

Huffines Sports Medicine podcast – Patterson-Brown podcast

[music]

- S1 00:10 Welcome to the Sports Medicine Podcast, brought to you by the Sydney and J.L. Huffines Institute for Sports Medicine and Human Performance in the Department of Health and Kinesiology at at Texan A&M University. At the Huffines Institute, we're always working to facilitate, apply and bring you the most up-to-date coverage of the wide world that is sports medicine and human performance, all in a language you can understand and share with your friends. And now, here's our host.
- S2 00:36 Hello and welcome to the weekly edition of the Huffines Institute for Sports Medicine and Human Performance podcast. I'm Dr. John Thornton, Director of the Texas A&M Coaching Academy, sitting in today for Dr. Tim Lightfoot. I want to thank you all for taking the time to listen, and we've got a special treat today, brought to you courtesy of the Coaching Academy. Our guest today is Miss Kerry Patterson-Brown; welcome to the podcast, Kerry.
- S3 00:58 Thank you for having me
- S2 00:59 Well I appreciate you taking the time to drive up from Houston. Actually came in and was a guest speaker in my class today, and I think our young men and women got a lot out of it. One of the things that we are doing with Coach Ken is profiling your career in coaches that are involved in coaching. With that, could you tell us a little bit of your background? What got you into coaching and some of the experiences you've had?
- S3 01:22 First I want to begin by telling you thank you for allowing me to come speak with your class today. I learned a lot as well. I am from Houston, Texas. I attended Jack Yates High School. As a student athlete at Yates I was recruited by a bunch of different schools in the state of Texas. I chose A&M just because it's A&M. Just to be-- the culture, the tradition, the legacy. It was just so much that brought me here to this campus. As a student athlete I majored in English and I played women's basketball. I'm sorry, I didn't say that. So when a position opened up on the coaching staff I became one of the assistant coaches here and truly what made me become a staff member, what made me choose that job was that I was learning a lot as a student athlete so I wanted to continue to learn then I wanted to provide that knowledge to the students that were coming behind me.
- S2 02:20 One of the things that I think you'll agree with me is that each coach's background or experience level is unique. Obviously from your start it lead to coaches in two different colleges, I think in the public school setting, and now you are involved in something that is pretty interesting undertaking down here in Houston. Can you tell us a little bit about that?
- S3 02:39 Okay. Yes, my experiences have lended me to start a charter school and the charter school is called Legacy Collegiate Middle and High school for Careers in Health and wellness. And the intent behind the school is to expose student and families to the professions within athletics. So we'll have a early college high school program, an elite athletic program, and then we'll have a profession with an athletics program. And those professions will be coaching, athletic administrations, sports journalism, and sports medicine. And what our intent is is to show kids that there's more to athletics than just being the player on the field and on the court.

- S2 03:19 One of the things that we talked about in class, or I got to hear you talk about is the impact that coaches have a chance to have, and one of the things that you brought up in the class - obviously, you think coaching and teaching go hand in hand.
- S3 03:30 Yes.
- S2 03:31 And your background's pretty extensive in the formation of youth as far as the educational process as well as the coaching. So a little bit of the background about the classroom setting that you've been involved in?
- S3 03:42 Yes, when-- so this was in 2001; when I left here, I became the head coach of Houston Tillotson University. It's a small HBCU - Historically Black College University - and the funding there was-- there was none. [laughter] So I had to, along with being a head coach, I had to have another job, another source of income, so I became a 9th grade English teacher, my major here at A&M was English. I received my teacher certification, and became a 9th grade English teacher. Then I was a literacy coach, an instructional coach, and now I'm an adjunct instructor at San Jac community college in Houston. My biggest thing is the ah-ha moment, and I think you can get it in both ends from the classroom, and on the court, and what I truly believe is that if athletics drives a kid, then we need to allow that to drive a kid, but we make sure we're pointing them in the right direction. I've learned a lot on both ends. From the education from the classroom, and from the game-- the sport.
- S2 04:46 Well let me ask you this, as far as-- you've kind of morphed, as a lot of coaches do-- segway-ed into something else, that's not directly related to competition. What do you think you're going to miss most when you leave that setting to go to the other setting, as far as I mean the ah-ha moment is what you've said. You've seen the look on people's faces. Is there anything else that you are going to miss?
- S3 05:08 Right now, I work with a-- there's an AU program in Houston. So I still get my itch scratched, [chuckles] you know. I still get the feel of the game. But truly, I guess what I see that athletics provides is a comradery like no other. I mean you-- the student athletes are the people in general that are on the field, they have one common goal and that's what's neat. You generally don't see that a lot and I miss that push for-- I will probably-- well, I will miss that common ground you know, where everybody is pushing towards the same thing. So, but I still have my kids that participate in athletics and I get to see that happen with them and that's probably one of the most rewarding things is that I get to see that. I get to see them grow within the game but also have one common goal with other kids with the same mindset.
- S2 06:05 Let me ask you this, if we have listeners out there that either have individuals that that they know are interested in coaching, children that are interested in coaching, or themselves interested in coaching, are there any suggestions that after all the experience that you've had through the different opportunities you've had in your career that you would say that people need to do or look out for, or whether it be related to networking experience, some recommendations that you would have?
- S3 06:34 Yes, there are a lot of things that I could share, but I think the biggest thing is something that I just learned recently that I talked to my son about, is like getting a good network of people around you that want you to succeed and where you are lending yourself to them, they're lending themselves to you, but you all want to grow. I think that that's important within coaching because you have to instill that in kids when you're working with young adults. So make sure that the people that you're around are-- you all are looking to do the same thing. Not necessarily coaching, but

