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# Preps Plus: Future is wide open for CB's Ade' Jackson

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Like many high school athletes, Ade' Jackson aspires to one day play in the NFL.

If that doesn't work out, Jackson, who has starred in track as well as football at Christian Brothers, has a nice backup plan: medical school

Becoming a physician isn't pie-in-the-sky talk from some wide-eyed dreamer. Anyone who spends time around the articulate senior realizes Jackson's plans are based in reality.

He has a 4.83 grade-point average and mentors area youths about the importance of athletic training, academics and staying on the right course.

Those off-field endeavors have come as Jackson became an All-Capital Valley Conference multi-talent in football and, last spring, made it to the 800-meter final of the Sac-Joaquin Section Masters track and field meet. Making it to the CIF State Meet this spring is one of his goals.

"Ade' is a great role model," said Andre Butler, a CBS assistant football coach last season who has mentored Jackson since he was 9. "He's always motivating his teammates, and he's one of the hardest-working kids I have coached. I definitely think he'll be a (NFL) draft pick some day."

The 5-foot-11, 180-pound Jackson turned down football scholarship offers from UC Davis and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and a walk-on opportunity from Stanford to play football and run track for Penn, an Ivy League school that does not offer athletic scholarships.

He figures Penn, coming off a 9-1 football season and the Ivy League championship, will provide the best chance to broaden an already inquisitive and insightful mind while still attracting the eyes of pro scouts.

"I fell in love with Penn," Jackson said. "The athletic facilities are outstanding. But what attracted me even more is that the campus is right in Philadelphia, so you feel a part of everything."

"You can see a play, eat in a great restaurant or visit the Liberty Bell. I've always dreamed about living in a big city."

Still, it wasn't an easy choice.

In passing on Cal Poly, he skipped an opportunity to play with revered older brother Asa, an All-America cornerback for the Mustangs.

In turning down UC Davis, he won't continue playing close to home in front of friends and family.

In forgoing Stanford, where he had been accepted academically, Jackson passed on the Pacific-10 Conference experience he dreamed of as a youth.

"It was a tough decision," Jackson said. "But ultimately it came down to education. I didn't think I could pass on the chance for an Ivy League education."

A respect for learning is a hallmark of the Jackson household.

His mother, Karen Webster, and father, Harold Jackson, are physicians. He said his grandfather was the first African American to have his own medical practice in the Bay Area.

"I'm thinking about being a surgeon," Jackson said. "I've seen the impact my parents have on their patients. I'm astounded at how much they help people on a daily basis."

Jackson says he's never needed much motivation to do well in school. He loves the challenge and rewards presented by Advanced Placement classes, and although he has yet to receive a high school grade lower than an A, grades are not his motivation.

"I'm a driven student," he said. "I can't say it's been easy, but I see it as honoring the memory of my grandparents, the sacrifices they made and the support they showed me."

Jackson likes to be tested on the track and the football field, too. He has run track since he was 7 and still gets stoked by achieving a personal best in the 400 or 800 meters.

His favorite football position is cornerback, likely where he will play in college.

"You are on an island," said Jackson, who also has played safety, running back, wide receiver and returned kicks for the Falcons. "Every play is a game of inches. You can get beaten for a touchdown on one play, then on the next make a pick and take it for six points and make ESPN (highlights) that night."

It's also a position at which he can share knowledge with Asa, who also excelled at Christian Brothers.

"He's a big force in my life," Ade' said. "He's someone who I have looked up to for a while, a role model who works so hard. To go to Cal Poly and start as a true freshman. ... I'm really proud of him."

Ade' Jackson had 66 tackles, 12 pass defenses and an interception for CBS last fall. He also averaged an exceptional 44 yards on 10 kickoff returns, rushed for 123 yards and a touchdown on 15 carries and had six catches for 99 yards and a touchdown.

But Christian Brothers had an inconsistent 2010, finishing 6-5 overall and 3-2 in Capital Valley Conference play.

"I can honestly say I played with no regrets," he said. "I played hard. I played with injuries. Football is not a game for quitters - and that's what I love about it. It was a great experience."

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