

75TH SHRINE BOWL

of the Carolinas

Vol. 6 Issue 3

"Strong Legs Run So Weak Legs May Walk"

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

One phone call can impact a life

The story of Tyler Stroud



Tyler Stroud above gives a glimpse of his "trademark" smile with Gamecock legend George Rogers.

Gettys Brannon

S.C. Student Correspondent

"I dialed and dialed from the second I saw the kid and didn't get an answer, I was thinkin' 'I'll call him one last time' and he answered," the number that S.C. Shrine Bowl assistant coach Walter Wilson (Calhoun County) was dialing so eagerly was that of the University of South Carolina All-American wide out Alshon Jeffery.

After Jeffery finally pressed the accept button on his phone he did not hear the familiar upbeat raspy voice of his former high school football coach

but, that of a 16 year old Shriner's patient sporting a garnet and black hat. "Alshon, you better not go to the NFL but, if you do go to the Carolina Panthers," the boy said emphatically.

Born prematurely, weighing only two pounds six ounces, Tyler Stroud was diagnosed with a brain bleed on his left side and cerebral palsy on his right side.

"The doctors, I felt gave up on him. (They) said he would never walk, talk, be able to learn, or anything like that. Basically saying he would be a 'vegetable'," Tyler's mother Tisha said.

"But he's far from that,"

At the age of four Tyler, "began breaking and no one knew what was wrong," that is when the Stroud's reached for answers. Tyler was admitted into the Shriner's Hospital in Greenville, S.C. where he was diagnosed with yet another rare disease, Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI). The term itself literally means, "bone that is imperfectly made from the beginning of life." "Fingers, arms, legs, ribs, ankles, you name it and he's broke it" Stroud describes her sons delicate state. "We stopped counting at 150 fractures."

Defiantly, Tyler still overcomes the pain to enlighten every individual he meets with a smile and a contagious will.

A trademark grin stained with courage at that, Stroud says, "People always remember his spirit and smile."

"He's never ashamed of his condition and wants people to accept him with it, just as he does. He makes straight A's, is in the school and National Beta Club, and volunteers when his health is well."

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“SAFETY IS KEY”

Athletic trainer Jeff Guffey enforces concussion laws for Shrine Bowl

Brianna Nowak

N.C. Student Correspondent

Southern Gilford High athletic trainer, Jeff Guffey, oversees the helmet regulations for game week. The 2011 game is Guffey's fourth year with the Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas and the low number of concussions show his talent for sports medicine.

Last January, the National Football League worked progressively with several congressmen in order to develop a nationwide concussion plan for high school athletes. “This law was beneficial for athletes; anything we can do to make football a safer sport is a good thing,” stated Guffey. The bill included: a authorized note from a physician, specialized in concus-

sions, and for coaches to complete a concussion management certification every three years. With all of this in mind, Guffey prevents an emergency call to a physician easily.

This past Sunday, players were given their uniforms and fitted for their helmets. “I fit them to make sure the helmets are inflated and the equipment is correct,” said Guffey.

In order for players to participate in the December 17th game, helmets must be reconditioned for the current year.

“Helmets are sent in to be re-certified and reviewed to ensure its safety,” explained Guffey. However, several helmets were failed when being tested.



Jeff Guffey takes a breather during practice before looking over the replacement helmets.

“Some helmets were out of date or there was a significant problem,” described the Greensboro, North Carolina resident. Spartanburg High School will be donating the helmets for the Carolina teams to use, during game week.

Defying the Odds

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The most significant operation Tyler has undergone was last December when doctors at the Shriners Hospital placed two rods in his back. “Tyler’s scoliosis was to the point that he could barely breathe and speak but he could still get out, ‘I... love... the... Game...cocks.’”

Loving the game of football may be an understatement for Tyler. Though he’s in a wheelchair do not belittle his football wits. Making his on-air debut a few years ago, with Ron Scarborough and WIRX (Anderson), Tyler, or should I say Lee Corso, scored a perfect 15-0 record in his first year predicting high school football games. “His dream is to be on ESPN,” Stroud said and boy is he on track.

Tyler is also Greenville High School’s head motivational coach, giving speeches prior to the game and during halftime. “He always says, ‘Mama I don’t want to be mean, but I need to tell them the truth,’ I just say ‘Well Tyler go tell them the truth!’” Stroud told the story in a humorous tone.

Tyler’s disorder has burdened him from competing in his favorite sport, but he still observes. He said optimistically, “I know I’ll never be able to play but I can still watch.”

The team he watches avidly? No surprise, the South Carolina Gamecocks. “He is a Gamecock,” Stroud said.

While keeping in touch with Gamecock great and Heisman winner George Rogers,

former Shrine Bowler South Carolina star Marcus Lattimore, and other Gamecock players, some on a weekly basis, Tyler is still delighted to receive an occasional call from Clemson Coach Dabo Swinney.

Tyler’s testament and inspiration shows the importance the Shriner’s, the Shrine Bowl, and a simple game is to the disabled.

“Kids look forward to this all year just to know that people care. It means so much to me especially to the other kids that they take the time out of their day to come.” Tyler said.

The children latched on to the players with no sense of jealousy, but an admiration of the “strong legs that run so the weak legs may walk.”

Get to Know Your Fellow Teammates...



