

From the playing field to the courtroom BY GRANT J. GUILLOT

Reflections from Baton Rouge attorneys who played college sports

“Sports, especially team sports, are a microcosm of any goal-oriented human endeavor,” said former East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney **Doug Moreau**, who participated in collegiate sports before attending law school. “There is a great amount of unseen preparation in getting ready to play the ‘game.’ Some of that effort may seem unnecessary, but, as in any endeavor, all of the ‘practice,’ if done with the correct mindset, improves your skillset and provides a greater opportunity for success. Those habits are transferable to any profession or business, including the law,” Moreau said.

Moreau enjoyed a successful athletic career in football as a member of the LSU team from 1962-1965. A pass receiver, extra point kicker, and field goal kicker, Moreau earned several distinctions, including being named All-SEC in 1964-1965, All-American in 1965, SEC Scoring Champion in 1964, and Sugar Bowl MVP in 1965. In 1964 Moreau was the national record holder for the most field goals in a season, and in 1966 he was LSU’s all time scoring leader. Thereafter, Moreau played for the Miami Dolphins from 1966 to 1970. His professional athletic career ended when he injured his knee during his fourth year with the Dolphins, thus leading him to enroll in LSU Law School in the fall of 1970.

Quincy Richard played quarterback for Southern University, led the team to win the 2003 SWAC Championship, and then was named the SWAC Offensive Player of the Year in 2003. Richard was named the Bayou Classic MVP in 2002 and 2003. In 2003 alone, he passed for 3,430 yards and threw 33 touchdowns and 13 rushing touchdowns, resulting in his setting the school record. Also in 2003, he was named the Black College National Player of the Year. Reflecting on how he utilizes his experience with sports in his legal practice, Richard ruminated, “Discipline, adequate preparation and the drive to be the best are the same in sports and the practice of law.”

Heidi Thompson was a cheerleader for LSU from 1987 to 1989. Her 1988-1989 squad won the national championship and was cheering at the famous LSU football game where a touchdown against Auburn literally resulted in the crowd causing an earthquake. “Being a collegiate athlete prepared me for the practice of law by

instilling the importance of time management and always giving your best effort. It also helped me see that there are different levels of success and that it takes the contributions of many to achieve success,” Thompson said.

Another former LSU cheerleader, **Jennifer Richardson Fore**, cheered for the Tigers three years between 2005 and 2009. “Some of my fondest memories while cheering were riding on Mike the Tiger’s cage and running down the hill with the band before football games,” Fore said. “Pre-game at LSU gives you chills from head to toe, especially if you are a part of the action on the field.” Fore said that cheering made her more outgoing and taught her how to be a team player. “To be an attorney, you cannot be shy. Also, you need to learn how to get along with people, correspond with people, and sometimes even rely on people,” she said.

Dan Guillory was a pitcher on the LSU baseball team from 1996 to 1998. His team made the College World Series all three years and won the national championship twice. Guillory considered going to law school after

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college, but postponed doing so for five years to play in the minor leagues. “Although practicing law is certainly different than playing baseball for a living, the work ethic and teamwork skills I acquired throughout my playing days certainly made the transition easier for me. Learning to work under pressure and being accountable are lessons learned from sports that translate well to the practice of law and to any profession,” Guilory said.

Another former collegiate baseball player, **Henri Saunders**, pitched for Tulane from 1989 to 1991, and for LSU between 1991 and 1993. His LSU team won the national championship in 1991 and 1993. Saunders became an attorney because of the influence of his uncle, Judge John Saunders with the Third Circuit. “Uncle John was an outstanding athlete in high school, but his career

was cut short when a tragic car accident left him paraplegic. By example, he taught me and many others what it means to overcome adversity,” Saunders explained. “As a trial attorney, there is no question that playing college baseball has helped prepare me to practice law, not only from the competition aspect, but also, I truly believe that experience allows me to win and lose graciously.”

Bryan Denison is a former Loyola baseball and basketball player. He was a point guard for the basketball team from 1993-1995 and a pitcher for the baseball team from 1994 to 1995. As a point guard, he averaged 9.9 points per game during his freshman season. Denison was also second in the nation in NAIA Division II in three-point field goal percentages at 51.9 percent, and he was eleventh in the nation in NAIA Division II in free throw percentages at 85.2 percent. He also led the conference in both categories. “Playing sports in college helped me to learn to manage people, become a leader, and adapt to situations and work with different people with very different personalities,” Denison said.

