

## Holley Talks Irish Offer

Written by Christian McCollum

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[Thomas Holley](#) is still in the process of adding offers, but the 2014 New York defensive tackle will soon shift into the mode of narrowing his options down.

On Wednesday, the 6-foot-4, 290-pounder from Brooklyn's Lincoln High School added Notre Dame, Ole Miss, Maryland and Baylor to a scholarship list that already included the likes of Florida, Florida State, Miami, Penn State, Rutgers, Syracuse and Boston College.

"It's cool," Holley said of all of the offers. "It's fun. It's just keeping me humble. Now I know I have to work even harder, so it's more motivation for me.

"I know I've got a target on my back. Next year everybody is going to be coming after me. They're going to be like, 'Oh, that's that kid that's getting all of these offers. If I do good against him then maybe I'll get some.' So I have to work harder to make sure that doesn't happen and anybody who is nationally-ranked or on top that I knock them down and just get to the top of the top."

College scouts are impressed with Holley's frame and attitude on the field.

"The coaches say I've got an engine and just my strength, my size and speed," he said. "I have

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an engine from the beginning of the play to the end of the play. I'll chase a guy down whether it's a running back or wide receiver. I don't care where the play is at, I'm always in the play. I just work hard."

Holley isn't quite yet in the process of announcing favorites.

"Right now, everyone has my interest because I'm still doing my research and I'm still learning," he said. "This has happened so fast, so I'm just taking everything in. Sooner or later, I'm going to have to start narrowing it down. I'm already beginning to narrow it down a little bit."

Notre Dame is one school that will survive Holley's cut.

"Definitely," he said. "They're definitely hanging around for a while."

Holley comes from the same high school program as current Irish defender Ishaq Williams.

"I know Ishaq is over there," he said. "I never got the chance to really get to know him, but I've heard a lot about him. I know their academics are outstanding and they're a powerhouse football program with great facilities."

Irish defensive coordinator Bob Diaco made a name for himself as a recruiter by pulling in Williams and is looking for a repeat performance with Holley.

"Today was the first time I talked to him on the phone and I got to see him when he came up to the school not too long ago," Holley said of Diaco.

Diaco said that the Irish had been evaluating 2014 prospects and came to the conclusion that Holley is one they want.

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“He said I’m definitely the person they want,” Holley said. “They want me to be a part of their program. They want to get to know me, build a relationship, but hopefully I’ll be a new Fighting Irish. That makes me feel good, makes me feel great.”

Holley is hoping to make a trip out to South Bend soon.

“Definitely,” he said. “I’m going to try to get out there as soon as possible.”

He’s got his eye on some other visits as well.

“I’m definitely looking to visit Florida, Florida State and Miami,” he said. “I might try to visit Ole Miss and Baylor and probably a couple of other schools. I’ve just got to make time for it because I’m still in the basketball season and that’s a lot of traveling to keep up with my books. I’ve just got to make sure I organized my time right.”

Holley knows what he’ll be looking for in a school.

“Besides the football, I want to make sure they have a good academic system so I can get a great education as well as playing football,” he said. “A place with a good campus, a nice environment and just a place where the coaches are going to treat me like family and push me to the next level. I’m not saying they’re working with the intentions to get me to the NFL, but that they’ll definitely make me NFL-ready.”

Holley may start narrowing things down soon, but he’s not going to rush a decision.’

“I’m going to take my time.”