



## 2 ex-Vols plan facility

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By Jason M. Reynolds

Staff Writer

The retail area around East Brainerd's Home Depot is getting a little more orange with the upcoming arrival of an athletic training center owned by two former Tennessee Vols football players.

"In high school I found there wasn't a place like D1 to get expert training from guys who have been there, done that," said Will Bartholomew, principal owner of D1 Sports Training & Therapy.

Franklin, Tenn.-based D1 Sports Training is building a facility on Commons Boulevard near the orange-clad Home Depot in East Brainerd.

The franchise was founded in 2002 by Mr. Bartholomew, a Vols fullback in the late 1990s and a former Denver Bronco. Indianapolis Colts quarterback and former Vols star Peyton Manning is a co-owner of the East Brainerd center.

"Everyone knows Peyton has a home here and loves Chattanooga," Mr. Bartholomew said. "A lot of great athletes have come out of Chattanooga."

D1's site behind Lowe's and across from Home Depot is being prepared for construction, which will start soon on the 18,000-square-foot building, Mr. Bartholomew said. D1 should open in April, although he declined to say what the project will cost.

Hamilton County records show his company, WB Sports of Chattanooga LLC, paid \$500,000 last summer for the site.

Mr. Bartholomew, who is from Middle Tennessee, said he loved working out in the weight room and running while playing football. His company strives to provide the same training experience collegiate athletes receive, hence the name D1, short for Division I athletics, he said.

D1 will provide clients with strength, speed and agility training, and have nutritionists and therapists, said Ron Rickel, director of marketing.

The company has locations in Knoxville and Nashville which are co-owned by Mr. Manning, plus sites in Greeneville and Memphis in Tennessee and Little Rock, Ark., which are co-owned by other athletes.

"Character development is a huge aspect of what we do," Mr. Rickel said. "We'll have a word of the week, a quote of the day. Hopefully you're learning life lessons."

The training center will be for all types of athletes, Mr. Bartholomew said, from football to soccer to wrestlers to runners. An individual's monthly fee will be about \$100, and team memberships will receive a discount, he said. The company will offer a variety of service packages. D1 is currently hiring staff.

"It's for athletes wanting to go to the next level," Mr. Bartholomew said. "It'll be good for athletes wanting to get college scholarships or wanting to make the team."

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