

WR/DB

CHRISTINA RUSSO

#23



HOMETOWN:

Kyle, Texas

RESIDENCE:

Austin, Texas

HEIGHT:

5-3

AGE:

14

GRADE:

High School Sophomore

FAVORITE ATHLETE:

London Jenkins & Ashlea Klam

YEARS WITH U.S. NATIONAL TEAM:

1st Year



CHRISTINA RUSSO AT A GLANCE

- Girls' high school football isn't a sanctioned varsity sport in Texas, so Russo plays for the powerhouse Texas Fury club team.
- Russo lists U.S. Women's National Team members London Jenkins and Ashlea Klam as her favorite athletes. Klam's parents founded the Texas Fury program, which has since produced numerous collegiate athletes. Russo enjoys Jenkins' energy and high effort playing style.
- Russo also competes in cross country, basketball, soccer and track and field. Some of the events she competes in include the 2 mile, 1 mile, 800m, 400m and pole vault.
- Russo won a district championship in the 2 mile for cross country and went to districts in pole vaulting.

WR/DB

KAITLYN REYNOLDS

#14



HOMETOWN:

Cedar Park, Texas

RESIDENCE:

Cedar Park, Texas

HEIGHT:

5-6

AGE:

15

GRADE:

High School Sophomore

FAVORITE ATHLETE:

Josh Allen

YEARS WITH U.S. NATIONAL TEAM:

3rd Year



KAITLYN REYNOLDS AT A GLANCE

- Reynolds won gold medals at the Junior International Cup in 2023 and 2024 with the 15U U.S. Girls' Flag National Team. She was the 15U Girls MVP in 2023.
- Reynolds has played flag football for ten years, dating back to when she was in kindergarten.
- Reynolds plays for the powerhouse Texas Fury club team. She earned Offensive All-Tournament Team honors at the Oakly ICON Alliance Championships in January of 2025.
- Reynolds competes in basketball and track and field for Cedar Park High School. She previously won a district championship in volleyball in middle school.
- Reynolds earned Athlete of the Year honors at Cedar Park Middle School in 2023 and 2024.
- Reynolds was an LISD Middle School District Champion in several individual track and field events in 2023 and 2024, including the 100m and 300m hurdles and triple jump.

C/RUSH MOLLY HAWKINS

#27



HOMETOWN:
Leander, Texas

RESIDENCE:
Leander, Texas

HEIGHT:
5-2

AGE:
15

GRADE:
High School Sophomore

FAVORITE ATHLETE:
Ashlea Klam

YEARS WITH U.S. NATIONAL TEAM:
2nd Year



MOLLY HAWKINS AT A GLANCE

- Hawkins got into playing flag football after seeing her cousins play the sport. She currently plays volleyball for her school in addition to playing flag football for the national powerhouse Texas Fury program. During her time with Texas Fury, Hawkins has won numerous tournaments and championships.
- Hawkins lists U.S. Women's National Team member Ashlea Klam as her favorite athlete because of "her energy, how she's always picking up people around her and everything she's done for the sport." Klam's parents founded the Texas Fury program, which has since produced numerous collegiate athletes.
- Hawkins and her Texas Fury team reached the semifinals of the NFL Flag National Championship in Canton in 2024.
- "Girls can play [football] too. A lot of other states are sanctioning [girls' varsity] flag football, and we don't want to fall behind in Texas. We've already done so much with clubs that we have a strong foundation to build on."

WR/DB

ZOE WINGFIELD

#1



HOMETOWN:

Pflugerville, Texas

RESIDENCE:

Pflugerville, Texas

HEIGHT:

5-8

AGE:

14

GRADE:

High School Freshman

FAVORITE ATHLETE:

Justin Jefferson &
Madisen Skinner

YEARS WITH U.S. NATIONAL TEAM:

1st Year



ZOE WINGFIELD AT A GLANCE

- Wingfield plans to play flag football for Weiss High School this coming year. She currently plays club flag football for the Neighborhood Sports Elite Vipers. Additionally, she competes in basketball, soccer, track and field and volleyball.
- Wingfield won an NFL Flag National Championship in 2024 and has won numerous NFL Flag Regional Championships.
- "I play flag football because I enjoy being a part of a team that is working towards a common goal. I am very passionate about playing the sport of football, and the confidence it instills in me personally."
- Wingfield has been named the Cele Middle School Basketball Player of the Year and Athlete of the Year.
- Wingfield comes from an athletic family. Her mother Sara Wingfield played soccer at McNeese. Zoe's sister, Karlyn Judge, followed in their mother's footsteps and now plays soccer at McNeese. Zoe's father played professional basketball overseas for 15 years after a career with the Texas Longhorns. He played in several countries, including Italy, Japan, Spain, Turkey and Greece.

