

## **Jan. 31 Football Letter of Intent Eve**

# **After some uncertain moments, Obado happily headed for Delaware State**

**By Rich Fisher**

**Fish4Scores.com**

**Jan. 31:** The Hamilton Township revolving door continues on the Delaware State football team.

Hamilton West product Marcus Ponder played his last season with Del State this past autumn, but a new township product is headed in next fall as Nottingham quarterback Esayah Obado will sign his Letter of Intent on Wednesday.

Delaware State is a Football Championship Subdivision (formerly Division I-AA) program that went 3-6 last fall under first-year coach Kermit Blount.

“The coaches were great and the football program is family based,” Obado said. “In addition I liked the facilities and the campus, and could see myself in a setting like that.”

The signing will cap a long, oft-times frustrating recruiting trail for the Northstars record-setting quarterback.

Obado, Northstars coach Jon “Big Dawg” Adams, and Esayah’s mentor John Stetzick all felt that Esayah was a Division I caliber quarterback and the statistics do little to hurt that opinion.

This season, Obado passed for 1,545 yards and 17 touchdowns and rushed for 525 yards and eight touchdowns, including a record-setting 99-yard TD run. He completed a school record 62.4 percent of his passes. As a junior, he became the third quarterback in county history to throw for over 2,000 yards when he passed for 2,075 and 24 touchdowns.

For his career, Obado threw for 3,690 yards and 42 touchdowns and rushed for 615 yards and 11 touchdowns – all school records. And Adams often said Obado could have more inflated states were he in a system that utilized his all-around abilities more. The coach lauded the QB for staying within the framework.

With D-1 offers hard to come by, Obado was ready to go a different route.

“Mostly Division II and Division III teams were looking at him,” Adams said. “We were looking to go the junior college or prep school route but we got very little feedback from those people.

“The twos and threes loved him. But hell, what’s not to love! He is a great kid and a tremendous athlete.”

A key figure in Obado’s process became Stetzick, who was his coach in the Hamilton Football League and has been his mentor for the past eight years.

“He is friends with my son and, I don’t know, we kind of just took to each other,” Stetzick said. “He was quiet but we always talked to each other. He played quarterback way back then so I guess this was what he was meant to do.”

And Stetzick did his best to make sure every option was explored in getting Obado a Division I scholarship.

“I played right next door at Wesley (where former Northstar Robert Wiggs currently plays) so I knew about Delaware State,” Stetzick said. “When I reached out to them and they showed interest I pushed hard for him to go there.

“If you ask their recruiter he probably got 10 calls a day and 10 texts from me. It’s perfect. It’s far enough to start his next step in life but close enough so we can see him on weekends.”

Considering Obado’s initial response from the Hornets, Stetzick certainly played a big part.

“A while back I sent my highlights to them and they showed little interest but then they began

showing more interest around December and January,” Obado said. “After being invited for an official visit, I saw that they had my academics in their interest and they offered a full scholarship, which was a huge thing!”

What will happen next fall remains to be seen, but Obado is ready for anything.

“They have a couple quarterbacks, and the current quarterback is a rising senior,” he said. “I am not sure if I will be red-shirted, that will be left up to how camp goes.

“All in all I am excited about my new opportunities and I plan to work hard on and off the field.”

Adams has no doubt as to how Obado will far.

Esayah Obado is a great football player, but he is a better human being,” the coach said. “I am very happy that he is getting this opportunity. I know that he will succeed and do great things in their program.”

Just like he did at Nottingham.