just grow within some field. If you have people that are stagnant or just don't want to move forward, then those aren't the people that you need to be around.

S2 07:16

It's like surround yourself with people that have the same mindset and want to be successful.

S3 07:20

Exactly. That have good values and-- I rate success in different manners. Some people look at success as being a billionaire, and then some people look at success as just having a strong family and enjoying their job. Whatever your success is, you find it, but you find it with a group of people that are interested in success as well. Whatever that may be, they have some goal in mind, and you all work together towards it.

S2 07:48

All right. At this point in time in the podcast, I think there's kind of a bonus round here. We have Reggie Brown. I'm not going to say, "the better half" or "the lesser half." I think it's two equal halves here. But Reggie, a former student athlete, Texas A&M much like Carrie was and Matt here. We'll talk about that in a little bit, and Reggie was All-American, All-Southwest Conference, played in the NFL and looks pretty prosperous to me at this point. I haven't seen him in a while but glad to have him here also. With that Reggie, thanks for coming.

S4 08:18

Thank you for having me.

S2 08:20

Well one of the things that I would like to talk about as far as the coaching side of it is concerned, and I'm glad you're here, and the fact that it's a tough business. We know that the fact that it's a family and both professionals. What are some of the keys to balancing this as a coach?

S3 08:38

When dealing with your family I found that you look at the things that go into coaching. So it was more-- in my mind I had the mental state, the ups and downs of coaching. I had my players that needed to-- that needed me. When you have a family you have the same exact thing. So my boys they needed their mother. But I had a strong husband that believed in he's going to do whatever is necessary for me to be happy in what I'm doing and then for my team to be happy. So it was a lot of compromise-- not even that, he basically lended himself to my life. He did a great job of just being a support system for me. So, basically it's hats off to him because he was my backbone with this coaching career that I chose.

S2 09:26

Well, did he ever suggest out of bounds plays? Reggie, I'm gonna ask you that too, did you critique her after games?

S4 09:32

I would lend my little two cents of knowledge about basketball. [chuckle]

S3 09:37

No but he was great though. Because I didn't--

S4 09:39

What I knew about it, or what I learned over the years from watching her.

S3 09:40

Well, I didn't have an assistant when I was at Houston-Tillotson. Well, I mean I had people that were on and off that joined every once in a while, but Reggie did a great job of-- he was my reflector when I needed to go back and we talked about the game. He was like, "Well I saw this and I saw that." That was good and my players loved him, you know? He was their other figure in their life - a man figure in their life, so they would go talk to him as well. So, it was great.

S2 10:05

So you both lived it, although one was actually that was their livelihood.

S3 10:08

Exactly.

