

2023
LEGENDS
NEWSLETTER



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We want to hear from you! Feel free to reach out to any of us with any questions.
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Visit new Legends website for additional information and resources.



EDITORS WELCOME

Welcome to the second edition of the Jaguars Legends Newsletter.

The tide has turned in Jacksonville and the arrow is pointing nearly straight up for the Jaguars on and off the field!

Hopefully you rode along with us last season as the Jaguars overcame a 3-7 start to the season by winning their final five regular season games then made one of the most dramatic, come-from-behind wins in NFL playoff history part of the lore of the franchise. Jaguars fans will never forget the night their team fell behind 27-0 before an incredible 24-point second half in their 31-30 walk-off field goal victory against the Los Angeles Chargers.

Our Legends Weekend in October was a huge hit beginning at Top Golf on Friday night that was lauded by everyone who joined us as one of the more fun and enjoyable evenings we've ever had. Saturday was brunch and a visit with team President Mark Lamping followed by a visit to the team walk-through and a chance to get to know players and coaches. Sunday, we celebrated Tony Boselli's Hall of Fame Induction with the presentation of his Hall of Fame Ring and a visit from his Hall of Fame bust. It was a memorable weekend and one we intend to continue growing. Be on the lookout for information about Legends Weekend 2023 later this summer.

Off the field, the new Miller Electric Center is getting closer to completion and is expected to be ready for Training Camp 2023. The 125,000-square-foot state-of-the-art sports performance center will nearly triple the space for football operations and will be among the very best in professional sports. The new two-story facility includes an indoor practice facility, two outdoor practice fields, fan amenity areas, offices, meeting rooms, and facilities to support the Jaguars.

In this issue, you'll get a look at the Miller Electric Center, plus catch up with Big Rich Collier for a candid conversation about leading a normal, joyful life 15 years after a tragic night in Jacksonville. We also catch up with David Garrard who is coaching his daughters, Ryan Davis as he updates us on his coaching journey, Tommy Bohanon and his Foundation, James Stewart who is helping clients lead healthier lives, Legends Richard Angulo and Tony Gilbert who are coaching together on Doug Pederson's staff, and you'll hear from the head coach on a variety of issues.

As always, the Jaguars Legends department would love to hear from you and perhaps tell your story. We will have a new podcast series debut right before Training Camp in July. We're building a community of Jaguars Legends, and we encourage you to come along for the ride.

Go Jaguars!
Brian Sexton



MILLER ELECTRIC CENTER

POWERING PERFORMANCE



Recently, Coach Pederson and General Manager Baalke toured Miller Electric Center to check out the progress. The Jaguars' under-construction sports performance facility is set to open in July.



Miller Electric Center's new 96,113-square-foot indoor practice field is adjacent to two outdoor fields.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW

Forgiveness Moves Big Rich Past the Pain

Legend Richard Collier

The smile on Richard Collier's face defines him. The once hulking offensive tackle whose football potential seemed unlimited, knew he would be fine even when the rest of us wondered if and how he would recover from a night that changed his life forever. Collier decided it would be that way on September 3, 2008, the day after he was shot and just a day before what would have been his third NFL season began without him.

"When I woke up in the hospital and found out that I had been shot 14 times, I was immediately grateful," he said. "You know, I was sad that it happened and knowing the football career was gone. But to realize that I had survived and was still here, literally still here, able to talk and think, I've always been grateful for that. God is good, God is so good."

It would be so easy for Collier to spend his time in his wheelchair thinking about what might have been had he woken up the next morning in his own bed instead of the hospital bed. So easy, but so out of character.

Collier is a study in perseverance and finding his way through the obstacles that life presented him. He didn't go right to college from high school despite being six foot seven and having the body of an offensive tackle. His grades weren't good enough. He ended up working at Walmart for two years. When he did decide he wanted to play, the product of Northwood High in Shreveport didn't go to LSU or nearby Alabama like most prospects with his size and abilities; he went to Tyler Junior College in Texas, where he worked on his grades and his conditioning.

"Well, my feet weren't great because I was 390 pounds, so I had to lose some weight," he recalled with a laugh. "I hadn't played ball, I hadn't worked out or anything in like a year and a half. I had been calling the coach all summer and he never answered, never returned a call or left a message. So on the first day of classes, I met the coach and I told him I just wanted an opportunity. And he's like; 'Yeah, you can come out and run sprints.' I didn't come in at first, but I worked on myself, pushed myself every single day. I was grateful because I knew I had squandered my opportunities and I wasn't guaranteed another."

Collier turned Tyler into another opportunity at Valdosta State where Richard kept working and fine-tuned his abilities for the Blazers who won the National Championship in 2004. He became an All American and turned that into a shot in the Jaguars Camp in 2006.

He arrived with little fanfare, but you could see the way he moved and the way he worked. You didn't have to be a coach or a scout to realize they might have found something special in southern Georgia.

"I knew I had a lot of work to do," he said. "I knew I was green, I knew I had to push my body like I never had before. But I knew I could do this, and I was really comfortable. I was making strides in practice, and I learned in a pre-season game in live action that I could block those guys. Dave (Garrard) threw this long touchdown and everyone was high fiving me, Tony Boselli even circled me on the television. I knew I belonged but I had a lot of work to do.

