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U.S. Defender Finds Purpose On The Bench

JULY 27TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

U.S. Defender Finds Purpose On The Bench

Special to the ShowMe Times - courtesy of Baptist Press Sports

BOSTON--U.S. team member Stephanie Cox spent much of her time on the bench at the Women's World Cup in Germany.

The lack of playing time - she played in two of the team's six games, for a total of 67 minutes - was frustrating. But it also served as a reminder to Cox of her responsibility to her teammates, no matter how much she was on the field.

Cox, a defender, began to see "that God has me there for a bigger purpose than for me to excel at my sport, or just wins and losses. It's more about the effect I can have on my teammates. My responsibility is to show them Christ."

Cox said she tried to cheer loudly for her teammates, supporting them and encouraging them in persevering through the competition. In doing so, she hoped they could see her love for them - and Christ's love in her - shining through.

"Eternity's worth more than playing every game," Cox said.

A native of Elk Grove, Calif., Cox grew up in a Christian home and was a member of First Baptist Church there affiliated with the North American Baptist Conference. She made a profession of faith at a young age and took several mission trips with her family as a youth.

As she grew older and became more involved with soccer, Cox often struggled with figuring out how the sport could fit with her life as a Christian. "How could God use my role as a soccer player?" she asked herself.

She often felt during high school as if soccer competed with her relationship with the Lord. Her commitment to the sport often caused her to miss youth group events or other church activities. But when she began her college career at the University of Portland, she discovered something important about the connection between soccer and her faith.

"When I got to college, some other girls on the team were Christians, and I realized you could find a community of Christians wherever you are," said Cox, who plays professionally for the Boston Breakers. "I've been trying to seek after communities on my teams ever since. That's an encouragement to my faith and my relationship with God - because often you can't go to church on Sundays."

During her time in Germany as part of the U.S. team, Cox said she could see ways in which God was moving on her team. She and several Christian teammates often prayed for team unity, and Cox said they felt God bringing them together.

"We were just so grateful that He was writing a bigger story than we could have," Cox said.

They held regular Bible studies, and on one Sunday they gathered to sing worship songs and listen to an online sermon.

The tournament's outcome was heartbreaking for Cox and her teammates, who lost to Japan in the championship game. But Cox said the World Cup experience has given women's soccer more exposure - and given her and other Christian teammates a greater platform to talk about their relationship with Christ.

"So even though we lost, I feel so honored to be a part of a team that so many people were watching and so many people were taking notice of," Cox said. "I almost feel like we won, in a way."

*Tim Ellsworth is editor of **Baptist Press Sports** and director of news and media relations at Union University in Jackson, Tenn.*

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'Cats Battle High Temps During Camp

JULY 27TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

'Cats Battle High Temps During Camp

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

The Bearcats are back on the field this week as the final camp of the summer carries on at Charles Bland Stadium. DHS Offensive Line Coach Greg Lummukkua was running the 'hogs' through a variety of drills during the group offense section of the evening's practice.

Zach Lacy (far left) is going to be a key leader on the offensive line this year, and looks to help lead the 'Cats to another run deep into the post-season.

'Mother Nature' won't be playing nice with the Bearcats during the rest of the week's

camp, with temperatures expected to stay in the upper 90's through Friday evening.

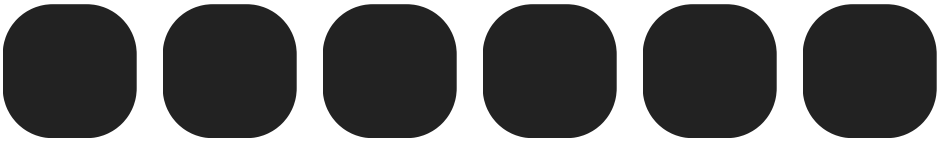
All DHS athletes will be entering the MSHSAA-sanctioned 'dead week' next week, with the football team returning to the field to begin official practices not long after their week off.

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A Family Tradition

JULY 25TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

Athletic ability runs strong in the men of the Windham family. Wayne Windham played basketball at Mississippi State University. His son Don played football and baseball at Northeast Mississippi Community College. Don's oldest son, Eric, played baseball at St. Louis Community College - Florissant Valley, and was recruited by several schools for his abilities on the football field. Eric's little brother, Ryan, is currently following in their footsteps.

Ryan is playing basketball at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas. The 19 year old son of Don & Vicki Windham is a 2010 graduate of Dexter High School and just finished his freshman season with the Eagles. He was a three-sport athlete at DHS until his senior year, when he decided not to play tennis. Despite not getting a lot of playing time during his freshman season, he is optimistic about his future at the school.

"I didn't get to play a lot this year, but hopefully that will change this season," he said. "We have a new coach and a new system, and I think it will be a good system to play in. It's fast paced, which is what I like and play the best in, and that makes it more fun for me."

The Eagles struggled last season, ending with an 11-17 (4-10 American Midwest Conference) record, but hopefully with new blood in the system, things will begin to change.