QB/WR

EMERY BECKETT

#9



HOMETOWN:

Lakeway, Texas

RESIDENCE:

Lakeway, Texas

HEIGHT:

5-7

AGE:

15

GRADE:

High School Junior

FAVORITE ATHLETE:

Patrick Mahomes

YEARS WITH U.S. NATIONAL TEAM:

3rd Year



EMERY BECKETT AT A GLANCE

- Beckett won gold medals at the Junior International Cup in 2023 and 2024 with the 15U U.S. Girls' Flag National Team.
- "I always loved football, so I started playing tackle. My mom wouldn't let me continue to play since the boys were getting bigger, so we had to find an alternative that still involved football. That is when I found Texas Fury."
- Beckett has been playing flag football for four years and has won numerous regional and state championships.
- Beckett plays varsity basketball for Lake Travis High School.

WR/DB

JAMES KUKLA

#1



JR. NATIONAL
TEAM

HOMETOWN:

Cedar Park, Texas

RESIDENCE:

Cedar Park, Texas

HEIGHT:

5-9

AGE:

14

GRADE:

High School Freshman

FAVORITE ATHLETE:

Justin Jefferson & Stefon Diggs

YEARS WITH U.S. NATIONAL TEAM:

1st Year



JAMES KUKLA AT A GLANCE

- Kukla competed at the 14U level in USA Football's inaugural Select Bowl in 2024 and earned All-Tournament Team honors.
- Kukla played tackle football for the Cedar Park Middle School Leopards in 2024 and will play for the Cedar Park High School Timberwolves in 2025. He previously won a district championship with the Leopards.
- Kukla plays in flag and tackle football, 7-on-7 and AAU basketball. He also competes in track and soccer for his school.
- Kukla began playing flag football at just four years old and has a decade of experience in the sport.
- Kukla has won numerous tournaments across flag football, 7-on-7 and AAU basketball, in addition to placing first in several track meets across various events.

WR/DB

CARSON POPE

#0



JR. NATIONAL
TEAM

HOMETOWN:

Rowlett, Texas

RESIDENCE:

Celina, Texas

HEIGHT:

5-8

AGE:

15

GRADE:

High School Sophomore

FAVORITE ATHLETE:

Stefon Diggs

YEARS WITH U.S. NATIONAL TEAM:

2nd Year



CARSON POPE AT A GLANCE

- Pope won a gold medal at the 2024 Junior International Cup with the 15U U.S. Boys' National Team. He previously won the championship and MVP of the 13U division at USA Football's The One Flag Championship in Charlotte in 2023.
- Pope competes in tackle football, basketball and track and field for Celina High School.
- Pope and fellow 15U National Team athlete Colin Murphy won the SHS Youth Flag Football World Championship at Disney earlier this year with the Northeast Dark Knights club flag football team. Pope earned MVP honors.
- Pope's brother plays hockey at an elite level, and his aunt is related to NBA All-Star Jimmy Butler.
- "Flag football is honestly a big deal to me because it teaches you the basics that really matter—like running routes, throwing, catching and playing defense, as well as how to be a solid teammate. If you're trying to go DI or play for a top school later on in tackle football, you've got to build your skills and level up your football IQ. Playing a lot of flag helped me learn how to read plays before they even happen, and that's huge on the field."

QB

VANITA KROUCH

#4

**HOMETOWN:** Carrollton, Texas**RESIDENCE:** Carrollton, Texas**AGE:** 44**HEIGHT:** 5-4**YEAR ON U.S. NATIONAL TEAM:** 6th**“THE TOM BRADY OF FLAG FOOTBALL”**

Krouch is the most decorated women’s flag football athlete of all time and widely recognized as the sport’s answer to NFL great Tom Brady.

