

Bits and Pieces

Edition 8

By Greg Barton

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Our Portland and Seattle Indoor Winter Football Training is up on the site. We will be indoors at Portland Community College and in Seattle at the University of Washington in January, February and March. You can register right now. Hope we see everyone in January.

I have really enjoyed this football season. I try to catch a high school game each Friday, then lay glued to the couch on Saturday's watching as much college football as I can, and then on Sunday, it is on to the NFL. I love watching college football and the thing I enjoy most is watching players on television who have participated in the Barton Football Academy. Just some thoughts about what I have seen in college football from players that have trained in the Barton Football Academy.....

Where do we start in talking about these guys? A couple of weeks ago, **Tony Rehn**, the former Skyline (Washington) quarterback, came to Portland, Oregon to lead his Menlo College (California) team to a victory over Lewis and Clark College. Tony is known for his arm and he threw the ball well. But he might have made one of the best TD runs that I have seen the entire year (at any level of football). Tony is a great young man who has a great future in the business world in front of him.

Patrick Stoudamire is the starting cornerback for Western Illinois University. He is a junior this year and this is his 3rd year starting at this level. He will definitely have an NFL shot when he finishes up next season. He is projected right now as a 4th-5th rounder for the 2010 NFL draft by: www.nfldraftscout.com Patrick played for Centennial HS in Gresham, Oregon. Corners are hard to find and Patrick is special.

Dominic Kegel started at quarterback for Greenville College in Illinois for his 4th straight year. Dominic is one of the top quarterbacks in the country at the small college level. The returning conference Player-of-the-Year is hoping to play in the Canadian League, the Arena League or in Europe following his final game in college. Dominic had a pretty good game last

week, earning his second consecutive Conference Player of the Week Honors. All he did was complete 14 of 19 for 304 yards and 5 touchdowns. In addition he rushed for 51 yards and 1 TD and had one-2 point rushing conversion. Believe this or not, Dominic played 8-man football in high school in Hunters, Washington.

David Johnson went to Southridge HS in Beaverton, Oregon. He is now a senior at the University of Tulsa. He has led the Golden Hurricane to an 8 and 2 record throwing for 3,300 yards and 37 TD passes. His stock has just taken off and the NFL scouts are starting to hang around the Tulsa practices and they are watching his games. He will hopefully be playing in a bowl game soon and we can all watch him on television showing off his great arm. You want to talk about being mentally tough; no one is tougher than this kid. Out of high school he was not highly recruited. At Tulsa, he red-shirted in his first year and then was the backup quarterback for 3 years. Finally he got the starting job this year and he is making the best of it. A lesson for all of us; persistence!!!

I attended the USC-Oregon State game that was held early in the season in Corvallis, Oregon. USC came in as the number one ranked team in the country. That night a young man from Capital HS in Olympia, Washington got his first PAC 10 start at center for the Beavers. I went to the game with his father, Bill Linnenkohl, who was an outstanding player for Puget Sound. Oregon State beat USC pretty good that night and their freshman running back from Texas, Jacquizz Rodgers rushed for 186 yards and 2 TDs. Most of his yards were gained between the guards, not the tackles. **Alex Linnenkohl**, starting as a sophomore center, completely dominated a couple of the top defensive tackles in the country. He showed leadership far beyond his age and experience. Alex will end up being a 3-year starter in the tough PAC 10 Conference. This is very unusual and it says an awful lot about the dedication that Alex had as a young player in Middle School and High School. We saw Alex pay the price as a kid growing up in Washington. He lifted weights and trained everyday. He never missed workouts. I was so proud of him that night; Alex was literally floating on a cloud. He was so happy in being a big part of taking down the number one team in the country.

Speaking of Oregon State football, how about the play of safety, **Greg Laybourn**? He had the huge interception to put USC away in the final minutes. Greg was a QB at Beaverton HS and a guy who could run the veer

option as well as any QB I have ever seen in high school. What kind of athlete is he? Well he started for Northern Arizona in the Big Sky as a true freshman as a cover cornerback. After the season, Greg missed baseball and transferred to Oregon State to join one of the top college baseball programs in the country. Greg played for the Beavers and did a great job on the diamond. But guess what? He missed football, so he talked to Mike Riley and he moved right into a starting position with the football team. Greg has 2 older brothers that were also excellent football players. One of Taylor Barton's wide receivers in high school (Beaverton) was Chris Laybourn who later played for the University of San Diego. Then, middle brother, Andrew was another great player at Beaverton HS and following high school, he played wide receiver at Portland State University.