"Jeff Rider was our coach, and he had just finished his fifteenth season at Williams," Windham added. "Coach Nichols actually played for him. Our new coach is John Austin, who used to be at Central Baptist in Conway."

One would think that there would be a lot of pressure with such a prolific family history in athletics, but it wasn't the case.

"There was never really that much pressure on me," Windham noted. "Everybody always just told me that if I wanted to play, then go play. If not, that's fine too. The only demand was that I give my best effort if I decided to play."

Windham began playing basketball at a young age, and even went on to win the Show-Me State Games with one of his teams.

“I started playing

AAU ball in fifth grade - we won the Show-Me State tournament,” Windham recalled.

“Amos Smith was the coach - he started shooting with me and teaching me a lot, but I’ve played with the same group since third or fourth grade. Guys like Ben Mills, Sawyer Smith, Hunter Bruce and Chance Holden.”

“Amos always taught me left hand,” he added. “He told me that I’d never be the strongest or the fastest, so I’d have to be the smartest. That’s really stuck with me over the years - it’s all about reading the defense and seeing what they’re going to do.”

Moving into junior high and high school, Ryan had a great person to learn from: his older brother Eric, who was a starter on the varsity football, basketball, and baseball teams.

“My brother didn’t teach me a lot directly, but I learned a lot by watching him. We always played one on one growing up, but I still can’t beat him...its just that little brother thing. He always beats up on me in the driveway,” Windham said, laughing. “He was someone I could watch and mimic myself after, especially with ‘the shot’ - he has one of the best shots I’ve ever seen. Even today, when we play together, I still try to make myself shoot like him. He’s hard-nosed and likes to hit people, so I’ve tried to move that into my game as well. I’m not the biggest guy, so I have to make up for it with a little extra physicality sometimes.”

Windham also noted other DHS Alums that he took

lessons from during his youth, as well as a former Duke Blue Devil.

“Amos Smith, I took his passing and ball-handling. I used to go across the street to his house; we’d sit in his basement and watch videos of Michael Jordan doing crazy moves with the ball and try to learn how to do them. I also liked watching Matt & Kyle Christian play when I was a kid, as well as Shannon Wright. I loved watching J.J. Redick when he was at Duke. He can hit shots at any time, averaged like 30 points a game. Great free-throw shooter too.”

A three sport athlete for all but his senior year, Windham enjoyed success on the football field and tennis court, as well as the basketball court.

“I liked whichever sport was in season the best, but I really liked football. The teamwork aspect that Coach Pixley pushed, I really got behind that and made it a part of my

mentality in all sports,” he said. “We always just had fun in football - I was out there as a sophomore with my brother, and just kept going through and grew up and quit getting knocked around so much.”

Windham also noted the persistence of his high school basketball coach, Rob Nichols, in helping him to get where he is now.

“Coach Nichols always stayed on me about shooting the ball more,” he said. “He made me come in and shoot all the time, and I think it really helped me in getting a college basketball scholarship.”

Williams Baptist wasn’t the only school to recruit Windham: he was also contacted by Bethel University - where fellow Bearcat alum Derek Demaree played basketball - and Northeastern Mississippi Community College.

“I was looking at Bethel, where Derek Demaree went,” Windham recalled. “He talked to their coach about me and got me a tryout; I just didn’t feel that I’d really fit in there.”

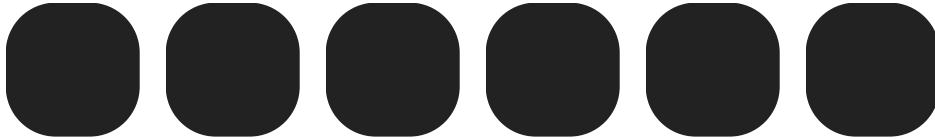
“I like the people down there - everyone’s super nice,” Windham said of his school. “The Christian atmosphere is great. We’re in the middle of a corn field - literally - so there isn’t much to do other than go to Jonesboro, which is like 20 miles away. Being down there with Tyler [Tanner] really helps things a lot. It’s a really nice campus. They’ve been renovating a lot of the buildings recently.”

Windham is planning on finishing a business degree at Williams Baptist College, and expects to graduate in May of 2014.

Regardless of what he does in life or when he graduates, Ryan Windham will live up to both of his ‘family traditions’ - he’s an outstanding collegiate athlete and he always has been, and always will be, a hard working man.

*Make sure to check back with the **ShowMe Times** for updates on Ryan’s future basketball seasons at Williams Baptist College!*

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Dexter Golfer Brings Home Whampions Trophy

JULY 24TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

Dexter Golfer Brings Home Whampions Trophy

It was a great weekend for a group of 22 guys that attended the annual Tournament of Whampions in Hot Springs, Ar., this past weekend. From college-age to the more mature, the group is a broad section of friends and family that make the trip this tournament every year.

The Tournament of Whampions began over 30 years ago with a group of friends and professionals that began to get together for a weekend of golf and fun. The tournament has been played on great courses throughout Texas, Louisiana, and most recently, the event has been held at the Hot Springs Country Club in Hot Springs, Ar.

