

EXPERIENCES OF A COACHES’ KID

Student athlete reveals pros and cons of growing up with school employees as parents

Austin Iske
Sports Editor

I grew up sitting in coaches’ offices and classrooms after school, waiting to see which of my parents could leave school and take me home first. Almost every day I’d have to find a way to entertain myself for hours in an empty school. I like to

think those days helped shape me into the person I am today, and I’m grateful to have a coach for a dad and a teacher for a mom, despite the downsides.

While I wouldn’t want it any other way, being related to a coach definitely comes with it’s challenges. Some people are always watching for me to make a mistake so they can pull the “He only



Photo by Maggie Brown

plays because his dad is the coach” card. While I’d like to say there aren’t people who would tear down a 16 year old kid just to create a fuss, there are. I’ve had to deal with adults and students like this since I started playing sports in 7th grade, and I’ve learned it’s best to just tune them out and focus on myself.

Another thing my dad’s position influences is how my peers view me. Coaches’ families move a lot, and ours is no exception. White Oak is the 8th town that I’ve lived in. Because of this, my closest friends didn’t even know I existed 3 years ago. When I first got to White Oak I felt like I was being scoped out by the kids. At first they treated me like I was a spy that was going to report any misbehavior to the coaching staff, but I feel like most people here have moved past that. I had to prove that I wouldn’t sell them out, and it cost me at times, but it was necessary to their seeing me as a teammate.

Because of my dad’s job, I had invested more time into football than most players ever do by the time I got to high school. I’m not talking about training (although I was “encouraged” to begin lifting at a very early age). I had nine years of waterboy experience before I started high school. That means I was at 2-3 games a week, two-a-days every summer, and countless after school practices. Being around the game so much instilled a love

of the game and a love for competition in me. I thought that there was nothing better than watching a varsity game, until I stepped on the field and played my first game. I looked around and saw that I was one of the people I had looked up to since kindergarden, and there was no greater feeling. My dad passed his passion for the sport on to me, and I intended to follow a career path that never separates me from the game.

Practice is a different experience too. Most kids don’t worry about their dad tackling them in the middle of practice (true story). I’m asked “If you get in trouble at practice, does it go home with you?”. The answer is yes. Many times we’ve had a stressed household because of practice. Having a coach scream in your face is one thing, but having a parent do it is completely different. It’s more natural to argue with your parent than with a coach (which has gotten me in trouble a few times). It’s a weird relationship on the field. I guess the best way to describe it is that I’m a player that he doesn’t have to worry about getting a call from parents.

Even though it comes with its own set of problems, I feel like this lifestyle has prepared me to deal with anything I might run into. All my life my dad has preached character and hard work to his athletes and set an example to follow. Being around that message my entire life has made me into a better student, athlete and person. I wouldn’t have it any other way.

Senior Spotlight

Community applauds Class of 2015 at Senior Celebration



photos by Lauren Ummel



In a rendition of ‘Remember me’ by Sarah McLachlan, Brenna Jennings captivates the audience. In her years at White Oak, she has become known for her readiness to perform, even on the slightest notice.

On the arm of her teacher, Keanna Sustaire pauses to have her favorite memories and future plans read to the crowd. Coach Cloud was sought after as an escort for the celebration and is thought of fondly across the board.



Smiles wide as always, senior Kadrienne Sanders is escorted by Josh Frazier at Senior Celebration, held last Saturday. Each senior had their time to share high school memories with an escort of their choice.

Lauren Ummel
Staff Writer

On the first day of school they sat in a circle, listening intently to the teacher. Everything was new to them. The person sitting next to them, the questions Mom

TREBLE’S ON ITS WAY

Solo and Ensemble students advance to state

Virginia Mogavero
Staff Writer

With only a little over a month left, select band students prepare to compete at State Solo and Ensemble on Monday, May 25 at Pflugerville High School.