Again, speaking of Beaverton High School, how many know this? The starting safety for the Indianapolis Colts this year is a rookie from Portland State University. **Jordan Senn** played strong safety for Beaverton, and the other safety was none other than Greg Laybourn. Jordan Senn trained with us and he will have a long NFL career. Greg Laybourn trained with us also and I believe he will have an opportunity to play in the NFL.

Tavita Pritchard has played well as a quarterback for two years for Jim Harbaugh and the Stanford Cardinal. He will always be known for throwing the TD pass that beat USC in his junior year in the Los Angeles Coliseum. This was the first PAC 10 start for Tavita and a game he will never forget. Tavita played his high school at Clover HS in Tacoma, Washington.

Gabe Miller was the Player-of-the-Year in Oregon, while playing at Lake Oswego HS. He tore his Achilles heel in the spring of his senior year when he was running the hurdles in Track and Field. Early in his career at Oregon State, he tore his Achilles heel again. Through lots of hard work, Gabe returned to football and played well this year as a tight end for the Beavers. What a great moment it was in watching Gabe competing in the PAC-10 after the problems he has faced and had to overcome.

Johnny Hekker was an outstanding quarterback and punter for Bothel High School, in Bothel, Washington. Johnny earned the punting job for Oregon State this fall and did a great job for the Beavers. When I went to the OSU-USC game, I talked to both of his parents. Both were nice people and quite nervous before the game. They were nervous for a good reason. Johnny is a young player and being a punter or kicker is a nerve racking job. Imagine

how it must be for a parent? Johnny punted the ball well vs. USC and he has improved his punting each and every game. He has some big time potential

I thought **Kavario Middleton** from Lake High School, showed some outstanding skills playing tight end for the University of Washington as a TRUE freshman. I don't know if the average football fan really understands just how difficult it is for a kid to play this early in the PAC 10. Think about this, Kavario graduates from Lakes High School late last May and then he gets his first PAC start on August 30 at the University of Oregon.

Kevin Riley has played well at quarterback for the University of California as a sophomore. Kevin should continue to improve and he just might move into the top group of quarterbacks in the country as a junior. Kevin played his high school football at Beaverton HS in Oregon. Kevin's arm strength is outstanding. He has trained in the Barton Academy since he was a 7th grader. Kevin was a ball boy for the Beaverton team when Taylor Barton was the quarterback at Beaverton.

Sean Canfield from Oregon State has overcome some adversity this year. Sean got hurt last year and lost his quarterback job this fall when he was still not fully healed from shoulder surgery. Sean came to Beaverton, Oregon late in the summer, just before his two-a-day practices, to work with Taylor Barton. I watched the short workout and Sean could only "lob" short passes and it was obvious that his injury was far from healed. Sean worked with us the previous summer and he looked terrific. He is big, strong and very athletic. I was very impressed with his effort and skills he showed during our Small Group Training. I felt terrible for Sean when he got hurt and had to have surgery. Then watching him this summer, I again felt really bad for Sean. He tied so hard, but he simply was not well yet. He worked hard during two-a-days and early in the season. I would guess that he was about 60% of where he needed to be. A couple weeks ago, Oregon State lost their number one quarterback and Sean was thrown into the fire. Sean has shown tremendous heart in leading his team to some huge wins. The guy is flat out a competitor.

