



Recruiting Realities: Inside the Numbers

Lee McDonald

As the recruiting process picks up during your senior year, shoot for the stars but make sure your college goals are realistic. For kickers, punters and long-snappers, numbers can tell a lot about what level a prospect can ultimately compete at. The following statistical ranges provide a general guideline for high school seniors looking to play at the college level. They reflect what college coaches at the NCAA Division I-A, I-AA, II and III levels typically look for when recruiting a specialist and are based on my experience helping place over a hundred college prospects.

It should be noted that these numbers are under game conditions (with a live rush) in good weather and no wind. Kickoffs are from a one inch kickoff tee and field goals are from a one inch block (both are recommended for HS seniors during their senior year). Relatively new footballs should be used as older, well broken in footballs will significantly inflate a prospects numbers. Punts are measured from the line of scrimmage with the punter lining up at thirteen yards. Consistently performing within these ranges and not just on occasion is a must. Accuracy on kickoffs and punts is also essential as most college programs employ directional kicking. Long snaps are from fourteen yards and must be accurate, catchable balls for the punter.

FIELD GOALS

90 th Percentile DII/DIII Prospect	66-70% Accuracy / 46-50Yard Range
95 th Percentile DIAA Prospect	71-75% Accuracy / 51-55Yard Range
98 th Percentile DIA Prospect	76-80% Accuracy / 56-60Yard Range

KICKOFFS

90 th Percentile DII/DIII Prospect	3.5-3.6 Hang Time / 56-60 Yards
95 th Percentile DIAA Prospect	3.7-3.8 Hang Time / 61-65 Yards
98 th Percentile DIA Prospect	3.9-4.0+ Hang Time / 66-70+ Yards

PUNTS

90 th Percentile DII/DIII Prospect	4.0-4.1 Hang Time / 39-40 Yards
95 th Percentile DIAA Prospect	4.2-4.3 Hang Time / 41-42 Yards
98 th Percentile DIA Prospect	4.4-4.5+ Hang Time / 43-44+ Yards

LONG SNAPS

90 th Percentile DII/DIII Prospect	.81-.85
95 th Percentile DIAA Prospect	.76-.80
98 th Percentile DIA Prospect	.71-.75

About the Author

A 1st team All-State and Blue Chip Illustrated All-American kicker out of DeMatha Catholic High School (MD), Lee McDonald signed a full scholarship to Rutgers University from where he earned a BA in 1999 and a Master's in Psychology in 2002. The former Scarlet Knight is known for his booming kickoffs and 1999 game winning overtime field goal that upset the Syracuse Orangemen 24-21 in front of a national TV audience. A four-year kickoff specialist and two year starter, McDonald also garnered Special Teams Player of the Week honors twice during his career and was named to the Big East Conference All-Academic Team in 1998 and 1999.

McDonald then kicked for the Buffalo Destroyers of the Arena Football League and the Norfolk Nighthawks where he set several Arena 2 football kicking records including most field goals in one game (6) that earned him AF2 Player of the Week honors. After serious injuries cut short his playing career, McDonald spent three years as an athletic academic advisor with the Rutgers University football program where he voluntarily coached kickers and punters. He is now a certified NJ school counselor and assistant football coach. McDonald is a member of both the New Jersey and American Football Coaches Association and provides private training for many high school and college level players. His yearly speaking engagements include the Nike Football Coach of the Year Clinic and Rivals.com Recruiting Junior Day.

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