James Percy swam for LSU from 1968 to 1972 and was teammates with his brothers, Ryland and Hereford. His specialty was the 200-yard butterfly, and he earned the distinction of Honorable Mention All-SEC in that event. He and his brother, Ryland, both started law school in 1974, once Ryland returned from Navy duty. “What swimming taught me was the hard work earns results. We swam literally thousands of yards a day while maintaining a full course load in order to graduate on time,” Percy said. Although he no longer swims competitively, Percy still swims in the mornings to stay in shape.

Chris Jones played baseball at Tulane from 1996 to 1999. He was a pitcher, and his team won the Conference USA championship in both 1996 and 1997. Jones explained that playing sports in college showed him that hard work is the only way to find success. “Talent will only take you so far, but there is no substitute for hard work,” Jones said. “Similarly, persistence is a very important trait that I developed over many years of playing baseball and other sports. Also, I attribute both my competitiveness and confidence to successes in sports.”

Chase Tettleton played baseball for Trinity University in San Antonio, where he played outfield from 2002 to 2005. In 2004, his team won its conference tournament and played in the Division III West Region final in Orange County, Calif. That year he also earned All-Conference and All-Region

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honors after leading the conference in home runs. Tettleton reflected: "Baseball taught me the power of preparation. As a player, I was trained that each game was an opportunity to display the hard work I had put in during practice. Now I approach major hearings and trials the way I used to approach games — as an opportunity to perform well."

David Fleshman played basketball at LSU from 2004 to 2006 under John Brady. One of his fondest memories is of his team preparing to play Duke in the Sweet Sixteen of the NCAA Tournament. He describes watching Garrett Temple harass J.J. Redick for 40 minutes to knock off the NCAA Tournament's top-seeded Duke and eventually advancing to the Final Four in Indianapolis as "a ride I'll never forget." Fleshman has found that many of the lessons he learned through years of athletics have been directly translated into his law practice. "Whether as a member of a basketball team or a trial team, I've found that it's that collective selflessness that affords the greatest opportunity for success," he said.

Jimmy Field, who played football at LSU from 1958 to 1963, was a halfback on the Freshman team the year the Varsity team won the National Championship. After being redshirted behind Billy Canon during his second year, Field began playing quarterback in 1960 in addition to playing defense. During his final year, he remained quarterback, and the team finished with an 8-1 record.

Furthermore, the team beat Texas 13-0 in the 1963 Cotton Bowl. In addition, Field played leftfield on LSU's 1962 baseball team and had the highest batting average at .356. He was drafted by the Green Bay Packers and the Boston Patriots, ultimately deciding to sign with the Patriots. Field was released at the end of the Exhibition Season in September 1963, and he thereafter went to LSU Law School. "Participating in sports at the collegiate level assisted me in handling adversity that every attorney will experience during his legal and/or political career; do the right thing because those who know you best and those who know you only by reputation will respect you for having integrity; and you are only going to be successful if you are surrounded by good people and you listen to their counsel," Field said.

Another former LSU football player, **Jerry Guillot**, played as an offensive lineman from 1965-1968. He was a three-year letterman, a member of the All-SEC Freshman Team in 1965, a member of the ALL-SEC Academic Teams in 1967 and 1968, and a permanent team co-captain in 1968. "Discipline, preparation, perseverance, attention to details, adaptability and teamwork were all traits developed through my participation in college athletics that have aided me professionally," Guillot said.

Victor J. Suane Jr. played football for Rhodes College as a linebacker from 1994 to 1996, and he was a member

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of the track and field team from 1996 to 1997, competing in shot put, discus and javelin. He was All-Conference in both football and track and field. He says, "In football, you prepare each week to face a different opponent and quickly process information you learned in practice on the field of play. As attorneys, we are often asked to quickly process information in order to be outstanding advocates for our clients. Competing in athletics helped me understand the preparation required to be effective and cultivated the competitive nature that drives me to go to the extra mile to help my client succeed."

Jordan Faircloth played baseball at LSU from 2001 to 2005. His first season on the team was Skip Bertman's final season as head coach. His team won the SEC championship

and made it to the College World Series twice. Faircloth also pitched in a 2004 LSU victory against Tulane in the Superdome. "College athletics, and even high school athletics to a degree, prepared me for the practice of law by fostering a competitive drive and the need to plan and prepare in order to be successful. Athletics also taught me how to treat adversaries with due respect, no matter the issue at hand or the outcome of a dispute," Faircloth said.

In conclusion, several members of our bar attribute their legal successes to the skills they formed and the lessons they learned while playing sports in college. Through fostering these attorneys' competitive drives and impressing on them the importance of teamwork, college athletics have provided these attorneys with invaluable tools they have carried with them from the playing field into the courtroom. ▀



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