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Born To Fly

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Born to Fly, Issue 1

Southern Miss Athletics

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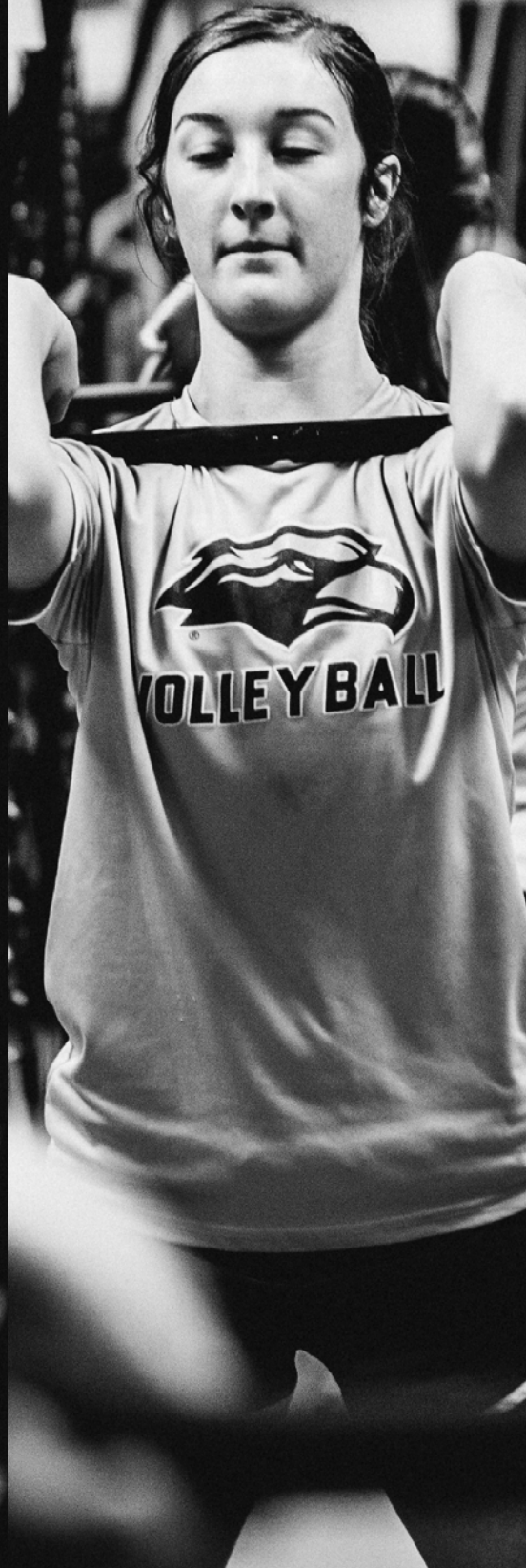
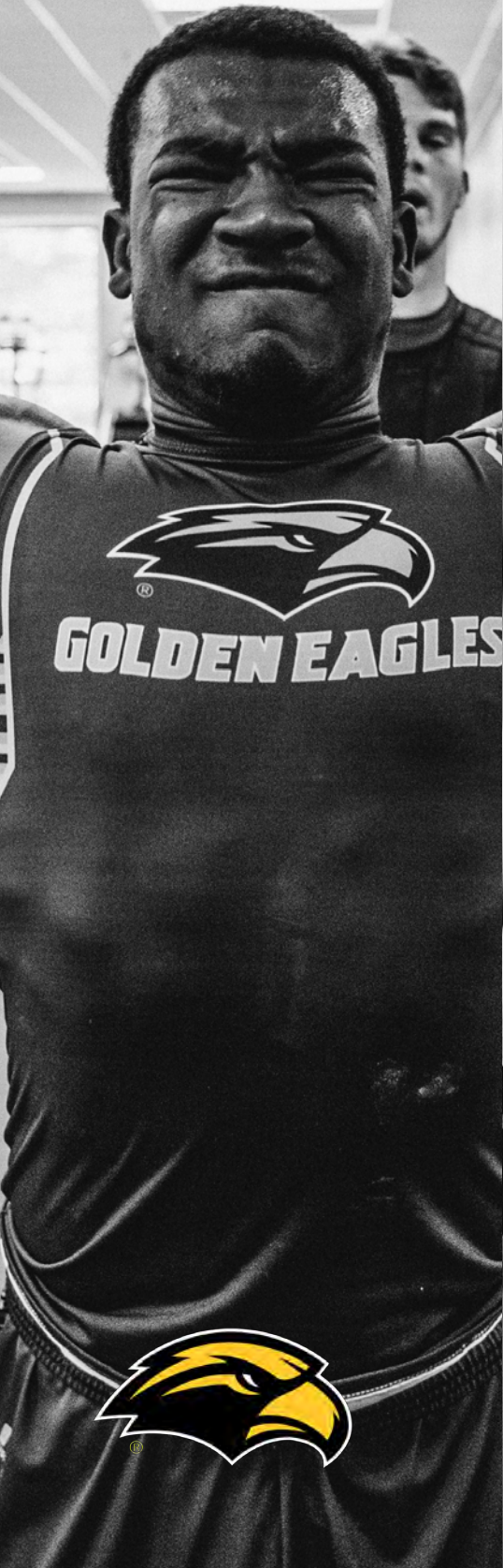
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BORN TO [FLY]

ISSUE 1 | APRIL 21, 2017



BORN TO [FLY]

College athletes seem like they have the perfect life. Fans only see the dunked baskets, glorious catches, scored goals and monstrous kills, but they don't truly see the person and work behind the athlete. That is what Born To Fly (BTF) is. BTF is a movement to tell the stories, journeys, adversities and triumphs of not only our student-athletes, but coaches, trainers, faculty and staff as well.

BTF enables our fans to see what our student-athletes are actually Born To Do. Not everyone is here to make it to the league or to play overseas. Some chose to come to Southern Miss because it provided them the proper education and resources to achieve what they are really Born To do.

BTF gives fans behind-the-scenes access to videos and photos to the realities of being a student-athletes, which include early morning workouts, film sessions, study hall, practices and the late night homework assignments.

