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Campo Football Star Commits to Yale Despite 'Bigger' Offers

By Spencer Silva



Sterling Strother Photo Gint Federas

With 13 minutes left in the 2014 season, the Campolindo Cougars needed a miracle. With El Capitan (Lakeside, Calif.) ahead 28-7, it looked as though the Vaqueros would cruise to an easy victory. In the process, they would not only foil Campo's hopes of winning a Division III state title, but also of completing a perfect 16-0 season.

Within the next 12 minutes, Campo scored three times, evening the score. Then, in the game's final minute, Adam Remotto picked up a fumble and returned it 85 yards for a touchdown, and with it secured the Cougars the unlikely of victories. This event is now a crystalized piece of school history, and it's a moment offensive lineman Sterling Strother, a senior this fall, will never forget.

"That was the best day of my life," he said without hesitation.

Earlier this summer, the 6-foot-5-inch, 250-pound Strother committed to playing football at Yale – in 2016, that is. This was a surprise to some, as Strother, a three-star recruit, per ESPN, received scholarship offers from several larger football programs, a list that included Cal, Utah, and Vanderbilt.

The reason? "For me, first and foremost, it's the ability to be a true student-athlete," he explained. "At a lot of high-level, power-five schools – even the schools that are very well-respected academically – there are definitely times at which you're more an athlete than a student."

According to Strother, it's the 50-or-so years after football that makes Yale so

appealing. Like most prospective college students, he's unsure what he wants to study, although he's certain it won't be "aerospace engineering" or "quantum mechanics." Future employment at NASA, it seems, is about the only thing he's ruled out.

It also doesn't hurt that the Bulldogs have made impressive strides in recent seasons. The 2016 class boasts several other three-star recruits and is shaping up to be a special group. Strother predicts they will win at least one Ivy League title during his tenure.

Despite his on-field success, Strother wasn't always set on being a football player. In fact, it wasn't until this past year he decided he wanted to play football instead of basketball in college. Ultimately, it was the camaraderie and brotherhood he experienced on the football field that helped make his decision.

"I started playing football not because I love the sport, but because I love the culture," he said. "Coach Macy compares it to war, how physically and mentally tough you have to be. ... There's no other sport like it."

Interestingly enough, both Campo and Yale employ a zone-blocking scheme that forms the foundation for prolific running games. Campo's stand-out running back Nick Fadelli is headed to the University of Arizona this fall, which means the 2015 Cougars will be dependent on a host of new running backs. The rotation is expected to include Jack Cassidy, Branden Bocobo, and Matt Rehnquist.

When interviewed for this article, Strother made a point of mentioning by name virtually every single one of his teammates. The program has emerged as one of the best in Northern California, and its winning ways have even drawn the attention of the Moraga Town Council, which issued a proclamation calling Jan. 25, 2015 "Campolindo Varsity Football Day."

The team is slated for a short break this summer before the season starts. The expectations will be piled high for the Cougars, but Strother isn't worried about all of this just yet. He's fallen in love with football, and knows that, like life, once play has begun, anything goes. "Once the ball is snapped, it's just ... elegant havoc. You never know what's going to be happening."

Lafayette Little League Team Bows Out in Section 1 Championship Game

By Karl Buscheck

There will be no repeat for the Lafayette Little League 12-and-under team. The squad's impressive summer run came to an end on July 23, as Lafayette lost to Petaluma Valley 13-0 in the Section 1 All-Star Championship Tournament title game in Alameda.

"Repeating is always a lot harder," Manager Jim Huchingson said after his team missed out on the opportunity to defend its 2014 Northern California Divisional crown. That accomplishment marked the first time in Lafayette's history that one of its teams had advanced that far in the Little League playoffs.

"Last year, no one really knew who we were—no one was watching out for us. So, we got to sneak up on people," Huchingson said. "This year, we get everyone's best pitcher. Everyone is waiting to take us down."

Lafayette arrived in the Section 1 championship clash by topping Napa 9-1 on July 19 and edging past Mill Valley 4-3 on July 21.

