

## Jan. 31 Football Letter of Intent Eve

### While visiting New Hampshire, Riese had his (birthday) cake and ate it too

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Jan. 31: Happy Birthday, Mr. Riese!

In a script that you usually see in Hollywood (or ESPN films, at the very least), Steinert High senior Adam Riese celebrated his official entry into adulthood by mapping out the next four or five years of his life on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Riese became eligible to vote this past Saturday, the same day he visited New Hampshire University for his final recruiting trip. The Wildcats program turned out to be the right one for the Spartans' quarterback/Bleacher Creature, as Riese will sign a Letter of Intent Wednesday to attend classes and play football for New Hampshire.

"I never really had a frontrunner because I wanted to weigh all my options," Riese said. "When New Hampshire came in, and after my visit, I knew it was for me."

His other considerations were Stetson, which is starting a new program under former Princeton University coach Roger Hughes, and Kutztown.

"I was talking to (New Hampshire) earlier in my recruiting process and we kind of faded but still kept contact," Riese said. "They ended up calling coach (Dan "The Bridegroom") Caruso last week asking for me to come up and I felt it was a great opportunity.

"I'm a believer of things happening for a reason. Since they came back with interest, and especially on my birthday, it was really ironic."

New Hampshire is a Football Championship Subdivision (former Division I-AA) powerhouse. The Wildcats finished No. 11 in the final FCS poll, went 8-4 and dropped a 26-25 decision to Montana State in the second round of the FCS playoffs.

Because Riese's size (6-foot-1, 200 pounds) is not that of a prototypical college quarterback, Caruso knew some schools would be scared off.

"To be quite honest, the list for Adam was shrinking because coaches were telling him or me that he was too short," Caruso said. "Coaches passed on him and they took quarterbacks that Adam outplayed during our season and playoffs simply because they were taller."

The coach figured some teams would come in late in the process, especially after Riese's outstanding playoff performance. And despite the size prejudice, Caruso knew Riese would eventually land on his feet.

"He did have interest from some other schools and went on some visits, but once he went up to New Hampshire he seemed sold to me," Caruso said. "New Hampshire has a great coaching staff that develops their players very well and they run a very quarterback-friendly offense.

"Adam relayed to me right away that he loved the town and campus. He felt like he fit in with the players, and really got a good feel from the coaching staff."

It sure was quarterback-friendly for outgoing signal caller Kevin Decker, who completed 262 of 380 passes (69 percent) for 3,272 yards and 22 touchdowns. Two other quarterbacks who will return got limited action.

"I think Adam recognizes that he is going to have to battle for everything," Caruso said. "Nothing is going to be handed to him. He is going to UNH next year and that is awesome, but now he needs to go impress and win a job."

Riese is going into it with that thought in mind.

“I believe I have the shot to compete for the role,” he said. “I think they were thinking of redshirting me but I can come off that depending on performance.”

One thing that works in Riese’s favor is that New Hampshire runs a fast-paced, spread offense similar to what he played in at Steinert. That can only help a quarterback who was as impressive with his legs as with his arm over the years.

Riese has been Steinert’s starting QB since the middle of his freshman year. In leading Steinert to the Central Jersey Group III championship game this year (and the first playoff wins in school history), he threw for 2,200 yards and 28 touchdowns with just four interceptions. He rushed for 818 yards and 11 touchdowns and, as a punter, averaged 35.5 yards per punt.

For his career, Riese threw for over 4,300 yards and 46 touchdowns and rushed for over 1,700 yards and 17 touchdowns. He amassed over 6,000 yards of total offense in his career with 63 touchdowns.

“Before Chip Kelly became head coach at Oregon he was on the New Hampshire staff and the offense is basically the same as the Oregon offense with the quarterback being able to run,” Riese said. “The only difference is New Hampshire probably throws the ball a little more.”