A majority of the students competing are in an ensemble. Ensembles can range anywhere from a trio to a quintet and contain a variety of instruments.

“I prefer to be in an ensemble because I don’t enjoy the spotlight directly on me,” senior Aimee Rodriguez said. “I believe you can grow more as a player when you have other people telling you how to make a part better.”

With conflicting schedules, getting together for practice can be difficult. Some ensembles find time during enrichment or after school. However, usually students try to cram in practices a week before the state competition.

“We try to practice as many times as possible,” junior Madison Mabry said. “It’s hard to get the group together but we try for at least three days a week.”

Practice doesn’t always make perfect, especially for those who have stage fright. Performing in front of the judges

can be very nerve racking for these musicians.

“I was nervous, but that’s how I am before any competition,” senior Mason Malone said. “I think that being slightly nervous is a good thing. It means you’re serious about what you’re doing and want to do it well.”

Many great memories are made every year on this trip. Whether it’s having some down time with your friends or just staying in a fancy hotel. The band students who make it to state usually get to enjoy time at Sea World while they are on their trip.

“Last year I received the Outstanding Soloist award, so it was really cool to see that hard work pay off,” junior Jennifer Schaez said. “However, my best memory was probably almost being left at Sea World with Michelle Holcomb. Thanks, guys.”

Being involved in Solo & Ensemble takes dedication and time, but it betters students as musicians. It’s a form of art for some and they take it very seriously.

“I chose to be involved in Solo & Ensemble because I wanted to see how well I could place playing a solo,” freshman Juan Resendiz said. “I learned that I did extremely well.”

asked everyday “how was your day?”, “who did you sit by?”, “what did you learn?” Everything was foreign. Now they know how to answer Mom’s questions almost unconsciously. From the time each of them sat in the circle watching the swiftness of the teacher’s hand to waiting to hear their names called with the accomplice of some university’s name and the word “attending” next to it, the long days of learning were coming to a close. Emerging two at a time, each student finally realized that the year they thought would never come was writing its final words in the chapter.

The senior class will walk across another stage for graduation. Soon-to-be alumni will transition from high school to college with their final steps across the stage at the Belcher Center on Saturday, May 30.

“I felt very accomplished walking across that stage,” Rachel Webster said. “I was very blessed to be named the Most Representative Girl. My sister, Rebecca, received that award last year and I was honored to follow in her footsteps.”

Senior celebration gave the class a final time to reminisce their favorite high school memories and have a moment in the spotlight.

“It was pretty cool to be recognized” voted Wittiest Boy Josh Hampton said. “I don’t take these awards very seriously, though.”

Seniors who enjoyed the spotlight talked about their favorite moment at Senior Celebration.

“My favorite thing was definitely Kevin Brown,” senior Kailee Simmons said. “I loved hearing him speak to us.”

The stage may not fit everyone’s

comfort zone. So, while some spoke about their favorite moments during the celebration, others admitted to their least favorite and what they could have done to make it better.

“I honestly loved it,” Kadrienne Sanders said. “I wish there had been food though.”

With homework assignments that were inevitably going to be all-nighters, the last minute studying for one of Hutchins-Boyett’s physics tests or trying to avoid the journalism staff’s survey days behind them, seniors now try to wrap their minds around not doing just that.

“I’m super excited,” 2015’s Mr. White Oak, Slaton Teague said. “I’m ready to start the new chapter of my life.”

The final countdown to graduation has students on their toes. Many are anxious to finally go to college, while others worry about what the future will hold for them.

“The last day of school will be bittersweet for me” Webster said. “I’m so ready to graduate, but I’m not looking forward to the real world with bills and more responsibilities.”

The last day of school not only marks the first day of summer, but also the beginning of a journey to achieve individual goals and dreams.

“I’m going to be going to down to College Station to get my bachelor’s degree in business and human resources,” Andrew Thornton said. “Then, after four years I would join the Navy as an officer,. If I like it, then I’m going to turn it into a career.”