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## Decisions, decisions

By Mindi Rice  
ESPN HoopGurlz

Everyone deals with the pressures of making big decisions differently. Some make pro and con lists, while others seek advice from anyone who will offer it. Some revel in drawing out a choice until the last minute, others still want to make a decision quickly so they no longer have to worry about it.



Players have plenty of tough decisions to make both on and off the court.

But whatever timeframe many of today's top recruits have - whether they made a verbal commitment during their junior year or will wait until November's early signing period to make their choice - they all agree that the decision on where to spend their college years comes from one thing: a gut feeling.

"It's mostly how things come and what feels right," said 2009 recruit [Cokie Reed](#). "Choosing your school is one of the most important decisions that you'll make in your life. It's a process and you've just got to go through and make sure that you're sure that you want to go there."

Reed is among 18 members of the ESPN HoopGurlz 100's top 25 who have yet to decide on their future destinations, and although she has a top five, the 6-foot-4 post from Waco, Texas, intends to take the time she needs to pick one.

"I think when I decide it will give me a peace of mind to know that this is where I want to be," Reed said. "When I wake up one day say that this is where I want to go, then that's when it will happen."

Reed's sentiment was echoed by other top players who



haven't committed, as well as players who committed before the summer even began, such as top-ranked [Brittney Griner](#) and USC-bound [Christina Marinacci](#).

**Cokie Reed challenges Baylor commit Brittney Griner.**

"It just felt right," said Griner, who has verbally committed to Baylor. "My dad didn't even know I was going to commit that day."

Griner, who already grabs attention just for her 6-8 height and impressive abilities that include dunking, added to her unique resume when she gave her verbal to Baylor in June 2007, at the end of her sophomore year.

"I wanted to get it done, that way I could put all my focus onto working on my grades and not stressing over which college am I going to choose, basically just take some of the pressure off me," she said.

More than anything, the pressure felt among top prospects often comes from friends, the media or the college coaches doing the recruiting.

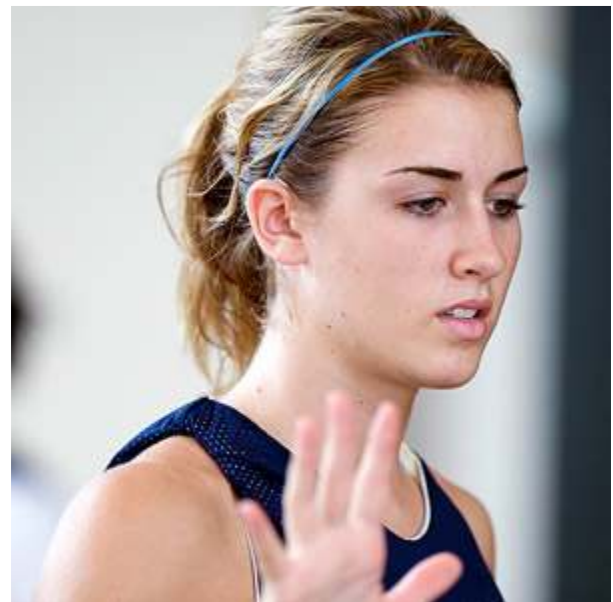
When Christina Marinacci started her unofficial visits after high schools season ended, she hoped to find her school before summer ball kicked into full gear. "I kind of wanted to (commit early) so I'd have my school picked out," Marinacci said. "They'll tell me what I need to work on for them and it kind of narrows down what I need to work on, even though I need to work on a lot of things."

The forward from Santa Ana, Calif., took her list □ armed with the Pacific 10 Conference's four California schools and Arizona State - and started on her visits. After traveling to Tempe, Ariz., and then to UCLA's campus, she went across town to USC.

"It just was a perfect fit," she said. "I love the coaches and I love the atmosphere, just the tradition of the campus that goes on. I really like the coach's style of play."

But one other factor played into her springtime decision: Marinacci knew they had offered another player a scholarship and thought that the girl who committed first would get it.

"I think that added a little bit of pressure," Marinacci said. "But I think, in the end, I still would have chosen USC."



**Christina Marinacci felt the pressure before committing early.**

"I'm glad I decided early, but if I wouldn't have known, and if there wasn't that other girl that was going for this scholarship, I probably would have waited it out."

Perhaps with words of wisdom from competitors, and those of her older sister, 2010 prospect [Chiney Ogwumike](#) will be well informed when it comes time to make her own college choice. Ogwumike has already experienced one round of recruiting as her sister, Nneka, will start at Stanford this fall.

"Every coach probably wants you to commit as soon as

possible to know that their school is favored, so there's pressure, but my mother's a very strong woman and she liked to alleviate that pressure," Chiney Ogwumike said.

Ogwumike, a 6-3 post from Cypress, Texas, said her mother's value of patience is a big part of the sisters' individual recruiting experiences.

"She said to just wait until you believe that it's absolutely the thing you want," Ogwumike said. "We're not going to commit until we see all the schools so that you know this is the best choice for you."

A wise motherly reminder for those who have yet to decide on a college - whether that decision is due this year or next.

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*Mindi Rice is a staff writer for ESPN HoopGurlz. She previously was an award-winning sportswriter at the Tacoma News Tribune and a barista at Starbucks, and grew up in Seattle, where she attended Roosevelt High School before graduating from the University of Oregon with a degree in journalism. She can be reached at [mindi@hoopgurlz.com](mailto:mindi@hoopgurlz.com).*



Chiney Ogwumike's sister is at Stanford but where will she go?