



Why Do We Promote Multisport Athletes at Lakeville South?

"I see a lot of guys specialize in only one sport in high school, like they only play basketball or baseball or football. In high school, I did everything. I played baseball and basketball and ran track. I even ran cross country and played soccer. I did everything. I think that trying everything gives you a better perspective on all the different sports." - **Larry Fitzgerald (Holy Angels, University of Pittsburg, Arizona Cardinals) Interview for Stack Magazine in 2007**

Why do we encourage multisport athletes at Lakeville South High School?

1. **You become a better athlete playing multiple sports.** An athlete who participates many different sports gains the perspectives and values unique to each (Matheson, 1990). The exposure to different coaches with different philosophies, strategies, and personalities can provide important benefits for the development of a well-rounded athlete (Hill, & Hansen, 1988).
2. **Multisport athletes get better grades and have a better high school experience.** Multisport athletes tend to get better grades, and are often the most active and productive students in the school (Cardone, 1994).
3. **Multisport athletes are less likely to use alcohol and drugs.** After-school practices leave student-athletes with less time for drug use and experimentation (Naylor, Gardner & Zaichkowsky, 2001). The Minnesota Student Survey (2010) says participating in two or more sports greatly reduces chemical use compared to those not in a sport (7% vs. 19% cigarette use, 6% vs. 15% marijuana use, 45% vs. 48% alcohol use).
4. **There is less risk of injury and burnout playing multiple sports.** Research also suggests athletes should have at least 2 to 3 months off per year from their particular sport during which they can let injuries heal, refresh the mind, and work on strength and conditioning in hopes of reducing injury risk (*Pediatrics*, 2007). With pressure to succeed hinging on one sport, the consequent anxiety often leads to burnout (Hill & Hansen, 1988).
5. **There is little research to suggest that specialization makes an athlete better at a sport.** Many athletic skills are transferable, which is why several experts suggest that early overall sport development (running, throwing and catching) makes for better athletes down the road (Hill, 1987).
6. **There is more long-term happiness with multisport athletes.** Well-rounded, multisport athletes have the highest potential to achieve the goal of lifelong fitness and enjoyment of physical activity while avoiding some of the pitfalls of overuse, overtraining, and burnout (*Pediatrics*, 2007).

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If these professional multisport athletes benefitted from other sports in high school and beyond, why wouldn't I participate in multiple sports?

- LeBron James (Cavaliers) – All state in basketball and football in H.S., still wants to play in NFL some day
- Michael Jordan (Bulls) – Played football, basketball and baseball in high school
- Allen Iverson (76ers) – Virginia player of the year in basketball and football in high school
- Matt Holiday (Cardinals) – All state in football and baseball
- Nate Robinson (Celtics) – Played football and basketball at University of Washington
- Joe Mauer (Twins) – All state in football (national player of year), basketball, and baseball
- Charlie Ward (Knicks) – Played football and basketball at Florida State (won Heisman)
- Chauncey Billups (Nuggets) – All state in football and basketball
- Dee Brown (Celtics) – All state in football and basketball
- Grady Sizemore (Indians) – All state in baseball and football
- Ben Wallace (Pistons) – All state in football and basketball
- Adam Dunn (White Sox) – All state in baseball and football
- Glen “Big Baby” Davis (Celtics) – All state in football and basketball
- Matt Harpring (Thunder) – All state in football and basketball
- Marcus Banks (Raptors) – All state in football and basketball
- John Havlicek (Celtics) – All state in football, basketball and baseball in H.S., also an Olympian
- Antonio Gates (Chargers) – Played football and basketball in H.S. and only basketball at Kent State
- Tony Gonzalez (Chiefs) – Played football and basketball at University of California
- Bud Grant (Vikings) – Played football, basketball and baseball at U of M, Played in NFL and NBA
- Cris Carter (Vikings) – Played football and basketball at Ohio State
- Jim Brown (Browns) – Played football, basketball and track at Syracuse, also in lacrosse hall of fame
- Dave Winfield (Twins) – Played three sports at U of Minnesota; drafted by NBA, NFL and MLB
- Randy Moss (Patriots) – West Virginia player of year in football and basketball, also state champ in track
- Tony Romo (Cowboys) – Mr. Basketball runner-up in Wisconsin to Caron Butler, football, golf & tennis
- Julius Peppers (Panthers) – Played football and basketball at North Carolina
- Jackie Robinson (Dodgers) - UCLA's first 4 sport letter winner in baseball, basketball, football and track
- Torii Hunter (Angels) – Played football, basketball, and baseball
- Bo Jackson (Raiders) – All state in three sports, played in NFL, MLB and semi-pro basketball
- Ronald Curry (Raiders) – Played football and basketball at North Carolina
- Greg Paulus (Duke/Syracuse) – Gatorade National Player of the Year in football and basketball
- Donovan McNabb (Eagles) – Played football and basketball at Syracuse
- Terrell Owens (Bills) – Went to Tennessee-Chattanooga to play 3 sports in college (football, basketball and track)
- Jim Thorpe (Giants) – Olympic Gold, played professional football, basketball and baseball
- Carl Crawford (Devil Rays) – All state in football, basketball and baseball (scholarships for all 3)
- Deion Sanders (Falcons) – All state in football, basketball and baseball (scholarships for all 3)
- John Elway (Broncos) – Played football, basketball and baseball (also drafted in MLB)
- Larry Fitzgerald (Cardinals) – Played football, basketball, baseball, track, soccer and cross country in high school.

And there are thousands more who played three or more sports in high school and beyond....

“Football is like life - it requires perseverance, self-denial, hard work, sacrifice, dedication and respect for authority.” – Vince Lombardi