By the end of 2006, he was playing and even earned a start in the season finale. He only scratched the line-up a few times in 2007 but General Manager James Harris and Head Coach Jack Del Rio were sold on the potential player and signed him to a contract extension. Then, everything came unraveled on that Tuesday night in 2008.



"I'm still not over playing football," Collier said quietly. "I miss football every day. And the older I get, I was telling my wife that I miss it more and more every year. I think that's just something you have to live with. I'm still trying to live with it, but I didn't let myself spend too much time living in the past. I have to live this life I have with my wife (Chandra) and I want to live a Godly life, so I had to do a lot of forgiving and letting things go and become a better man than I was before. If it took me to lose football to save my soul, it's totally worth it."

Collier doesn't back down from any question about his life before or since the shooting. He knew it would be much easier to heal and move on if he talked about it and so he does with remarkable candor and self-awareness. He also knew that he had to forgive Tyrone Hartsfeld, the man who pulled the trigger and sent his future in an entirely different direction.

"That was the hardest thing," he explained. "I had to forgive the guy who shot me and that was hard. There were a lot of prayers, like 'Lord, I don't know if I can do this.' But one day, it just felt like a weight lifted off me and I don't even think about it anymore."

Hartsfeld was sentenced to life in prison but earlier this year, with Collier's consent, the State's Attorney resentenced him to 27 years with credit for the 14 years he's already spent in prison.

Honestly, Collier does not have a lot of time to think about the past. He is busy with his family and the woman who did not leave after the accident, the woman who nursed him back to health, the mother of his twin boys Richard and Robinson, his constant companion and inspiration.

"My wife is the first pick of the draft, a hall of fame woman and mother," he said. "The first conversation we had I said to her, it's going to be hard so if you want to leave, I understand. She told me to shut up and that she wasn't going anywhere, and she's been by my side ever since. I love being married, love being a father. My life is a gift and so is Chandra, a gift from God."

The Colliers do not waste much time. Twin eight-year-old boys do not let you do that, and neither does a busy speaking schedule or travel plans. He does not let life pass him by. Two years ago he watched as his sister April Robinson lost her battle with cancer. Richard and Chandra did not blink, taking in her two children and raising them as their own. Collier turned to his faith and the difficulties he had already tackled and did what he knows how to do.

"Man, life is hard, it's really hard," he said with a sigh. "You're going to go through challenges, but if you have a little faith and the right mindset there's nothing you can't figure out. I always tell people to just keep pushing. I'm still grieving for my baby sister, she moved here to be with us, and we were close, it's hard to lose someone you love so young. But I know God has a plan and now April's kids are part of that plan."

Fifteen years later and Collier is smiling and talking about a trip to Alaska he's wanted to take for years. The weekends are packed with baseball and flag football and nights out with friends and former teammates. Big Rich has taken a personal tragedy and turned it into a public triumph. He moves with what seems like little effort from car to coffee house and husband/father to public speaker and advocate for people with difficulties.

"I wanted to make living in a chair seem normal," offered the man who has done just that. "People always see me, and they think you need help but I'm always like; 'I'm good, thanks though.' I just want people to see me as a normal person. I want people who live with disabilities to know they can live a full life. You can have it all."

That smile that defines Richard Collier is telling the whole story these days. The smile tells the whole story, a big man with an even bigger heart is living with joy and hopes you see it and that it might even bring a little smile to you.



Sharing the Game with their Daughters

Legends David Garrard, Adam Podlesh, Issac Smolko, and Joe Zelenka



Football is America's game, and it has been for more than half a century. It began on an upward swing on a December in 1972 when Franco Harris caught the most famous pass in NFL history and has owned the sporting world in this country ever since.

But the game's enormous growth in recent decades has been powered by building an audience that didn't play or follow with the same passion as the men and boys who lived the sport on and off the field.

Women arrived as followers in the late 1970's with their husbands and sons, then became passionate fans as the game entered the golden age of quarterbacks in the 1980's, and in recent years they've taken a spot inside the walls of college and professional teams and are finally playing the game.

Girls are growing the game in greater numbers than ever before as flag football has opened the opportunity in a new and exciting way.

"It's the fastest growing sport for girls in this country," offered former Jaguars quarterback David Garrard about a sport that is now an official sanctioned high school sport in Florida and is on the list of sports being considered for the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. "They see their brothers and dads and wonder; 'Why can't I play too?' Now they can and we're going to help them grow as athletes and young women to be good people and eventually become Legends in the community."

Garrard and a number of Jaguars Legends are in the game through the Girl Power Flag Football League which was named the Best Female Program at the NFL Flag Summit. It's founder, Phil Squatrito, has in two short years grown to more than 300 girls playing for 28 teams in eight divisions. The growth is nothing short of astounding.

"When we started out, there was really only a handful of girls interested," recalled 'Coach Squats.' "But I knew if we created the platform, girls could compete in a healthy safe and positive environment. The energy and enthusiasm out here among the girls is hands down the best part of my week."

