



For Parkland's Dean, the summer is his only off season

Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

Parkland's Kyndel Dean (5) didn't join the track team until the spring, but ended up being a key contributor in the long sprints (200 and 400) plus the 4x200 and 4x400 relays.

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
FOR THE CHRONICLE

Kyndel Dean of Parkland fully embraces his ability to multi-task as a three-sport athlete. Whether it's winter, spring or fall, he's always working on his craft for that particular season.

It's fair to say that Dean, a 6-2, 170-pound junior, has excelled to the extent where he's viewed as a college prospect in football, basketball and track. At this juncture, though, it seems more likely that he'll pursue football and possibly track at the (NCAA) Division I level.

"Of the three sports, football is my favorite," said Dean, who has a 3.0 grade-point average. "But if an opportunity came up for me to do both (football and track) in college, I would do it."

Given Dean's athletic gifts (speed, sure hands, quickness and leaping ability), it's hardly surprising that he's an all-purpose threat on the gridiron. He's tough to handle as a wide receiver who runs 4.4 seconds in the 40-yard dash and has the speed and agility to make tacklers miss.

Dean, who transferred from Carver after his sophomore year, also has game-breaking talents as a running back and kick return specialist. At times, the Mustangs will insert him at quarterback in Wildcat

formations.

Defensively, his ability to cover one-on-one is sure to get him some serious looks from major college scouts. For now, he has offers from East Tennessee State, Middle Tennessee State, UNC Charlotte and Elon.

"I've coached high school football for 21 seasons, and Kyndel is the most talented player I've seen," said Martin Samek, head football coach at Parkland. "He can score from anywhere on the field, can make all the catches, and he routinely beats double coverage. Not only is he football savvy, but he's very coachable."

"The major colleges like him as a defensive back because of his size, speed and ball skills. I'm confident that he'll attract interest from schools in the ACC and East Carolina. If there's a better pure athlete in Forsyth County, I want to meet him."

On a basketball court, Dean is fearless at the shooting guard position. His exceptional lateral quickness and sense of anticipation make him a superior defender. Offensively, he's at his best when using his quickness to blow past defenders and get to the rim or pull-up for mid-range jumpers. Dean is known for his competitiveness and has a reputation for never backing down from a challenge.

Perhaps Dean's most impressive athletic achievements came during the outdoor track season. Since he plays football and basketball, he didn't join the team until right after basketball season. That's significant in a sport where pre-season conditioning is so crucial to becoming a state-championship-caliber runner.

As a result, Dean, who ran the 200 and 400-meter dashes, plus the 4x200 and 4x400 relays, did not run cross country, nor did he run indoor track. In spite of that, he showed tremendous improvement with a little less than three months of track training.

In the closing weeks of the season, the Mustangs' best long sprinter Lorenzo Graise was sidelined due to a hamstring injury. With Graise out of commission, Dean assumed the role as Parkland's best at the 200 and 400.

Dean shaved three seconds off his personal best time in the 400 (49.01 seconds), while finishing fifth the Class 4-A state championships two weeks ago. At that same meet, he placed eighth in the 200 (22.12) and ran legs on the state runner-up 4x200 and the 4x400, that finished fifth.

"There's no question that Kyndel loves running," said Antwan Hughes, the Parkland track coach. "To come in like he

did, when he did, with no kind of endurance base and still finish fifth at the 4-A state meet was remarkable. His work ethic is amazing."

Darrell Elliott, who coaches Parkland's quarter-milers, admits that he was surprised by Dean's rapid progress over such a short period of time. "If he concentrated on track, he'd run (the 400) in the low 47s at least. I have no doubts that he'll get his share of Division I track offers. Kyndel wants to be good and he has a winner's mentality. Whatever the sport, he has that mindset to give all that he has to give."

When Dean reported for track try-outs in March, he understood the degree of difficulty he faced to make his mark in the 200 and 400 sprints. Parkland's track program has a well-known reputation for its demanding work-outs that pushes athletes to their personal limits. As things turned out, it was the kind of environment in which Dean flourishes.

