

Stephen Garrison
Football, Lacrosse
Class of 1981

Dreams don't always come true, but there was no way Steve Garrison was going to fall short of achieving his because he didn't work hard enough. As a kid, Garrison couldn't wait to play for Nyack. Whether he was serving as a water boy, setting up the phones for the team, or helping Marion Wanamaker with her photography equipment, Steve loved being around the football team. As he watched heroes like Walter Nobles and Spencer Mayfield (NHSAHOF '22), Garrison used the work ethic instilled by his father to prepare as hard as he, knowing that playing for Nyack football was "in his blood all along."

While he wasn't the fastest or most athletic, nobody was going to outwork Steve Garrison, and his effort and determination paid off. Garrison played as a receiver and helped captain the defense as a middle linebacker, hardly ever coming off the field. As a junior, Steve teamed up with record-setting QB Andy Cowan to lead the county in receiving yards and earn the Team's Most Improved Player award. Despite losing Cowan to graduation, Garrison took his game to another level his senior year. Now a tight end, "Hands Garrison" teamed up with new QBs Tom LeLoup and Frank Stola to take on a record and to propel the team. On a Friday night against Pearl River at MacCalman Field, Steve caught a short pass to break the county record for career receptions of 49. Garrison got the capacity crowd going wild again a few plays later with a 70-yard catch-and-run touchdown to help secure the win.

Steve finished with 61 career receptions, catching anything thrown remotely his way, and was named 1st Team All-County and Team MVP in 1980. Garrison, who had helped Nyack have its best record in years as a senior, was also recognized for his character, along with his athletic and academic achievements. He earned a Journal News Scholar Athlete of the Week Award, as well as Nyack High's Monday Morning Quarterback and James Tillinghast Memorial Scholarship Awards.

Before leaving NHS, Garrison was a starting defenseman on the 1981 lacrosse team that became co-county champions. In the section title game, Steve and the defense shut down archrival Suffern for key stretches en route to capturing the crown.

Garrison went on to star at tight end at the renowned Cornell University. He was a team captain in 1984, and he earned All-Ivy League honors. Steve also received the Miller's Captains Cup Award and the Cornell Football Coaches Award. From his days running around the St. Ann's parking lot playing with Dwight Olivier (NHS AHOF '23) to his standout careers with NHS and Cornell, Steve Garrison's relentless work ethic and determination made his dreams and so much more come true.