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UNC Football Inks 22 Recruits to National Letters of Intent Five First-Team All-State selections among 2004 signees

University of Northern Colorado head football coach **O. Kay Dalton** and his staff announced today the signing of 22 high school recruits to national letters of intent. Included in the Class of 2004 are five players who were named first-team all-state by either the *Rocky Mountain News* or the *Denver Post*. The Bears were able to capture 18 in-state players and landed four out-of-state recruits.

Heading the list of all-state selections is All-Colorado running back Patrick Ealy (5'8", 181 pounds) of Denver, Colo./Denver South HS. Ealy averaged 11 yards per carry and scored 32 touchdowns, while racking up 1,798 yards as a senior. Ealy also returned seven kicks for touchdowns in 2003.

Joining Ealy as first-team all-state selections from Colorado are WR Jerod Ermel (Fountain, Colo./Fountain-Fort Carson HS) and WR Jeremy Ashida (Ordway, Colo./Crowley County HS). Ermel ranked fifth in the state of Colorado with 999 receiving yards. Ashida is a two-time all-state pick and ranked third in the state in overall receiving yardage. UNC also signed OL Abraham (Abe) Medeiros Jr (Papaikou, Hawaii/Hilo HS) and Mark Rodden (Jones, Okla./Heritage Hall HS), two out-of-state players who earned all-state honors in their respective states.

Comments from Coach O. Kay Dalton

On recruiting Division I talent:

"Every kid we signed was recruited by other Division I schools. The players we are going after are top-notch football talents. Having our players go 9-2 last season and ranked No. 19 in the final polls certainly helps us but we sell the program and the University as a whole."

On where an emphasis during the recruiting occurred:

"We put an emphasis on offensive linemen, quarterbacks and linebackers in this recruiting period. I think we signed some top-notch offensive linemen and quarterbacks. We came out short on the linebacker side but we lost those players to other Division I programs."

On the class as a whole:

"Overall, we have a very good recruiting class for 2004. All of the credit should go to the rest of our coaches because they evaluated close to 600 prospects either on tape or in perso. For us to come out with 22 players, these should be elite players that we are signing today."

-- PICK UP UNC FOOTBALL RECRUITING CLASS OF 2004 --

BREAKDOWN: UNC Football Recruiting Class of 2004

Total Signees: 22

By State:

| | |
|------------|----|
| Colorado | 18 |
| California | 1 |
| Hawaii | 1 |
| Oklahoma | 1 |
| Texas | 1 |

By Position:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Offensive Linemen | 5 |
| Wide Receivers | 4 |
| Quarterback | 3 |
| Defensive Backs | 3 |
| Linebackers | 2 |
| Defensive Linemen | 2 |
| Tight Ends | 1 |
| Running Backs | 1 |
| Fullbacks | 1 |

All-Colorado Selections: 1

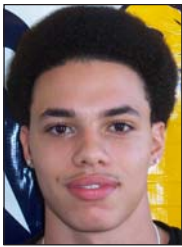
1st Team All-State Selections: 5



Jeremy Ashida, WR
6' 3", 194 pounds
Ordway, Colo.
Crowley County High School

Two-time all-state selection at Crowley County HS ... a first-team all-state (Class A) as a senior by the *Rocky Mountain News* ... averaged 30 yards per catch and ranked third in the state in overall receiving yards ... recorded a 4.5 40-yard dash time.

High school coach: Randy Reeves
Parents: Jerry and Julie Ashida
Birthdate: April 18, 1986



Eric Brown, DB
5' 10", 168 pounds
Aurora, Colo.
Gateway High School

Possesses blazing speed with a 4.35 40-yard dash time ... has the toughness and ability to tackle that has the Bears' coaching staff excited ... should be a significant contributor at cornerback for the Bears at the I-AA level.

