

## Matthew Reardon | Youngstown State Football

Hi uh my name is Matthew Reardon um I'm at Youngstown State University I'm a grad senior and I play football The best advice is stuck by me through my career would probably be put your head down and work I know it's a cliche thing to hear um as an athlete everybody says to do it but Truly um if you if you work At your craft whatever sport it is at all at any time that you have the opportunity to do um whether people know you're doing it whether people don't know you're doing it just just putting your head down and working is definitely the the biggest the biggest thing that I think that I I've taken from any mentorship that I've had I think at at this point in my career the things that I that I focus on the most are more Because I'm older um body isn't as nice to me as it used to be um I tend to focus more on mobility and flexibility things I think from a training regimen than than strength obviously strength I I it's still a very important thing to me um strength is explosiveness all that stuff is is important to play play division one football but for me specifically mobility and um I spent a lot of time in the training room just making sure that my body feels good to be able to perform at the at the level that I want to um so I think I think the biggest thing to me is is mobility and and flexibility yeah so uh a a big thing for me um Xs and O's wise for for football is definitely the fact that you gotta watch a lot of film um to understand what other teams are doing obviously we're out of season right now so I'll go in with um one of our other receivers and watch film with him sometimes and we'll we'll watch specific players in the NFL just watch how they play uh see if from a different a specific guy if you can get one small thing from their game it's it's it adds up if you can do that from for 6 or 7 different guys that you can add to the way you play and then in season watching the other team what they do their tendencies and their coverages and How their guys play Different guys play good different coverages different ways and knowing that is a really important thing to know um for that week and then every week you gotta release what you what you just learned about the guys the past week and learn what the next team does challenge that I faced personally where my dad was my head coach growing up um I've always been around football I've loved football Football's been football is my first love um and and With all that being said going to college and kind of having I wouldn't say rude awakening because I knew what college football was like um I'd been around in my whole life It was more Being in a situation that I kind of fell out of love with the sport and that

was something that was really hard on me um and that was a big reason why I entered the transfer portal I ended up coming here and I'm forever grateful for that because without that I I wouldn't have fallen fallen back in love with the game and my biggest thing was I didn't want to finish Finished playing football at a place that I wasn't enjoying playing football um and that that's a that was a huge thing to me and I'm thankful because YSU has made football an enjoyable thing for me again And yeah that's that's probably the biggest challenge I faced um With with my career like I said I've been playing football my whole life um I got my first offer To Akron my sophomore year of high school and then uh How it normally goes is once you get one you start to get a bunch um And I probably ended up with I I don't even know how many specifically probably 15 to 20 offers and took some visits and ended up really liking Miami um loving the school loving loving the position coach that I had and I I think if I could go back and change it I I was told uh through the recruiting process not to commit to a coach um And I definitely did that um and if I could go back and change it I probably would but I'm I'm glad I went through the experience and learned from it but yeah I ended up in Miami I was at Miami for 3 seasons Um and then entered the transfer portal in December of 2023 had some Division 2 Division 3 offers Uh Youngstown State offered me to come here as a walk-on um came here as a walk on bet on myself and then uh ultimately earned a scholarship in the summer of 2024 um And then we're here now so yeah a good piece of advice that I heard one of my teammates say at Miami once I was already there when we were talking to other recruits was um commit to a place that if you weren't playing whatever sport you're playing you'd be happy to be there um a lot of people commit just because It's good football or just because it's good at whatever sport it is and um just because they have a really personable coach uh with the way that college athletics works uh there's a carousel of coaches that go in and out everywhere um so a position coach specifically it always seems that they they're they're looking for the next best job so um my position coach he was a really good position coach which Ultimately led to him getting better offers and he ended up he ended up leaving and that that's the coach that I that I definitely committed to um not as much the head coach and the area but more so the coach and it ended up being hard on me when he ended up leaving Youngstown stays home place of grit Youngstown is a is a storied place of hard times that A lot of places I I don't think would would still be a city um Youngstown in itself was The top of the the steel steel cities in the country in the world and one day everything just shut down and the

