Written by Christian McCollum
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**Kahlil McKenzie** enjoyed a successful sophomore season at Southwest High School in Green Bay, Wisc., but he'll be playing the remainder of his high school ball on the West Coast.

"We went undefeated in the regular season and were conference champs for the first time in 37 years," the 2015 defensive lineman said. "We lost in the quarterfinals in a game we should have won, but that's how it goes.

"I did alright. I had somewhere around 45, 46 tackles, seven sacks, 13 tackles for a loss and 20 hurries. I had a knack for getting to the quarterback and taking poor angles and him scrambling."

The 6-foot-4, 278-pound defensive line prospect is moving to California to join his father, Reggie McKenzie, who was hired as the Oakland Raiders general manager in January after 18 years in the front office with the Green Bay Packers.

McKenzie will finish off the school year in Green Bay before transferring to a school in California next fall. He isn't sure what school he'll attend next, but it will be somewhere in the Oakland area.

“I think it’ll be really nice,” McKenzie said of the transition. “I feel like my level of play is definitely going to elevate by playing in California. I’m excited for it. It’ll be a new challenge and I’m ready for it.”

McKenzie feels blessed to have a father so intimately involved in the game. McKenzie’s father was drafted by the Raiders out of Tennessee in 1985 and also played with the Cardinals and 49ers.

“It’s awesome,” the younger McKenzie said. “I get to hear his stories about things he used to do and I get somebody who’s made it and somebody who can tell me what it actually takes. I don’t just hear it on TV, I get it every single day. I love that. I love how it puts a drive in me to make it that far.”

Effort is the big thing McKenzie’s father always stresses.

“You’ve got to put in the work day in, day out,” said McKenzie. “There are no off days. You can’t take any days off. It starts in the classroom, that’s something I hear a lot.”

McKenzie has been able to be productive at the high school level with shear strength, but wants to improve other parts of his game.

“There were a lot of games when I would just overpower offensive linemen,” he said. “I’ve still got to work on my speed. That would kill me sometimes because I couldn’t get to the quarterback fast enough, but my strength definitely helped me. Being able to react to different plays helped me a lot. A lot of teams run quarterback read option, so being able to see if the quarterback pulls it or the running back keeps it, helps.”

McKenzie doesn’t have any offers at this early stage, but is receiving interest from schools across the country including Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Stanford, Tennessee and Notre Dame.

“Oklahoma and Wisconsin are pretty much my two leaders right now,” said McKenzie. “I like those schools a lot, but I’m still only a sophomore, so lots of things can change.”

Education will play a major role when he’s evaluating college options.

“First is if they have the degree I want, which is a bachelor’s degree in business administration,” he said. “Other than that, it’ll be the coaches, the fan base, of course if the team’s winning, that’s a plus. If they have a great coach who is willing to work with me and have awesome fans, that’s a deal-breaker right there. That’s it for me.”

McKenzie doesn’t know too much about Notre Dame, but the Irish are trying to get him to attend their camp this summer.

“I’m thinking about going to it depending on when it is and if I can,” he said. “I know they have a great history and great players. They’re a good team. I like how they play and I like the players when they get to the NFL. I like Notre Dame.”