Two outstanding linemen from Oregon are making themselves well known in big-time college football programs. **Ethan Johnson** grew up in Oregon and played at Lincoln HS. He received a football scholarship from Notre Dame last spring and he is starting as a true freshman. Ethan is a 6'4 and 275 pound defensive end. I have seen Ethan play on TV a lot and he is

doing a great job for the Irish. **Ndamukong Suh** is a junior nose tackle for the University of Nebraska and he is one of the top defensive linemen in the country. Ndamukong came out of Grant High School in Portland, Oregon. I copied and pasted from The Sporting Blog the following:

N is for Ndamukong. As in Ndamukong Suh, the Nebraska nose tackle who must have gotten plenty of sleep, eaten a balanced diet, and warmed up thoroughly before the Kansas game Saturday. Suh, a 6'5, 300-pound nose tackle, had 12 tackles and caught a touchdown pass against Kansas in a 45-35 Huskers victory.



Ethan and Ndamukong, if they stay healthy will both a long NFL career. Both have been in the Barton Line Camps and both are really good guys.

Sean Setzer is sharing the starting quarterback position at Utah State University as a senior. I have copied and pasted his bio below....

10 Sean Setzer



PROFILE

▶ Class: Senior	▶ Last College: Garden City JC
▶ Hometown: Portland, Ore.	▶ Height / Weight: 6-2 / 227
▶ High School: Wilson HS	▶ Position: Quarterback
	▶ Birthdate: 04/13/1986
	▶ Experience: SQ

Quickly: Enters the fall battling for starting quarterback position... Showed great progress and promise in spring drills... Signed with USU in December of 2006 and participated in spring drills. **2007 (Jr.):** Saw action in one game, playing against Boise State... Was 1-of-1 for two yards. **Junior College:** A second-team all-Jayhawk Conference selection in 2006 at Garden City JC... Threw for 2,034 yards and 13 touchdowns, while hitting 168-of-292 pass attempts... Also rushed for seven scores. **High School:** Was a first-team all-conference quarterback and defensive back at Wilson HS in Portland, Ore... Garnered back-to-back league Offensive Player of the Year honors... Earned second-team all-state honors as a senior... Also played baseball and was drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates as a first baseman in 2004. **Personal:** Born April 13, 1986 in Portland, Ore... Son of Randy Setzer and Sheri Thompson... Majoring in interdisciplinary studies... Hobbies include hanging out with friends, playing video games and watching football.

Sean is 53 of 94 for 602 yards and 4 touchdowns.

One more kid from Oregon to brag on is **Jeron Mastrud** who is starting at tight end for Kansas State University for his third year. Jeron is only a junior and as he enters his senior year, he will be one of the top tight ends in the country. Jeron, who is 6'6 and 260 pounds, started off training with us, as a quarterback from Southridge HS in Beaverton, Oregon. Jeron was a good high school quarterback, but once he signed his football scholarship, the KSU coaches told him to get into the weight room as he would now play tight end in his college career. With a good senior season, Jeron will move on to an NFL career.

Everrett Thompson is another one of the good true freshmen that played a lot this fall for the University of Washington. Thompson trained in our lineman camps and played for Kennedy High School, in Renton, Washington. He is

a 6'6 and 265 pound defensive lineman who has a great future in front of him.

Let's talk about a young quarterback that is making a big name for himself at Boise State University. **Kellen Moore** had an unbelievable career at Prosser High School in Washington. Kellen set most of the Washington state records for passing the football. He is only a redshirt freshman quarterback and he is already doing some remarkable things on the field. After his game vs. the University of Oregon in Eugene, Kellen was named the Walter Camp Football Foundation's National Offensive Player of the Week. All he did vs. the Ducks was to go 25 of 37 for 386 yards and 3 TDs in leading the Broncos to a 37 to 32 win. In 9 games, Kellen is 190 of 268 (70.9) for 2,427 yards and 20 touchdowns with only 6 interceptions. At this time, he has led Boise State to a 9 and 0 record and they are ranked as the number 9 team in the country. Kellen has trained with us and during these workouts he worked hard and he showed excellent leadership qualities. We are really proud of Kellen. Think about this, he still has 3 more years to play at Boise State.