North Carolina quarterback Kwashaun Quick

Brianna Nowak

N.C. Student Correspondent

Identified with the last name Quick, Kwashaun is the defi-

nition of a born athlete. With the quarterback position for Scotland High and now the North Carolina team, Quick has a bright athletic future.

As the 4A state champion, Quick threw for over 2500 yards and rushed over 1000 yards. Confidence, dedication, and heart led him to the Shrine Bowl combine. "This is a huge accomplishment for me," commented Quick.

He expects for the Tarheels to come out with a win this coming Saturday. "I plan to throw a couple and hopefully run a couple," pre-

dicted Quick.

Although Quick has not committed anywhere for the next four years, the University of South Carolina and NC State are where he would like to see himself. "I am just going to wait and see how many offers I get when I am up here," stated Quick.

The talent and state champion pride is sure to come out on Saturday for Quick. It also helps that his high school teammate, Isaiah Robinson (below), is wearing the same North Carolina green and yellow.



North Carolina defensive back Isaiah Robinson

Brianna Nowak

N.C. Student Correspondent

At 5' 9", Isaiah Robinson is the North Carolina team's defen-

sive back. This is not the first time Robinson has been associated with the word all-star, as a Scotland High School football player.

Scotland went to the state championship game against Indian Trail, North Carolina's Porter Ridge. The final score was 42 16, Scotland. "I loved the state championship. The atmosphere at Wake Forest was great because there were so many people," described Robinson, recalling the December 3rd game.

Not only did the Shrine Bowl bless Robinson with a great

opportunity, but also a familiar face. His Scotland quarterback, Kwashaun Quick (above), is also here for game week. "Its awesome to have him here," commented Robinson.

"That's my roll dog right there."

Robinson has received offers from UNC Pembroke and NC A & T. However, he has not committed anywhere at the moment. As far as the rest of game week, "I plan to eat good and healthy and stretch before I go to sleep," said Robinson.



North Carolina Defensive back/Running back Stephen Houston

Brianna Nowak

N.C. Student Correspondent

The double threat Stephen Houston, defensive back and

running back, has two positions to shine in for Saturday's game. "I like both equal. Either way were making plays and I am on the field," stated Houston.

The Richmond Senior High student has been playing football for about five years. Along with the other 4A schools, RSH lost to Scotland, during the 2011 season. "I wish we would have been able to finish the season strong since it is my senior year," commented Houston.

In practices, Houston is planning to focus working on

technique. "I'm a technician," expressed Houston.

For the North Carolina player, Boise State University is his first choice. Although he has not committed anywhere, Houston plans to use the Shrine Bowl opportunity to further his college football search.

Back to the Grind

Players begin practicing on Monday

Gettys Brannon

S.C. Correspondent

Enough eating and lounging around, practice is here.

“We are ready to get to work,” South Carolina (Lexington High School) secondary coach David Bundrick said prior to practice. “We are ready to see what skills these guys have and how they fit in to what we have.”

The players from both squads will be practicing twice daily. Morning practices are set to begin at 9:30, with afternoon practices starting at 2:30. Each practice will last two hours until Friday where the morning practice will be one hour and the afternoon will be an hour and a half.

With the high school football season not far past, for many the “rust” will not take long to flick off. For some, this is a place to resume what was left on the field.

Rated as one of the nation’s premier defensive ends, North Carolina’s Johnathan Bullard is thrilled. “Being back on the field is great, after loosing in state wasn’t how I wanted it to end. Being here, playing with a purpose along with the best (is a better ending).”



The South Carolina Sandlappers run through a few plays in practice for Saturday’s game.

North Carolina (Randleman) offensive tackle and Wake commit Joel Suggs reiterated, “Being kicked out early in the first round of the playoffs, its good to be back in pads.”

Only ninety minutes into the first practice the Sandlappers’ coaches had already begun to install their offensive and defensive schemes. Though there were not too many pads colliding, players seemed to be understanding the logistics of the play books fairly quick.

Weather: Tuesday, 12.13.11

6 AM: 40 F

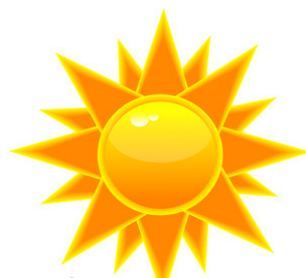
9 AM: 46 F

12 PM: 58 F

3 PM: 63 F

6 PM: 56 F

9 PM: 49 F



SUNNY

High: 64 F
Precip: 0%

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

7:00 AM: FCA Breakfast at the Clarion

7:30 AM: Training Room open

8:15 AM: Board buses for Spartanburg HS

9:30 AM: Morning practice (2 hrs)

11:30 AM: Teams leave practice field, Spartanburg HS

12:00 PM: Lunch at Spartanburg Shrine Club
Compliments of Grill 221

1:00 PM: Training Room open for PM practice

2:30 PM: Afternoon practice (2 hrs)

4:30 PM: Teams leave practice fields, return to hotel

6:00 PM: Board buses for dinner

6:30 PM: Dinner: Wades restaurant

Compliments of Ted Conrad Family

7:30 PM: Board buses for bowling activity

Paradise Lanes & Family Entertainment

9:30 PM: Return to hotel

TEAM MEETINGS OPTIONAL

8:30 PM - 10:30 PM: Country Store Open

11:00 PM: Lights Out