High school coach: Jeff Sweet
Parent: Sylvia Morsel
Birthdate: December 31, 1985



Ryan Chesla, TE
6' 5", 220 pounds
Colorado Springs, Colo.
Palmer High School

Big school Player of the Year as selected by the *Colorado Springs Gazette* ... honorable mention all-state pick by the *Rocky Mountain News* ... played quarterback as a senior at Palmer HS ... played tight end as a junior.

High school coach: Rod Baker
Parents: Joe and Lynn Chesla
Birthdate: March 24, 1986



Eric Christensen, OL
6' 5", 296 pounds
Broomfield, Colo.
Broomfield High School

An all-conference performer at Broomfield HS ... excellent run blocker ... anchored Broomfield's offensive line as a senior.

High school coach: Gary Davies
Parents: Dan and Ellen Christensen
Birthdate: Aug. 16, 1985



Joe Douglas III, DE
6' 4", 251 pounds
Aurora, Colo.
Smoky Hill High School

An honorable mention all-state selection by the *Rocky Mountain News* ... menacing defensive lineman for Smoky Hill HS ... has exceptional speed (4.7 40-yard dash) despite his size.

High school coach: Steve Carroll
Parents: Joe Douglas and Debbie Hicks
Birthdate: Feb. 10, 1986



Patrick Ealy, RB
5' 8", 181 pounds
Denver, Colo.
Denver South High School

An All-Colorado pick by the *Rocky Mountain News* as a kick returner ... first-team all-state (Class 5A) selection ... led Class 5A by averaging 11.0 yards per carry and scored 32 touchdowns ... racked up 1,798 yards as a senior ... also returned seven kicks for touchdowns as a senior and 13 kick returns for touchdowns in his career.

High school coach: Ryan Mullaney
Parents: Willie Ealy and Cheryl Payne
Birthdate: Oct. 15, 1985



Jerod Ermel, WR
6' 3", 175 pounds
Fountain, Colo.
Fountain-Fort Carson High School

First-team all-state (Class 3A) selection at wide receiver by the *Rocky Mountain News* and the *Denver Post* ... ranked fifth in the state and first in Class 3A with 999 receiving yards ... caught 52 passes as a senior ... all-conference (Southern League) and *Gazette* all-area performer as a senior.

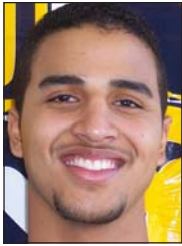
High school coach: Mitch Johnson
Parents: Rod Ermel and Shirley Miles
Birthdate: Jan. 2, 1986



Myles Hayes, DB
6' 0", 162 pounds
Aurora, Colo.
Overland High School

Helped lead Overland HS to the Class 5A championship game as a senior ... rushed for over 1,000 yards as a senior on the offensive side of the ball ... possesses speed, athleticism and size, which are ideal for a cornerback.

High school coach: Tony Manfredi
Parents: Vic and Rancine Hayes
Birthdate: Jan. 1, 1986



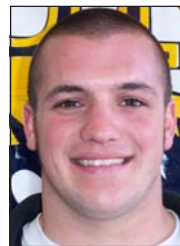
Franklin Henderson II, QB
6' 4", 189 pounds
Aurora, Colo.
Montbello High School

Second-team all-state (Class 5A) by the *Rocky Mountain News* ... led the state in passing with 2,361 yards ... led Montbello to an undefeated Denver Prep League championship ... has pure passing ability and pocket poise.

High school coach: Oliver Lucas

Parents: Franklin and Jesse Henderson

Birthdate: Nov. 5, 1985



Sam Lewis, LB
6' 0", 231 pounds
San Antonio, Texas
Ronald Reagan High School

Second-team all-district selection in the largest district in south Texas ... averaged 12 tackles per game ... served as team captain ... voted his team's defensive player of the year by his teammates.

High school coach: Irl Kincaid

Parents: John and Sherry Lewis

Birthdate: Oct. 3, 1985



Wade Henkowski, OL
6' 7", 360 pounds
Denver, Colo.
Mullen High School

Anchored the offensive line and led Mullen HS to a playoff berth as a senior ... powered the Mustangs to an undefeated regular season and Centennial League championship.

