

Malik Osborne: Football Prospect To Basketball Prodigy

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JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (seminoles.com) -- Long before Malik Osborne became the phenomenal Florida State college basketball star that he is known as today, he was a boy from Matteson, Ill. who grew up with two parents who played collegiate athletics and supported him along his journey of doing the same.

Osborne always knew was destined to be an athlete at the collegiate level, with his dad being a football player at Iowa State and his mom running track at Lewis College. As if having two athletic parents growing up wasn't enough, his whole family seemed to be involved in sports, which only made his dedication to it easier.

Osborne leads the Seminoles against Missouri in the championship game of the Inaugural Jacksonville Classic on Monday at 8:30. He scored 10 points in the Seminoles' 73-45 victory over Loyola Marymount on Sunday to advance the Seminoles to the game against the Tigers from the SEC. The CBS Sports Network will televise the game.

"At first I really wanted to be a football player like my dad," said Osborne. "A majority of my dad's side (of the family) played football. He played at Iowa State, his brother played at Miami at Ohio, and then his other brother also played; they all played college football. My grandpa, my dad's dad played for the Chicago Bears, so all of these things motivated me to play football. And then knowing that my mom ran track, and her sister ran track and almost qualified for the Olympics, and her other sister, her twin, ran track and I felt like sports was right up my alley, it was something I was made for."

James Osborne, his grandfather, played for the Bears from 1972-84, and is still one of the organizations' leaders in career sacks. He played in 186 career NFL games after starring at Southern University.

For so long it looked like Osborne was going to follow in his father's side of the family footsteps. It wasn't until he reached his frame of 6'8 and his then 200 pounds, that he knew basketball was his true fortune.

"As I was pursuing football, I kind of grew taller than anyone in my family," said Osborne. "So I picked up the basketball and I made my own way in our little sports family tree and started the whole basketball thing. They definitely had a huge influence on me playing basketball and just playing sports in general."

From that point on, Osborne truly flourished in his basketball career. After playing at the Bosco Institute in Indiana, his true talent came to light when he began his collegiate career at Rice University.

His move to Florida State from Rice checked off all the boxes that Osborne was looking for when he decided to transfer schools. Along with his offer from Florida State, Osborne had other offers from Northwestern, Wisconsin, Kansas State, San Diego State, Seton Hall, and Virginia Tech. Although these schools carried a lot of talent, Osborne, and his grandma, knew that his own talents belonged at Florida State.

"When I was at Rice, I watched Florida State when they made their Elite Eight run (in 2018)," said Osborne. "I was thinking (Florida State's) is a great system, I could really see myself thriving in that system. The system showcases a bunch of athletes who are just able to get up and down the court and play transition. They all look like they are having fun, they all look comfortable, everybody got a piece of the pie."

"Then my grandma called me after the game and said 'were you watching the Florida State game? Because I could really see you playing at Florida State.'"

The pieces all seemed to be coming together for Osborne. He not only transferred to a nationally ranked college basketball program, but he also has the luxury of family living nearby in Florida.

Osborne is also taking advantage of Florida State's national status as one of the United States' most highly regarded academic institutions.

Because Florida State is a top 20 national public university, Osborne took advantage of his opportunities and earned a bachelor's degree in Social Science in 2021. He is currently working on his second degree in broadcast journalism, which he believes will be his most beneficial move yet.

"I really want to be a sports broadcaster or sports analyst after my career is over with the opportunity to be around basketball, still talk the sport, still have my personality mesh with my knowledge of sports and be able to display that on the big screen."

Osborne shouldn't have any difficulty in his future career of broadcasting, as his experience in the field on and off the court is plentiful.

"I've already had experiences talking in front of cameras ever since playing college basketball," said Osborne. "That's just something I'm really looking forward to having a degree in as well. I feel like that is something that will help me in my development as a speaker, as an advocate for people and players if I get that opportunity. That's really my academic focus right now."

His excellence has not only been academically, but on the court recently as well. He recorded a double double of 18 points and 13 rebounds during the Seminoles season opener against Penn, and equaled his Florida State career-high of 18 points against Florida.

With these stats, it is hopeful that the star athlete will one day compete in the NBA. Along with that big day comes a big contract, which he will accept with open arms, but not only for himself.

"I want to take care of my family; whatever my family wants or what they need," said Osborne. "I want to be able to deliver that because they have been with me through this entire journey, and it's been a very hectic journey. My journey is a testament to them having faith in me, them sticking by my side. When I am able to sign that first contract, I want to give back to them."

"I feel like I've already been taken care of -- now it's my turn to take care of my family."

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