

Irish Still In Mix For Harris

Written by Sean Mele

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When [Drake Harris](#) de-committed from Michigan State a few days ago it released a big fish back into the college recruiting pond. The 2014 wide receiver prospect had turned down nearly 20 other schools in favor of spending his college career in East Lansing, but now he's back on the market and looking at other possibilities.

Don Fellows, who is Harris's head coach at Grand Rapids Christian High School in Grand Rapids, Mich. is close to the situation and has been in constant contact with him throughout the process. Although Fellows accepts some of the blame for the recent turn of events in Harris's recruitment, he believes there's been a mountain made out of a molehill.

"I feel bad because I think some of this is my responsibility," Fellows said last night. "I'm not so much concerned about him (Harris) de-committing and using that exact term, as much as the whole thing has been blown out of proportion."

"From his standpoint he wants everyone to know that he might end up going to Michigan State," he continued. "But he's not committed there anymore so he can have this be an open situation where he can visit a school with the right frame of mind and if he likes it, he can go there and not feel the pressure. It's not necessarily a negative thing toward Michigan State, it's just Drake wants to have a clean slate as he goes through this process."

The slate may be clean now, but some believe it will quickly be filled with the Spartan's instate

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rivals in Ann Arbor.

“He (Harris) is completely open to other schools,” Fellows explained about the Michigan rumors. “I flat out asked Drake why he wanted to do this and if there was another place he already wanted to go to. He told me he wasn’t in the right frame of mind because other coaches felt like he was only committed to Michigan State.”

“He wants this to be an open recruiting process for any school,” he continued. “He felt like it was hindering him a little bit from other schools around the country who wouldn’t talk to him because he was committed to Michigan State. I think it’s all the process and how these college coaches handle it that painted him in a corner by not being able to say he’s available to anybody. He just wants to be able to find his right spot.”

Whether that spot is in South Bend remains to be seen, but the Irish coaching staff is doing everything they can at this point and it looks like the 6-foot-4, 180-pounder will be on campus next month.

“I actually talked to Coach (Chuck) Martin yesterday,” Fellows stated. “Notre Dame has always been one of the schools that Drake is seriously interested in and they’re going to get a legitimate, fair look.”

“I’m going to South Bend to speak at the coach’s clinic in April,” he continued. “Drake’s going to come down with me and watch practice, do the tour, and stay overnight. Notre Dame is definitely in the mix.”

Aside from the drama that seems to have surrounded the four-star recruit in the past 72 hours it’s clear the kid can play football and is a heck of a talent.

“He’s a legit 6-foot-4 and always seems to be the fastest kid on the field,” Fellows said about what makes Harris great. “He runs right around a 4.5 40-yard dash. To have a kid that tall and that fast is one thing, but he has great hand-eye coordination and plays like he’s 5-foot-10 mobility and quickness-wise.”

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“He’s so athletically smart,” he continued. “I was a college coach for nine years and we use a system where he has option routes and he’s reading coverages as they come. A lot of times he has four routes he can run on any play. Whatever school gets him will be really impressed with how naturally athletic and intelligent he is - not every kid has that.”

Not every kid can be as gifted in two sports as Harris is either, although the pigskin nearly took a backseat to the round ball if it wasn’t for some in-school coaxing.

“It’s funny, he (Harris) has always been a basketball player,” Fellows explained. “Football was always a hobby and we had to recruit him from our own school to get him to keep playing football. He made the switch as a 10th grader and realized he was pretty good at football even though he never really had to work hard at it.”

Luckily for Fellows, Harris’s work ethic continues to match his level of seriousness toward the game.

“We’ve seen a completely different commitment level and attitude towards football in the past year,” Fellows stated. “It’s been a tremendous thing to watch as he (Harris) has switched gears and made football his priority. He had 2,000 yards receiving last season and he’s obviously good, but he’s really willing to work at it now.”

Here comes the rub, right? Usually a kid with that kind of talent tends to be a jerk off the field, but Harris is not one you can label in that manner. In fact, Fellows is hoping the de-commitment from Michigan State doesn’t tarnish his reputation too badly.

“When you have a superstar kid at this level sometimes they aren’t the humblest off the field, but we’ve been fortunate because he (Harris) is such a good teammate,” Fellows stated. “He’s kind of a quiet kid and he’s never painted me in a corner as a head coach where I’ve had to discipline him. Sometimes you get kids like him who are arrogant or egotistical, but with Drake it’s all about the team. I think why his stock has increased so much is that everyone just raves about him and the type of kid he is.”

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“I’m really disappointed how this all shook out though, because he’s a really great kid,” he concluded.