city had to find a way to thrive again um And I think that every sports program here follows that same mantra tries to Um just have grit and and work through whatever adversity is thrown at us um so it's I I think that's that's what I would say why Youngstown Things that led to earning that scholarship were so I I was only a walk on for 7 months here Um I it was during the spring went through winter workouts and everything I was doing A ridiculous amount of stuff on my own to try to get better perfect my craft um And then on top of that I was Working two separate jobs so that I could pay for my school um My parents helped me a little bit but I didn't want to put that burden on them because I had other opportunities to get money for for school going to Division 2 or Division 3 programs that Um If I had done that it would have saved them so I I was working I was working two jobs for that entire time trying to trying to just make sure I had my school paid for and everything uh so the days were long days were hard uh but I worked my butt off and and ended up reaping the benefits of of my work in that situation um and I'm forever grateful to coach Phillips and YSU football for that for that opportunity Yeah I I think things that may have stood out I I had A very a very good and consistent spring ball which is is a big thing when you're transfer coming in I came in and and I knew One of my one of my skills football wise is that I've I've I understand football Um I have a high high football IQ I think that's that's my strongest trait I understand what's going on I can learn things fast um and because of that I learned our offense A lot faster than a lot of people can and have learned it um and that really set me apart because I could play every single receiver position rather than just one and I think that's a valuable asset to a team um having a guy that can do more than one thing um if you have a guy that can only play slot receiver he's limited to just playing slot receiver when an outside receiver goes down he can't be a guy that goes and plays outside so I made sure that I knew everything and whenever my opportunities showed up whether I was in the slot whether that was outside like I made sure that I knew what I was doing and took advantage of those opportunities and that was That's that's I I would say that's probably what stood out was um I think After a short period of time in spring ball they knew that they could depend on me and I think that that like I said that's a that's a very valuable asset to a team Personal goals for myself I uh I graduated in December um I'm working on my MBA right now um I'll be graduating with that in the fall um and then from there I want to I want to go be a pilot um so I'm I'm currently working on trying to get my private pilot license and then The plan is to enter the Air Force and then go

from there from the from the pilot standpoint And then ultimately become a commercial pilot down the road but yeah the the immediate plan as soon as I'm done playing is is going into the military to become a pilot I think it's really important to be in a position that uh kids look up to you fans fans look to you to be To be to be a good role model um I think it's it's It's a privilege to have that opportunity um and a lot of people I think in my shoes take Uh kind of kind of take advantage of it or look past it and don't really appreciate The opportunity that you have to to further the youth to um help people Just be be better people um it doesn't have to be football it doesn't have to be athletics based you can go out in the community and help help people and it and it really mean you can you can tell it really means something to them um and then you talk to a kid you make their week you they they know everything about you Well we go to we go to schools um and tutor sometimes and there's there's kids that I know their names They know my name I think we haven't been we go in the spring so we haven't been since last spring and I'm I'm super excited to go back because I think I think I mean it makes my day going there um I think it makes it makes their days as well They're they're always like when are you coming back when are you coming back um and that's just it's just really fun to have that kind of impact on on kids especially um and then fans I mean they just want us to be They want us to be the best on the field as possible and it's Sometimes fans come off and and that message gets skewed because they're angry about how the season's going or how you're playing which is fine It's just it's a love for the for the area for the school for the sport um And it's important to know that They want the best from us even if it's even if it doesn't come off that way Simple advice for younger athletes is the the advice that I think I took the most like I said what is just put your head down and work especially at that at at the high school age it doesn't it doesn't matter all the all the stars and your ratings and all that stuff that doesn't matter Can you play your sport or not Are you good enough at your sport or not Like it is your your path to Playing college at college sports is it will be different than somebody else's and looking and comparing yourself to somebody else is gonna do nothing but mess with your mental space um and people say like people like to say is a comparison is a thief of joy so Don't compare yourself to where somebody else if you're a sophomore and you you play against somebody that's a 4 star and they're rated really high um don't compare yourself to them um You could you could come along and by your senior year you're a better athlete than they are There's no point in comparing yourself to somebody else Just

put your head down at work and Whoever will take you and go there and make a name for yourself Hi my name is Matthew Reardon I go to Youngstown State University I play football and you can check me out on Next Level Prep