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It's been a crazy couple of weeks for **Trey Blair**, to say the least.

Not long after finishing off one of the best individual seasons in Pennsylvania and leading Haverford High School to its first two district playoff wins in the program's history, Blair was still verbally committed to Buffalo.

Then Blair got word from his coach, **Joe Gallagher**, that Temple wanted to recruit him.

"I couldn't help but smile a little bit," Blair said in an interview with OwlScoop.com Wednesday morning. "Because going into this whole thing, when I knew I wanted to play Division I football, Temple was one of the first schools on the list for a lot of reasons. One being that it's so close, the major situation, it's a great program in a great conference. You get to play at the Linc. There's so many things that are just so exciting about Temple. And just hearing that they were recruiting me was an excitement to me."

Then things happened quickly.

At this time last week, Blair had just started his official visit to Temple. A day later, he announced he was de-committing from Buffalo. And the day after that, he announced his verbal commitment to Temple.

Wednesday morning, Blair could smile again after signing his National Letter of Intent to play for the Owls, who finished the 2019 regular season at 8-4 and earned a spot in the upcoming Military Bowl on Dec. 27 in Annapolis, where they'll face North Carolina. The 5-foot-11, 195-pound two-way standout who played quarterback and cornerback at Haverford joins a Temple recruiting class that is expected to have 18 signees and two transfers by the end of the day.

Blair, who will enroll at Temple next month and be eligible to participate in spring practice, is slated to play free safety for the Owls.

He called Wednesday morning "a dream come true."

"It's kind of cliché, but I feel like I've been working for as long as I can remember," Blair said. "I wanted to be a Division I football player. Just signing the Letter of Intent made everything official and it's just a great feeling. I can't really explain it. It's awesome."

In Blair, Temple is getting a player who could eventually wind up as one of the cornerstone pieces of its 2020 recruiting class after putting up some ridiculous

numbers as a senior for a Haverford team that won two District 1 Class 6A playoff games before losing to state semifinalists Downingtown West.

At quarterback, Blair rushed for 2,165 yards and 28 touchdowns while averaging nearly 12 yards per carry. He completed 70 percent of his passes for 1,154 yards and 14 touchdowns and accounted for two more scores – on a punt return and kickoff return touchdowns – on special teams. He lined up at cornerback on defense and logged two interceptions there, although teams didn't throw his way that much this season.

“Athletically, the word explosive comes to mind,” Gallagher, Haverford's longtime head coach, said. “He can go from point A to point B on the football field as fast as anybody I've ever seen.”

And Blair did some of his most impressive work last month while playing through a great deal of pain.

One week after tallying touchdown runs of 73, 43, 63 and 88 yards in the 12th-seeded Fords' 49-14 rout of fifth-seeded Spring Ford, Blair sustained a hip pointer injury in Haverford's next playoff win, a 35-12 victory at Downingtown East High School. He still managed to score three times despite missing most of the second half.

“It was an ‘iso,’ so I was running right up the middle,” Blair said in recalling the play on which he got hurt. “A linebacker came and kind of blindsided me, put his helmet right in my hip, and it was almost like my leg went numb. That's how much pain I was in. So I had a hip pointer and it was just a huge bone bruise, and it hurt like every time I would step.

“I tried to stay in there, and we handed the ball off a couple times, and it started to hurt to breathe.”

Sophomore quarterback **Andrew Maginnis** relieved Blair and helped finish off the win with a touchdown pass, and then Blair went back to work the following week against the district's No. 1 seed.

Playing on essentially one good leg, he ran for 217 yards and two touchdowns in a 49-42 loss to Downingtown West, a game Haverford once trailed by 42-14 before mounting a comeback. One of Blair's runs went for 74 yards.

“I just saw a hole,” Blair said, “and I guess I was so excited and (had) all this adrenaline. We had so many people. We had fan busses come to that game, playing in front of basically the whole community.”

Temple will need to replace **Benny Walls** and **Ayron Monroe** at safety heading into the 2020 season, so it's not implausible to think that Blair could potentially contribute next fall as a true freshman in the defensive backfield or even on

special teams. Blair knows that remains to be seen and that playing time won't be guaranteed.

But if it does turn out that way, Temple head coach **Rod Carey** and his defensive coordinator, **Jeff Knowles**, might be thankful they eventually got involved in Blair's recruitment – even if it was late in the game. Very late in the game, as Gallagher explained.

The previous Temple staff had recruited Blair heavily. Then Blair got lost in the shuffle with the coaching transition, Gallagher said.

But a text from Knowles to Gallagher less than two weeks ago changed everything. Knowles reached out to ask if he could come in to talk to him about Blair, and Gallagher's response was "absolutely."

"We sat down and we looked at his tape together," Gallagher said of his meeting with Knowles, "and he went, 'God, this is a no-brainer.'"

Blair is a big believer that everything happens for a reason. Prior to his junior season, he was receiving recruiting interest from programs like Virginia, Syracuse, Pitt, Michigan State, Rutgers and Maryland. They all wanted him to come to their camps, but an injury prevented him from doing so.

And even if Temple came around late, Blair is glad they finally did.

"I think everything worked out well," Blair said, "and Temple's the place I'm supposed to be at. And I'm glad it worked out that way."

You can listen to OwlScoop.com's interviews with Trey Blair and Joe Gallagher [here](#).

Trey Blair

Joe Gallagher