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Student athletes struggle to juggle success

Yvette Martinez ■ Updated: 11/20/2008 9:20:24 PM ■ Posted: 11/20/2008 7:19:30 PM

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When you're young and experiencing success or admiration because of athletic achievements it can be hard to keep your feet on the ground and focused on future goals.

One local organization tries to help athletes juggle it all.

"While we're telling them to run faster, put their elbows back, we're also talking to them about effort, and responsibility and courage, perseverance things like that," D-1 Sports Training Strength and Speed Coach Rob Wilson said.

Coach Rob Wilson says recruiters are looking for more well rounded athletes with upstanding character. "Not just size, strength, speed but what kind of student is he what kind of relationship does he have with his mama."

But when you are training teenagers it can be tough to get them to take warnings about trouble seriously. "A lot of that has to do with the relationship between coach and athlete, if you can make that bridge you got a better shot," Wilson said.

Wilson says harsh guidelines and stiff penalties keep players on track. "Just look at Nick Saban. The epitomy of tough love and he's got the number one team in the country right now."

The D-1 coach also believes too many victories can lead to defeat in the real world. "The success can be too much too fast, because the maturity level is not there to meet it," Wilson said.

A local defense attorney says high profile failures are a harsh reality for athletes.

"Whenever you have somebody like an athlete who is going to get a lot of media attention, things like criminal charges are going to draw a lot of attention to them," Don Bosch said.

Bosch says young star athletes shouldn't expect a free pass to escape the long arm of the law. "There used to be a day, certainly, where being somewhat of privileged status could help cover things up or help minimize things. Really that day has passed, in large part due to the media and due to the attention paid on these things."

Coach Wilson has some words of encouragement for Austin-East athletes facing a judge for shoplifting allegations. "If I could talk to one of those kids what I would say is tomorrow's a new day,"



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