Jake Locker, the starting quarterback at Washington, and one of the top football players in the country has had a tough season. He trained with Taylor Barton in Seattle in the winter and spring. Taylor really likes and respects Jake as both a person and a quarterback. I was at the opening game in Eugene, Oregon to watch the season opening game for both the Ducks and Huskies. My heart went out to Jake as the guy is one of the best competitors I have ever seen at any level. The Ducks absolutely dominated Washington and Jake was taking a pounding. The guy never backed away and he competed to the very end taking a beating. There is no quit in this guy. Then later in the season, he breaks his thumb and misses most of his sophomore year. I predict that Jake will bounce back and finish his Husky career in style; helping the University of Washington to some huge victories. Whoever gets the head job at Washington will absolutely love Jake Locker. He is a very special athlete and he is a winner.

Now let's talk about high school football a little. The playoffs are being held right now in both Washington and Oregon. The skill level in both states is terrific this season. I have watched quite a few games and I have

really been impressed with the coaching, the players and the enthusiasm of so many of the fans.

Congratulations to **Gino Simone**, the great athlete from Skyline High School in Sammamish, Washington. He had some very nice offers early in the process and he verbally committed to Washington State University. The senior receiver is a great young man and I am really proud of him. I believe that he will have a great college career. The guy simply makes plays. It all begins with his quickness and how well he runs his patterns and how strong he comes out of his patterns. I also believe he plays smart and he really understands defensive coverage's. Bottom line the kid is a competitor and he will bring a winning attitude to the Cougar program.

Over the past 5 years we have had a lot of Canadians come down to train in the Barton Football program. **Drew Jacobson** and **Troy Trentham** both played for Brooks Composite High School in Brooks, Alberta. Drew had a very good year as a quarterback, improving in every game. Drew just started playing quarterback a couple of years ago. He led his team to some big wins and to the playoffs this year. I watched some game film of Drew and he has improved dramatically this year. Troy is one of the top players in his league as a receiver and a defensive back. Troy made some huge plays this fall for Brooks Composite HS. Troy is a winner, both on and off the field. I really like him a lot as a competitor. Congratulations to both Drew and Troy for leading their high school to a great season. **Tyler Nickel** has been a very good quarterback in the Calgary area for a few years. He is a very talented quarterback who has the tools to play in college. Tyler played this fall for Lord Beaverbrook High School in Calgary. Tyler has a strong arm and he has a lot of potential to play at the next level. **Jeremy Long** is another quarterback who has trained with us both in Portland and in Seattle. Jeremy is leading Notre Dame High School (Calgary, Canada) to a fantastic season. They will be in the Provincial Finals in a week. Jeremy has always worked hard and he has developed a lot over the last 3 years. He throws a nice ball and he is a winner.

Tannon Pedersen is a junior quarterback in Highland, Utah. He has started at quarterback for Lone Peak High School as a sophomore and junior. He has developed a lot in these 2 years and he will enter his senior season as one of the top quarterbacks on the West Coast. Tannon is also a tremendous basketball player. He already has an offer from Southern Utah University. Tannon will be picking up a lot more offers in the near future. Tannon has

trained with us in Portland and he is very talented quarterback, student and person.

Congratulations to **Jack Lomax**, the starting quarterback at Lake Oswego High School in Oregon. Jack has led the Lakers to a number one ranking in the state of Oregon and has played well in the playoffs. Jack was offered a football scholarship to Oregon State and he verbally committed to the Beavers a couple of weeks ago. Jack has trained with us for along time and the first time I saw him was as a 6th grader. I remember being very impressed with his great feet. I was blessed in being able to do the radio for Portland State football games for a number of years. This was when Mouse Davis was the head coach. The first year I did the radio, the Vikings had a senior quarterback named June Jones, who later played a little pro ball, but then made his name as the head coach of the Atlanta Falcons and then with the University of Hawaii. Coach Jones is now the head football coach of Southern Methodist University (SMU). The next 4 years, the Portland State quarterback was Neil Lomax. He went on to set most of the NCAA passing records and then to a terrific career as an NFL quarterback with the Cardinals. Neil's son is Jack Lomax. Neil and I did football camps together for around 8 years and I remember him bringing his 4 kids to our camps. Jack was always running around showing pretty good athleticism, even as a little guy. Jack's older brother (**Nick Lomax**) received a football scholarship to Boise State. Both Jack and Nick attended many of our camps and training growing up. I have been happy in watching both of them grow up. I believe Jack will develop physically a lot in college and he has a chance to become a special quarterback.

