

He's No. 1

Schultz embraces ranking as nation's No. 1 tight end prospect

By Christopher Kamrani
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There were the days when Dalton Schultz lined up as an offensive lineman, ensuring a teammate the opportunity to race toward the end zone because, as a young football player, Schultz stood out.

He was bigger, so he learned how to block. There weren't many alternatives.

"I was always an offensive lineman," Schultz said, "so that was all I had."

Things have changed.

As his football career progressed and his athleticism began to showcase itself, he was shifted to a different position. Still a member of the line at times, Schultz has blossomed as a tight end.

Schultz, now a senior at Bingham High School, is considered the No. 1 tight end prospect in the country, according to Scout.com. He gave Bingham coach Dave Peck a breather when he narrowed his laundry list of high-profile offers to five in late July.

Now it's Utah, Stanford, Notre Dame, Washington and Oregon State.

"I told him he needed to because I'm getting tired of all the phone calls," Peck joked.

But as Peck reiterated, the offers continue to roll in and understandably so. Stanford coach David Shaw was on the Bingham sideline to watch Schultz on Friday (vs. Jordan).

Standing at an imposing 6-foot-6 and weighing 240 pounds, Schultz's frame fits the bill of the modern-day tight end. When he isn't blocking, helping the Miner offensive line open holes for the Bingham running backs, he is out-jumping opposing defensive backs. Schultz leads the Miners, a run-heavy offense, with six touchdowns receptions.

Schultz, unlike many prep stars, embraces the attention he's getting as the top prospect in the nation at his position. Coming from a program like



Dalton Schultz's height and athleticism made him a big target and one of the state's best college football prospects.

Schultz's career

Season	Rec.	Yards	TD
2013	20	362	6
2012	34	490	3
<u>2011</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	65	969	9

Bingham has helped the transition, he said.

"At first it was uncomfortable getting all the attention and stuff, but as time goes on, you realize that not a lot of people have the opportunity like this," Schultz said.

They don't, and offensive coordinator John Lambourne, like Peck and other coaches Schultz has had, understands the strain it can cause.

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LEFT: Dalton Schultz leaps over a Brighton defender to make a catch.

RIGHT: Schultz leaves a group of West Jordan defenders in the dust on his way to a touchdown.

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“Let’s face it,” Lambourne said, “accolades oftentimes are not purely based upon the talent and ability of the kid. They’re based on the hype and everything else that happens. The kids generally don’t see it that way. Dalton has never got to the point where the hype has really gotten to him in a negative way. He’s gone past the peak.”

Which makes Schultz rare, and Peck says he has as high of an upside as any player to roll through the program.

“We’ve put a lot of kids into college and a lot of them have done really a good job, and it’s not taking anything away from any of these other guys,” Peck said. “But I think he’s kind of the whole package when it comes to academics and, physically, he’ll go knock the crap out of you because his demeanor is he enjoys doing that. You don’t get that out of a lot of tight ends.”

Lambourne echoed Peck.

“His blocking is what makes him the No. 1 recruit,” he said. “The tight end position in football nowadays is kind of a lost art. We are ruthless about doing our part.”

Schultz, who boasts a 3.9 grade-point average, has yet to take an official visit to any of the schools in his top five. He said he and his family are hoping to make the trek to Rice-Eccles Stadium soon then on to Palo Alto, Calif., on Nov. 28 for an unofficial visit to Stanford. They’ll let the rest of the trips roll on from there. Dec. 6 in South Bend, Ind., and hopefully Washington and Oregon State after that.

Schultz doesn’t buy into the hullabaloo associated with making a college commitment.

“I’m not doing it for the hype on Signing Day,” he said. “I’m just doing it until I feel comfortable.”

Which means making a decision for himself and taking however long he needs. He won’t be set up in the gym at Bingham High School with cameras in his face and various caps in front of him, waiting for one to be snatched up.

“I don’t like that all that much,” he said.

Schultz is focused on the now, on getting back to Rice-Eccles Stadium as a player and starting off on his collegiate tour with a ring on his finger.