

Dreams become reality for Aurora student Femi-Cole



Photo by Paul Mosey

By Jake Courtepatte

For the Canadian high-school athlete, the NCAA's Division 1 (D1) can seem so far away and unachievable playing in a market often overlooked.

But for St. Andrew's College's Jonathan Femi-Cole, that dream became a reality Wednesday when he signed a commitment to play football next year for the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers.

"Growing up you dream about going to a D1 school, but growing up in Canada that dream seems a lot more far-fetched," said Femi-Cole. "The fact that I am living this dream and I have been given the opportunity to play for a great program is something that I can't even put into words."

The running back is expected to join around 20 players in the Gopher's 2015 recruiting class, and his numbers back up his talent. In eight games as a senior, Femi-Cole rushed for over 1,600 yards and twelve touchdowns. Scouts had him ranked as the number one running back prospect in Ontario.

His physical attributes are equally as impressive - he runs the 40-yard dash in 4.5 seconds, bench presses 330 pounds and has a 40-inch vertical.

"I started lifting when I was young, I've been around personal trainers a lot."

Upon his arrival at SAC three years ago, coaching staff at the college knew right away the potential within the young athlete, including head football coach Len Gurr.

"We knew he had the potential to accomplish great things," said Gurr. "To see him here three years later is a thrill for all of us. I have said it time and time again, but Jonathan is arguably the most naturally talented football player I have coached, and we have had some truly great players come through our program over the years."

It was only fitting that Femi-Cole officially signed his commitment papers on campus, surrounded by friends, family, teammates, and coaching staff in the Yuill Andean Room within the La Brier Family Arena.

"I will be forever grateful for the opportunities I have been given here at St. Andrew's College," said Femi-Cole. "The chance to grow academically and athletically has truly paved the way for me - it truly is a special place."

One of the oldest programs in college football, the Golden Gophers participate in the highly-competitive Big Ten Conference, most recently coming up short in the 2015 Citrus Bowl to the Missouri Tigers.

With the graduation of David Cobb, the starting tailback position is wide open for the Aurora native to work toward. He has stated that his goal is to start and make an impact as a freshman player.

Schools such as Iowa State, Virginia, Virginia Tech, Colorado, and Louisville also put in bids for the running back, but his loyalty to the Gophers remained strong following a campus visit hosted by fellow Canadian and Vanier College alum Julien Kafo.