University of Washington

I want to share with you my thoughts about the University of Washington coaching situation. Tyrone Willingham has been a real friend to the Barton Football Academy. Taylor Barton has had many long talks with Coach Willingham about lots of different things. Taylor has gone in and talked to Coach Willingham about players who performed in our camps; players that have asked Taylor for help in the recruiting process. Coach Willingham always showed Taylor respect and he listened as Taylor talked about the players. Coach Willingham also supported the Barton Football program. We can't thank him enough for making us feel so welcome to the University of Washington. It is a big deal for young players to be able to train in the Indoor Dempsey Center or in Husky Stadium. Coach Willingham helped

make this happen. In addition, Tim Lappano showed us the same respect and support. Randy Hart, who Taylor really respects, was always there giving us a pat on the back and encouraging us to “keep up the good work”. Coach Hart was one of Taylor’s coaches with the Huskies. Steve Gervais and the Barton Football program developed a relationship when Coach Gervais was the Head Football Coach at Skyline High School. We have always liked and respected Steve as a coach and a person. When he took the Assistant job with the Huskies, we were all very happy for him. Coach Gervais is another that has always showed us class and dignity.

The coaching profession is a tough one. I want to thank Coach Willingham, Coach Lappano, Coach Hart and Coach Gervais for being so kind to us over these years. I wish each of you and your families the best always. If one of you or a couple of you stay with the Huskies, we look forward to continuing our relationship with you. If you move on to another college or to the professional level, lets keep our friendship and maybe we can work with you again someday soon.

We wish the Huskies the best in their search for a new coach. As I have already said, we just picked up some dates from the University of Washington for our winter indoor training. We will always support the University of Washington and we can’t thank them enough for being so good to us.

Greg Barton’s Thoughts on Coaches

As I said, the coaching profession is tough. As a former player, I can speak for thousands of players that have played this great game. You, as fans, get frustrated at coaches and at times you can’t stand them as both coaches and people. This is a competitive world and fans take this game of football seriously. With our “internet world” there are few secrets anymore. Coaches are really out there with a target on their chest.

The relationship between a coach and player is quite unique. Through the process both sides feel a lot of up and down emotion towards each other. I played college football for Glenn Dobbs, who is a member of the College Football Hall of Fame as a player. He was a great quarterback in college and at the professional level. When I went to the University of Tulsa, I joined a program that had turned itself into a school that was normally the leader in the NCAA in Passing and Total Offense. In other words, we were

the best passing team in the country. This run lasted about 7 to 9 years under Coach Dobbs. It was a program that the top quarterbacks and receivers in the country wanted to play for as so many of the quarterbacks and skill position kids were leaving there every year to play in the NFL. Today, Texas Tech University is that type of school and most of the top quarterbacks will want to look at this college just because of the offense and success they are having.

Every coach is different. They all have different personalities and they all have different philosophies in regards to offense, defense, organization, discipline, and more. Coach Dobbs was a great player and he expected you to be great. He would not stand by and watch a quarterback throw an incomplete pass in a practice. He was simply a perfectionist. He would not stand for an incomplete pass in practice. The intensity was crazy in practice. Coach Dobbs intimidated everyone. I mean everyone; the players, the coaches, the trainers, the team doctors and the equipment people. He was just tough and demanding. Being a spoiled California kid, I really had a hard time with him. On one hand I was really in a good situation as I was one of the team's quarterbacks that played in the best offense in the country. On the other hand I was miserable due to just feeling sorry for myself and overall being a little bit soft mentally. I was not alone as I would guess that 90% of the players absolutely hated Coach Dobbs and were in the same boat as myself.

But a couple of things happened that made me "like" my college experience "just a little." One, our practices were fun as we were doing what we loved to do. Two, in games we were really darn good. We put up big numbers and my teammates were outstanding players. In the NFL draft each year, we were one of the leaders in having the most players drafted. But truthfully, all in all, I, like most of my teammates just complained daily about our program.