Born To Fly also allows fans to see that our student-athletes continue to learn and grow but are willing to share those lessons with others that may relate or struggle with the same or similar issues. Because of Southern Miss these student-athletes are able to Fly.

Everyone is born to do something.
So what are you Born To Do?

Chanelle Smith-Walker | Director of Digital Marketing and Creative Services

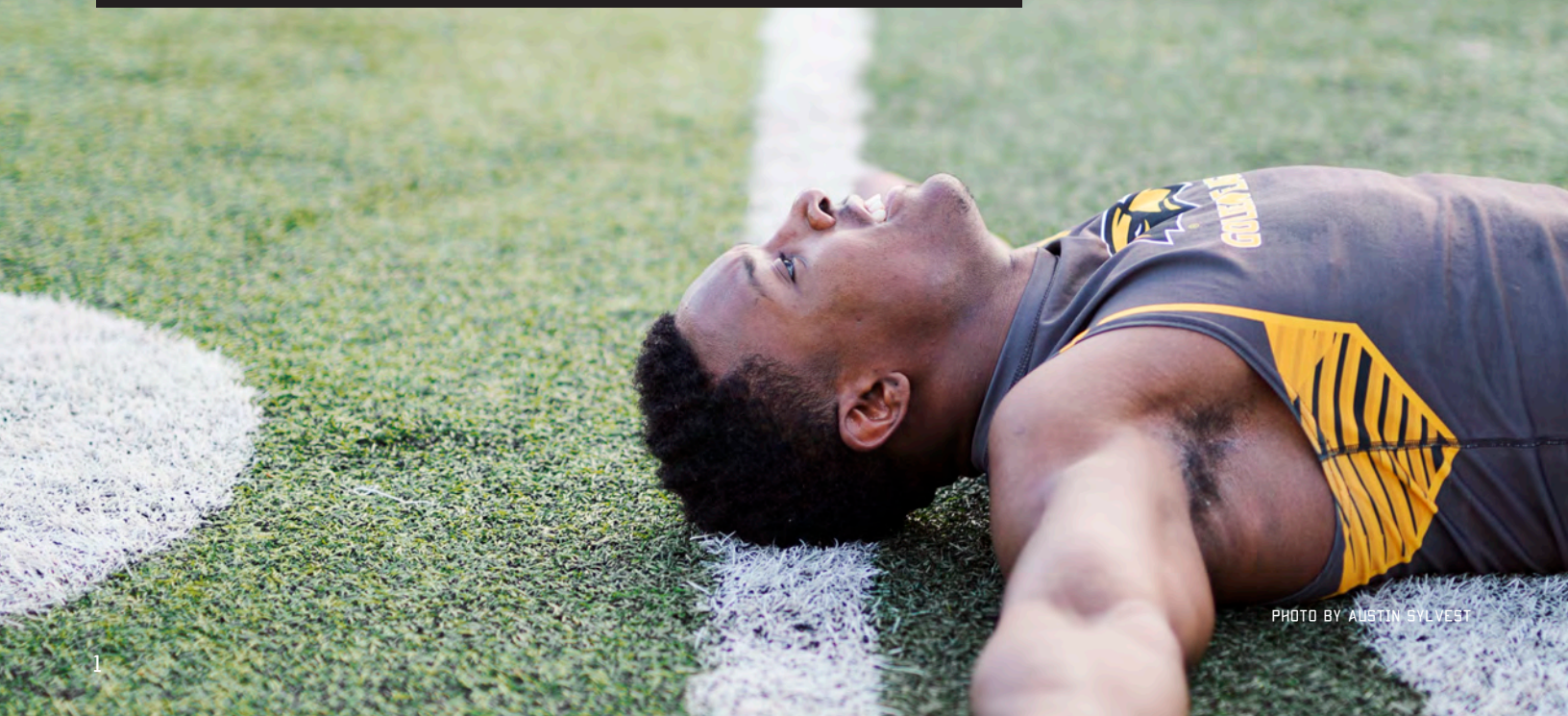


PHOTO BY AUSTIN SYLVEST

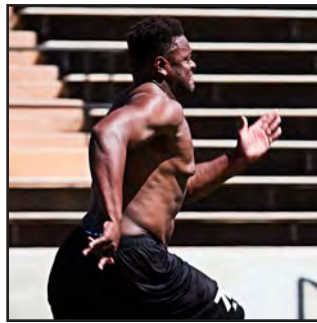
TABLE OF CONTENTS



BORN TO TRAIN
WOMEN'S SOCCER



YOU BETTER RECOGNIZE
BRITTANNY DINKINS
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL



PRO DAY
CAMERON TOM | FOOTBALL



FROM WALK-ON TO PRO ATHLETE
AUSTIN DAVIS



PRO DAY
DYLAN BRADLEY | FOOTBALL



THE KREWE
WOMEN'S GOLF



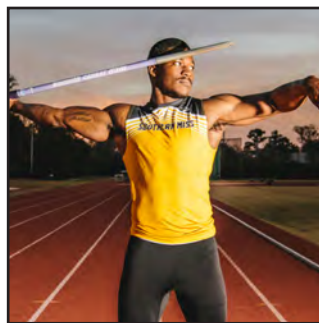
THE DUO
DANIELLE BLOCK | SOFTBALL
DANA DILLISTONE | TRACK AND FIELD



SPRING HAS SPRUNG
VOLLEYBALL SPRING
SEASON RECAP



FUN FACTS
CORTEZ EDWARDS
MEN'S BASKETBALL



THE HULK
EMRON GIBBS | TRACK AND FIELD



BORN TO TRAIN
ALLEN FAILS | FOOTBALL



FEATURE STORY
LYNDEY LEE | SOCCER



BORN TO [TRAIN]



RING.RING.