High school coach: Dave Logan

Parents: Derek and Lora Henkowski

Birthdate: Feb. 19, 1986



Pat McNiece, QB
6' 1", 171 pounds
Boulder, Colo.
Boulder High School

Led Boulder HS to a berth in the Class 5A playoffs with a 7-4 record as a senior ... all-county pick ... all-conference selection ... named the conference player of the year.

High school coach: Bob Carskie

Parents: Walt and Sharon McNiece

Birthdate: Aug. 28, 1985



Bryant Jestes, WR
6' 1", 175 pounds
Fort Collins, Colo.
Poudre High School

An honorable mention all-state (Class 5A) pick by the *Rocky Mountain News* ... all-conference performer in football and track at Poudre HS ... ranked 8th in 5A in receiving yardage (avg. nearly 14 yards per catch).

High school coach: Rich Yonker

Parents: David and Sue Jestes

Birthdate: July 11, 1985



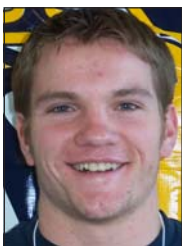
Abraham (Abe) Medeiros, OL
6' 4", 268 pounds
Papaikou, Hawaii
Hilo High School

First-team all-state pick as a senior at Hilo HS ... all-conference performer ... served as team captain ... all-conference track athlete ... overpowering run blocker ... possesses excellent technique.

High school coach: Albert Kawelu

Parents: Abraham & Donna Medeiros

Birthdate: March 16, 1986



Joe Kenney, DB
6' 1", 203 pounds
Colorado Springs, Colo.
Colorado Springs Christian High School

An honorable mention all-state (Class 2A) pick by the *Rocky Mountain News* ... named Linebacker of the Year for the Tri-Peaks League ... flies to the football ... uses great instincts and tenacity to bring opponents to the turf.

High school coach: Paul Passno

Parents: Steve and Mary Ellen Kenney

Birthdate: April 23, 1985



Mike Mullen, WR
5' 9", 181 pounds
Lone Tree, Colo.
Arapahoe High School

Excelled as a two-way player for Arapahoe HS ... able to stretch defenses as a receiver ... also excelled on special teams as the Warriors' punt and kickoff return specialist.

High school coach: Mike Campbell

Parents: Chris and Marie Mullen

Birthdate: June 21, 1985



Mark Rodden, OL

6' 2", 260 pounds

Jones, Okla.

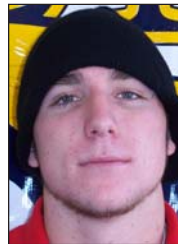
Heritage Hall High School

First-team all-state (Class 2A) selection at Heritage Hall HS ... named the district's offensive lineman of the year ... voted his team's most valuable player ... served as team captain ... dominates the line of scrimmage.

High school coach: Tracy Holland

Parents: Mark and Katherine Rodden

Birthdate: Feb. 15, 1985



Cody Stone, QB

6' 0", 194 pounds

Bakersfield, Calif.

North High School

Helped North HS to a 7-4 record and a berth in the state playoffs as a senior ... the No. 1-ranked passer in the Southwest Yosemite League ... earned a spot on the all-area team ... completed 77-of-115 passes for 1,611 yards and nine touchdowns.

High school coach: Mike Snow

Parents: Bob Stone and Elissa Ladd

Birthdate: Dec. 10, 1985



Sam Safken, DL

6' 4", 260 pounds

Grand Junction, Colo.

Fruita Monument High School

Led Fruita Monument to the state playoffs as a senior ... notched 113 combined tackles and 10 sacks ... like a motor that just keeps running ... would be a perfect contributor to an explode UNC defensive line.

High school coach: Bill Moore

Parents: Mark and Linda Mulleady

Birthdate: July 21, 1985



Tyler Ward, FB

5' 11", 219 pounds

Colorado Springs, Colo.