Now after all of these years, I look back and I am sick. I am sincere about this, I am literally sick because I blew it. Coach Dobbs was a genius in a funny way. He truthfully was not that mean, we were just soft. We didn't understand that we were under a genius that could take us to a whole new level in football and life. Yes, life! I look back now and he was teaching, or in his case, demanding life lessons. Everything there was, "Yes sir" and "No sir". Everything was "Please" and "Thank you". As I think back, everything he did was to help us grow up.

I have two disappointments in my life. One was when my son got sick and two was in not taking advantage of what I had with Coach Dobbs. If I would have listened to him and if I would have simply been smart enough to understand that he could take me to levels I could only dream of, I would have been a great quarterback at the pro level. I was good enough to get drafted in the NFL and play 3 years for Detroit. I was then traded to Philadelphia and instead of going there, I signed in Toronto in the Canadian Football League. I played up there for awhile and then finished off playing in Portland in the old World Football League. So yes I got there and had a great time. The problem was I was not mentally tough enough. The great ones have the mental toughness. I was in the perfect environment to learn these life skills. I did not take advantage of the opportunity. In pro ball I was always known as the guy with one of the strongest arms in the NFL. So if that was true, why didn't I become a great NFL quarterback? I simply did not learn from Coach Dobbs when he gave me the opportunity.

I came to the NFL right after Vince Lombardi left the Green Bay Packers. When I was in Detroit, he had moved on to the Washington Redskins. Coach Lombardi was the exact way Coach Dobbs was, in regards to how to develop and train players. They obviously had completely different offensive philosophies. Coach Dobbs wanted to throw the ball 40 to 50 times a game and Coach Lombardi wanted to control the line of scrimmage by running the football. Both won a lot of football games. Both were teaching the same life lessons. Funny I have talked to many players who played for Coach Lombardi who felt that they missed the boat by not taking advantage of him. But then when you read about the players who did take advantage of Coach Lombardi, most are in the NFL Hall of Fame and most became very successful in life after football.

I believe that all coaches go into this profession feeling that they can teach life lessons to the players. It is not easy as there is so much "drama" and "emotion" that goes on between players and coaches. I was never in the service but I have talked to many who did serve our country and most say the same thing; "I hated the structure and discipline that I had to put up with for day-after-day and year-after-year, and I hated the guys above me that were beating on me all the time. But in time of combat, I loved those that prepared me for the battle, as they motivated me and truthfully saved my life."

I honestly don't know if there is another profession in life that puts in the time that football coaches do. Truthfully I think it is crazy and I believe they go way overboard, but it is what it is. When my son, Taylor Barton, was coaching at Oregon State University under Mike Riley, they would come in at 6 a.m. and leave at 11 p.m. This was almost everyday! The college and pro coaches really put in long hours. It is a very tough and demanding profession.

I played for some great coaches. My high school (Millikan High School) was not a great situation. I grew up in Long Beach, California where some of the biggest high schools in the country are. Long Beach Poly High School is legendary in football and actually, in all sports. My coaches were alright in high school. Some of the coaches we competed against were unreal. A coach at a rival coach (Lakewood High School) named John Ford helped me a lot in regards to work ethic and quarterback play. I used to go to his summer programs to train as my school didn't have programs in the off-season. Then I went to Long Beach City College and it was here that I learned about great coaches. Jim Stangeland was my head coach when I was a freshman and he was fantastic. Jon Meyer was my first real quarterback coach. He did a lot for me. In my second year at Long Beach, Coach Stangeland left to join John McKay at USC and Rollie Eilerts became our new head coach. I liked and respected him a lot. I also had Coach Meyer again as my quarterback coach. Following my Junior College career, I was one of the most recruited quarterbacks in the country and decided to go to the University of Tulsa where I played for Glenn Dobbs. He was not only my head coach, but also my quarterback coach. We had other great coaches of the staff, but believe this or not, they were not allowed to talk to us (quarterbacks) regarding football. Only Coach Dobbs could talk to us or work with us in football. Crazy, but true! With the Detroit Lions, my head coach was Joe Schmidt. He was fantastic. I loved him a lot. He is in the NFL Hall of Fame as a middle linebacker. Our offensive line coach was Chuck Knox, who later was the head coach of the Buffalo Bills, the Rams and the Seattle Seahawks. Jim Martin who was an All American for Notre Dame and an NFL offensive guard; he was our defensive line coach. Jim David was our defensive back coach. He was also a great NFL player. In Toronto, I had Leo Cahill as a head coach and then John Rauch as a head coach. Coach Rauch was the head coach of the Oakland Raiders when they played Green Bay in the first Super Bowl. With Portland, in the WFL, Dick Coury was my head coach. Coach Coury had coached at USC and in the NFL with the Broncos and Eagles. Most of you know who his son