It's 5 a.m. Get up: It's time to train. Something inside of you has to push you to get up every day and keep grinding. There isn't a break...but really isn't that the best part? How hard can you push yourself? You'll never know unless you do it. You can't want it easy, because it's not. You just need possible. Anything worth fighting for will bring adversity because that's where we learn to push to levels we thought weren't attainable. There is a remarkable feeling when you can humble yourself enough to be happy that the girl next to you surpassed a goal, regardless of your own assessment that day. It's hard not to smile when I think about my teammates killing lifts in the weight room or making progress on the field, because every bit of sweat and tears is for those moments. This is spring training; getting up before the sun rises to practice and lift, on top of school...this makes things that used to seem so difficult so easy. The grind becomes a habit...and life would be boring without it. The feeling of soreness means we worked hard. You don't just train or lift; you physically and mentally push oneself to the point of exhaustion. If I can add five pounds to my lift, you can bet that the bar will get heavier. Sleep. It's important for optimal training, but you learn to suffice with even the slightest amount. Half the battle is mental, but nothing a simple quote from our savior can't handle or a little pep talk from a teammate won't fix. There will be good days and there will be bad days that seem to never end. When you may question why you do what you do or where you feel like you're just not good enough...those days pass. Distractions can't touch you because there is nothing you will let get in the way of the effort put in every single day.

Lyndsey Lee | Soccer

YOU BETTER RECOGNIZE

BRITTANNY DINKINS' CAREER AT SOUTHERN MISS



194 FT. (INSIDE)



Brittanny Dinkins' senior season was one of the more prolific campaigns in Lady Eagle history. Dinkins scored the second most points in a single season (627), made the third-most field goals (245) and the second-most steals by a Lady Eagle senior (106). The year's campaign also put the Miami native in the career records for most games played (134), sixth for all-time steals (281) and moved her career point total to 10th all-time (1,460).

The season's success all began in Birmingham, Ala. when Southern Miss was defeated 64-46 by UAB in the first round of last year's C-USA Tournament. Dinkins knew she did not want to go out like that again.

"It left a bad taste in my mouth," Dinkins said.



Despite the loss, the bright spot was Dinkins' performance. She had scored a game-high 20 points on 53.3 percent shooting, lighting a fire.

"I knew, coming off of that, that something had to give," Dinkins said. "Going into my senior year, it was going to be all or nothing. I was not going to let anything like that happen again. I got a taste of being relied on in the UAB game."

Dinkins went into the summer to prepare for her senior year knowing that head coach Joye Lee-McNelis would give her more responsibility and her leadership would be looked upon when the Lady Eagles were down. This was not anything new for Dinkins, who said that she has been looked upon since to lead and guide a team since junior high basketball.

Dinkins' senior season began and the Lady Eagles, after being picked to finish eighth in the pre-season poll, went 8-4 in a non-conference schedule that featured the eventual 2017 National runner-up, Mississippi State, as well as Tulane, which advanced to the third round of the WNIT. The team's non-conference schedule took Southern Miss to Las Vegas for the 2016 Las Vegas Classic.

The team saw No. 24 Cal, Xavier and Northern Kentucky. After going 1-1 in the first two days the team looked to rebound against Northern Kentucky, a team that was struggling and on paper was an underdog. The Lady Eagles came out flat and fell 58-53.

The Lady Eagles also lost their next game, held nine days later, against LA Tech, and Dinkins recognized the feeling as something similar to what she felt after the UAB loss.

"There was a lot of adversity. I knew this feeling and I didn't like it. As a leader, you have to take the good and the bad. I wasn't scoring how I wanted to, and that was a problem. I told myself that I needed to show up or leave my team out to dry. I knew



something was wrong so I started evaluating myself even more. It's something I've been doing since I got here."

This evaluation happens all the time in Dinkins' head. She's constantly thinking about what she can do to improve herself and the team. She'll also involve coaches and teammates in this evaluation during any spare time she might have.

"Brittanny is always finding ways to get better," said assistant coach Pauline Love. "Even if we won, and she scored a lot of points, she still wants to know what she can do to be better. She's committed to making herself better and she's willing to take in a lot of information with her."

Before her senior year Dinkins had a total of seven games where she scored 20 or more points. Her senior year saw 14 games of 20 or more points, including besting her career high of 28 points in back-to-back games. Dinkins also received accolades from Conference USA and was named to the All-Conference Team, All-Conference Defensive Team and awarded the 2017 C-USA Defensive Player of the Year.

The other Lady Eagles noticed Dinkins and looked for her when sometimes they felt like there wasn't much left in their tank.

"What she did was more about how she played," said junior Megan Brown. "We needed her to put buckets down and that's what she did. I can remember her saying, 'I'm here.' To us that meant she came to play. It's her Miami flavor, as I like to call it. She has a resilient work ethic and it goes off the court to the life that she lives. Things just fall in your favor when you live that way."

All in all, the Lady Eagles went 23-11 on the season, a major improvement from last year's 14-16 mark, and Dinkins felt like she consistently bettered herself, no matter what adversity she faced. "I went from being an only offensive player

and coach saying, 'I don't know where to put you because you don't know how to play defense.' to an outstanding senior year where I blossomed on both sides of the ball. Whatever minutes I played, and when my number was called, I made sure to show up."

Dinkins' hard work translated to showing up in the record books for 19 different statistical categories for single game, career and season achievements.

Sterling Randle | Communications Graduate Assistant

CAREER RECORDS

- 559** Field Goals Made (8th)
- 1,292** Field Goals Attempted (8th)
- 474** 3-Point Field Goals Attempted (3rd)
- .334** 3-Point Field Goal Percentage (10th)
- 373** Assists (9th)
- 281** Steals (6th)
- 3,414** Minutes (10th)
- 1,460** All-Time Lady Eagle Scoring List (10th)
- 281** All-Time Lady Eagle Total Steals List (6th)
- 106** Steals by A Lady Eagle Senior (2nd)
- 162** 3-Point Field Goals Made (3rd)
- 133** Games Played (1st)

SINGLE SEASON RECORDS

- 627** Points (2nd)
- 245** Field Goals (3rd)
- 62** 3-Point Field Goals (8th)
- 174** 3-Point Field Goals Attempted (8th)
- .798** Free Throw Percentage (8th)
- 106** Steals (5th)
- 34** Game Started (4th)



ON 2017 PRO DAY:

PERSONALLY IT WAS A SOLID DAY. I'VE BEEN TRAINING A WHILE, SO I HAD GOOD NUMBERS, BUT IT WAS A GOOD DAY. GOT BETTER IN SOME AREAS.