Garrard isn't the only Jaguars Legend working with his daughter on the field. Punter Adam Podlesh is enjoying the preparation and competition with his daughter in the Girl Power League.

"Simply put, I'm enthusiastic that Addison is enthusiastic," said Podlesh. "I've been around team sports my whole life, and I know the intangible skills that kids can develop through that medium. Addison being involved in any team sport makes me enthusiastic...Addison being involved with a team sport I played for most of my life is just icing on the cake."

Podlesh's son Carter is also a football player which gives him a unique perspective on boys and girls playing the game.

"In a broad sense, I don't think there really is a difference when it comes to coaching boys and girls," Podlesh explained. "Specific to the two of them, Addison and Carter have very different personalities, which translates to different strengths, weaknesses, and responses to coaching techniques. It's fun to experience and learn about the contrasts and similarities they have playing the same sport."

Issac Smolko played fullback, tight end and linebacker during his Jaguars career, so he knows both sides of the football, but he doesn't know how to compare sons and daughters playing the game he loves.

"God has blessed me with 3 beautiful girls but with that comes an entire set of emotions I never knew existed," said Smolko. "I also believe their attention span is a little, emphasis on little, bit longer than boys. When we draw up or call a play for them, they typically do a really good job of executing. It's just awesome seeing these girls getting to take part in my favorite game and, in a way, they can absolutely excel at. Girls Flag Football is really fun to watch."

Tight end and long snapper Joe Zelenka spent last fall coaching his son at Providence. He's not coaching his daughter Abigail; he's enjoying being a spectator, but he knows the guy over the team she's playing on and he's pretty comfortable with the experience she's getting.

"Anytime I get to watch my children do something, I am amazed that they're mine," Joe said with his trademark smile. "Watching Abigail get to play and be coached by Dave is something sweet. First because it has reconnected me with David. I get to weekly see a dear friend and do life with him and his kids. Second, I get the joy of my daughter getting to do (and love) something that was so precious to me. To see her cheer for her teammates and develop relationships outside the game is beautiful."

Podlesh, Smolko and Zelenka love that their girls love their game, but it is abundantly clear that the character-building qualities that so many boys benefited from during a football career are just as important to these Legends for their daughters.

"What Coach Squats is doing down there with the Girl Power Flag League is pretty amazing," Zelenka said. "He empowers these girls, but he does it in such a way that is encouraging and uplifting. This is more than just flag football. These girls are learning life lessons. They're learning how to get along. They're learning what it is to win, lose, struggle, fight, and celebrate. I mean, football is the greatest game ever invented. It gives back everything you pour into it. What's really amazing is that our daughters are getting an experience like we got, and I think we're all really grateful for that."

'Coach Squats' is grateful for the Jaguars enthusiastic support of his fledgling league and knows their help can only make it more formidable in the future. He's also excited about having Jaguars Legends bring their knowledge and passion to help the girls get a sporting experience that will stay with them wherever they go in life.

"It's incredible that the Jaguars Legends come out to be a part of the movement," Zelenka noted. "They really want to see their daughters have the very best athletic opportunities. That's why we started the Girl Power League, to give our daughters something really special and to experience it with them at every practice and in every game. It was a good idea and it's become a great example of what's possible when everyone is focused on making sure their daughters love the game."



Teammates Twice

Legends Richard Angulo and Tony Gilbert

Tight ends coach Richard Angulo has been here before. So too has linebackers coach Tony Gilbert. The difference is that 16 years ago when both men wore the teal and black they were simply tight end Richard Angulo and linebacker Tony Gilbert.

The former teammates reconnected in 2022 when each joined Doug Pederson's first coaching staff and found themselves back in Jacksonville together for the first time since 2007.

Angulo spent two of his seven NFL seasons with the Jaguars and was part of that great run through the 2007 season which included two wins in Pittsburgh in a four-week span including a dramatic Wild Card Playoff game that ended on the final play. Jacksonville earned a special place in Richard's heart.

"It was definitely surreal coming back here, the first couple months," Angulo recalled. "But now it just feels like home, to be honest with you. I always loved it here. I had a great time when I was here as a player. I loved the city, the location in Florida, everything about Jacksonville. You know, every time the coaching cycle spins there are a couple of places you're interested in, and Jacksonville was one of those. I had a great run with the Ravens but to be here is definitely a blessing and definitely very different."

Gilbert has been back in Jacksonville since he signed on to Doug Marrone's staff in 2020, but he shares the same great memories of that special 2007 team which won with the League's best running game and a feisty defense that loved to beat up the opponent on every single play.

"We had a hardnosed group of guys," recalled Gilbert with a smile. "Mike Pederson, and I was his back-up, plus Clint (Ingram) and John Henderson and Marcus Stroud, Reggie Hayward and guys on the back end with big time playmaking skills like Rashean (Mathis) and Reggie (Nelson). It was fun to go to work with those guys on Sundays. That was the most fun you could have playing ball."

Angulo worked the other side of the ball with Mercedes Lewis and Zach Potter as a replacement for tight end Kyle Brady who ended up in New England where that season ended. He was a critical part of the blocking scheme for Fred Taylor and Maurice Jones-Drew who led a rushing attack that produced nearly 154 yards per game which kept the defense fresh and well, you get the point.

