

## TEN REASONS TO JOIN THE TRACK TEAM:



**YOU ARE NOT AS GOOD AS YOU THINK.** Sorry but this is the truth. NCAA football scholarships go to freaky talent. At Plainfield North we've only had a handful of NCAA Division-1 scholarship football players. Scholarships are rare. Despite the fact that major college football teams give 85 scholarships, less than 1 out every 100 high school football players will receive a free college education. It may not be a good strategy to invest all of your time and effort in the pursuit of such a long-shot. Financial advisers encourage investors to take a balanced approach. Smart people never invest in the lottery. College football players are freaky-big or freaky-fast, or both. The size of your muscular-skeletal system is basically predetermined. Track is the number one way to improve your speed. *Why not play a second sport?*



**SPEED KILLS.** The most important football skill is speed. Like it or not, speed may be the key to getting recruited and the key to getting drafted. It is simplistic and fundamentally wrong to believe in weight gain as your ticket to the big-time. Yes, NCAA football players are big, but they not artificially big. 300-pound linemen are 6'5", not 6'2". 230-pound running backs are first and foremost FAST. Big and slow running backs went extinct 40 years ago. #Speedkills. If you want to improve your marketability, you should join the track team. Don't be an idiot who hires a personal trainer two weeks before a [football combine](#). Anyone who values the weight room more than sprint training probably has thick ankles and suffers from speed envy. Slow guys love the weight room.

Even big guys need to be fast. The top three tackles of the NFL Draft were taken in the first round at picks #2, #6, and #11. All three were huge and super fast in the [40 yard dash](#). #2 pick, Greg Robinson of Auburn was the 2nd fastest offensive tackle in the draft, running 4.92 despite being 6'5" and weighing an incredible 332 pounds. #6 pick overall was Jake Matthews from Texas AM. Despite being 6'5", 308, Jake ran 5.07 in the 40. The speed-star of the offensive tackles was Taylor Lewan of Michigan. Taylor Lewan was drafted #11 by the Titans. When you

watch the 6'7", 309-pound OT run the 40 in 4.87, you can understand what made him a first-rounder. Lewan was the FASTEST offensive lineman in the draft despite his enormous size.

The top guard picked in the draft (the only offensive guard picked in the first two rounds, #33 pick) was Xavier Su'a-Filo of UCLA. 6'4" and 307 pounds, Su'a-Filo ran the 2nd fastest time of all offensive guards, 5.04.

The top center in the draft (the only center taken in the first two rounds, #43 pick) was Weston Richburg of Colorado State, the FASTEST center in the draft. At 6'3", 298, Weston ran 5.10. The New York Giants wanted the *fastest* center available.



**WHAT YOU MEASURE YOU IMPROVE.** We measure everything. We use Freelap to measure fly 10-meter sprints. We time 40-yard dashes. We time 30-meter block starts. Our focus is on explosion, acceleration, and max speed. We time lactate workouts. All data is recorded, ranked, and published. Graphs are used to show improvement. And that's just practice. Track meets pit the best against the best. When you run a 10.65 100-meter dash, every coach in America knows you are legit fast. The whole world knows you have the athleticism to play at Florida State, Alabama, Auburn, etc. *You are what you do.* If you lift weights, you become a weight lifter. If you focus on weight gain, you get fat. If you sprint, you become a sprinter. It's your choice. See an article I wrote last year, "[Inertia and Data-Driven Speed Training](#)".



**YOU WON'T SIT THE BENCH IN TRACK.** I love kids that play in the marching band, but football players are usually better athletes. You are strong, fast, and tough. There is a place for you on our team. If you are not good in track, you probably aren't as good as you think you are in football. Join the team and get faster. We have 18 events. Almost all of our meets have a fresh-soph and a varsity division. Your participation is guaranteed. I will find a spot for you. Unlike the ball-sports, track teams are not breeding grounds for jealousy and pettiness. Your

spot on the team will be based on measured performance, not based on the opinion of your coach. Every kid that's ever sat the bench in a ball-sport has secretly hoped that a teammate would screw up. In track, we cheer for everyone, even our opponents. Track is not a zero-sum game. Your success is not based on your opponent's failure.



**TRACK IS NOT A “TIME ROBBER”.** Ball-sports block out the sun. The time expectations are immense. Some teams practice three or four hours. Some teams require weight lifting before school. Most teams require 25 days of practice in the summer. Do you like selling cards or cookie dough door to door? My track practice will begin at 2:35 and you will be on your way home at 3:25. If you want to stay and lift weights, great. If not, OK. If you want to stay and work on hurdles, great. If not, OK. You can vacation in Florida over spring break because we don't schedule practices on non-school days. We don't have a summer track program. If you want to come to Speed Camp, great. If not, OK. Our fund-raiser is the Fast Cat 5K and 10K, so you will not sell door to door. Track will not block out the sun. You will go home every day with gas left in your tank. Enjoy the spring.



