

Jersey Lineman Interested In ND

Written by Christian McCollum

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[Kevin Wilkins](#) already has a handful of scholarship offers, but the 2014 New Jersey lineman isn't focused on recruiting right now.

"It's going pretty well right now," the 6-foot-4, 275-pounder from St. Joseph High School (Montvale, N.J.) said.

He currently has offers from schools like Rutgers, Boston College, Connecticut and Maryland among others. He's also receiving interest from Notre Dame, Ohio State, Miami and other big-time programs.

"It feels good," Wilkins said of the early interest. "I don't really think about that much because I'm just focusing on wrestling right now. When the time comes, I know I'll be ready to worry about it."

Notre Dame assistant coach Bob Diaco stopped by St. Joseph last week to check on Wilkins and his underclassmen teammates.

"He couldn't really talk to us that much, but I got his card," Wilkins said of Diaco. "I talked with Coach (Tony) Karcich and he said, 'They're really shocked about your size, your height and

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how you can move.”

Wilkins has been clocked with a sub-5.0 40-yard dash and has athleticism uncommon for a kid his size.

“What my coach usually tells the recruiters that come in is that you’re never going to find a guy who can run like a skill guy and still hit like a lineman,” he said. “They say that I have agility like a running back or wide receiver. I don’t run with the o-linemen, I run with the skill guys. I guess that’s what they like, athletic linemen who can run fast, but still hit.”

Some colleges view Wilkins as a defensive lineman, but he’s coached by former Boston College offensive lineman Augie Hoffman, who sees things differently.

“A lot of the schools are offering me for defense, but Coach Hoffman is telling me I’m going to play offense in college,” Wilkins said.

“I really don’t care, whatever gets me on the field. I haven’t talked to any school that’s wanted me on offense yet.”

While position is unlikely to play a major role in his recruitment, relationships will.

“Definitely that family feeling of a school,” he said. “I like smaller schools with a family feeling. I just like to have a connection with everyone and a good relationship with my coaches.”

Wilkins played at New Jersey power Don Bosco Prep his first two years of high school before transferring to St. Joseph and Notre Dame is a school that Wilkins already has a very high interest in.

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“When I played at Bosco, I knew Ryan Grant and he said it had a great atmosphere,” Wilkins said of the former Irish running back. “Last year, I played with Elijah Shumate. I talk to him from time to time and he still tells me, ‘Hey, it’s a great place up here. They’re going to challenge you academically.’”

“That’s what I need so I can stay on top of my game. I don’t know too much about them, but I would love to get out there and see it because Shumate says he loves it.”

Wilkins said he would love to visit South Bend if he landed an offer from the Irish.