Krouch has led the U.S. squad to remarkable success, helping the team earn gold medals at the 2018, 2021 and 2024 IFAF World Championships as well as the 2023 IFAF Americas Championships as starting quarterback and team captain. Under her leadership, the U.S. National Team holds a 33-1 record.

“The flag community would call me the female version of Tom Brady and the success he’s had,” Krouch told the NFL in 2022. “Me, personally, I just play football for myself and for the team and I play my style.”

After taking silver in the 2022 World Games, Krouch and the U.S. Women’s National Team bounced back in the 2023 IFAF Americas Continental Championship, earning a perfect 6-0 record, including a gold-medal game victory over Mexico. Krouch was named MVP of the gold medal game after throwing four touchdowns.

In 2024, Krouch led the U.S. National Team to another gold medal at the IFAF Flag Football World Championships in Lahti, Finland. Krouch completed 160-of-222 passes for 1,874 yards, 39 touchdowns and 23 extra points to just three interceptions as the U.S. tallied an 8-0 record to emerge at the top of the largest World Championship field ever comprised of 23 nations from six continents.

Krouch’s success on the flag football field has led her to several unique experiences as she served as the offensive coordinator for the NFC team at the NFL’s annual all-star game, the Pro Bowl, in 2023, when the game transitioned from a tackle to flag football format.

“For the longest time, thinking about the moment, everything, you’re like, ‘Oh, my gosh, this is a dream come true. Is this really happening?’” Krouch told NBCSports.com in 2023. “But then I started thinking to myself: You know what? None of us grew up thinking of this as a dream to obtain. So really, it’s kind of reversed where I’m living a dream. I get to be a pioneer in this growth of flag football for all and inclusion for all, youth and adults, [women and men]. It’s such an inclusive sport, and I get to be a part of this growth and still actively play. It’s exciting. I’m literally living the dream. I’m very much like, ‘Guys, don’t pinch me. Let me keep sleeping.’”

Krouch had a role in the NFL’s 2023 Super Bowl **commercial** “Run With It,” an ad geared toward the push for increased women’s participation in football. She returned the screen in 2025 as she joined U.S. Women’s National Team teammate Ashlea Klam and Kiona “Ki’lolo” Westerlund, a gold-medal-winning alum of USA Football’s 15U and 17U Girls’ Junior Flag National Teams, in the NFL’s Super Bowl LIX commercial **“NFL Flag 50”** promoting the growth of opportunities for girls and women to play America’s favorite sport.

Krouch, Klam and Westerlund, who played the lead role in the commercial, shared screen time with NFL Legends Marshawn Lynch and Pat McAfee, and current NFL All-Pros Myles Garrett and Justin Jefferson.

Through efforts like their “NFL Flag 50” campaign, the NFL hopes to inspire all 50 states to sanction girls’ high school flag football as a varsity sport.

**ROUND BALL**

Krouch’s journey in sports began long before her start in flag football. Krouch started playing basketball in the fourth grade and eventually earned a scholarship to play at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. She played four seasons (2000-03) at SMU, winning a Western Athletic Conference Championship and earning an appearance in the NCAA Tournament as a freshman.

After college, Krouch played semi-pro basketball with the Dallas Diesels before making the transition to flag football. Her nearly two-decade flag football career started after she did an internet search for rec leagues in the Dallas area and began playing 4-on-4 flag in a men’s division.

“I play flag football because it’s empowering and inclusive,” said Krouch. “I feel women can do all the things a guy can do. Plus, flag solves three problems for me – fulfilling my desire to compete, exercise and be social.”

FLEEING PERSECUTION

Originally from Cambodia, Krouch’s family migrated first to the Philippines (where Vanita was born) and then to the United States when she was two months old, escaping from the deadly Khmer Rouge regime.

Krouch’s mother, Phonnary, was critical to keeping her family together in a time of tremendous difficulty. “In a nutshell, my mom is an amazing woman,” Krouch told NBCSports.com “On the journey, she had a lot of trials, tribulations, ... and after our dad left us, it was just mom and four kids in this little one-bedroom apartment. So, it was a challenge. I’m just so amazed by her strength and will to never give up.”

