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## **(Neb.)- Eagles Football To Bring In 49 Players**

By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 02/08/2019 12:48 PM

CHADRON, Neb. -- As the national signing period opened last Wednesday, February 6, Chadron State College football has added 49 new names to its roster for the fall, over the past three days. Thirty-three signed National Letters of Intent to play for the Eagles in 2019, while another 16 were able to secure preferred walk-on status.

"I'm extremely excited about the class," said CSC Head Football Coach Jay Long. "We addressed immediate needs, and we found some players that will replace next year's graduating class. A lot of them will develop into Eagles. We're also glad to provide an opportunity for 16 players to join the Eagles as preferred walk-ons. We've had numerous walk-ons over the years become great players for us."

The class features 31 players who earned some form of postseason honors such as all-state or all-league recognition. Seven played in state championship games over the past couple of years. Three are transfer students from junior colleges. And while the lion's share are from the four-state region making up CSC's core recruiting area, another 11 come from the east or west coast. Many are former Chadron State campers. In addition, there are several who stood out enough as high school players to garner notice from Division I programs and national recruiting services.

Morgan Fawver, Baily Hood, Zane Musgrave, Cade Payne, Keegan Reifschneider, Clark Riesen, and Carter Terry are the seven Nebraskans who have signed NLI's. Hood is a legacy whose father played on the defensive line for the Eagles. Reifschneider was on the 2018 Scottsbluff team that made the state final for the first time since 2000. Riesen is a Chadron native, and Terry played for coach Kevin Stein, brother of CSC Offensive Coordinator Chris Stein, at Grand Island Northwest. Payne's brother Denton is a productive defensive lineman currently

In addition, another five players from the Cornhusker state are preferred walk-ons. They are Dan Dunbar and Jake Lemmon of Chadron, Ephroen Lovato of Minatare, Jarret Pieper of Hay Springs, and Levi Wilson of Hershey. Lovato owns the NSAA playoff record of 390 yards in a single game. Pieper helped his Hawks squad to its first-ever state title game appearance.

From Colorado comes the biggest haul of recruits. Fourteen of them, including four preferred walk-ons came from the Rocky Mountain State. Ethan Fray, Layne Green, Isaac Harris, Drake Holdren, Jackson Hoops, Chase Mestas, Isaiah Meyers, Amos Morrison, Gabe Perkins, and Jalon'e Rice are the nine who signed on scholarship. Green, Hoops, Meyers, and Morrison all played for state champs. Green also twice earned the Colorado Eight-Man Player of the Year award.

Preferred walk-ons from Colorado include Bryson Long of Peetz, the Colorado Six-Man Player of the Year, as well as Austin Stauffer of Kremmling, Greg Horton of Fountain, and Trevon Wehrman of Kersey. Peetz's Bulldogs won the state title in 2017.

The Wyoming class is also a large one and a talented one. There are Kameron Mellon, Clayton Iacovetto, Clancy Gines, and Trevon Smith are four elite players from the state who are now on scholarship at CSC. Iacovetto earned his conference's Lineman of the Year award, and Smith earned the same distinction for all of 4A football, the highest classification in the state. Gines was the Six-Man Defensive Player of the Year.

Cortland Barker of Farson-Eden will walk on, joining teammate Gines, and Wyatt Crane of Wheatland will pair up with fellow Bulldog Iacovetto to become Eagles. The two remaining Cowboy State walk-ons are David Johnston of Gillette and Cade Schwarzkopf of Torrington. Schwarzkopf and his team played for state titles each of the past two seasons

A small but promising group are from South Dakota. Dillon Woods of Rapid City's St. Thomas More High follows a tradition of Eagles to come from that school. Hot Springs' Morgan Harkless, Brand Baker, and Andrew Wendland are local prospects. Wendland holds the Nebraska all-class single-game state receiving record of 365 yards from his time in Crawford as a junior.

Rounding out the class are seven players from Florida, three from California, and one from New York state. The Floridians are Tariq Ballinger, William Bradford, Jr., Jason Campbell, Eldridge Franklin, Deon Jones, Harvey Reynolds, and Trayon Russell, all from the southern end of the Sunshine State. Luke Manos, Devontae Massey, and Torren Ward hail from California. Justin Calderon is the rare Empire State native who will join the Eagles. Ballinger, Calderon and Massey are all junior college transfers who the coaches expect to make a major impact immediately on the offensive line and in the defensive backfield.

"I also want to thank some people that helped make this class a success," added Coach Long. "First of all, I thank our coaches for all their hard work and travel, and the professors on campus for taking the time to meet with all the recruits. The food service staff took care of us on visits, and the admission staff was extremely flexible. Our community was most welcoming to all of them."

In addition to the signees, four mid-year enrollees have already been added to the roster. They are junior college transfers Jeremiah Gutierrez of Long Beach, California, and Aaron Howard of Los Angeles, Armon Johnson of Prosper, Texas, and Willie Manuel of Mobile, Alabama.