I TOLD MYSELF I WANTED TO RUN A 4.8 AND I DID THAT. I THINK I COULD HAVE GOTTEN A LITTLE FARTHER IN BROAD JUMP, AND BENCH WAS PRETTY GOOD [A PERSONAL RECORD]. THROUGH TRAINING IT'S ABOUT BUILDING CONSISTENCY SO AT LEAST I PR'D IN SOME THINGS.



CAMERON TOM

4.89



23 REPS



32"



9'0"



BORN TO [FLY]

AUSTIN DAVIS- FROM WALK-ON TO PRO ATHLETE

Austin Davis was a four-year starting quarterback for Southern Miss, breaking several of Brett Favre's records before embarking on his own NFL career.

People remember his outstanding debut in front of 32,792 fans at The Rock on Aug. 30, 2008, which was a 51-21 dismantling of UL Lafayette. But what many people did not know is that Davis came to Southern Miss as a baseball player as well, walked on, and had to earn the trust of recently-hired Larry Fedora, all in a span of a few months that offseason.

"I got the scholarship before the 2008 season when I was getting ready to start," Davis said. "As a matter of fact, it was a situation where I was promised a scholarship by my sophomore year [by then-head coach Jeff Bower], with me paying my way for a full year. But when Coach



Larry Fedora came in after my first year with the program my family was worried about it. My dad drove down and talked to Coach Fedora before I even stepped on the football field.

We told him the situation and why we were concerned, but he honored [my scholarship]

before I even threw a pass in a game.

"I did my best to repay that favor for him."

That previous fall as a redshirt freshman out of Meridian, Davis double-dipped as a member of both the baseball and football teams under two of the most-celebrated legends of Southern Miss: Bower and Corky Palmer. Davis' brother, Bo, was three years older and an established four-year starter on the team, capping off his career as the Golden Eagles' leading-hitter on its breakout 2009 College World Series squad.

Austin was an excellent quarterback in high school, becoming West Lauderdale's winningest quarterback and participating in the Mississippi-Alabama All-Star Game. He did not come from the most-prolific passing offense, but it was little representation of his will and sheer talent that was proven in the spring of 2008.

"It was a process. I do remember the day I was switching over from first team to second team, and I was competing with Martevious Young who had a ton of talent and was a little older than me, a redshirt sophomore. He got first dibs over me and had a real strong arm and a lot of ability. I remember the day they were giving both a fair share of the job and [offensive coordinator] Blake Anderson told me one day I was going to get my shot with the ones, and I just had a big day that day. I don't ever remember it changing from there. I ran and took it and started that first game against ULL."

Davis and veteran running back Damion Fletcher were the only things hotter than the 92-degree humidity that August night. Fletcher ran for 222 yards, and the redshirt-freshman quarterback completed 14 of his 21 passes for 206 yards and two touchdowns as well as rushing for 63 yards and another pair of scores.

Fast-forward to Davis' senior season,

and Southern Miss is looking for its 18th consecutive winning season. It began with Danny Hrapmann kicking a late 49-yard field goal to beat Louisiana Tech 19-17 and a bittersweet loss at Marshall in which Davis broke Favre's school record for career passing yards.

The Golden Eagles did rally itself to win its next game. And then seven more in a row en route to a 10-2 record.

The stage was set for the C-USA Championship Game, playing undefeated Houston in its home stadium. The Cougars were 12-0 and ranked No. 7 nationally, one win away from a BCS game.

The home team was of little match for Davis, who threw four touchdowns and helped Southern Miss to a 49-28 dismantling in front of a packed Robertson Stadium. Two of his scores were for 60-plus yards, one giving the Golden Eagles the lead for good in the second quarter and, the other, blew the game open 42-21 late in the third.

"That game was everything we worked for," Davis said. "Every year we were good enough. It's hard to win championships. We were just never able to put it together. Our defense was great that game and really all season they were dominant."

"That was the highlight of my career, hands down. All the individual accomplishments are great, but winning a championship was by far the best thing we did for Southern Miss."

That team-first mentality is what makes Davis so highly-regarded amongst Southern Miss fans from a spiritual standpoint. The great thing about him is that any walk-on or star can look at him and say "he's been in my shoes." Davis offered advice to all those who are looking to make that crack into the two-deep or starting rotation, despite their

initial scholarship status.

"The thing about football is you can't control everything," he said. "Some the coaches or team dictates, but you have to focus on how you approach things. I didn't know it was gonna happen the first semesters of my career. I was fortunate and you have to have some breaks. You can't do it alone. At the end of the day, you have to be at peace with whatever happens."

There was one other thing that Davis could not control in life, and it was not such a bad thing. Despite never playing an inning for the Golden Eagles, he got a call from his agent saying he was 31st-round pick by the Boston Red Sox. Davis says he "didn't really expect it."

"I had signed with the Rams and was in St. Louis having finished OTAs and looking for my shot with the team," he said. "One of the local scouts filled me in on the situation and said they liked to pick a guy who may or may not still be in baseball anymore, and with my brother, and baseball past, they somehow found me and took me in a late round. I definitely would have given it a shot if football hadn't worked out. It just never really got there."

Davis last fall wrapped up his fifth season in the NFL and has played for the Rams, Dolphins, Browns and Broncos. The former walk-on was truly Born to Fly as a Golden Eagle.

David Cohen | Director of Communications





ON 2017 PRO DAY:

I FELT LIKE I HAD A PRETTY SOLID DAY WITH SOME GREAT NUMBERS. IT WENT BY LIKE I EXPECTED AND I JUST HAD A WHOLE LOT OF FUN OUT HERE. MY TRAINERS AND AGENT TOLD ME I HAD A PRETTY GOOD DAY. THEY SAW SOME IMPRESSIVE NUMBERS SO FAR. I'M EXCITED TO GET IT OVER WITH AND JUST GO ON TO THE NEXT PHASE OF THIS AND WAIT TO GET MY NAME CALLED.

DYLAN BRADLEY



4.97



28 REPS



32"



8'6"

.....

BORN TO [FLY]

THE 'KREWE'

The 2016-2017 Women's Golf season has been nothing short of special. Records were broken, and then broken again.