"That team came together when they made the move at the end of training camp to go with David (Garrard) instead of Byron (Leftwich)," said Angulo. "We had so many guys who loved football, they were students of the game, and they were always prepared. That team was the perfect example of complimentary football, we ran the ball with force and the defense was always fresh. They were fun to watch. They played with great energy and played together. It was fun to go to work every day with that team."





That team learned how to prepare in the meeting rooms with Defensive Coordinator Mike Smith and Offensive Coordinator Dirk Koetter who had great success in that season and in the years that followed in Atlanta. Those two men burned the midnight oil—they were the first in and the last to leave every day. The lessons they shared with those players, well, let's just say it's hard to be surprised that two role players who fell in love with the game were able to leverage their time into a way to stay in the game.

"It's amazing how little we knew as players, you know?" Angulo offered. "We were well prepared, but we memorized the game plan and learned what we needed to know for any given week. Becoming a coach was a wake-up call. There is so much more to it, and I didn't always think I was going to do it. I tried some other stuff in the real world, but the real world spit me out. This is what I'm meant to be doing. Once I committed to the job it was a smooth transition."

Both men were grinders, guys who had to fight to stay in the game with every single practice rep let alone game opportunity. It is a surprise to many that at least half the players in the NFL, if not more, are in the exact same situation. That makes guys like Richard and Tony excellent coaches because they've been where their players are and want to stay.

"I actually tell my personal stories to my guys," Gilbert said. "Especially as a back-up and a special teams guy and you've got to know all the positions to stay around. I learned what it took from those guys, and the coaching side of it just kind of got in my blood. These players need to know what it takes to stay on the roster and stay in the league, but they also need to learn that there is life after football. I want to be a real life coach for the guys in my room. I've seen or played with some of the best. I know what it takes, and I know how to help them excel at this level. Football is a short part of life, and I want to help them be their best while they're here."

Angulo sees the same benefit as Gilbert. Evan Engram had the best season of his career in 2022, and Chris Manhertz was a dominant blocker in the run and pass game.

"I think it's kind of a natural, unspoken thing that the players appreciate the fact you went through what they're going through," he explained. "I was a guy who was always fighting for a job. I've been there, I've fought that fight. Nothing against guys who haven't played, but they respond to a guy who has been there and has the experience and the stories to tell."

They helped Pederson turn the tide of a franchise they loved. It's safe to say that they are ahead of schedule after 2022 which finished with the AFC South title in that dramatic come-from-behind game against the Titans and that dramatic come-from-behind win over the Chargers that sent them to the Divisional round in Kansas City. Both men loved 2007 but said the chance to finish what they started all those years ago was an important consideration.

"It's easy to go somewhere where they've been winning over and over," said Angulo. "You're just another piece in the puzzle and you just kind of keep it going. But to be able to say we turned it around here would be really cool. So, yeah, I'm excited about where we are and more excited about where it appears we're going. I'm looking forward to it."

Jacksonville became a part of them 16 years ago and it wasn't just the great weather or beautiful beaches or excellent tax opportunities. It was the teal and how it rallied this city, and they remembered it against the Chargers and Titans as exactly how it was back when they were playing.

"There's something special about this place," Gilbert said. "I know people look at the record and don't necessarily see it. But if you've been here or are from here you get the whole DUUUUVAL thing, you know? We took a big step but there are other big steps still to take and that's exciting. I come over that bridge every day to the stadium, and I can't help but smile and think there isn't a place I'd rather be than right here."

Both men are back at it in 2023 with the goal of taking this franchise someplace it's never been — the Super Bowl.



Another NFL Dream in the Making

Legend Ryan Davis

Ryan Davis had one opportunity to make something with his football dreams and he did. Bethune-Cookman College was his only scholarship offer, but instead of worrying or wondering he put his head down and charged. Four years and a MEAC Defensive Player of the Year award later he found himself in Jacksonville at the beginning of a seven-year journey through the NFL.

Now, seven seasons removed from his final season with the Jaguars, he recently found himself with another opportunity to do even more with those football dreams. This past February, Davis headed to Indianapolis and the NFL & NCAA Coaches Academy where he networked to build connections and worked on developing the leadership skills that could catapult his young coaching career.

"I was so happy when I got that call. I had a huge smile on my face," Davis recalled. "It's another opportunity, you know? Just getting onto an NFL roster was tough, making it and then finding a way back is tough, too. A lot of people ask, 'Why aren't you coaching college football?' Coaching is a process and I'm going through it, and I reach out to people and some things might not be available when I want them. So, I just keep going and pushing the envelope and then the Jags call and here I am."



And while he was sitting in the seminars and networking his way through the Coaches Academy, he took a call from another NFL team, and he's hoping it leads him back to professional football.

"It was actually my birthday, that Friday in Indy and I looked down at my phone and read the text and was pumped," Davis explained. "I went for an interview with the New York Jets and I think it went pretty good. It's for a job as the assistant defensive line coach. I know a couple of guys on that staff, Robert Saleh, the head coach, Aaron Whitecotton, the defensive line coach, Mike Rutenberg, the linebackers coach and a couple of other guys who were here when I was here back in the day. Hopefully I get some good news and I'm back on an NFL sideline this fall."

