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Clowney a constant in Heisman talk

Devin Washington builds reputation on and off football field

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Devin Washington

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Devin Washington's high school resume reads like that of an involved and accomplished student.

Washington played the piano. He did yoga. He finished No. 4 in his graduating class at Jones High in Orlando, Fla. He volunteered earlier this year to help pressure-wash the exterior of the school.

Washington might be best known, however, for what he did on the rectangular patch of green grass across the street from Jones - and how the South Carolina freshman has represented himself and the Gamecocks on the social media network Twitter.

Washington and those around him are proud of his reputation on and off the playing field.

"He's not your everyday athlete, but he's a normal person," said Kenard Lang, who coached Washington in his two seasons at Jones. "That's how he treats himself. He loves football. He does great in his schoolwork and he's a great team player."

Washington's size, speed, tenacity and motor are what earned him 30 scholarship offers, Lang said. The 6-foot-3, 225-pound defensive end picked the Gamecocks over Central Florida, Missouri, Ole Miss and South Florida, among others.

The first to send in his paperwork on National Signing Day, Washington also is the unofficial ambassador of the 2013 class, singing the praises of South Carolina on Twitter almost every day since committing in May of 2012.

He also shares inspirational messages, opinions on the recruiting process, and interacts with fans and teammates.

"To all you recruits who don't like #USC please give me one reason why? Because there is no place like #Carolina," he tweeted after committing to the Gamecocks.

On Twitter, it seems Washington always has something to say. So, what's he like on the football field?

"I'm not really a talker," he said. "I'm more of a quiet kind. They say you're supposed to be scared of the quiet kids. On the field, I'm not nice. You have to be aggressive. If I'm really into the game, I'm in a different zone and not a nice guy anymore."

Washington had 30 tackles and nine sacks in a senior season in which he missed seven games with an injured foot. He had 55 tackles with 11 tackles for loss and 6.5 sacks as a junior, and 43 tackles with 9.5 sacks as a sophomore.

Washington enrolled at USC in June. He could play as a freshman as a pass rusher if needed, Rivals national analyst Mike Farrell said.

"This kid has got a lot of talent," Farrell said. "Being a hybrid guy who can stand up or play with his hand down, I think it's going to be important for him to play early at South Carolina."

Washington has developed a reputation among Gamecocks fans for those positive musings on Twitter. He's admitted to enjoying public speaking.

Coaches told him they like his motor, use of his hands and how he makes plays, Washington said. They also like that he shows good character.

"They speak to me and can tell I'm not just a football player. I can be more," Washington said.

"Education is first for me. They like that I articulate well and that they can not just use me as a football player but a person who can speak to the media to show what their program is about."

He said it ... on Twitter

A sampling of Devin Washington's posts to his Twitter page (@D_SC5):

... "I think for my age I have some of the deepest thoughts about life. I'm always looking ahead in life."

... "I always keep my academics first because I know there is life after football. From the start I told my

mom she wouldn't worry about college."

... "Some of y'all get wayyyyy to caught up in this recruiting process."

... "Some people don't realize that they may have not woken up this morning. Be grateful and count your blessings."

... "You must face reality, not everyone will make it to the NFL always need a backup plan. But I am sure going to work hard enough to make it."

... "Our Class this year has many guys that are underrated, but that's what makes Carolina what it is. They DEVELOP kids into SEC material!"

... "No matter how hard you try, you will never cause me to lose my character over a social network."

... "God never said this road would be easy. But he did say he will be with you every step of the way."

... "Everyone says don't rush to get to college, but I'm on a mission. I'm ready to get on this #SEC grind."

... "IT'S GREAT TO BE A GAMECOCK!"

... "I can truly say I love public speaking and being in front of the camera. I really want to minor in broadcasting and journalism."

... "Feels to good officially be a South Carolina Gamecock! #ForeverToThee"

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