is.....Steve Coury, the very successful Head Football Coach at Lake Oswego High School (Oregon) is Coach Coury's son. (I remember throwing Steve Coury passes when he was just a kid hanging out at practice). Dick Coury was an excellent head coach and a tremendous person. He is a great family man and a class person.

I mention these coaches to prove a point; all players will have memories of their football coaches. If someone plays youth football and then plays at the Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity level in high school; he will always remember those coaches he had. His memories will be good on some of the coaches and bad with others. Of course, his parents will have their good or bad memories of the coaches who coached him also.

I probably have parents talk to me about their son's high school coaches more than anything else. I am a good listener and I understand parents, as I have 5 kids of my own. My advice to all parents, when they are upset about something, is to go talk to their coach eye ball to eye ball. Better yet, have your son or daughter go talk to the coach.

When my son was a freshman at Beaverton High School, Heather and I went to a Freshman Parents Basketball meeting. The varsity head coach was Nick Robertson, who I have always respected. He came in to welcome us and to talk about the program and what he expected. During his talk he mentioned that he had some definite philosophies regarding parents coming in to talk to him. His comment was something like this, "If your son has a problem with playing time, with his coach or anything, I hope he will come in and talk to his coach or to me. If you, as a parent come in, I will listen to you, but truthfully I am going to have it go into one ear and out the other. If your son comes in, I will not only listen to him, but even if I totally disagree with him, I will somehow, someway reward him for having the courage and maturity to come in to talk to me eye-ball to eye ball. This is a life lesson that we want our players to learn about." I was very impressed with Coach Robertson when he said this. I remember coming home that night and talking to Taylor about what Coach Robertson said. I told Taylor that I would always be there for him, but that he must handle disagreements or concerns with his coaches. I told him that Heather and I will be good supportive parents, but the battles must be handled between you and your coaches. Taylor understood this and I pat him on the back as he always handled everything with his coaches and truthfully he didn't share a lot of this with either Heather or me. Coach Robertson set the table, he wanted to

treat them as a young adult and because of this, Taylor felt these talks were between the two of them.

Sometimes it is easy to have communication with your son's coach, because the coach is outgoing and enjoys talking to parents. Other coaches want to keep distance and they really don't open up to much with the parents. My thought on this is either the coach is shy and needs to slowly be won over or he has been burned by some parents in the past. I made a point of this; when I talked to a coach of my son or daughters; I would never talk about my kid. Instead, I would talk about my kids' teammates. That enabled me to talk to the coach in a relaxed manner as he didn't feel that I just wanted to talk about my son or daughter. Then if he would directly ask me something about one of my kids, I would keep the answer direct and I would not "add conversation" to the answer. In most cases after the answer, I would quickly change the subject and talk about the other kids on the team. I believe this put the coach in a comfort zone where he was not feeling any pressure from me. Give this a try, it really works. Slowly, but surely, the coach will become relaxed when talking to you.

When I would volunteer for something with a coach, I would ask him if I can do this behind the scenes. In other words, because my son was a quarterback, I wanted to make sure that I stayed low key. I didn't want other parents saying that Taylor is only playing because his father or mother is helping the program in fund raising. When Taylor was a senior, I ended up putting together a team highlight tape that every player was welcome to. I filmed every game and then got copies of game tape from the coach. At the end of the season, we played the highlight tape at the banquet and the players each got a copy. No one knew this was coming as I always took video of all my kids' games and school events. Another father and I got together and did a fund raiser that generated a great deal of money for the high school football program. Even though we were involved, we stayed very low key and stayed away from the coaches. Looking back, I believe my wife (Heather) and I did a nice job in supporting the programs that our kids were in, but at the same time, we stayed out of controversy. My wife and daughters during home and away games sat on the OPPONENTS side of the field. She did this not to be disrespectful, but she wanted to enjoy the game. As most of you know, the games get pretty intense and many start complaining about the coaches, the quarterback, or whatever. Heather felt that if she sat somewhere else, no one could ever say that "Heather said this or that." She never wanted to be involved in any "controversy" and neither

did I. After the game, we would get together with other parents/family and celebrate the game.

