

Dwight Phillips – Where Are They Now?

Q: Tell us what you've done and where you've been since you finished your eligibility.

A: After I finished playing at Tech, I got a job at All Saints Episcopal School in Lubbock where I was the head girls' basketball coach. I was able to work there while I finished my degree in Exercise and Sport Sciences. While I coached the girls my former teammate Tony Benford coached the boys. It was there I worked under a guy named Ken Bastion, who mentored me and helped me tremendously. He helped me find out who I really was. Ken passed away three or four years ago very suddenly and that was tough. I left All Saints after eight years to go to Greenhill School in Dallas, again as the girls coach. I was there five years and I moved on to St. Marks School and I'm beginning my fifth year as head JV, assistant varsity boys coach.

Q: What did it mean to play for Tech in the early 80s and talk about playing for Coach Myers?

A: When I was growing up in Levelland, I watched Tech play often. It was an honor and privilege to play at Tech and there is a lot of Texas Tech followers in Levelland who got to see me play. Playing for Coach Myers was a thrill, too. He was an outstanding coach. He gave us life situations to deal with in addition to teaching us basketball. I really appreciate that. He probably doesn't hear that enough from us guys, but I'm one who really appreciated that. One year I messed up and was kicked off the team and I think it was a huge benefit for me in the end.

Q: Now that you're a coach, how do you view the experience of being kicked off the team?

A: I see exactly what Coach Myers had to do. You've got to have rules and regulations with young men who think they are invincible. It's all about an attitude and guys like me needed the guidance I got from Coach Myers. He helped me see the big picture and about being successful. I'm not a real strict disciplinarian as a coach, but I don't really have to be at this level. To coach and be successful you need team discipline but I've never been forced to remove a player. If I'm ever in that situation I'll know how to deal with it.

Q: Twenty years ago you play on a pretty good team in your senior season. You guys won the '84-85 SWC regular season championship and post-season tournament. Talk a little about that team.

A: We started out that year with a good group of seniors and we decided we were going to be successful and go to the NCAA tournament. We worked hard. People said we weren't talented but you've got to have some talent to win a championship. You also must have a good leader and that's what we had. We had good coaching and all that experience and we were able to accomplish our goals. That year was real special. I still have great memories of that year and I keep a picture of that team up in my office. I stay in touch with Tony Benford and Bubba Jennings and it brings back memories of that team to see those guys. I have daily reminders of that team and that season.

Q: We originally intended to have the 20-year reunion of that team during this basketball season but so many of you guys are involved in coaching basketball that you couldn't

attend. Yourself, Vince Taylor at Hobbs (NM) High School, Tony Benford and Coach (Rob) Evans (at Arizona State University), Tim McNally coaches high school in El Paso, and of course Bubba here at Tech are still in coaching. In addition, a couple of the assistant coaches off that team are still in the game. We'll have that reunion in September '05 and hope you can make it back.

A: Incredible! I'd be honored to be back for that! To see the guys and to see Coach Myers and some of the others who supported would be awesome. I can't wait...

Q: What are your thoughts about the United Spirit Arena and Coach Knight?

A: The arena is awesome. I like what I see when I go in there. But, there was nothing like "The Bubble", though. What we had back then was fitting for us. People had problems coming in and playing us in that place. I think Coach Knight is great. Bobby Knight is a proven winner and is doing some great things for Tech. Most of all, I'm impressed by his record as a guy who graduates players and who gets his kids to behave.

Q: What's the future hold for you, professionally and personally?

A: I'm living life large as far as getting to coach and getting to see my kids grow. My daughter, Savannah, is in the 7th grade and she's a basketball player. My son, Jarius, is a 2nd grader and they're both big kids and we hope they'll follow my wife and I and attend Texas Tech. My wife, Cynthia, is a 1986 Tech grad and she and Tony Benford's wife were roommates at Tech, so that's made it easy to stay in touch with him. I'd love to move back to Lubbock someday and work in some capacity at Tech. I love Tech. Right now, though, I'm just having a great time here coaching and teaching and raising a family.