Davis is on the verge of another shot because he was willing to do what he did when he played. He attacked the opportunity to coach the defensive line at Raines High School with the same energy and passion that made him an important player for Gus Bradley's defense from 2013 through 2015. When Bradley's team finally started winning late in 2013, it was Davis who had an interception and a critical sack that guaranteed two wins in a four-game stretch. He knew he belonged then just like he knows he belongs now.

"I wasn't a five-star guy or even a drafted player, but that didn't really matter," he said. "I had to cut my teeth wherever I went in order to get where I wanted to go. You don't get very far without a passion for the game and plan. I'm still that guy now as someone who wants to coach as I was when I was that guy who wanted to play. Nothing has changed except where I line up."

He's taking small steps towards the big goal of coaching on Sunday afternoons. It began last fall on a high school field on the north side of Jacksonville with a group of young men. For now, his job is to develop young men and then football players, and he's all in on that mission.

"I work with Coach Wayne, our offensive line coach at Raines, and he looks out for those kids," Davis explained. "We want to win every Friday night but that isn't the most important thing we're doing. We know some kids might not go to college or not be able to play football beyond high school and there is life after the game. That's what I love about the family at Raines. We look out for them and help them, and I feel like that's important."

Ryan speaks with a gleam in his eye when he talks about his kids at Raines. He knows the impact he can have and embraces his role.

"They ask me a lot of questions and you can tell, you know, they're listening," Davis explained. "And it's cool answering their questions because you know they want to compare; they want to know if they can make it too. There's no secret recipe, you know, I tell them they can have more than what I had if they're willing to do what I did. I lay it out for them, they listen, and they appreciate it too."

He's proud of his new direction and is enjoying the ride that many of his former teammates are on as well.

"I ran into Roy (Miller) at the Jaguars Nike 11-On in St. Augustine last summer," he said. "He's part of the staff at Providence that has a bunch of former players on it. It's cool to see and they did some good things this season. I also ran into some guys who are coaching in their hometowns during Legends Weekend, and we compared notes and stories. This game gets in your blood and it's so tough to walk away from it. I can learn from all those guys just like I did in the defensive line room back when I was playing. I can use it all to help my career."

The Trojans of Raines High School wear cardinal red and silver, and so does their defensive line coach, but the teal runs deep in Davis. He's loving the experience on the sidelines and enjoying the resurgence of his beloved Jaguars, his first shot at the big time and the franchise that is helping him to what he hopes will be his second shot at the NFL.

"I was having heart palpitations watching the playoff game," Davis said with a laugh. "So, yeah, I'm connected to everything that is going on down there. They have their franchise quarterback and the right head coach with the right system. The momentum is rolling now and it's fun. Somebody told me a long time ago that this is a great city and it's even better when the Jaguars are winning. I'm excited to be where I am right now, but I won't lie, their success has me focused on the success I want to have and where I want to be someday."

Time seems to be the only variable with Davis and coaching professional football. He's waiting patiently for now and trusting that hard work and his faith will come together to open a new door.

"I've prayed about it," he said quietly. "I just feel like God has His hand on me and is moving me in a certain way. I'm always optimistic."



Coaching Others Towards a Healthy Lifestyle

Legend James Stewart

The rich baritone voice of James Stewart is both soothing and energizing at the same time, and it's inescapable as the air inside Studio 33 just off Mayport Road in Atlantic Beach where he trains a growing list of clients. The former Jaguars first round draft pick looks like he could still grab the ball and score, and he certainly sounds like he could take the stage in any concert hall.

"I've never really sung," he said with a smile. "They always used to ask me to join the high school choir, but that's for people who were blessed to be able to sing. I'm a shower singer, great in the shower, but I need to leave it at that."

Stewart was blessed with the body of a linebacker and the speed of a much smaller man which is why Tom Coughlin moved up to select him with the second of the club's two first round picks in the Jaguars first NFL Draft in 1995. Stewart didn't disappoint, averaging 4.0 yards per carry and scoring 33 touchdowns in five years in Coughlin's pass-heavy offense and splitting carries with Natrone Means and Fred Taylor. Along the way he put up the first 100-yard rushing game in Jaguars history, played in six playoff games and two AFC Championship games and set a franchise record on a memorable afternoon against the Eagles when he scored five rushing touchdowns. He was a consummate professional on and off the field for which he was beloved by his teammates and the media.

"I'm an old school guy," he said with no small measure of pride. "I like to be coached and so of course I fit right in with Tom (Coughlin). I never minded someone being hard on me because I understood that to be successful in the NFL, I had to be harder on myself than anyone else could possibly be. I wanted my teammates to be able to rely on me no matter what situation we were in and so I worked with that in mind every single day on the practice field so that everyone would be comfortable with the ball in my hands when it was time."