Huchingson couldn't point to one particular factor when asked to explain how his teams have managed to rack up so many wins over the past couple of summers.

"I don't know if there's any one key to our success out here. I think it's trying to keep everyone on board," Huchingson said. "It's hard trying to keep all 13 kids going for the whole summer. I think one of the bigger challenges is just to keep

everyone moving in the same direction and believing that we can continue to win games."

John Kalil, one of Lafayette's star pitchers, explained that the key to success is the ability of the players to strike the proper balance between work and fun.

"There's definitely a lot of talent on this team, but just the fact that we can stay loose and joke around keeps people from getting nervous and tensing up," Kalil said.

Jason Vorhauer Jr., the club's catcher, agreed with that assessment: "[We try to] kind of stay healthy and be serious, but at the same time, just have fun."

Even when he's not playing, Vorhauer Jr. has been spending plenty of time hanging around the diamond this summer. Vorhauer Jr. has been working as a coach for the Lafayette Challenger team, which is part of a Little League program that gives players with physical and mental challenges an opportunity to participate in the sport.

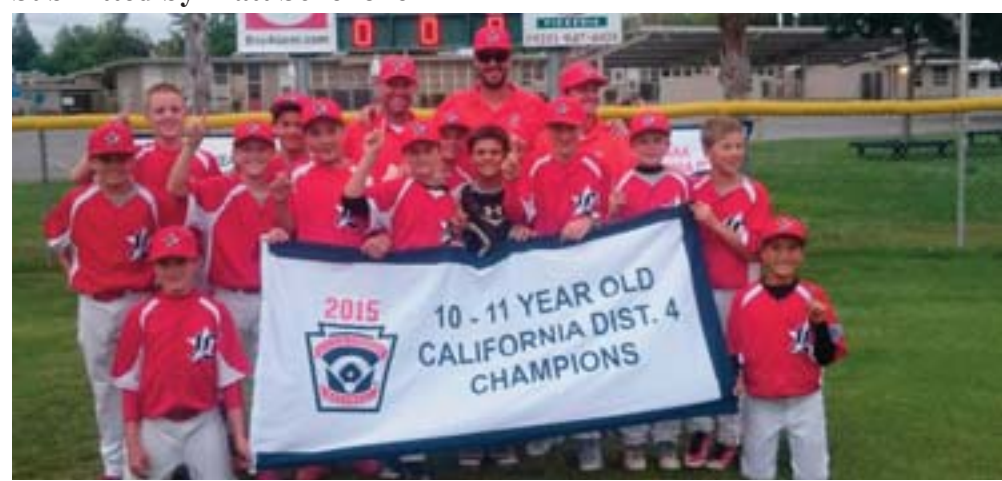
"It's been humbling," Vorhauer Jr. said of the experience. "It helps me realize that what I have is very lucky."

Vorhauer Jr. was introduced to the program by a friend's brother, and he has found working with the Challenger players to be a natural fit.

"I just felt like it was a cool idea," Vorhauer Jr. said. "They're great kids and I'm glad they came and played baseball."

Lafayette 11's Capture District 4 Banner

Submitted by Matt Schenone



From left, bottom row: Will Berrien, Jack Cusumano; middle row: Luke Souza, Graham Smith, Graham Oh, Dante Montgomery, Kyle White, Miles Bergman, Kade Finegold, Jack Wood; top row: Sam Winkles, Mike Castelli, Manager Paul Souza, Will Stryker, Coach Bill Stryker, Coach Curtis Berrien; not pictured: Evan Malmquist. Photo provided

The Lafayette Little League 11-year-old all-star team completed a run to the District 4 championship with a 5-3 victory over Alameda. The team went undefeated in the tournament, amassing a 53-6 run advantage over the competition. Things were tense in the championship game, as the final frame saw Alameda load the

bases with just one out. A swing-and-miss strike three followed by a line-drive laser that was tracked down in left field secured the victory. The District title is one of only a handful in Lafayette Little League history. The team advances to the Sectional Tournament in Petaluma, where it hopes to continue its run.

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