She credits her family’s inspirational journey as the motivation behind her many achievements and uses it to continue to break barriers in sport.

“I’m just thankful, honestly, that my mom allowed me to break the Asian culture barriers of a woman playing sports because that’s not easy,” she continued in the NBCSports.com interview. “She faced a lot of backlash from the community. But she said, ‘Hey, my child’s making good grades. She’s healthy, she’s good. She’s staying off the streets. I don’t see a problem.’ And she just let me do it. I was just lucky to have a mom that let me spread my wings.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHERS

When she’s not competing against the world’s best flag football athletes, Krouch is helping to shape the lives of children in her community. Krouch has been a physical education teacher for 20 years and is currently teaching at La Villita Elementary in Irving, Texas.

“My work as a P.E. teacher is beyond fulfilling,” Krouch said. “I feel like I haven’t really worked a day in my life because I get to laugh and smile and play and encourage my kids daily. I know that for some of them, I will be the only smile or hug or high five they get and it’s important to me they feel seen and nurtured and loved. I enjoy teaching them how to work with a team and develop their basic motor skills and expose them to various sports and activities to hopefully instill a love for a healthy lifestyle.”

Krouch’s elementary school physical education teacher Toni Neibes was instrumental in her sports and life journey. Neibes, who Krouch calls a “second mom,” signed Krouch up for soccer in third grade, paid for her entry fees and helped get her to practice. Krouch wears her No. 4 jersey to honor Neibes and her contributions to Krouch’s getting started in sports. Neibes wore No. 4 as an athlete as well.

“I see Toni in me when I teach because she taught with tough love and always expected the best effort of me and not just enough to be the best compared to others,” said Krouch. “She pushed me to reach my true potential and capabilities. Without Toni, I don’t think I’d be me at all. She believed in me, helped nurture my love of sports and taught me how to be a more well-rounded person. Without Toni, I truly believe I would be a different human on and off the field.”

In addition to soccer, Krouch competed in basketball, track and field and volleyball in high school.



DB/WR

ASHLEY EDWARDS #2



HOMETOWN: San Antonio, Texas

RESIDENCE: San Antonio, Texas

AGE: 35

HEIGHT: 5-5

YEAR ON U.S. NATIONAL TEAM: 3rd



BALL HAWK

Edwards turned in one of the most dominant defensive performances at the 2024 IFAF Flag Football World Championship in Lahti, Finland as she tallied five interceptions in a game against the Finnish National Team.

Edwards finished the tournament with eight total interceptions, helping the U.S. National Team emerge with a gold medal from a field of 23 women's national teams from six continents.

"IRON SHARPENS IRON"

Edwards regularly trains with fellow U.S. National Team athlete Madison Fulford in San Antonio. Edwards says Fulford is the best player she's ever lined up against and training together has made her a better player.

"Madison and I train together at least five times a week between lifting sessions and field sessions," Edwards said. "It's a very common saying for us that 'iron sharpens iron.'"

The pair often competes in one-on-one drills and has to be dialed back by their trainer.

"Our coach always has to reiterate that they are professional reps. No one needs to get hurt, but we still somehow always find ourselves battling to the ground or ending the session with scratches," Edwards said. "Honestly, we push each other physically but also mentally and strategically. We've both benefited immensely from training together."

HIT THE LINKS

Outside of flag football, Edwards has several hobbies, including golfing. She picked up the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic to stay active.

"My close friends and I were looking for some way to stay active, and walking the course outside allowed us to be together and to still compete in something," Edwards said. "It took some time, but I'm a decent player now. I can shoot mid to high 80s."



FROM BASKETBALL TO FLAG

Edwards played basketball at Central High School in San Angelo, Texas before playing in recreational flag football leagues in college and ultimately trying out for the U.S. National Team.

Edwards' experience in high school basketball helped motivate her to be the best version of herself in flag football.

"I wasn't a starter and didn't get very much playing time. What I've taken from that experience is how to be better now than I was then," Edwards said. "High school sports taught me that 50 percent effort results in average play, so I've tried to learn from that. I want to train harder so I can be the strongest and fastest version of myself while also perfecting my craft in the game with continuous reps. Even that is not enough. I need to know the strategy behind the game to combine with the physical work so I can play smart."



