



Former Don Bosco wide receiver Yuri Wright diving for extra yards against rival Bergen Catholic during the 2011 regular season.

Yuri Wright Weathers Social Media Storm

Former Don Bosco student-athlete commits to Colorado after expulsion, starts tweeting again; experts weigh in on social media do's and don'ts for recruits

By Tim Sohn

Former star Don Bosco cornerback Yuri Wright has made a comeback only weeks after being expelled from the private Catholic high school in Ramsey for posting sexually- and racially-charged tweets.

Wright, who was booted from the all-boys school Jan. 18 after being asked multiple times to stop tweeting, has made a verbal commitment to the Buffaloes at the University of Colorado. He previously also had received scholarship offers from the University of Michigan, Rutgers university and University

of Notre Dame. But, according to published reports, Michigan decided to pull its proposition.

National Signing Day, the first day that high school seniors can commit on paper through a National Letter of Intent to NCAA-participating colleges and universities, is Feb. 1.

Still Tweeting

Wright's original Twitter account, which had its tweets protected, has been deleted. However, he has opened a new account under username YuriWright.

Recent Tweets by Wright read:

Turnin a new page over in this chapter of life

Thanks for all the support this mean everythin to me

Fans . You guys so great . Time to start new chapter in my life. You guys aint even ready for next year ima show all these people wat I got

The #buffnation show so much support . This team on the rise We gone be gettin better every year

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Do's...

Sam Carnahan, CEO of Varsity Monitor, a company based in Essex Fells, N.J., that provides social media education and monitoring services across the athletics industry, offered several ways student-athletes can use social media to their advantage:

- ✈ Share links to articles that define you;
- ✈ Post positive commentary; and
- ✈ Include photos of athletic accomplishments.

"Your social media account defines you — and if you want to be seen as a productive, positive person to recruiters, you need to post that type of content," said Carnahan, adding that Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and YouTube are the most common platforms being used. "Social media can and should be a positive reinforcement of yourself."

Some of Varsity Monitor's clients include The University of North Carolina, Villanova University, University of Nebraska and The University of Texas football.

Kevin DeShazo, founder of Fieldhouse Media, based in Oklahoma, also weighed in on how student-athletes can use social media in a positive way. He suggests to:

- ✈ Talk about school, in a positive light;
- ✈ Post about movies you have recently watched;
- ✈ Write about sporting events you plan on attending;

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✈ Discuss your team, how practice is going, how the game went;

✈ Rally support from classmates and the community; and

✈ Be yourself.

Fieldhouse Media, which provides education to student-athletes on the right ways to use social media, recently unveiled a social media monitoring service for colleges and universities, called FieldTrack.

It monitors social networks and websites in real time by using keywords and phrases to identify content that could damage student-athletes' reputations, or lead to discipline or NCAA violations.

Clients, so far, have predominantly included Oklahoma

"My biggest piece of advice is to imagine every tweet will be read by your mom, teacher, principal, grandmother and pastor. If you don't want them to read it, don't tweet it. It could impact your next game, your opportunity for a scholarship, or your opportunity to get a job. Don't give somebody a reason to think negatively about you," [DeShazo] said.

high schools and athletic director associations. However, Fieldhouse is working on that, building relationships with University of Nebraska at Omaha, The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor and The University of Memphis.

DeShazo added, "Remember who you are and who you rep-

resent. Social media can be a powerful tool that can assist in getting a scholarship, getting a job, and more. Use it to brand yourself, to define your image. You have the power to control your image online."

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Yuri Wright going up for a touchdown reception during this year's NJSIAA Non-Public, Group 4, Championship Game at MetLife Stadium.

Don'ts...

Carnahan explained that whatever is posted on social media never goes away: "There is no such thing as privacy in social media."

He recommends not to post:

- ✈ Anything you wouldn't want your mother or father to read;
- ✈ Content that you wouldn't freely share with your coach or recruiter;
- ✈ Information that is hurtful to anyone; and
- ✈ Things that do not reflect your offline behavior.

"We always tell people, everyone is watching, and everyone has a camera. And when it comes to social media, you should expect people to want you not only to 'screw up,' but they want to be there to post about it and share it," said Carnahan.

DeShazo recommends not to:

- ✈ Discuss controversial topics, if not educated on the issues;
- ✈ Use vulgar language;
- ✈ Post anything sexual or racial in nature;
- ✈ Trash classmates or opponents;

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- ✈ Get involved with critics;
- ✈ Tweet within 24 hours of a game no matter the result, because emotions run high;
- ✈ Talk about personal relationships; and
- ✈ Post questionable photos.

"My biggest piece of advice is to imagine every tweet will be read by your mom, teacher, principal, grandmother and pastor. If you don't want them to read it, don't tweet it. It could impact your next game, your opportunity for a scholarship, or your opportunity to get a job. Don't give somebody a reason to think negatively about you," he said.

Neither Wright nor Don Bosco returned requests for comment.

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