It is not easy being a coach. But guess what? It is not easy being a parent either. That is why I honestly believe that the perfect scenario is a “partnership” between the parents and the coach in dealing with the player. I tell parents this all the time, “Hey, you love your son and I am coaching your son. Let’s get this done together.” As a coach I really want the parents to feel confident in knowing that I am going to work hard in helping develop their son as a player and a person. Truthfully I must EARN their respect through my actions as a coach and in how I am dealing with their son. But it also goes both ways. As a parent, I have to earn the coaches respect through my actions. That is why I believe it is so important for the coaches to see and hear that you care about all the players, not just your son or daughter. They are trying to sell the player on a “team concept” and as a parent you can win them over by showing that you are a “positive parent.”

When my kids were playing in high school, I would go out of my way in talking to a parent who was upset about something that happened in our program. I spent the time necessary talking to the parent trying to help him out in regards to his concerns. I wanted to put out fires with our parents before something bad would happen. I can honestly say that I kept many parents away from our coaches over the years. They might have been upset about something and by simply talking to them for a half hour or so, they now saw a different view point. Most parents just need to have someone talk to them in a positive way. Because I coach, they felt I had a certain degree of credibility on this subject. Did I always defend the coaches? Heck no, many times I felt the coach or coaches were out of line. But there are many egos involved in an argument or disagreement. Coaches do have the advantage in that your son can be a senior and he can simply bench the kid and forget about him. Maybe after the season, the coach is punished by the Athletic Director or Principle, but unfortunately your son lost, as his eligibility is finished. So I try to explain to parents that we must protect their son or daughter in discussions with coaches.

In most cases the coaches are really good people and they really do care about the players. The thing that sets coaches off is “hearing” rumors about what you are saying about them behind their backs. We all know how a “rumor” can quickly grow to “one and one is now ten!” Most parents, when they get frustrated, start complaining to others who are not happy about their

own situation. This becomes a disease. It spreads like a fire and pretty soon everyone is out of control. That is why I honestly hate the chat sites, where parents go online and blast a coach. All of this puts your son or daughter in a terrible situation. Don't hide behind a computer. The key thing is the player must go to the coach and have a heart-to-heart talk. If this does not work, then the parent can talk to the coach. In normal situations, if the player and the parents keep their composure, then things will slowly work out for everyone. We, as parents, must also have the ability to really understand what talents or lack of talents our kids actually have. This is tough, but it is important in these discussions.

In summary, talk to your son or daughter about having the courage and maturity to walk in and talk to the coach if they are upset about something. It is not easy, but it is part of growing up.

Congratulations to each and every player who suited up and played at any level of football this fall. It takes a lot of work and courage to play this game.

I tell this to families all the time; if your son or daughter is good enough to play a varsity sport in high school, then they are terrific. Most students just go to school. To play a varsity sport in high school, the athlete must put in a great amount of time in the off-season and in the regular season. In addition they have the same school work as any other student in the school. To do both takes a lot of hard work and dedication.

For those who move on to play a sport in the college level, whether it is at the D-1, D-1AA, D-2, D-3, NAIA, Junior College, Community College or at a Prep School, you are fantastic. Playing the sport you love at any level is a major accomplishment. The work and dedication this takes is not for everyone. Of course, you will also have your academics, and to combine the two is a real challenge. If you accomplish this, it will be something that you will be proud of for the rest of your life.

The Barton Football Academy is proud of the accomplishments of so many that we have met and worked with. We look forward to seeing all of you this winter in either Seattle (Washington) or Portland (Oregon) for our Indoor Winter Workouts. Please let your friends know about the Barton Football program. Thank you and we will see all of you soon.