Stewart moved on to Detroit in 2000 and posted a pair of 1,000-yard campaigns over the next four years with the Lions. When a shoulder injury began to take its toll, it was time to put professional football in the rear-view mirror and start the next chapter. He didn't know exactly what he was going to do but James knew where he wanted to do it.

"It's a big city with a small town feel," Stewart said of his adopted hometown. "I grew up in a small town in Tennessee, so it was good for me to come to a place like Jacksonville which is low key. I'll always believe that was the best thing for me, to get to start my career here. I remember when I got drafted, my dad asked me if I was happy. I didn't realize then the significance of being part of those early years of a new franchise, but as I got older it became more important to me. Honestly, we never really left Jacksonville. I just went to Detroit to play football but always came back here. It felt like home."

Stewart found himself drawn to the gym, which is no surprise since the self-proclaimed "gym rat" never really left the gym behind either. He started working with a friend, training folks at a popular local gym

and then began working with his own clients at his own place. The smile on his face gives away the fact that he's happy to be connected to his athletic roots and to do it his own way.

"It just kind of evolved," he explained. "It took me some time to get used to training other people. I was just used to getting my body ready to play football. It took me a little while to hone in on what I was good at, how I wanted to help people get ready for whatever they wanted to do, suddenly 13, 14 years have gone by and I've gotten to a point where I know exactly what I want to do."

Stewart can get someone ready to play whatever sport they're interested in or tune up a body builder for a show, but what he really wants to do is help people adopt a big picture look at their own health. His passion is helping his clients live their best and most healthy lives.

"I believe in a living a healthy lifestyle," he said. "I want to help people realize that a consistent approach to working out and eating healthy is the long-term way to live well. I can work with someone who is 13 or someone in their 80s and help them find their own path to work on being their best every day. You don't have to be a ballplayer or in your 20s to live well. At the end of the day, I want my clients to be motivated to push themselves to get where they want to be and of course I'll push them also."

James doesn't train his clients as if they're professional athletes. Not many regular people could or would even want to endure the grueling workouts he used to push himself during a long and successful NFL career. But he uses the same approach that got him to the top of the mountain and it's what sets him apart in a crowded world of fitness and personal training.



"I've always been a process guy," Stewart observed thoughtfully. "I enjoyed the process from Pee-Wee to high school and college and into the NFL. It was always about the next step, the next day, the next game. That was fun to me. I tell the people who walk through these doors that the one thing you must do is keep moving forward. One foot in front of the other every day. Just keep getting up, keep coming to work out, keep eating right, keep improving at home and at work. When you stop moving forward, that's when the problems show up."

He is a living example of what he preaches. Stewart is in phenomenal shape, and it's not hard to believe he was a star at the University of Tennessee and in the NFL. But that's not the reality for many former players who reach their 50's and struggle to stay connected to their athletic past. Stewart wants NFL Legends to know that a good plan and a lot of patience are all it takes for them to get to much better spot with their health.

"People have been telling them their whole lives, 'Hey, you need to work out, you need to eat properly, you need to do this or that,'" he said. "Some guys, when they don't have somebody over their shoulder telling them what to do and when to do it, simply don't. It doesn't take long to find yourself overweight and out of shape. But if they want to get back to a healthy spot it's simply a matter of a good plan and a strong mindset. If you just get started and find your balance and your strength again and can push yourself a little bit more every time you work out, you'll begin to see the results and once the foundation is set it just gets rolling. I want my clients and former teammates to know that it's one foot in front of the other every day."

There is an energy that you can almost touch when you talk with James. He clearly loves where he's at right now and is enjoying stepping through the doors of Studio 33 and into a world where he makes a difference every day.

"I feel like whatever is going on around me comes to stop when I am here working with my clients," he offered. "Many of them are friends now, and I want to give them the best of me when we're together. When they get results it feels like I'm getting those same results. It's hard to explain but when you're connected to your clients or your teammates you can get into a zone and those days when you're in that zone and hitting on all cylinders, whether it's in the gym or on the field, are the days you feel most alive. It's good to be able to still be in that zone, I'm grateful to still have that in my life."

Things are rolling for him and for his former team. Stewart made time to get reacquainted with the Jaguars recently and has been a staple at Legends events and in and around the franchise. He appreciates Head Coach Doug Pederson's efforts to keep former players connected to the Jaguars and expects it to continue to grow as the Jaguars continue to build.

"It's been great," Stewart said. "I've really enjoyed the updates and the Jags making the former players feel a part of everything. I've done seven or eight events and I want to continue to do that. We still want to be connected and it's important to us that they've made it easy to be."



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Inching Beyond Ian and Into Others' Lives

Legend Tommy Bohanon

Tommy Bohanon only scored three touchdowns in his NFL career, but in Jacksonville he will always be known as "touchdown" Tommy Bohanon for two one-yard plunges into the end zone against Houston and one incredible 14-yard touchdown at Pittsburgh.

"That was the only time I actually made the playoffs in my seven years in the NFL. It was something that was truly incredible," Bohanon said. "You don't know what it's like until you're actually in. I still talk about that play because it was one of those things where all the stars aligned. We had run the lead iso play the play before and they were in the exact coverage that we thought they were going to be in. Blake Bortles just looks at me and goes, all right, let's do it. And we run, I think it was 312 Japan is what the play was called. And just that little move made the linebacker fall on his face and I was wide open down the middle."