FOR THE LOVE OF DOG

Edwards prized possessions are her two dogs — German shorthaired pointers named Reese and Rory.

"My family always had dogs when I was growing up, so it's such a needed piece for me," Edwards said. "We got Reese eight years ago, and she has been so amazing that we got her a little brother this past year. What we didn't realize when we got Rory, was that the dogs shared the same birthday — Sept. 19."



RSH/WR

ADDISON “ADDIE” ORSBORN #17



HOMETOWN: Round Rock, Texas

RESIDENCE: Ottawa, Kan.

AGE: 22

HEIGHT: 5-4

YEAR ON U.S. NATIONAL TEAM: 3rd

“I HAVE A DAUGHTER WHO CAN PLAY”

Orsborn’s introduction to flag football wasn’t exactly planned. She found herself traveling to play in a tournament after her mother volunteered her to fill in for a local team that had an open spot.

“My mom got me started on flag football when I was eight,” Orsborn said. “Her boss needed one person to play in a tournament or else their team couldn’t play. My mom said, ‘Oh, I have a daughter who can play,’ even though I had never played flag before. I played in that tournament and haven’t stopped since.”

Flag wasn’t the only sport Orsborn played while growing up. She started out with soccer and basketball, continuing to play the latter in high school. Orsborn also picked up baseball because her school didn’t offer softball. The team played her in center field and as a pinch runner to maximize her speed.

Orsborn’s family’s athletic background played a role in her trying out various sports. Her mother played softball in high school, while her dad was a wrestler at Kansas State. Orsborn’s brother also played multiple sports in high school, participating in the cross country, swimming and tennis programs.

While Orsborn enjoyed playing baseball and basketball, it was flag football that opened the door for her to play at the college level at Ottawa University in Kansas.

FINDING A HOME IN FLAG

Flag football is more than just a hobby for Orsborn and many of the other elite athletes pursuing the game at an international level. However, the sport is also an outlet for her to escape everyday concerns.

“It’s an escape. Most people have different escapes like painting or drawing. This is my form of that,” Orsborn said. “I can come out here and I don’t have to pay attention to the bad things going on in the world or the homework I have to do when I get back. I just get to be myself and do something that I’m genuinely good at.”

Flag football also helped Orsborn meet one of her longest-tenured teammates: three-time U.S. National Team athlete and Keiser University star Ashlea Klam.

“I played with boys for a bit when I first got into flag football, but I finally got on a team with Ashlea Klam,” Orsborn explained. “We played together and started going to nationals together. We’ve been playing since I was 11 and she was nine.”

Orsborn even developed a pre-game ritual with Klam’s mother, Amber. Orsborn and Amber will both eat a green M&M before games. Green is Orsborn’s favorite color, and she swears the green M&M’s taste the best.



REIGN OF DOMINANCE

Orsborn began her college flag football career at Ottawa University (Kan.) during the 2022 season. She has been a part of four out of Ottawa’s five consecutive NAIA National Championships. The program’s most recent National Championship came May 8, 2025 in Riverside, Mo., with a 30-24 victory over Keiser University. Ottawa is building a dynasty during the early years of women’s college flag football.

One of the driving forces behind Orsborn attending Ottawa and the program’s outstanding success is head coach Liz Sowers. A former U.S. National Team athlete in women’s tackle football and an assistant coach on the 2023 U.S. Women’s Flag National Team, Sowers’ love for the game and experience made it easy for Orsborn to connect with her.

“I went to Ottawa because of the coaching staff,” Orsborn said. “I appreciate their love for the game. I also had a strong connection with head coach Liz Sowers. My senior year of high school, my mother had a stroke. That was hard to navigate, especially being a young adult trying to figure out where to go to school. I was scared to leave her because I wanted to help take care of her. I grew really close to Liz who had gone through something similar, and she was there to help with my mom. I started watching her coaching style and really fell in love with it.”

Orsborn has earned First Team All-KCAC honors during each of her four seasons at Ottawa and was the NAIA National Invitational Championship Game MVP in 2022.



GROWING THE GAME THROUGH KINDNESS

Like most sports with pathways to play at the college and international levels, flag football is a highly competitive sport. Sometimes emotions can take over, but Orsborn keeps the game in perspective. She believes the sport will grow in popularity as athletes uplift and encourage each other.

