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5/25/13.....Well did you know this about Roddy McAlpine? '67
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How many times has a young athlete been told, “Just hang in there, your time will come”? Patience and hard work does appear to pay off for some. Unfortunately, some run out of time before that elusive seam of opportunity presents itself. And, some don’t stand ready to seize that moment in time, if and when it appears. Yet, some seem to have that ingrained patience and perspective, which helps them seize that moment. Those don’t spend time fretting about that fate or destiny discussion. They seize it and run for daylight. This will be a story about a guy, who is still humbled by an unexpected opportunity to contribute and exposure to the right coach for him, in the right year in his life. His exposure to that coach impacts him for life.

By the time Roddy had entered the 8th Grade at Nimitz, he had already attended 9 different schools. Three years of elementary school was spent in England. He then journeyed stateside to Virginia and Illinois before finding his home in San Antonio. You see, his Dad’s career was in the U.S. Navy, which had started as a Navy pilot prior to WWII.

During his time in England, he was not exposed to those great American pastimes of Baseball and Football. He was behind the experience curve on Baseball when he arrived in Virginia.....didn’t make the Little League team. Yet, his move to Illinois in the 6th Grade meant an even start with other kids in Basketball. He has already been exposed to Soccer in England. But, he seemed to find his sport in Basketball. In the 7th Grade he was on the 2nd team.....proud to be there, since Illinois is a Basketball state. You’ll learn that ‘2nd team’ will weave through his story for some time.

Now, it’s time for an undersized Roddy McAlpine to play with the big boys in San Antonio, Texas. He does make the Nimitz 8th Grade team, but finds himself on the 2nd team again. He moves over to Eisenhower and the same seat is reserved for him on the 9th Grade, 2nd team. A Pattern?

It's now his sophomore year and it's time to become a legit Lee Vol. He knows that he is up against tough competition. He hits the tryouts and makes the sophomore team, 2nd team. A Pattern?

It's a glimpse of good fortune when Roddy makes the Lee Varsity as a junior. But wait.....The '66 Class Football team was reaching into a great playoff season and some dual sport athletes would be late in returning to Basketball. Even though Roddy is still "riding the pines", he gets a break to show his style in the Corpus Christi Tournament in a "call off the bench, last minute steal." Defensive magician, Coach Roberts had a last minute steal in mind not a last minute foul. A big defensive mistake with Roberts could get one a first class ticket on the "knuckle head train". Roddy's train is headed for the Junior Varsity Depot.

Maybe a good break after all. Game experience matters and now our perennial 2nd teamer is spending a lot of game time on the JV court. One can swallow a bit of disappointment, if they are now standing up during the game versus sitting down as a uniformed spectator.

It's now the '67 Class' chance to make their mark in Lee lore. Some have the opportunity to move over to the new Churchill High School. Roddy is one of those and given a decision on being a Varsity starter..... he might have a better chance at Churchill. There is a wealth of Basketball talent returning at Lee. He is involved with Student Council and decides to stay and take his Basketball chances at Lee. And he is going to do this with a new coach, the legendary Jimmy Littleton.

That season begins with Roddy again lining up at practice with some great point guards in David Bohls and Damon Hollingsworth. David's unfortunate injury changes the lineup and Roddy is now in the starting five of the Lee Varsity after the first game. Like his teammates, he has already experienced Coach Roberts as a great defensive coach. Now Coach Littleton works with him on his shooting skills. Coach Littleton gives him the gift of confidence in his ability to contribute. Roddy will tell you that he was the 5th man, but he finally arrived to start alongside big time players like Bob Peek, Zane Shullanberger, Billy Black, and Steve Niles. Honored! That team of 12 seniors and 3 underclassmen went on to play the defending State Champs, Houston Memorial. In one

of the greatest State Championship games in Texas history, Lee beat Memorial 70-69. State Champs! Maybe that 'pattern' was actually Resolve. It certainly appears this is a big part of his story.

Why not 'walk on' at A&M? He did just that and he made the Aggie freshman team as a starting point guard. That Aggie team played the UT freshman team at Blossom Gym. Four of the players in that game were on that '67 Lee State Championship Team. Roddy, Andy Harris, and Steve Niles from A&M and Billy Black from the UT freshman team were on the court. A bit of NEISD history: the '67 team played in the 1st game ever played at the new Blossom Gym, which was later named after Coach Jimmy Littleton.

It was two more seasons as an Aggie player, before an injury in his senior year. He stayed in the program as a Student Assistant Coach. In his sophomore year, he was on the 11 man Aggie team that made it to the Sweet 16. A rare opportunity!

He graduated from A&M and was planning on accepting a coaching job, but he had an ROTC commitment to fulfill and he moved to UT to get his MBA. While getting his MBA, he was commissioned into the U.S. Air Force for a short tour.....as Vietnam was winding down and they did not need an officer with bad eyes.

He moved to Houston and entered the computer business, but that only lasted for two years before he went into the commercial real estate business. Today, he owns McAlpine Interests with his office located in Kingwood. His company is involved in commercial real estate in the Greater Houston Area and surrounding counties. His enthusiasm is even greater now his son, Adam, has joined him in the company.

That Championship team and season; that 70-69 game; his journey there; and the confidence Coach Littleton placed in him were a watershed moment in his life. It can happen!

He and his wife, Patsy, have seen athletics play a big role in the life of their children. All have been athletes: Adam played Soccer for UT Tyler; Ashley was a Basketball and Tennis player; Whitney ran Track and Cross Country for Rice.

The military brat in him must have given him the world travel bug. He

has traveled the world and has even taken his children out of school to back pack across Europe as a family. This is a grateful man.

A humble and authentic Roddy likes to say, “Nothing is as good as it seems, and nothing is as bad as it seems”. His journey and the people in his life might be exceptions to that. He might even tell you that the aforementioned watershed season was “really as good as it seems.”

ONE OF OURS, RODDY McALPINE, PERSPECTIVE AND GRATITUDE