**MIDDLE SCHOOL TRACK AIN'T TRACK.** If you “don't like track”, you don't know what you are talking about. In middle school you did not practice on a track, you practiced on grass. Here, we practice on a 180-meter indoor track and a 400-meter outdoor track. In middle school you competed against other middle schools from Plainfield. In high school, we compete against the best schools from all over the state of Illinois. We run on the finest indoor tracks in the state: University of Illinois, Eastern Illinois University, and The Shirk Center at Illinois Wesleyan. We make two southern trips, Belleville West & Edwardsville, both overnight. We have only one coed meet. You will be treated like men and expected to act like men. We have 21 meets including the Top Times Meet (Indoor State) and the IHSA State Championship, a three-day, two-night trip. The best state championship in Illinois is the IHSA Track & Field State Championship at Eastern Illinois University. No Illinois state championship event draws a bigger crowd.



**YOU CAN BE A VIP AS FRESHMEN. YOU CAN BE A VIP AS A ROOKIE.** We have tryouts and keep between 75-85 athletes. Our 2014 roster included 28 freshmen. If you are a good football player, you will make the team. Last year six freshmen won varsity letters. Try doing that in one of the ball sports. It's not uncommon for freshmen to make the trip to state as a competitor or a relay alternate. Last year, four freshmen made the three-day trip to state as relay alternates. We keep [freshmen records](#). We give [freshmen awards](#). Freshmen practice with the varsity every day. Unlike the ball-sports, freshmen are a part of the varsity program. Our coaches will know your name. You get the same attention as a senior. Our upperclassmen are taught to be good "big brothers" to our freshmen; you are the future of our program. Both of our over-night meets have fresh-soph relays, so our best freshmen will make the trip. In the past five years, we've had three rookies become All-Staters. Jayden Gerber quit baseball as a sophomore and ran lead-off on our All-State 4×1 in 2011. Randy Gordon had never played on a sports team but came out for track his senior year (2011). Gordon ran on All-State 4×2 and 4×4 teams. Like Gordon, Evan Flagg joined the track team as a senior, thinking he would be a high jumper. Instead, he anchored our 2012 All-State 4×4 team.



**YOU WILL BE A PART OF A TERRIFIC TRACK PROGRAM.** We have sharp uniforms with lightning bolts on our sleeves and a tribal tiger on our back. We wear black. Our schedule is as good as any team in the state. Our website, [pntrack.com](http://pntrack.com), is loaded. Pictures are taken at every meet and posted. We have one of the most active twitter accounts in the state (@pntrack). Our coaches are the best. Coach John Singleton was a nationally ranked hurdler and has the longest dreads in the state. Our distance guru, Coach Andy Derks was an IHSA State Champion in the 1600 (1998). Derks ran the 2012 Chicago Marathon in 2:26.23, placing 53rd. Our throws coach, Sean Carlson was an All-State linebacker in high school and coaches the linebackers for the Plainfield North varsity football team. Our jumps coach, Dr. Brian Damhoff, is an A.R.T.-Certified Chiropractor and competed at Lewis

University. If you played freshmen football, you already know me. We speed-trained last summer. You know it's fun. You know my sprinters get fast. #SpeedKills



**ATHLETES CHOOSE TO COMPETE.** Call me crazy but I think football players need to *compete* more than nine times a year. What kind of athlete would choose to practice and train for 356 days and play only 9 times? The 2014 Big Ten recruiting class included 305 athletes from 14 teams. *89% of 2014 Big Ten recruiting class played multiple sports.* 100% of Iowa's recruits played multiple sports. In the 2014 NFL Draft, 222 of 256 players played more than one sport (87%). Four out of every ten players drafted in 2014 were 3-sport athletes in high school. *Only five of the 32 guys picked in the first round of the NFL draft were one-sport athletes.* Alec Holler, track & football coach at Edwardsville says, "If you aren't good in track, you probably aren't as good as you think you are in another sport; so my advice would be to run track and get more athletic. You may think you are getting better with your personal trainer, but you're not. One thing you can't duplicate is the intense competition of a true sport." I couldn't agree more. Call me old-school but one-sport athletes are part-timers.



**FACTS DON'T LIE.** The following comes from a terrific website, [trackingfootball.com](http://trackingfootball.com). I spoke with one of the co-founders, Aaron Hunter, recently. *"Track performance in itself does not always tell us a guy can play football, however it does show inclinations on who does not have the ability to play. Thus track performance is a great indicator of D1 athleticism."*

- Of all 2014 Big Ten football recruits, 59% ran track. 45% played basketball. Only 8% played baseball. 73% of Minnesota's recruits ran track.