How special has it really been?

Almost 10 whole strokes better, down from 306.45 (18-over par) to 297.04 (9-over par) strokes per round. The Golden Eagles have had three team wins and two individual wins. And they've earned the lowest ranking ever in school history at 67th in the nation. One could easily say the Golden Eagles are one of the most improved teams in the nation, as they made the move up 67 spots from 134th in the Golfstat.com Rankings.

WHY CALLED THE 'KREWE'?

"To me, a crew is...a blue-collar workforce. I think it means hard work and sacrifice. And that's what the team lives, so I started calling us a 'crew'. And since we're close to New Orleans and that's the culture, we changed it to 'Krewe' because it also represents a fun and happy vibe which I think also sums up this team perfectly."

Erika Brennan
Head Women's Golf Coach

Coach Erika Brennan and her 'Krewe' knew this was going to be a noteworthy season when they won the South Alabama Intercollegiate right out of the gates.

The South Alabama Intercollegiate win included the lowest 18-hole total at 289, (1-over par) ever for the Golden Eagles.



The team finished 3rd at the Kiawah Island Classic and set a school record for lowest 54 hole team finish.

They tied this 18-hole score one more time in front of the home crowd at the Golden Eagle Jam in October, before smashing the record at the Kiawah Island Intercollegiate in January by shooting an 8-under par, 280.

"The team came together in a way this season that is so rare. Top to bottom they created a vision and stuck with it even on days when the results didn't go our way," said Brennan.

The addition of transfers Nichada Satasuk (Chiangmai, Thailand), from Seminole State CC, and Kayla Bloor (Niceville, Fla.), from Florida State have helped the team's success this season; and they have accounted for each of the two individual wins.

Satasuk has earned four top-10 finishes in eight starts on the season.

"My game has been improving a lot since I've gotten to USM and the tournaments are more competitive, so it made my game better. I think the team and coaches get along with each other pretty well. I'm so proud to be a part of this team," said Satasuk.

The Golden Eagles have also hailed two Conference USA Players of the week, Kelly Erasmus, the week of October 12, and Valentina Haupt, the week of March 29. Erasmus earned her accolade after a strong showing at the Golden Eagle Jam with a runner-up finish and a 3-under par final score. Haupt's honor came after a 1-over par, T6th place showing at the Henssler Financial Intercollegiate among multiple top 50 teams and top 100 individuals.

The drop in the team average can be attributed to the improvement of individual play. Three players this season have the top three scoring averages in Southern Miss women's golf history: Nichada Satasuk (73.84), Kelly Erasmus (74.56), and Henriette Syr (74.85). "Our performance this year has shown that the hard work is paying off and we are reaping the rewards. Along with the hard work, we have been enjoying practice and learning from one another which I think made us all better golfers and teammates," said Erasmus.

The team will lose three seniors, in Kelly Erasmus, Emily Ross, and Devon Spriddle next year. But it gains a freshman class loaded with talent. The addition of Julie



UNF Collegiate Team Champions

Baker (Hoover, Ala.), Emily Cox (Lancaster, S.C.), Valeria Pichardo (Veracruz, Mexico), and Ping Huang (Beaumont, Calif.) look to keep the Golden Eagles trending in the right direction. Coach Brennan and her team expect to break more records and become a nationally recognized team in the 2017-18 season.

Kayla Bloor | Women's Golf

"[The girls] are **gritty** and **competitive** which has really upped the ante. Most importantly they believe in one another."

Erika Brennan
Head Women's Golf Coach



Golden Eagle Jam Team Champions

THE DUO.

DANIELLE BLOCK AND DANA DILLISTONE

Two student-athletes. Four years at Southern Miss. Fall 2017 at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

Enter the worlds of Southern Miss softball pitcher Danielle Block and track, cross country runner Dana Dillistone.

Block and Dillistone on April 11 were named to the Who's Who Among American Colleges and Universities list, a prestigious list that gains even more magnitude considering their athletic and other extracurricular workloads. Block, who currently serves as the president of the Southern Miss Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, even earned university Hall of Fame distinction.

"It was cool linking up with the plaques and certificates and seeing the 20 or 30 seniors, to be recognized among the senior class as a top student," Block said. "I know everyone has their own things, but we have a big-time commitment with athletics and to represent our teams and department as a whole on stage was so much bigger than ourselves."

What is especially funny is that the two student-athletes, although both regular honorees for their academic and community accomplishments, admit that outside of being acquaintances in one class over their collegiate careers, have grown to know each other fairly well in their last month as undergrads and will be in all the same classes at UMMC in the fall.

Dillistone is keeping her options open, but said primary care is where she is leaning, including pediatrics and obstetrics gynecology. Block says she is keeping to others' advice on keeping an open mind "like Dana," but has found ObGyn intriguing.

"I thought about ObGyn because one of the softball team fans told me it's really awesome because you get to be with a patient during the best time of your life, so a happy time like pregnancy versus other times as a doctor where people aren't as happy," she said. "That was an interesting perspective and it opened my eyes on paying attention through rotations and stuff."



Danielle Block (Left) and Dana Dillistone (Right) were also awarded with the prestigious Who's Who Among Students award. Block was also inducted into the Student Hall of Fame for her academic achievements.



It gets even more immaculate considering what the two have done when wearing their respective team's uniforms. Dillistone has consistently broken her own school records in the 1500 and 5000m (16:44.12 that was also the best mark at the Crimson Tide Invitational on April 8). Block held the Golden Eagles' top ERA her sophomore season and made the most of her first 2017 start on April 12, no-hitting Southern for four innings en route to a complete-game shutout.

But surely there have been moments where athletics and academics convoluted into moments that could make them stronger.

"My junior year was my hardest by far," Block said. "I was taking o-chem classes and preparing for the MCAT and that was super stressful. I forget where we were playing, but it was coming back from a Sunday night game and I was on my computer studying for a test or working on lab work, and I remember turning and looking behind me and everything was dark and everyone was asleep. I just couldn't because I had lab write-ups and other stuff going on. It was a moment of "alright, I'm doing something pretty tough but it will be worth it for sure."