Cheyenne Mountain High School

A 2002 graduate of Cheyenne Mountain HS ... attended Air Force Prep Academy after graduation ... currently attending UNC as of the spring 2003 semester ... all-state and all-league performer at Cheyenne Mountain HS.

High school coach: Tom Ward

Parents: Tom and Susan

Birthdate: March 12, 1984



Christian Sarmento, LB

6' 1", 228 pounds

Lakewood, Colo.

Lakewood High School

An honorable mention all-state (Class 4A) pick by the *Rocky Mountain News* ... his ability to run sideliel to sideline is unmatched ... a leader on and off the field ... helped lead Lakewood HS to a winning season as a senior.

High school coach: Mark Robinson

Parents: Michael Sarmento and Carolyn Doran

Birthdate: Feb. 5, 1986



Gordan Stant, OL

6' 4", 254 pounds

Littleton, Colo.

Dakota Ridge High School

Second-team all-state (Class 5A) selection by the *Rocky Mountain News* ... first-team all-conference pick ... one of the main anchors on the offensive line for Dakota Ridge HS ... size and athletic ability make him ideal as a Bears' offensive lineman.

High school coach: Ron Woitalewicz

Parents: Mike and Jane Stant

Birthdate: Oct. 5, 1985

UNC Football Recruiting Class of 2004, page 5

2004 University of Northern Colorado Football Signings (22)

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Pos.</u> | <u>Ht.</u> | <u>Wt.</u> | <u>Hometown (High School)</u> |
|------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|---|
| Jeremy Ashida | WR | 6-3 | 194 | Ordway, Colo. (Crowley County HS) |
| Eric Brown | DB | 5-10 | 168 | Aurora, Colo. (Gateway HS) |
| Ryan Chesla | TE | 6-5 | 220 | Colorado Springs, Colo. (Palmer HS) |
| Eric Christensen | OL | 6-5 | 296 | Broomfield, Colo. (Broomfield HS) |
| Joe Douglas III | DE | 6-4 | 251 | Aurora, Colo. (Smoky Hill HS) |
| Patrick Ealy | RB | 5-8 | 181 | Denver, Colo. (Denver South HS) |
| Jerod Ermel | WR | 6-3 | 175 | Fountain, Colo. (Fountain-Fort Carson HS) |
| Myles Hayes | DB | 6-0 | 162 | Aurora, Colo. (Overland HS) |
| Franklin Henderson II | QB | 6-4 | 189 | Aurora, Colo. (Montbello HS) |
| Wade Henkowski | OL | 6-7 | 360 | Denver, Colo. (Mullen HS) |
| Bryant Jestes | WR | 6-1 | 175 | Fort Collins, Colo. (Poudre HS) |
| Joe Kenney | DB | 6-1 | 203 | Colorado Springs, Colo. (Colorado Springs Christian HS) |
| Sam Lewis | LB | 6-0 | 231 | San Antonio, Texas (Ronald Reagan HS) |
| Pat McNiece | QB | 6-1 | 171 | Boulder, Colo. (Boulder HS) |
| Abraham (Abe) Medeiros | OL | 6-4 | 268 | Papaikou, Hawaii (Hilo HS) |
| Mike Mullen | WR | 5-9 | 181 | Lone Tree, Colo. (Arapahoe HS) |
| Mark Rodden | OL | 6-2 | 260 | Jones, Okla. (Heritage Hall HS) |
| Sam Safken | DL | 6-4 | 260 | Grand Junction, Colo. (Fruita Monument HS) |
| Christian Sarmento | LB | 6-1 | 228 | Lakewood, Colo. (Lakewood HS) |
| Gordan Stant | OL | 6-4 | 254 | Littleton, Colo. (Dakota Ridge HS) |
| Cody Stone | QB | 6-0 | 194 | Bakersfield, Calif. (North HS) |
| Tyler Ward | FB | 5-11 | 219 | Colorado Springs, Colo. (Cheyenne Mountain) |