- 59% of the players in 2014 NFL Draft ran track. 49% played basketball. Only 6% played baseball.
- The top five quarterbacks in college football all have track backgrounds. [Athleticism Is Key](#)
- Most people consider Georgia's Todd Gurley the top running back in the NCAA. Is it due to toughness and strength? Gurley ran the 100 meters in 10.70 and the 110 hurdles in 13.66.
- Sammy Watkins of the Buffalo Bills was the first receiver taken in the 2014 NFL Draft. Was Watkins #1 because of his soft hands and precise routes? Sammy Watkins is big (6'1", 210) and fast. Watkins was the Florida state champ in the 200 meters running 21.11. Check this [video](#) from five years ago.
- Justin Gilbert of the Cleveland Browns was the first cornerback taken in the 2014 NFL Draft. Was Gilbert #1 because he had good football stats? Justin Gilbert ran 10.47 in the 100 meters and 21.29 in the 200 meters.
- The ESPN #1 ranked high school recruit of last year, Leonard Fournette, now plays for LSU. Fournette was #1 because of his athleticism (size and track stats). At 6'1" 225, he ran 10.68 in 100, 21.57 in 200, 41.37 in 4x1, and 1:26.83 in 4x2.
- The #1 ranked wide receiver in college football is Rashad Greene of Florida State. Why? At St. Thomas Aquinas H.S., Greene ran the 400 in 48.27 and ran on a 41.60 4x1 team.
- Mike Singletary of the '85 Bears was only 5'11" 230 pounds. 5'11" guys don't get drafted unless they have something spectacular to offset their size. How about 6'3" 6" in the shot put? How about running the 4x1 despite being 230 pounds? Some people still think it's all about desire, dedication, courage, toughness, etc.
- Last years #1 pick in the NFL was Jadeveon Clowney. Clowney was a good football player but there is more to the story. At South Pointe H.S., Clowney anchored a 4x1 team running 42.71. Jadeveon Clowney was 6'6" 247 as a high school senior. By the way, Clowney played basketball too.
- The 2014 Alabama recruiting class included two of the nation's top hurdlers. Marlon Humphrey (13.24) and Tony Brown (13.28). They weren't bad in the 100 either, 10.63 and 10.37. Alabama also recruited six shot putters over 50 feet.
- The 2014 Auburn recruiting class included three shot putters over 55 feet and three discus throwers over 150 feet. Braden Smith threw 61'03 and 188'0. Auburn also inked 3-sport athlete Roc Thomas who was a 5-star recruit. Great running backs are great track athletes ... 100 meters 10.94, long jump 21'7", high jump 6'04".
- The 2014 Oregon recruiting class included three big-time sprinters, Justin Hollins 10.52, Tony James 10.52, and Charles Nelson 10.58. Sprinters like these are worth their weight in gold.
- The 2014 TCU recruiting class included six guys who ran on sub-42.00 4x1 teams (41.55, 41.10, 41.29, 41.24, 41.44, 41.24). TCU is currently ranked #7 and leading the NCAA in points per game, 50.4. TCU is scoring 25.3 points per game more than last year. #SpeedKills
- The 2014 Georgia recruiting class included three sub-10.70 sprinters. Nick Chubb was one of them.

This tweet went viral last spring. *Football coaches who don't attend track meets just don't get it.* Every track meet is a showcase of athleticism. You think these guys might be able to play football?

Tracking Football has observed a track emphasis in the South. In SEC football country, skill athletes are expected to run track. When comparing the top schools of the Big 10 and SEC, the numbers look about the same *with the exception of the average 100 meter dash time.* Any track coach understands that 11.15 makes 11.36 look slow. Maybe the attention the SEC pays to track is making the difference.

## Big Ten Conference Recruits vs SEC Conference Recruits (Five Schools from each Conference)



### Big Ten 2014 Recruiting - 5 Schools

Ohio State, Michigan, Michigan State, Wisconsin, Nebraska



Statistics	
Recruits	111
Avg. Height	6' 2"
Avg. Weight	228
Avg. PAI Score	3.1
Avg. Star Rating	3.4
Multi-Sport	93 (83.7%)
Track & Field	67 (60.3%)
Basketball	51 (45.9%)
Baseball	9
Wrestling	5
Other	6



### SEC 2014 Recruiting - 5 Schools

Alabama, LSU, Auburn, Georgia, Texas A&M



Statistics	
Recruits	120
Avg. Height	6' 2"
Avg. Weight	230
Avg. PAI Score	3.5
Avg. Star Rating	3.8
Multi-Sport	98 (81.6%)
Track & Field	75 (62.5%)
Basketball	48 (40.0%)
Baseball	9
Wrestling	3
Other	4

#### Key Track & Field Event Statistics

Event	Participants	Avg Performance
40 yd. Dash (HS)	58	4.80
100 meters	25 of 111	11.36
Shot Put	25 of 111	44'08"
Long Jump	17 of 111	20'10"

#### Key Track & Field Event Statistics

Event	Participants	Avg Performance
40 yd. Dash (HS)	66	4.79
100 meters	24 of 120	11.15
Shot Put	37 of 120	45'09"
Long Jump	22 of 120	21'02"



Note: 40 times avg from ESPN, Rivals & team sites