Dillistone had her similar moments, except in an even more overt setting.

"I would be at track meets with notes out," she said. "Everyone would be watching the events and I would be looking down on them. On the road after breakfast we would shake out and go back to bed and I would go down to the lobby and do homework. It was a lot of good time management and having to stay focused."

So where did the medical fascination come from?

"I was always interested in science and it was my thing in school," Block said. "I liked putting band-aids on people and was just real interested in that. I started off undecided my freshman year and my second semester I was a business major. After that summer, I decided I would do science. Everyone told me the labs would be hard and I wouldn't have time because of softball. But I realized business didn't interest me."

Dillistone, a product of Oak Grove High School, credits one of her old chemistry teachers who not only fostered her love of the subject, but also for giving her advice in choosing it for a major.

"I liked science and didn't really know what to do with it yet, but I'm just so interested in the human body and that's one of the exciting things about UMMC, just learning about the body and all the processes and stuff like that," she said.

It was that close proximity to Southern Miss that made her a Golden Eagle fan her whole life. The then-teenager thought her recruitment process diligently through and ultimately went all-in for the Black and Gold.

"I had an old teammate who ran here, and my coaches here knew mine from high school so there was communication," Dillistone said. "I originally didn't want to stay close to home but now I'm so glad I'm here. I've come to a lot of Southern Miss games



and knew it my whole life. I've been a fan for a while. Originally I wanted to go somewhere other than Hattiesburg, but the team here is such a family."

Block also had a strong high school connection, albeit more than 1,500 miles away.

"My freshman year, the coaches we had here used to be at ASU and [Coach Kirsten Voak] had been one of my pitching coaches growing up," she said. "When they got the job out here they said 'hey, we want you to come out to Mississippi and check out the campus, you'll really like it. I came on a visit and fell in love, and having never been in the South before I really loved the green. The campus is so pretty here and it was awesome feeling with the athletic department.

I committed on my first visit."

Block also said that the coaching transition to Wendy Hogue and her staff her sophomore year was "awesome," and how fortunate she was to have the seamless transition that many other athletes and new coaches are sometimes without. Hogue, a Hattiesburg native and longtime coach in the area who previously served at Petal High School and William Carey, shared nothing but compliments on

Block's persona.

"She is an incredible student-athlete," Hogue said. "Her ability to stay focused and balance all she has going on is proof that she will continue to achieve success after leaving Southern Miss. Our program, university, conference and community are better because she chose to be a part of them."

David Cohen | Director of Communications

USA
2017
CHAMPIONSHIP
SOFTBALL
HATTIESBURG

MAY 10-13
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SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

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BORN TO [FLY]

SPRING HAS SPRUNG

SOUTHERN MISS VOLLEYBALL TEAM



The 2016-17 academic year is in its twilight, and there is one thing on the minds of the Southern Miss Volleyball program: who's next?

The spring campaign featured plenty of action between trips to New Orleans, Hammond, La., and Mobile, Ala. (twice). It was the first time the Golden Eagles took the floor without the star-studded senior class of Chanel Joyce, Stephany Purdue (school's all-time career kills leader) and Makareta Rademakers, which finished last fall as the winningest in program history.



Alexis Coombs | Sophomore | Middle

As with any good program, it's not about rebuilding for the next year, but reloading.

"[Rising junior] Kylie Grandy has just always been so solid, and I don't think she gets enough credit for her consistency and all-around game," head coach Amanda Berkley said. "[Rising junior Sarah Bell] has done a nice job too. I think we have a lot of competition on the right side following Chanel's departure, but Cat Repsher and Alexis Coombs are doing a nice job and they're your typical people to do well."

Grandy and Bell started each of their first two years, winning a combined 47 matches. Staying at that current rate would put their class ahead of the curve in besting the Joyce, Purdue, Rademakers group.

The other testament to Berkley's success in Hattiesburg has been her ability to cultivate and get the most out of her student-athletes. She says it's still a learning process in the spring season, but a few have certainly made their mark for the future.

"In terms of leadership, Sarah and Kylie have stepped up and Alexis Coombs has spoken up at times, especially in conditioning groups," Berkley said. "The dynamic definitely changed after last year because all three had big personalities and different leadership qualities."

That team persona is also seen in its academic prowess. Eleven members earned a spot on the C-USA Commissioner's Honor Roll for posting a 3.0 GPA or better in the Fall 2016 semester, while returnees Sarah Bell and Ashley Chapman and as well as the departing Rademakers claimed conference academic medals for having at least a 3.75.

It will be surely be another exciting year for Southern Miss fans come August, no matter how the lineup plays out.

David Cohen | Director of Communications



Ashley Chapman | Freshman | Defensive Specialist

FUN FACTS

WITH CORTEZ EDWARDS



ILLUSTRATION BY
COLE GOLDEN



1. Favorite Food:
Shrimp alfredo

2. Favorite Sports Team:
Atlanta Falcons

3. Dream Vacation Spot:
Cancun, Mexico

4. Favorite Color:
Blue

5. Favorite Music Artist/Band:
Kodak black

6. Favorite Movie:
All About The Benjamins

7. Favorite TV Show:
Martin

8. If stuck on an Island, two items you would bring:
Phone and solar power panel

9. Prediction for NBA Finals Champion:
Cleveland Cavaliers

10. Which celebrity would play you in a movie?
Michael B. Jordan

11. If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
Ability to fly

13. If you could know one thing about the future what would it be?
How rich I will be

14. Who is your role model?
Kyrie Irving

15. Who is your funniest teammate?
Robert Thomas

16. What is your favorite season?
Summer

17. Favorite basketball memory:
Receiving my first scholarship offer after making it to the state championship

18. Who is your celebrity crush?
Karrueche

19. Favorite class:
History

20. Favorite spot on campus:
The student union

THE HULK

EMRON GIBBS

**2016 FIRST TEAM
ALL-AMERICAN**

**2016 EAST NCAA MEET
2ND PLACE - 239.1'**

**2016 NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS
4TH PLACE - 244.1'**

**MEN'S JAVELIN SCHOOL RECORD
248'55"**





BORN TO [TRAIN]



PHOTO BY AUSTIN SYLVEST

Growing up I was taught, there are two great days in a person's life: the day they were born and the day they discover why! Great achievements are usually born of great sacrifice, and never result in selfishness. If only I could get one more rep. One more sprint. Another pull-up. Five more pounds on the bar. Ten more minutes in the weight room. If only I could be the best I can be every second, minute, and hour of the day. There's two voices in your head: a voice that's trying to stop your grind and a voice that is trying to enhance your grind.

