



New Mexico Activities Association Student-Athlete Spotlight

Wyatt Strand, Nice Guy Finishing First

By Tyler Dunkel, Sports Information Director, NMAA

The old saying “Nice Guys Finish Last” isn’t the case for Logan High School senior Wyatt Strand. Strand walks the halls of LHS high-fiving anyone and everyone he can. He smiles at fellow students and teachers with an uplifting attitude that one teacher says is, “just magnetic.”

“His peers view Wyatt as a person that they aspire to be because he is an athlete. He is very intelligent, he is genuinely nice to all the students and helps them in their athletics and even in class,” commented Shelley Wallin, a teacher at Logan High School for over 24 years.

Strand has always been a small town guy his entire life, living in nearby San Jon till he was an eighth grader. His parents both grew up in a small town environment and Strand sees himself continuing that family tradition in the future.

“I would love to be part of a small town community in the future and be able to give back to a town like Logan that has given me so much. I plan to major in engineering, which may take me to a bigger city but I think if given the opportunity I would like to be a part of a small town and make a difference.”

“I’ve always been told that I could make a big impact in this community and I do want to be a person that makes my community better. I’ve always wanted to build things and I think with an engineering degree I could hopefully create something one day that will make an impact on people’s lives.”

His mother, Tammy Velasco, who is a teacher at Logan, can see her son giving back to his hometown of Logan someday.

“I think he sees his dad and I and how we both came from a small town environment and he sees the ways we give back. But to me I can see him coming back and being a coach, or helping the younger kids fulfill their dreams and goals.”

Strand is a 4.0 student, taking college level classes at Logan. Despite being involved in so many extra-curricular activities, Velasco says school has always come first.

“Before anything he puts school work first. We don’t have to push him academically. He does all that on his own.”

Although education is a big focus, Strand is also heavily involved at Logan High School in a number of activities.



On the athletic side, Strand is the school's starting quarterback and middle linebacker. He also plays baseball, basketball and runs track.

On the gridiron, Strand was an All-State selection as a quarterback, linebacker and kick returner his junior year. As a sophomore, Strand was named the 8-man Football Player of the Year. He also earned All-State honors as a wide receiver and defensive back.

On the diamond, Strand plays shortstop and pitcher, earning All-District nods as a freshman, sophomore and junior. In track & field, Strand runs the 100 and 200-meter dash, long jumps, high jumps and was a member of state championship teams in the 4x100 and 4x200 relay.

Strand says he wants to play football at the collegiate level after his high school career is over.

"I've always wanted to play college football. Eastern New Mexico and New Mexico State have shown some interest in me. It really doesn't matter to me where I play. I just want to continue playing football. I want to build a legacy for my family and this town."

Logan High School head football coach Kene Terry thinks Strand has the ability and drive to play at the next level and thinks he is the best athlete he has ever coached.

"I definitely think Wyatt can play football in college. Making the leap from 8-man football to 11-man football is a giant step but Wyatt has that work ethic. I've only been coaching for about four years but I can say that Wyatt is the best athlete I have ever coached and is the hardest working young person I have ever been around. There are lots of kids that work really hard but don't have the athleticism; he has all the skills and still outworks anybody."

Even with a busy schedule that includes sports and schoolwork, Strand still finds time to be involved in the activities world at Logan. He is currently the school's chapter representative for the Future Farmers of America and has been the student body president the last two years. Strand even started a school tradition called "Tie Tuesday" where each Tuesday the members of sports teams wear a tie to school.

Strand says he has always been involved in multiple activities since he was young.

"It started when I was younger and the older guys really took me under their wing. I always wanted to be part of as much as I could at my school and in the community. Being a good role model and someone that others could look up to has always been important to me. Here at Logan they offer a lot of stuff to do and I've always been a very confident and motivated person. When I put my mind to something, I work hard and will achieve my goal."

"I was voted student council president my junior and senior years by my classmates. I think being voted in as president shows that my peers respect me as a leader in this school. It's very humbling. I love this school and I love all these students here at Logan. It means so much to represent them and it's a great honor."

Coach Terry says that Strand is a very serious person and leads his fellow classmates by example.

"Wyatt is a very serious guy but at the same time he knows how to have a good time. He truly leads by example and the other students in this school follow him. He is a team guy and the ultimate goal for him is the team but at the same time his presence and attitude are magnetic."

Velasco agrees that her son is a leader but cares about each and every student that attends Logan High School and wants to see each of them succeed in life as well.

"When I see Wyatt interacting with the other students, it's very selfless. He cares if they are doing well and will do whatever he can to help people out. A lot of times people will try to give him the credit for things and put him on a pedestal, especially for the team sports, but he won't go there without his team."