- S2 10:08 Reggie, what's your thoughts on that? What are some of the keys for having a successful family, marriage, career?
- S4 10:14 Well, I think going into it, knowing-- say with my athletic background, knowing how much my coaches put into it hour-wise, it took time and effort, and knowing that's what Carrie's passion was, it was something I kind of expected. And once I saw she was committed herself to it, was serious about, that's what she wanted to have for a career. Just like anybody else, you're going to support your spouse and what they want to do. Just this certain profession takes a lot of man/woman hours to be the best at what you do and if have that certain drive and passion - which she does - I could only do nothing but salute her and say, "If that's what you want to do fine." I wasn't happy with it 100% of the time, but, like I said, I knew going into it what to expect, so it didn't just catch me off guard. When I played in Detroit all the players are gone at 5 o'clock, but the coaches I know they stayed there till 11 o'clock, midnight. But I know that's on a professional level. Even our college coaches, they had entire staff, with the vast resources that A&M has, and the resources that Houston-Tillotson had when she was there. And she was the only coach/academic adviser/--
- S2 11:29 Bus driver.
- S4 11:29 Parent liaison. I think that's all they had was a bus driver.
- S3 11:33 Sometimes I drove a bus.
- S4 11:34 [chuckles] Oh yeah, sometimes she did drive.
- S3 11:36 Yeah.
- S4 11:37 So I knew the stresses that she was-- she would probably be dealing with. I didn't know from first hand knowledge but just hearing from her and kind of seeing the experiences she went through I really didn't have any problem with it.
- S2 11:51 It probably helped a lot in the fact that your background was so related to athletics. So you had a great perspective or insight on what was going on.
- S4 11:58 I think that goes into our relationship also. Things I have gone through in my athletic background. And her being an athlete as well we can both kind of relate even though we're total opposites. [chuckles] We can both have that similar thing in our histories. She can understand I'm not in the best of moods, she might not be in the best of moods, even though majority of the time she was in a good mood.
- S2 12:25 [chuckles] Tell us a little bit about who is bringing what to the table but the good moods. Here is one of the things I think's unique in the podcast ability here. I don't know if we've ever had two former student athletes from Texas A&M that met here, married, two children both very successful and athletics is big part of your lives. Obviously with you Carrie it ended up being a career for you. Reggie, also the different things that you've undertaken in your professional career. Where and when did you come up with the realization of what your future path was going to be as far as your career was concerned? I mean because of-- we all know this, it's sometimes student athlete's focused. There's the sport. That's what they've done their entire lives. Was there any kind of trouble as you went through trying to figure out where you are going to go and what you're going to do?
- S3 13:15 I think when we had a kid. I knew that at some point, I was going to have to stop coaching just because of being supportive and being able to see my kids go through-- play their sport. And then as far as with the school with the opening of Legacy in

August 2016, it's dealing with my oldest son and dealing with my youngest son. Looking at their different personalities and who they are as young men. I knew we needed to have a school that was something like this. So it was, I guess probably five or six years ago when my thought process came about with building Legacy. So it was like five, six years ago really. And my oldest son is my muse. I look at him everyday and I'm like there has to be a program like this because there are truly a lot of kids that are similar to him. So you know, educating them just not on the -- I think we could co-mingle those two things together, athletics and education, and then allow that to drive a kid. So, I realized 5 years ago that this is my pathway. This is what God has put me here for.

S2 14:20

Awesome. Looking forward to being a partner with you as you bring this thing forward. Reg, let me ask you this. Coming to Texas A&M, having a great career, choosing a degree path for yourself as you were here and then having that manifest itself in what you're going to do for the rest of your life. You've always been a serious guy as we've always talked about. Do you consider the fact that you were that serious earlier on in your educational process, or did you mature as you went through and were exposed here at Texas A&M?

S4 14:48

I think I matured as I went on. When I first got here - when I first stepped on campus I was still 17-years-old, so I was still trying to figure things out and I didn't redshirt so I was the youngest in my recruiting class, or one of the very few that actually played. And I didn't come in-- I don't think I was prepared as Legacy will have the student prepared when they make it to college. I was pretty much like I say the youngest. Probably didn't have any thought of a major. Thought about it several times. Didn't have a lot of college graduates in my family. So I was pretty much one of the first if not the first that graduated from college. There's been several after me that were older than me, but several after me that went on and got a college degree. So I don't think I was prepared as I should have been, but I think as I matured and get older and I will say been around so many different people from different backgrounds, I think it kind of let my mind matriculate to a point of, okay you get you serious. And plus my background, I'm probably one of those instances where a lot of people say you can't play for ever, you never know when your last play is. My injury kind of showed people, hey here's somebody you know that tried to do everything the right particular way and career was short, cut short on one fluke play.

