



# New Mexico Activities Association Student-Athlete Spotlight

## Football or Music - Toddy Enjoys Both

By Jason Groves

Nate Toddy's football game day experience is slightly different than the conventional high school running back in New Mexico.

The Cloudcroft High School freshman running back doubles as a drummer in a highly successful Cloudcroft marching band.

"Our coach wants us to arrive early before games so we can get the whole team there and talk about the game," Toddy said. "Before that, I go to the band room and ask if they need help loading any of the equipment and I talk to our band instructor. After that I tell them that I will see them on the field. At halftime, I take off my shoulder pads and helmet and leave my football pants and cleats on."

Toddy rushed for over 1,500 yards and led the team in touchdowns as a freshman on a 3-7 Cloudcroft team that had just one senior.

"At home games, he strips his pads at halftime and grabs his drums and plays during the halftime show," Cloudcroft football coach Toby Hall said. "He loves it. I just tell him to keep focused on the game and get back so we can make our adjustments. We have a great band at the school. They are always winning something, so why not let the kid excel at everything he wants to do and don't limit him."

Toddy plays the quad toms, a set of four percussion drums worn in a harness.

"I've been in band since the fifth grade," Toddy said. "This was the last year we had a quad tom player and we needed someone to step in and I said I would do it and I'm liking it. I really love band but I like football too. The football coach and the band director talk with each other. We make sure that the band schedule and the football schedule don't overlap too much."

The Cloudcroft band competes in the Eastern Arizona College Band Day that features high schools from New Mexico, Arizona and Texas, as well as several band competitions throughout New Mexico.

"I'm pretty sure that Cloudcroft is the smallest school that goes (to Eastern Arizona) and we have been getting 1st every year, which is the best score you can get," Toddy said.

But while Toddy's band experience is relatively new, he has played football since the second grade.

"We only had one senior on the team so some might say it was a bad season but I say it was a growing season," Hall said.

He played two games with the Cloudcroft varsity team as an eighth grader last season.

"We knew that he was a talented kid but he might experience the tough side of football. He was by the toughest kid



that we had on our team," Hall said. "He was running the ball and he could take big hits by bigger players. That's something you don't find from a middle school kid to see the field the way he did."

Toddy said he carried the confidence from last season into this year.

"I knew that we had lost some vital people but we gained more guys and I guess I was fortunate to get on the starting team," Toddy said. "I was more confident. It gave me a little taste of what was to come instead of being on the field. I knew what was going to come."

With only one senior, Toddy said the team showed what they are capable of in a 26-20 season opening victory over Springer .

"That was the first game that we went into and it didn't start how we wanted but by halftime, we came together and played like the team we were supposed to be and we came back and won," Toddy said. "That's the game I look back on a whole bunch."