



Chris Polinder

Athlete

Perhaps the hardest worker and greatest competitor to ever play Lynden football, Chris Polinder accomplished amazing things over the course of his career. If there was an award to be won or an honor to be had, he most likely received it.

In the 2014 History of Whatcom County High School Football program, Polinder was rated #30. His impressive list of accomplishments included All-League 1st Team Offensive Line and All-State 2nd Team Offensive Line honors as a sophomore, All-League 2nd Team Offensive Line, All-League Honorable Mention Defensive Line, and All-League 1st Team Offensive Line nods as a junior, and All-State 1st Team Offensive Line, All-League 1st Team Defensive Line, and All-State 1st Team Offensive Line honors during his senior season.

Recognized early in his freshman season as anything but ordinary, the eventual 6'3", 260 lb. lineman was, according to Coach Curt Kramme, "so good, so young." Polinder established a name for himself during his sophomore season when Coach had him play on both sides of the ball because he was "too good to only play one way." During his junior season, Polinder admitted to feeling extra pressure to work hard after being the only non-senior named to the Class AA All-State 1st Team. That pressure pushed him to develop a demanding workout program during the off-season in order to be ready for his senior year. His work paid off, as letters started arriving from Division 1 teams before his final season even began—a season that would prove to be as successful as everyone had predicted.

After graduating from Lynden in 1997, Polinder traveled across the state to play for Eastern Washington University, where he was named to the All-Big Sky 1st Team in 2000 and 2001. In 2001 he was also selected to two 1st Team All-American squads, and he was selected to the All-Academic Team four times, as well as to the CoSIDA Academic All-District VIII Team in 2001. He was selected to play in the Paradise Bowl College All-Star game in 2002.

After graduating from Eastern with a Bachelor's Degree in Business and Finance in 2001, Polinder signed a contract to play with the AFL's Detroit Fury in 2002 and spent the year as a starting center and long snapper. After a year with the Fury, he played arena ball for the Colorado Crush for their 2003 season.

Polinder returned home to Whatcom County in 2003 and began his career as a financial planner. He also joined the Lions' coaching staff, where he volunteered his time and expertise to the team that helped develop his talents.

From the long list of honors and accomplishments he accumulated, it's easy to see why his coaches and teammates acknowledged him as a hard worker and great competitor. For him, however, football wasn't about the awards received. According to Polinder during his junior year at LHS, "That ain't why you play. I'd rather have fun."

Induction January 24, 2017