S4 16:07

So now is the now what kind of instance. I'm kind of that poster child of being prepared and just luckily I was surrounded by people that I've met along the way that could kind of-- and once I finished playing I came back to A&M. Okay let me take some classes, go back and finish my degree, and I remember talking to Carl Mooney which was our academic advisor at that point in time, and I said, "I think I want to start in the fall and take the summer off." He said, "No, you're going to start second summer session. The next opportunity don't wait, get started." So that kind of push and when I finished playing by far classes were so much easier as I came back as a 23-year-old instead of coming in as a 17-year-old with having no clue. In this new surrounding, everybody saying howdy [chuckles] to me I have no idea what's going on. All I know is the football team and campus is that way. And it's kind of here's your schedule, here's a map of the campus. See you at 2:30 for meetings.

S2 17:07

All I know is that you two are a great story individually, but even a better story together, and it's one of the kind of things that I really appreciate that you've all taken the time to come up here and look forward to following up and staying in touch as we go forward with your legacy. And Reggie with your background and what you're doing

and obviously will be following a couple of kids too I think pretty soon here as far as-- tell us about your children.

- S3 17:33 Yes. So our oldest is Reginald Brown, we call him Reggie and he's 13. Then our youngest is Michael Brown and he is named after his uncle - big Reggie, the oldest, his brother. So it's Reggie and Michael, and Reggie and Michael, and he's six. So both student athletes, in the younger version obviously. But they're great kids. [chuckle]
- S4 17:59 But quite different [chuckle]
- S3 18:01 Yeah, they are. It's funny because they are opposite like big Reggie and I are but they're-- I mean I enjoy every day. You look at them and you're like, "Thank you God for giving us these two." They'll test you, but at the same time, it's a reward everyday.
- S2 18:16 Let me ask you one more thing in closing. Is there one take away message that either one of you would like share?
- S3 18:23 Mine is empowering your students with choices. I think that that's a big thing from a coaching perspective because if you teach them how to make good decisions or if you teach them how to do things within your system that are, just not one way. Teach them that there are many ways to get things done. Then I think that you're lending them to become successful young adults or successful adults. Not just saying that this is the only way we are going to be able to do things, but let's try to figure out how we can do things that come up with this one common goal. So I think empowering kids with choices is something that I've learned from a coaching perspective along the way, but within your system. So you don't give them all these choices that have nothing to do with what you're trying to get done. But within your system you empower them with their choices and allow them to educate themselves.
- S2 19:13 I would like to give Reggie's parting shot because I know him well enough. He's not a fan of that. [chuckles] He's got one system. His way. Not really. Reggie you have anything that you'd like to leave anybody with?
- S4 19:26 I would say as far as coaching goes, I would say to an up and coming coach or even a coach that's been doing it for a while, just realize the power of their words. Power of their examples that they set and how much an athlete will remember and hold on to almost everything you say. Whether good or bad, positive or negative. I was fortunate to have so many coaches throughout my career - high school, professionally and even here at Texas A&M. I had three different defensive coaches in four years but we always still had a top five defense every year. But each coach I had had their own personality, and I still spit out so many different sayings from so many different coaches. I probably tell my kids too much, I say, "A coach told me once" [chuckles] blah blah blah blah." But like I say, the power of those words and how much they can motivate a kid, and keep them on track, and keep them doing the right thing.
- S2 20:28 That's a wonderful take home right there. We all know the influence that coaches and teachers can make on ya. That's a great way to end. First of all, thank you for being here. I know it was a trip to get up here, and I really enjoyed getting to reconnect and have you come to my class.
- S3 20:41 Thank you for having us.
- S4 20:43 Always a pleasure.
[music]

S1 20:44

This Sport's Medicine podcast is produced by Kelly Selman and Ayland Letsinger, and licensed by the Huffines Institute at Texas A&M under a Creative Commons 3.0 license. You can share it as much as you want, and you can talk or blog about it all you want. Just don't change it or charge money for it. This podcast is made possible by support by the Omar Smith family, and the Sydney and J.L. Huffines family. Our music was composed, performed, and graciously provided by Dave Seltzer Productions. Your source for quality music and music production since 1992. Find him at www.davidseltzer.com. Our opening and closing credits were provided by johnmilesproductions.com. If you have questions or comments, please send them to Huffines Podcast at hlkn.tamu.edu. From all of us at the Huffines Institute, we hope you have an active and healthy week.