

Features



Faith, dedication, enthusiasm define Johnson

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By Annabeth Miller, ShowMe Times Editor

Determination. Discipline. Dedication. Disciple.

Those four words go a long way to paint a portrait of Glen Johnson. The young man with roots planted in Dexter, goes through life with a smile on his face and a faith that defines his life – on and off the football field.

After a standout career on the football field as a Dexter Bearcat, Johnson traded his ‘red and black’ for the ‘purple and white’ of the Bearcats at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar. Now in the spring of his junior year at SBU, Johnson is looking forward to running back on the field next fall as a leader on and off the field.

He is dedicated to his sport – even completing a strenuous physical workout regimen during Christmas break when many college students rest, sleep late, and enjoy some time away from college tasks. But Johnson spent hours each day working out – all with a goal to become strong, faster, more physically ready for another year on the football field for SBU and being a better athlete.

“Success comes before work only in the dictionary,” he grins as he repeats one of his favorite sayings.

Dexter Red & Black

But a lot of who Glen Johnson is can be found back in his hometown of Dexter – the place where he first played football – the place where he says his best football

memories originate.

“My best memories of playing football were of playing next to my friends – who were brothers to me – on Friday nights,” he said with enthusiasm. “I would say that is the biggest difference between college and high school. You play in college with a bunch of studs from all over the country who you don’t know. In high school you are playing with the guys you grew up with.”

But Johnson is also <images/Blog Images/Local News/3.01.2011-GLEN-GAME.gif> a leader off the field, heading three different student groups on the SBU campus. And that’s where his discipleship comes into clear view.

Discipleship In Focus

Active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes when he was a Dexter Bearcat, Johnson was surprised to arrive in Bolivar and not find a FCA group on campus. Things have now changed.

“I am now the president, and it was non-existent on our campus when I got the torch passed to me,” he said. Now the group has 30-50 students every Monday night. In addition to FCA, Johnson started a group for guys at SBU, called “Guys Only,” that meets right after FCA.

“It’s just for the fellas and we just talk about God’s calling in our life to be spiritual leaders and what it takes to do that,” he said. “We tackle the hard stuff in our life - stuff that is real in our lives – and we help each other conquer that.”

The third group was started last year is called One16. The group’s name is based on Romans 1:16: *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”*

“This is a campus-wide Bible study that has just exploded,” he said with excitement. The co-ed group boasts 40 or more students each week.

“We talk about real issues, too, but we have the ladies around so our focus isn’t solely on guy talk, but relationships and just growing in our relationship with Christ,” he explained. “Faith is slavery – it’s a relationship that has its ups and downs. His timing

is perfect, and in the mean time I live by Colossians 3:23 – *‘Work hard and cheerfully, as if you were working for Christ and not for people.’*”

Mentors Who Inspire

Johnson’s road seems to always lead back to Dexter. The lessons learned as a young kid on the field at Bland Stadium, the weight room and classrooms at DHS, and in the community were all made possible because of a crew of mentors.

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“It all really started with

mentors in my life,” he said. He credits four men for playing those key roles: Coach Aaron Pixley, Alan Hedrick, Scott Northcutt and Brett Dorton. And it is their influence that inspires Johnson to give back to the community – to help with football clinics, to serve as a mentor himself during Disciple Now, to encourage and teach another generation.

“They had an interest in my life. ‘Coach Pix’ encouraged me to be a good person, Hedrick gave me the confidence to chase my dreams, Northcutt taught about being a servant, and Dorton the importance of being a spiritual leader,” he said. “How could I not want to give back?”

That giving is obvious when you watch Johnson with young kids who just seem to naturally gravitate to him. And when he was back in town for Disciple Now earlier this winter, he threw himself into activities 150 percent – down on the floor encouraging young boys to do their best, playing basketball, running races and being a role model for younger boys – always working hard and giving much.

“I want to give back to the programs and the community that gave so much to me when I was growing up,” he said.

Johnson is getting to that point in a college student’s life when important life decisions are made – career, family, goals. And there his dedication, determination, disciple and discipleship and come together.

“I have felt called into Education for a long time - coaching football and I really want to teach weightlifting, life fitness and health because I am very passionate about fitness,” he said. “I have been blessed with opportunities to reach guys of all ages

through athletics. I feel like Education is about developing the student morally and helping them appreciate education and make it a “get to” and not a “have to.”

Determination. Discipline. Dedication. Disciple. But there is a fifth ‘D’ for Glen Johnson: Dexter.

“I love Dexter – it will always be home. I will always bleed red and black!”

Photos above

Top Photo: Glen Johnson is always a Bearcat at heart! After wearing Bearcat Red & Black at DHS in high school, Johnson now puts on Bearcat Purple & White at Southeast Baptist University.

Middle Photo: Johnson and his teammates prepare for a game at SBU in Bolivar.

Bottom Photo: Johnson and one of his biggest fans, young Carter Dorton, son of Brett and Christy Dorton of Dexter.

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