“Kindness on and off the field is really important,” she said. “Since we’re all very competitive, sometimes people forget we all come from different places and backgrounds. This is an escape for the majority of us. You have to remember to be kind to people on and off the field. Encourage other people, even if somebody is on the other team but they’re doing well. Spread the game and let people know that we’re all here for the same reason.”

As an athlete who started playing flag football on boys’ teams, Orsborn is excited to see how much the sport has grown in the past decade. The game creates new opportunities every year for athletes of all ages. Orsborn believes flag football’s community is one of the reasons why the game continues to grow.

“It’s insane how flag football has grown,” Orsborn said. “That’s another reason why I tell people to be kind. You want the flag community to be a good community to be a part of. We’re welcoming of anybody because the sport has opened doors for a lot of us. I wouldn’t have the chance to go to the Olympics if it wasn’t for flag football. We should be positive, welcoming and let anybody try it. We’re all here to make history.”



DB/WR

LANEAH BRYAN #25



HOMETOWN: El Paso, Texas

RESIDENCE: El Paso, Texas

Age: 289

Height: 5-4

YEAR ON U.S. NATIONAL TEAM: 3rd

PRONUNCIATION:

LANEAH Bryan (Luh-NAY-ah)



A STAR ON THE HARDWOOD

Before finding flag football, Bryan was a standout on the hardwood at Franklin High School in her hometown of El Paso, Texas. Bryan averaged 20.8 points, 5.5 rebounds, 3.3 assists and 3.5 steals in her senior season (2013-14) for the Cougars, who won 20 games and won the Region 1-5A title. She was named District 1-5A MVP for her efforts and the year prior earned the El Paso Times' All-City MVP. She began her high school career at Volcano Vista High School in Albuquerque, N.M., leading the Hawks to the 5A state championship her sophomore season (2011-12).

Bryan went on earn a basketball scholarship at the University of New Mexico, playing four seasons (2014-18) for the Lobos and seeing action in 121 career games.

"Basketball was a big part of my life for many years, and I appreciate all the lessons it taught me on and off the court," Bryan said. "I was blessed to have great coaches and teammates that really helped shape me into the player and person I am today."



MOM'S INFLUENCE

Bryan says her mom, Sharon, is the biggest influence in her life.

"She is one of the biggest influences in my life for a lot of reasons, but one of the biggest things I got from her is her resilience," said Bryan. "When I was younger no matter what was going on – in good times or bad times – she always kept a smile on her face and showed up for my sister and me. That motivates me every day to show up and be the best I can be."



MAKING THE MOVE TO FLAG

Bryan made her first foray into flag football following college, playing in a local league in El Paso.

"I've always loved competing and after completing my collegiate career I had to find the next thing to challenge myself," she said. "For me flag quickly became my new obsession and I fell in love with the game fast."

"Football was my first love, but where I lived there weren't opportunities for girls in football, so I chose basketball which I quickly fell in love with. After that chapter came to an end, I found flag football, and the rest was history."

Bryan has only been playing flag football for six years, but she has made the most of her time, first earning a spot with U.S. National Team in 2023 and helping the team to a gold-medal winning performance in the IFAF Americas Continental Championship over Mexico.

In that tournament, Bryan helped the U.S. to a perfect 6-0 record, tallying seven interceptions, including one in the gold medal match.

"That was the most fun game I've ever played in," Bryan told El Paso's KTSM-TV in 2023. "I've played college basketball, which was an amazing opportunity, but playing against Mexico in that championship game, the atmosphere was insane."

In 2024, Bryan returned for her second consecutive season with National Team, serving as a key cog on the U.S. defense that helped the team to a Gold Medal after posting an undefeated 8-0 record to emerge at the top of a field of 23 women's national teams from six continents.



TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

In addition to her flag football success, Bryan has had success off the field. She is the co-owner of MountainStar Solar and G.O.A.T. Roofing and Construction in El Paso.

"I worked for another roofing and solar company in the past, and I loved working with homeowners and doing the job the right way," Bryan said. "I love being my own boss. It does come with certain challenges, but ultimately has made me better. What I love most about it and what brings me the most joy, is providing an opportunity for our employees that can change their lives and help provide for their families. We really try to create a culture of growth in our work, but also as people."