That fourth quarter touchdown, with less than five minutes to play, stunted the Steelers who had brought the game to within a touchdown after falling behind 28-7 in the first half. It secured both the win and Tommy's spot in Jaguars lore.

There's a photo of that moment somewhere among Bohanon's possessions, most of which are in storage or under a tarp outside the home he and his wife Katie have built in Fort Myers, Florida. The home filled with water on the day Hurricane Ian leaned on the coast of southwest Florida last September and turned the Bohanon's life and the lives of tens of thousands of their neighbors upside down and inside out.

"We had just come back from vacation and the hurricane the entire time was supposed to hit north of us," he recalled. The hurricane technically hit on a Wednesday and on Monday evening, I decide, you know what, I need to probably put the shutters up just in case. At this point, the hurricane is still going north to Tampa and we still don't really think anything of it. We're supposed to maybe get tropical storm winds, but nothing crazy. And then at about 7pm on Tuesday, we get an evacuation notice on our phones. I'm thinking, it's too late, there's no way that we can get on the roads right now because we're already seeing high winds and so we stayed at the house, and it was the longest storm I had ever experienced. I sat through Charlie and other large storms, but this one was different and just sat on top of us.

I'm pretty sure it was about seven or eight on Tuesday evening when we started seeing higher winds. We kept getting winds all the way through to about 2pm on Thursday morning. We live on a canal

down in north Fort Myers, and about halfway through the storm on Wednesday, I went and looked out my back garage door and I saw the canal coming up and around the house on both sides, meeting my driveway and pushing out towards the street. At about that time, I told my wife Katie, the water was going to come in. We have to take our valuables that we want to save and put them up on the counter tops. It was probably about an hour after I said that, that we had water in our house. We ended up having about three and a half to four feet of water in our garage and about two and a half feet of water in our house."

The Bohanons are rebuilding as are most of their neighbors. It's a long process and one that requires both hard work in the clean-up and patience when things get delayed. While they wait for life to return to normal, they're serving through the Tommy Bohanon Foundation.

"We knew that we could use the foundation to help people in need. So, we did," explained Bohanon. "We did four different outreach events after the hurricane. We went to specific communities that we knew needed help. We went to Pine Island, which is surrounded by a body of water, and to Fort Myers Beach and gave out Gatorade, food, and basic necessities. We tried to give people a little bit of normalcy. You see people who had everything taken away from them out there still wanting to give back. And that's something that I think is truly special about the people from Florida, is that they might not have anything at the time, but they're still going to try to do something to help. You encounter people that are devastated, but they're on the front lines helping others, alongside what we were doing through the foundation.



Bohanon did what he always did when things got tough on the football field. He went to work. Over the course of nearly 10 years in professional football, he was always fighting for his job. He never quit working to create another opportunity for himself in professional football and he's not about to quit on the kids in southwest Florida who need his help to create their own.

"My message is a simple one," he offered. "It's outwork everybody because there's always going to be doubters. There's going to be people that say you can't do this, or you can't do that. If you're the one that's in the gym at 5 a.m. working out, doing everything you can, doing the right things in the classroom, doing the right things at home, all these different variables add up to something. You have to have the want to. And if you consistently just put in the effort, the dividends will pay out. Look at my story before the 2017 season, I was out of football for an entire year. I was pouring concrete in the day, working out at night and in the morning before work. But without ever knowing if I was going to be back on a football field."

He got back on the field and he's hoping to help the young athletes who are struggling to do the same after Hurricane Ian. The Tommy Bohanon Foundation raises money for equipment grants and scholarships all in an effort to make sure someone else might get the same chance he once had.

"Katie and I always talk about the platform I was given as a professional athlete," he said. "We're able to help here in my hometown. Making a positive impact through the foundation, is where I truly learned to love helping others and feel like I am making a real difference. When you have that opportunity you also have that responsibility, and we're both so grateful to have the ability to help the place we love so much get back on its feet."

The Bohanon's are charging ahead with the Tommy Bohanon Foundation, with Tommy's new job as a financial advisor, and with their family and friends who are rebuilding their lives in southwest Florida. He's moved on from his career as a professional football player but carries the lessons he learned from Pop Warner to Wake Forest to the NFL.

"I'm from a hardworking, construction family," Tommy said. "I was never going to get outworked in any room that I was ever in. That's something that I learned at a very young age, that no matter what you do, if you put your mind to it and you truly work hard, nobody's going to take anything away from the hardest worker in the room."



DOUG PEDERSON

Q&A WITH HEAD COACH

Jaguars Head Coach Doug Pederson has spent the better part of the last 30 years working in professional football. The one-time undrafted rookie free agent who was constantly shuffled on and off the Miami Dolphins roster who went on to win a Super Bowl ring as Brett Favre's backup in Green Bay and as the head coach in Philadelphia has a unique perspective on life in the NFL.

Pederson's first season in Jacksonville began with a promising 2-1 start then quickly devolved during a five-game streak of agonizingly close losses. Pederson never wavered and his team didn't either, and before the season was over the Jaguars were right where they hoped they'd be when the head coach was hired in January of 2022... competitive.

