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McSteen's role worth the wait

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A common comparison that is often associated with transitioning from high school to college football is that the change is similar to playing a video game on the easiest level for your entire life, and then suddenly switching to the hardest level.

This transition can often be a tough one; so tough in fact that college athletics allow students to grow accustomed to the heightened level of competition by "redshirting," sitting out a year of competition without losing a year of eligibility.

Dylan McSteen, a standout offensive lineman at Campbell University, took that route. The three-year letter winner at Ashley High School, redshirted his first year at Campbell, an experience he says was extremely beneficial towards his development. "I enjoyed (the redshirting process) because it gave me a chance to develop," McSteen said. "It was definitely a change of pace. It really let me settle in and get used to things."

The year of waiting paid off, as McSteen has become a crucial part of a young but talented Campbell offensive line that is returning all five starters from last season. As a redshirt freshman, McSteen started the final seven games of a disappointing 2012 campaign, in which the team started 1-1 and finished 1-10. This year, the Fighting Camels have started 1-2, but McSteen has higher expectations.

"I think this year we just need to win the games we're supposed to," McSteen said.

"Last year, I felt like we would play well but let the game get away in the end. If we can consistently play well for all four quarters, we'll be a lot better."

McSteen has had equal amounts of success in the classroom, being named to the 2011 and 2012 Pioneer League Academic Honor Roll. For the business major, the accomplishment is just as important to him as any on-field achievement.

"Academics are hugely important, and being a student obviously comes first. You hit the books hard, and it'll pay off," McSteen said.

While McSteen still has a great deal of football in front of him, that hasn't stopped him from thinking about the future. He would like to concentrate on banking, and Campbell's extensive undergrad program was one of the major draws.

McSteen hasn't forgotten about his Wilmington roots, however, and says he still frequently checks up on how the Ashley football team is doing.

"I'm still close to some of the players there," McSteen said, "I'll always text them to see what's going on. I have a pretty good relationship with the program. They enjoy having me around and I enjoy watching the kids grow."



Former Ashley standout Dylan McSteen starts on the offensive line at Campbell.

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