

- 1) Name: Clayton (C.J.) Smith
- 2) New Trier sport(s): Swimming and Diving
- 3) Suburb you lived in when you went to New Trier: Wilmette
- 4) What year did you graduate NT? 2011
- 5) Where do you live now? Cincinnati, Ohio
- 6) Who was your coach? Mark Onstott
- 7) HS sports accomplishments/awards/honors:

- 2-time state runner up in the 500yd freestyle
- 2 TEAM state championships
- Multiple All-American selections
- Captain

- 8) Favorite high school *individual sports* memory:

My favorite individual memory would be when I touched the wall in the 500yd freestyle at my senior year state championships. In that moment, I realized that the race was my last one for New Trier. I thought about all the great times with my teammates, friends, and coaches, and how important those experiences and relationships were to me.

- 9) Favorite high school *team* memory:

My favorite memory would be our senior year state championship title. We battled back after a disappointing 3rd place in 2010, and had one of the strongest team performances in state history. Nearly every individual scored, and our team scored the most points in state history.

- 10) Who was your biggest team or individual rival in HS, and where did they go to school?

Our biggest team rivals were likely Evanston and Hinsdale Central, then Neuqua Valley and Naperville Central. Danny Thomson from Hinsdale Central was my strongest opponent, but there was a large amount of talented competition in the state each year, including my former teammate Reed Malone.

- 11) Favorite class and/or teacher at NT:

My favorite class was by far Mr. Rhee's sophomore year English class. Mr. Rhee challenged individuals to think differently, and he approached class with a unique energy that promoted a positive, learning environment.

12) Where did you attend college? University of Minnesota

13) Compare your HS sports experience to your college experience:

College and high school had similarities and differences. My high school team was quite successful. Our focus was largely on the TEAM, and how we could achieve our collective goal of winning a state championship. When I attended Minnesota, I tried to bring this mindset to the team, which took a lot of energy. In college, there is likely a bigger focus on swimming, as there are strict rules and guidelines. Additionally, Minnesota has an abundance of resources to help athletes achieve their goals. We had nutritionists, doctors, sport-specific weight rooms, snack stations, clothing, and more. Overall, the atmosphere of both college and high school teams are similar, but college took it up a notch.

14) College sports accomplishments:

- 3-time NCAA All-American
- Academic All-American
- Big Ten Distinguished Scholar
- Mutual of Omaha Leadership Award Winner
- Team Captain

15) Favorite college sports moments:

My favorite college sports moment was my freshman year when I first became an All-American. I began the season without this goal in mind, and to exceed my expectations was an unbelievable feeling. I also enjoyed watching my teammates race at NCAA's and Big Ten's, some of who set school or Big Ten records.

16) Area of study:

Political Science, Minor in Sociology of Law, Criminology and Deviance

17) What do you do now?

I graduated law school and will begin work at the law firm Dinsmore & Shohl LLP.

18) If you could go back in time and give yourself advice/wisdom as you are starting Freshman year at New Trier, what would that advice be?

I think I would tell myself to work hard, focus more in school and in the pool, and to just have fun and enjoy the time you have with friends and family.

19) What would you do differently if you could do it again?

I would not change a thing. I loved every minute of it, and I am proud of what we accomplished at New Trier and what I achieved once I graduated.