"When you look back on year one it was a whirlwind of a season because you're putting the staff together and trying to convince the players to come back into the building for the off-season program," he recalled recently. "Then you're putting training camp together and you get to the regular season and the highs and lows of everything that brings on a weekly basis. I think outside the building we exceeded a lot of expectations. Inside the building there was a lot of confidence in the ability we had as a football team. I think we showed that down the stretch, and my hat's off to the players. They hung in there when things didn't look good. They were two and six and then three and seven and the next thing you know you look up and you're in the AFC South title game. I think it gives everybody some momentum, enthusiasm, excitement moving into the offseason and headed toward 2023."

The Jaguars late season winning streak was capped off by dramatic come-from-behind wins over the Tennessee Titans and Los Angeles Chargers in prime time on a national television stage. A standing-room-only crowd exploded as the Jaguars pushed beyond just making the playoffs and showed a national audience what playing in Jacksonville is going to be like in 2023.

"It opened a lot of eyes around the nation and around the NFL," said Pederson. "A sold-out crowd both games and the crowd seemed to be as excited as the team to be on that stage. Honestly, it had been a few years since we were on that stage, back in '17 but those were on the road, and it just goes to show what happens when we do our jobs well and put a good product on the field. Those last two games, are hands down, a couple of the best games I've been a part of."

Pederson brought Jaguars Legends into the fold during his first season in Jacksonville with a mentoring luncheon in September and during Legends Weekend in October. The Jaguars hosted their largest gathering of former players for the Texans game, outside of the 25th Anniversary weekend in 2019. With the head coach placing

importance on having Legends involved, you can expect even more in 2023.

"It's great to stay connected with the Legends," said Pederson. "Those are the guys who paved the way for the players on the roster right now. We had our guys interact with our Legends and it goes a long way because relationships are built and those guys were where the current players want to be. For me, personally, as a former player, I want to do as much as I can to have those guys around even more. We have a great group of guys who live in our area and I want to be able to connect with them and have different things throughout the course of the year that really make them feel like they're part of this organization. We'll keep looking for ways to bring them around."

One area where Pederson has involved former NFL players is on his coaching staff. Half of the men who coach alongside him on a daily basis wore an NFL uniform and most of them played on Saturdays in college. He values the perspective of those who played the game but said he didn't necessarily set out to build a staff of former players.

"It's funny because when I hired them, I didn't realize they all had played, quite honestly" he admitted. "It was about hiring the best



guys and I think that having staff that's played the sport at this level you can relate to the players and give them some critical insight into what it means to be a professional and to practice and work every day even when you're not feeling your best. I think we can enhance our job as coaches when it comes to instructing but the struggles today are the same struggles we went through as former players and that relationship and understanding can really help these young players."

It is not surprising that there are a number of Jaguars Legends who are currently coaching at the high school level, where Pederson got his start on the sidelines. The head coach is supportive of the move from the locker room to the coaching profession and encourages guys to take a look for themselves.

"There are a lot of internship programs that the league has put into place that help young coaches try and get back into the NFL," Pederson said. "It gives them a look and lets them decide if the grind of what we do would fit them and their families. It's not all bells and whistles he said. It's long days and nights putting in game plans and trying to figure out how to win a game. But that's the grind and it works for some of us. I'm a former high school coach who got an opportunity to come in and be a quality control coach and now am sitting in the head coaches chair years later. Not every path is the same and it can be very demanding, but coaching has its rewards and I think guys who are interested should at least take a look."

While Pederson is preparing his football team for the off-season program, and on the field activities in the weeks ahead, he's also getting ready to move his entire football operation into a world class performance center. The Miller Electric Center will open just outside Gate Two of TIAA Bank Field in July and the hope is it will be a critical part of building a championship legacy in north Florida.

"There is obviously a great deal of excitement about getting into that new facility come training camp," he offered. "It's going to be a place that our players can call home year-round in Jacksonville. They can

come and use the weight room and of course it will have all the bells and whistles of the best facilities in the NFL for recovery, treatment, rehab, dining. We feel like we built the foundation for our football team on the field this last year and now we're stepping into a building that will help us reach our goal of making it to a Super Bowl and being a champion. It shows the players and the fans that there is a very high level of commitment here in Jacksonville from Mr. Khan and the organization."

Pederson can't help but smile when he talks about where his team is and where it's headed. Thirty years in professional football have taken him from south Florida to northern Wisconsin and from big markets like Miami and Philadelphia to smaller markets like Green Bay and Kansas City. He's long been fond of Florida and thinks Jacksonville is a hidden treasure among NFL markets.

"Our first year here was incredible," he said. "You know, my time in Jacksonville was always fly in on Saturday and fly out on Sunday then leave. Now, having spent a year here, I see why a lot of guys, whether they're former players or coaches, find homes here and want to live and retire here. It's a great community, and you can't pass up the beaches and the weather and everything Jacksonville has to offer, but it's really special that it's a smaller city with room to grow. We've just been thrilled to call Jacksonville home."