Overall, the tournament is designed to allow any and all golfers a chance to compete on a level playing field. The group uses a modified Stableford scoring system which gives points per the score a player gets on each hole. A bogey is worth 1 point, par is worth 2 points, birdies are worth 4 points and eagles are worth 8 points in this scoring method.

Your handicap is established per your home course, verified and adjusted to make sure your needed points are high enough to be fair to other players. Therefore, a person with a 20 handicap would need to get 16 points in a 36-par round of golf to break even.

The group from the Dexter area included several [images/Blog Images/show/ujed](#) members from the Holden Family, led by the patriarch Demp “Boot” Holden. Other members of the family were Bill Holden, Steve Holden, Tim Holden, Jason Comfort, Josh Comfort, Tyler Holden, Chance Holden and Ryan Holden. The Christian family was also well represented, with Terry Christian, Bruce Christian and Kyle Christian on hand for the tournament. Other members of the field included Mike Gaylord, Alan Hedrick, Terry Hill, Darren Hillis, Nathan Mauer, Dennis Meeks, Matt Mills, Jamie Ralph, Andy Riley, Dale Stites and Doran Vancil.

[images/Blog Images/show/ujeb](#) The first event of the weekend was a 'Horse Race' contest, where two-man teams are selected and play an alternating shot format. In the under 27 handicap division, the winners were from the Dexter area, with Nathan Mauer of Poplar Bluff and Josh Comfort of Dexter, who narrowly defeated the team of Ryan Holden and Chance Holden on the final hole.

The event normally begins with an early morning shotgun start on Saturday and tee times on Sunday. A twist is always added to the two-day tournament, as the course is played from the deepest tips of each tee box, making the course play extremely long. Further, the greens are set up with the extremely difficult pin placements on the green, with slants, breaks, and speed always being a problem with gaining points.

After the first day of the tournament, Terry Christian of [images/Blog Images/show/ujea](#) Dexter and Terry Hill of Jackson, MO were tied, leading the field with a +8 score. Jason Comfort also battled the extreme heat and was on the heels of the leaders with a +3 score.

With tee times beginning at 7:00 A.M. on Sunday, the field of 56 golfers all started with high hopes of either continuing the success of the previous day or to make a major improvement to their scores. When all the cards were turned in, Jason Comfort of Dexter became the 2011 Tournament of Whampions Champion with a +9 ½ score for the overall tournament. Bruce Christian of Dexter had an incredible second day and finished in second with an overall tournament score of +6. Terry Christian finished with a score +4 on Sunday for 3rd Place in the contest.

Previous winners from the Dexter area of the Whampions Tournament include Steve Holden and Chance Holden.

Plans are already being made for 2012 Whampions Event. There is a discussion that the tournament will be moved to another location in the Midwest.

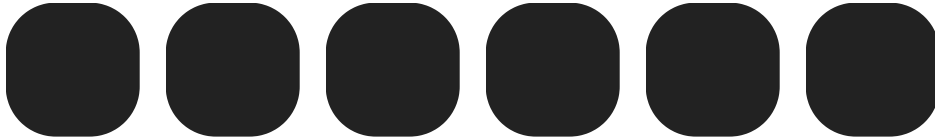
Photos Above: *Top Photo: Jason Comfort receives 2011 Whampions Trophy from Greg Procell of Shreveport LA.*

2nd Photo: Group Patriarchs Demp Holden and Doran Vancil continue to enjoy the tournament.

3rd Photo: Josh Comfort and Nathan Mauer were the winners of Friday's Horse Race contest.

4th Photo: After dinner Friday Night, Holden and Christian Families get a picture made together with a newcomer and friend, Jack Greene.

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Boys Wrap Up Rib City Shootout

JULY 24TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Boys Wrap Up Rib City Shootout

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

The action was fast and furious on the basketball court this weekend, as over thirty teams from the area competed in the second annual Rib City Shootout.

Basketball fans were treated to over 100 games, spanning three courts in the Bearcat Event Center, as well as the T.S. Hill Middle School gymnasium.

Several teams backed out of the tournament at the last minute, forcing a somewhat chaotic rescheduling of games. The 'Cats were represented well by the junior varsity and eighth grade squads, but the varsity team was unable to compete.

Sophomores Cody Neldon and DJ Dowdy both had solid performances on the JV squad,

with Dowdy hitting a deep three at the buzzer to put the 'Cats over Naylor's Varsity squad during pool play on Friday afternoon. Freshman Drake Mitchell showed some promise as well, hitting several key perimeter shots and having a great defensive showing during the tournament.

This weekend’s tournament saw the last round for the boys, but the girls have one more round left, scheduled for July 28-29. 36 teams, from as far as Du Quoin, Ill. and Manila, Ar. , will be competing in the final round of this summer’s shootout.

Full details of next weekend’s shootout, as well as a schedule and a list of the event’s sponsors, can be found at www.ribcityshootout.com.

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*Make sure to check back with the **ShowMe Times** for full coverage of next week’s final round of the Rib City Shootout!*

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