When that bad voice tells you 'I'm tired, I'm hurting, I can't go anymore, I don't feel like doing this.' It should be a sensor that goes off in your heart that says what's my why? My why wakes me up every morning. My why is the reason I do what I do. I don't do what I do for



show. But I do what I do because I remember how many times I was denied, the countless numbers of times I failed, the people that told me I can't. My why is every single day I wake up; I have an opportunity to outwork those who quit, those who gave up, and those who took their opportunity for granted. God is that good voice! He tells us we can when others tell us we can't. He tells us we will when we've been told no. He tells us to push ourselves when we're about to give out. He tells us get up when we have fallen. He tells us one more rep when we say no more reps.

He tells us keep going when our mind tells us to stop. He tells us keep fighting when it seems to be no way. He tells us to trust him when we can't even see him. That's the voice of success, courage and passion! We all are a bunch of zero's from different backgrounds with the same goal.

Goals to win! Goals to outwork our opponent! Goals to fight and to never give up! Goals to become successful! Goals to make it to the next level! What separates a good player from a great player? The will to go the extra mile when you're tired. The will to persevere through adversity. The will to pick your brother up when he falls. The will to lay your life on the line for your team. As a team, there are only a few things a player can control and that is work ethic, mindset and effort. What fans and people on the outside see is the long touchdowns, the amazing tackles, interceptions, one-handed catches, sacks and all the celebrating that goes along with this wonderful sport. But what they don't see is the grind!!!!!! The 6 a.m. runs. Countless hours in the weight room. Long meetings and film review. We were born to play this game. But what they don't know is, everything that we are going through is preparing us for what we asked for! One mind. One goal. A championship!!!!!! We weren't made for this, we were born for it. God has blessed us today to do what others won't so tomorrow we can do what other can't.

Allen Fails | Football



OH, BUT MY DARLING, WHAT IF YOU [FLY]?

LYNDESEY LEE'S STORY



PHOTO BY AUSTIN SYLVEST



BORN TO [FLY]

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olly Cuevas encouraged her daughter, Lyndsey Lee, with the saying “Oh, but my darling, what if you fly?” even though she didn’t fully understand what her daughter was going through.

They say ACL injuries are one of the hardest injuries to come back from in soccer. Imagine tearing the same ligament twice. Imagine the emotions, the heartbreak and the will power it takes for an athlete to overcome that injury in order to get back on the field. Imagine doing that twice in one year.

Soccer was everything in Lee's life. The dream was to play Division I soccer. But in her junior year of high school, that ligament snapped and Lyndsey's life would begin to change. The rehab and the time off the field was nothing compared to what Lee was about to go through both physically and mentally.

Lee returned to the game she loved early after rehabbing hard for five months. But once you've experienced that snap and feel your bones collide, you never forget that feeling.

“I turned the wrong way and once you've done it once, you know when you do it again,” Lee said. “It was my first time back on the field and I knew it was done.”

But what Lee didn't know was what her body and mind were about to go through after her second surgery. There wasn't a trigger. There wasn't one pinpoint situation Lyndsey can remember that started it all, but that second surgery changed Lee's future and health moving forward.

Pain medication, the healing process, the time away from friends and the game she grew up with, took a toll on her body and her mentality about her figure.

Once Lee was able to train again, she did just that. Lyndsey did everything she could to be healthy. But what was thought to be getting in shape turned out to be more.

Lee was considered to be obsessively over exercising.

This over exercising allowed Lee the chance to play soccer in college, but not quite at the highest level or so she thought.

Lee was offered a spot at Pearl River, a junior college. She thought that's the best she could do coming off two ACL surgeries, but when her club coach mentioned Head Coach Mohammed El-Zare and Southern Miss to her, all it took was a phone call to have her hooked.

With D1 soccer again in her sights, nothing was going to slow her down. What originally started with obsessing over exercising, led to her disordered eating.



Lee lost muscle mass after her surgeries and that's what started the over compensation with working out to get to what she thought her body needed to look like. Lee began to notice the change in her body. The pressure she put on herself to compete at the highest level made her train that much harder.

“You don't even know you're doing it,” Lee said. “I just wanted to play so bad that I was doing everything I could to build muscle and get my knee healthy again.”

At first, Lee stopped eating as much as she used to. Then came the constant want and need to exercise when she ate.

"I never used to care what people thought of me or was self conscious of what I ate, but that was something that changed after surgery" Lee said.

The amount of exercise equaled the amount of food she ate or vice versa. The more food she consumed, the more she would exercise to balance it out. The constant amount of exercise resulted to almost no body fat and her weight was extremely low for her height.

That triggered the binge eating.

"My body went into starvation mode and I was trying to make up for the food I didn't eat. But when that happened, your mind thinks, 'I need to get rid of the food I do eat and I need to throw up.'"

Despite all of these ideas running through her head and all these false notions of what her body needed to look like to be an athlete, Lyndsey met her childhood dreams.

Lee didn't let her eating disorder get in the way of her performance on the field or in the classroom.

Lee earned quality minutes on the field starting eight of the 16 games she appeared in her freshman season with Southern Miss. Lee also recorded eight shot attempts and two assists in 651 minutes on the field.

No one ever suspected there was something going on in her head. Despite her first season's success, the eating disorder became more prominent in her life when Lee started to notice her eating habits had changed and her portion control was something she started to care about.

After a great opening season, Lee was stuck in the position of whether or not she could handle this problem, something she still didn't know she had, on her own or if she needed to seek professional help.

Lee decided leaving Southern Miss was in her best interest after her first semester.

The decision to leave left everyone with questions: her mom, coach El-Zare, her teammates and even herself.