WR/DB

TYLER DAVIS #0



HOMETOWN: Oakland, Calif.

RESIDENCE: Austin, Texas

AGE: 34

HEIGHT: 5-10

YEAR ON U.S. NATIONAL TEAM: 1st

“THE SEA OF HANDS”

Davis’s father is former Oakland Raiders running back Clarence Davis, who made one of the most famous catches in NFL history during a 1974 AFC Divisional Game against the Miami Dolphins. **The play – know as “The Sea of Hands” was ranked the No. 17 play in NFL history on the “NFL 100 Greatest” show.**

With thirty-five seconds left in the game and the Raiders trailing the Dolphins 26-21, the Raiders had the ball, first-and-goal at the Miami eight-yard line. Raiders quarterback Ken Stabler looked for his primary receiver Fred Biletnikoff, but he was covered, as was fullback Marv Hubbard, his second option on the play. Finally, as Dolphins defender Vern Den Herder, grabbed onto Stabler’s legs, the QB tossed the ball towards Davis who was covered by three Miami defensive players.

As Raiders.com described it:

In a “sea of hands,” Miami safety Charlie Babb and linebacker Mike Kolen fruitlessly extended their fins with the Raiders running back also stretching out his hands that were characterized by friend and foe as notoriously bad. But this time, Davis was able to outmuscle the defenders, clutching the pigskin with both hands and pulling it tightly to his chest as he fell to the turf.

Davis played for the Raiders from 1971-78 after being selected in the fourth-round of the 1971 NFL Draft out of USC. He was part of the Raiders Super Bowl XI championship team.

“My dad is the reason I wanted to play football,” Tyler said. “He wasn’t able to teach me everything because he had a life-changing stroke when I was one, but to see him play, see his impact, hear old stories and see his memorabilia, talk to him about certain things helped me.”

Davis wears two pendants that his father wore while playing – a No. 28, signifying the elder Davis’s jersey number with the Raiders, and a Raiders logo.

“These pendants are what he wore and this is how I carry him around, because I don’t get to see him all the time.” said Davis.



PLAYING FOOTBALL ACROSS THE WORLD

Before playing flag football, Davis played tackle football, first at University City High School in St. Louis, Mo., and then at Missouri Valley College.

Davis is one of the best players in Missouri Valley College history, earning All-Heart of America Athletic Conference first-team honors each of his four years at the school, and taking home the conference’s defensive player of the year award in 2012. He also earned All-America honors in 2012 from the American Football Coaches’ Association.

After college, his football career took him across the globe. He began his professional football career in 2014 with the Munich Cowboys of the German Football League (GFL) and earned GFL MVP honors with the Kiel Baltic Hurricanes in 2015, seeing action on both sides of the ball and notching 94 receptions for 1,733 yards and 24 touchdowns and adding six interceptions on defense.



His play in the GFL led to the Miami Dolphins signing Davis to a reserve/future contract in January 2016. After his stint with the Dolphins, Davis moved to the CFL, seeing action with the BC Lions.

Davis’ international experience in tackle football should make him right at home with the U.S. National Team where international travel is commonplace.

“Football has been an outlet for me to travel the world on somebody else’s dime, and it’s been an amazing experience,” Davis said. “I’ve lived in three different countries, two different continents and learned a lot about different cultures. Now, flag has opened up even more outlets for me.”

FROM TACKLE TO FLAG

Davis made the transition to flag football after a friend from Austin, Texas approached him about playing in a local league.

“I said why not?” Davis recalled. “We got a bunch of friends together and went to play in a local league in Leander (Texas) and I went off in our first game.”

Davis began considering where flag could take him, and that he could potentially earn a spot on the National Team after traveling around the country and seeing how his talent stacked up at some of the biggest and best tournaments in the country.

Davis met National Team head coaches Jorge Cascudo and Pat Alley at a tournament in Nashville in 2024 and put together strong performances in front of them. Alley, who was coaching the Dallas Ocelots of the AFFL at the time, invited Davis to the team’s tryouts where he made the team’s 12-man roster.

“That’s where the connection between Pat and I came from and from there, I was able to earn an invite to National Team Trials,” Davis said.