

World's Tallest Teen, Olivier Rioux, Tests Football at Florida

July 25, 2025

– Categories: General News



Download IPFS

Olivier Rioux, the 7-foot-9 Canadian center and the world's tallest teenager, has been turning heads at the University of Florida not just on the basketball court but also on the football field. Recently, the 19-year-old, who represented Canada's Under-19 national basketball team this summer, tried his hand at football, suiting up in an orange helmet to test his potential as a special-teams player for the Gators.

The experiment was an attempt to leverage Rioux's extraordinary wingspan to block field goals and extra points, a creative idea from Florida's football assistant coaches. "I like the idea," said Gators basketball coach Todd Golden at a booster event on Thursday evening, commending the football staff's innovative thinking. However, Rioux's 305-pound frame and 11-inch vertical leap didn't quite translate to success on the gridiron.

"They were a little disappointed," Golden noted, reflecting on the football coaches' reaction when Rioux couldn't block any kicks during the workout.

Despite the football experiment falling short, Rioux remains a towering figure in Florida's basketball program. After redshirting his freshman year, the young center is expected to see limited court time this fall with the defending national champions, who return their entire frontcourt. While his minutes may be confined to low-stakes moments, Golden is already eyeing ways to use Rioux's height strategically. At the FIBA U19 World Cup in Switzerland earlier this month, Rioux showcased his defensive prowess by disrupting an inbound pass against the United States, forcing a turnover that led to a crucial 3-pointer just before halftime.

Rioux's unprecedented stature has made him a sensation beyond the court. A few years ago, his height earned him a spot in the Guinness World Records, and in Florida, he's become a viral phenomenon.

During the Gators' SEC Tournament celebration, while teammates and coaches climbed ladders to cut pieces of the net, Rioux casually reached up and snipped his share while standing flat-footed, a moment that captured his unique physical presence.

As Rioux continues to develop his basketball skills, his brief foray into football underscores the curiosity and creativity surrounding his potential. For now, he'll stick to dominating the paint rather than the gridiron, but his story continues to captivate fans and coaches alike.