble."

Farley always tried to win, but he would never think of winning by deceit or breaking the rules, and he especially had no interest in embarrassing anyone. Ahead by five touchdowns at the half at Amherst in 1994 and urged by his assistants to run up the score as payback for a previous drubbing at the hands of Amherst when Farley was an assistant coach. Farley got the attention of the timekeeper and said, "Hey, we're going to run the ball on every play, so you keep that watch ticking and we'll all be home in time to watch real football."

When Farley took over the football team in 1987 Williams had lost six straight to Amherst. Farley went his first 13 seasons without losing to Amherst (12 wins and a 0-0 tie in 1995), before finishing up 14-2-1 vs. the Lord Jeffs. That is the stuff that legends are made of in the Purple Valley.

