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**D1**  
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**D1 Gives Young Athletes the Edge in Performance and Attitude**

July 5 |

By Hugh G. Willett

July 12

In July 2002 former Denver Broncos football player Will Bartholomew opened the first D1 Sports Training Facility in Nashville.

July 27

From the very beginning Bartholomew had an idea for a training facility that would provide not only the latest in performance training techniques, but also an environment that would teach core values and accountability.

By 2004 Bartholomew's ideas had led him into a partnership with NBA player Shane Battier and NFL star Peyton Manning. Manning is especially interested in helping young athletes achieve their goals.

Within a year, D1 facilities had been opened in Memphis and Knoxville.

As a former professional athlete, Bartholomew had other unique ideas to contribute to the business plan. He began to incorporate into the D1 model the idea of conducting performance training and rehabilitative therapy in the same facility.

Several years later, the D1 team included the names of other prominent athletes and a new 25,000 square foot facility opened in Nashville. In 2007 another facility opened in Chattanooga.

As the D1 concept grew into areas such as corporate wellness, the organization began to attract corporate customers. Averitt Express opened an in-house corporate wellness center in their Cookeville offices.

Despite the expansion into corporate wellness and other areas of health and fitness, it's clear from watching the young athletes at the Knoxville facility that one of D1's core strengths is its youth training programs.

After winning the Knox County Youth Football championship last season, Coach Steve Brewer knew his players would be facing an even greater challenge when they moved up to play in a tougher division this season.

Pre-season conditioning made a big difference in the early part of last season when the Brewer's "Blue Machine" roared out to go undefeated in all its pre-season and first five regular season games.

It was the decision to take pre-seasoning conditioning to the next level that prompted Brewer to look into D1 Sports Training.

Many of the 10 to 11 year old boys on the team participated in basketball, hockey, baseball and other sports when not playing football, but the individual level of fitness generally varied among players at the start of the season.

One of the goals of pre-season conditioning during June and July is to prepare the young athletes for grueling 2-hour, three times a week full pad practice sessions beginning the first week of August.

"Young players can't learn if they're too tired to keep up with the instructional part of training," Brewer said.

Players who are not properly conditioned will not be paying as close attention during drills and instruction as those who are in good shape. If young athletes are all at the same level of conditioning, it's easier to get them to work as a team, Brewer said.

"We need the players to be in excellent physical shape at the start of the season so they are ready and able to give 100% during practice," he added.

Pre-season conditioning at the team level also builds team spirit. New players joining the team and the players who haven't practiced together for more than six months get the chance

to work out together, building camaraderie and cohesiveness.

The instructors at D1 are particularly attuned to the needs of young players, especially when it comes to attitude and performance. Each player is encouraged to give 100% during practice sessions that include a variety of conditioning and agility drills.

Players are also encouraged to take responsibility for keeping the team spirit alive by encouraging others on the team to perform at the highest level possible.

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