"Is this something I can live with the rest of my life?" Lee said. "Is soccer what's causing these thoughts and these problems?"

Lee decided to go back to Pearl River thinking she could handle the issue by herself with friends she grew up with surrounding her. But that wasn't the solution.

Lee was still not able to control her eating habits. She still questioned what was going on with her. Lee kept asking herself, "Is this the life I want to live?"

Was a life full of anxiety and depression the life she wanted to fight on her own?

A phone call to her mom was all it took for Lee to get the help she needed.

"I didn't want to live my life like that," Lee said. "It meant more to me to be open and go get help rather than to be embarrassed and try and hide something for the rest of my life. I treated people differently and I was unhappy because I was so frustrated I couldn't fix myself."

Counseling was the first step to understand what was happening in her mind.

"It's a mental disorder and until you acknowledge it and get help, you can't just stop it", Lee said.

During counseling, Lee was told that in-house treatment would be the best option in order to control and fully understand what she was going through both mentally and physically.

Lee spent 90 days at Canopy Cove, a private, residential eating disorder treatment center in Tallahassee, Fla.

"It was an emotional strain, but we did what we needed to do," Cuevas said. "I told her I would do my part and all she had to do was focus on getting better and that's what she did."

While at Canopy Cove, Lee was diagnosed with anorexia, induced bulimia and excessive over exercise.

Canopy Cove had Lyndsey on a strict schedule. Eat. Therapy. Eat. Therapy. And repeat.

"I never felt like I had an issue growing up that caused me to have this disorder and that's what I struggled with understanding," Lee said.

Lee recognized through treatment that her personality characteristics had something to do with her disorders. Being a perfectionist was a key factor into explaining why her thought process happened the way it did.

"If I'm going to school to get good grades, then I'm going to get good grades," Lee said. "If there's a healthy way to eat then I'm definitely going to do it. That's just the way my thought process worked."

But treatment helped Lyndsey realize that there is a middle ground she needed to find in order to live a balanced and healthier life style.

Lee was secluded from family while at Canopy Cove and when the therapists said playing soccer after leaving wouldn't be in her best interest, Lee was discouraged. They just shot down the one thing that's been her dream since she was 4 years old.

Lee wasn't going to let that get in her way and encouragement from her mom was all she needed.

"My mom was the number one person helping me get through everything and even when I

had professionals telling me I don't need to be playing sports again, she was there telling me I have never let anything someone said stop be from following my dreams, so why start now," Lyndsey said. "I wasn't going to start after two surgeries and treatment?"

The fear was in Lee's mind. Her health was in question. Her hard work to be healthy again was at risk. Was soccer worth it?

"I felt like I had nothing left in me," Lee said. "I could give no more. I couldn't do anything else but think of these problems. All of my effort was drained in the fog of dealing with my eating disorder."

And that's when the inspiration came in.

OH, BUT MY DARLING, WHAT IF YOU FLY?

"That stuck with me because I always asked, what if I fail?" Lee said.

The positivity stuck. The treatment had given Lee a healthy mind and body back. Lee took a few weeks off after leaving Canopy Cove to make sure she would be able to handle the outside world on her own and maintain a healthy regimen.

Once she felt like she had control, Lee got back into training. The first thing on her mind was getting back on the soccer field.



Lee called Coach El-Zare to get back on the Southern Miss soccer team and also explained to him what caused her to leave after freshman year.



"I told him I would do whatever it takes to be on that field because I wanted to be apart of something that was bigger than myself," Lee said.

Coach El-Zare saw a healthy, different person from her freshman season. Her character and personality shined through everything else.

"It wasn't about her skills on the field because everyone knew she had them, but it was about seeing the positive change in her and how happy she was that made it an easy decision for me to get her back on the team," El-Zare said.

Lee is back on the soccer team at Southern Miss and completed her second season with the Golden Eagles in 2016 where she played in all 17 games and started in 12. She had 24 shots, nine on goal and had two assists in her junior season.

Lee is still fighting her diseases and has them under control but considers herself still in recovery.

"I'm more aware of it," Lee said. "I'm more open to talk about it. Knowing that I have this amazing support team here makes it so much easier to handle."

"There is always a lesson in everything," Lee

said. "God was teaching me humility through this. It took me a notch down and made me appreciate everything I had."

Talking about it helps Lyndsey. If anyone ever needs someone to talk to, Lee feels like she is a person to come to.

"I'm so open to talk about it now and help others going through something like this," Lee said. "I don't want people to feel trapped in this. Food is supposed to keep you going, not bring you down."

Lee wants to be an inspiration to those who are going through the same situation and an outlet for comfort for those who need it.

Soccer was the end goal and the dream that kept Lee fighting.

Lee made it to her goal because she believed she could fly.

Ashleigh Young | Communications Graduate Assistant



BORN TO [FLY] WRITERS & DESIGNERS



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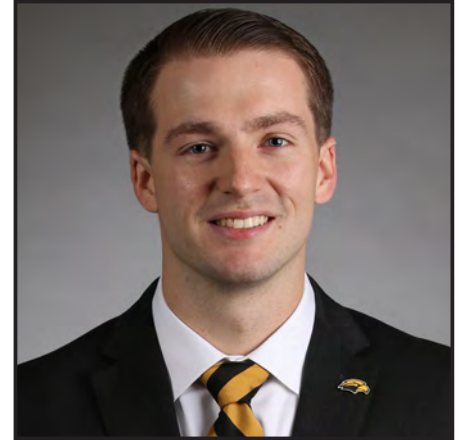
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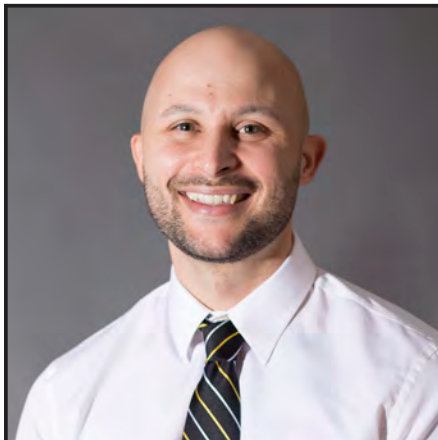
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