

Built for success: Nigerian football players benefit vastly from their genes, culture, brains

[In the eyes of Bobby Burton, who has been covering college football recruiting for more than 20 years, Nigerian players and] their culture, their drive, their family structure and, oh yes, their bodies seemed to fit football...Why are Nigerians different to be the subject of this talent/recruiting boom?

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Forget any athletic stereotype, Nigerians have a fierce family pride and dogged belief in education...that allows them to succeed in this country.

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"Africans don't consider themselves black, they consider themselves Africans," said noted author Jon Entine, who is also executive director of the [Genetic Literacy Project](#).

"American blacks can call themselves African-Americans, but they really are Americans. It's a whole different mindset in cultural history and tradition and pride [from Nigerians]."

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Entine has concluded those with a West African ancestry have — in general — less body fat, proportionally more lean muscle mass and a higher percentage of fast-twitch muscles.

"I think the genes and the God-given talent," he said. "The intelligence, the culture, the diversity. There are a lot of factors that play together."

[Football coach and scout Louis Ayeni, whose parents are from Lagos, Nigeria's capital,] agrees.

"First of all, the thing about Nigerians is they have distinguishing traits," he said. "They have fast-twitch muscles. They're very chiseled, very tough. It's the same thing when you think of the Polynesian culture. You think of big, strong, thick torsos."

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [How culture, passion and genetics are fueling a Nigerian takeover of U.S. sports](#)