"Track was a lot of fun because the practices were very competitive," said Dean. "Everybody really pushed me and it helped a lot. Because of that, I got faster because I do not like to lose. Running helps a lot with football, not only with my speed and balance, but also with stride length and how quickly I'm able to accelerate."

3 Storm players sign to play for the University of Northwestern Ohio



Sadeeq Bello, Daniel Page and Corbin Pierce to remain teammates

SPECIAL TO
THE CHRONICLE

THOMASVILLE - A trio of Davidson County Community College basketball players will remain teammates next season as members of the University of Northwestern Ohio basketball squad. Sadeeq Bello, Daniel Page and Corbin Pierce signed Letters of Intent to play for the UNOH Racers during a ceremony Friday afternoon in Brinkley Gym.

"I expect Sadeeq, Daniel and Corbin to do great things at the University of Northwestern Ohio," Storm Head Coach Matt Ridge says of the three players who helped lead DCCC to a trip to the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III tournament during the 2015-2016 season.

Bello, the Storm's starting point guard, was named to the All-Region X Team during his sophomore season in which he averaged 13.1 points per game. His 7 assists per game ranked sixth best in the nation for Division III players. He finished the season with 246 assists and only 84 turnovers.

"Without question

Sadeeq was the engine that made us go this past season," Ridge says. "His speed makes him a difficult match-up for opponents to defend."

Bello, a Greensboro resident, graduated from Westchester Country Day School. He was named to the All-Academic Team for Region X and received his associate in arts degree from DCCC this spring.

"I've been blessed playing under great coaches and with really good players at DCCC. We accomplished a lot this year," Bello says. "I just want to thank God, my family and Coach Adams for the opportunity to further my basketball career for these next two years."

Page, a sophomore center, was one of three Storm captains during the past season and averaged 3.2 rebounds per game. The Sneads Ferry resident and graduate of Dixon High School in Holly Ridge was also named to the All-Academic Team. He is a 2016 spring graduate, receiving the associate in arts degree.

"Daniel has been an incredible teammate for the past two years and is a great example of what we expect out of our student athletes," Ridge says.

"It's been a great experience," says Page. "Coach Ridge really pushed us hard and it actually paid off because we made it to nationals this year."

Pierce, the starting power forward for the past two seasons, averaged 14.1



Submitted photo

(Top left) Matt Ridge, DCCC head coach and Chris Adams, UNOH head coach and athletic director, (bottom and top, left to right) Sadeeq Bello with his mother, Bummy Bello; Daniel Page with his mother and sister, Paulanne Cagle Page and Lani Page; Corbin Pierce with his parents, Camille and Kelley Pierce. (Top right) Ken Mcham, DCCC assistant coach

points and 5.2 rebounds as a sophomore. The Reagan High School graduate also earned All-Academic team honors and was named First Team All-Region.

"Corbin's ability to make threes at 6 feet, 6 inches really helped us stretch the floor," Ridge says. "He made 44 threes for us this season while shooting 37 percent from the three-point line. He also caught numerous alley-oop dunks for us in

almost every game. "I have enjoyed my time here at Davidson, and I'm eager to continue my college career at the next level," says Pierce, who will major in business administration at UNOH.

University of Northwestern Ohio head coach and athletic director Chris Adams attended the signing event. UNOH, located in Lima, Ohio, competes in the National

Association of Intercollegiate Athletics members of the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference.

"They're not only good players, they are the kind of people we like to have in our program," says Adams. "We're elated to have three Davidson County Community College players on our team. I've been a big fan of Coach Ridge ever since deciding to

recruit in North Carolina. He's one of the premier junior college coaches in the state."

Five DCCC basketball players from the 2015-2016 Region X and District H championship teams have now signed to play for four-year colleges next year. Tre Williams will suit up for Claflin University while Isiah Gill will play for Bluefield College.