

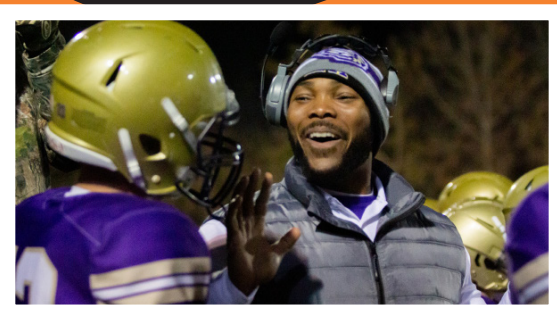
STRENGTH in the GAME

upper school football coach shares
unique job experience
by Sadie Gorley
editor Sophie Nabors



A REASON TO WORK Coach LeRoy Harris' impact goes beyond the classroom for sixth grader C'Drianna Mills. "My first time ever being in a real gym was after Coach Harris taught me how to use the weights and other equipment. I started to look forward to going to the YMCA and working out with my grandparents instead of just watching them," Mills said. photos provided by Coach LeRoy Harris

SMILING THROUGH THE PAIN Offensive lineman and senior Jarrett Mathews understands how to handle fatigue with a positive outlook. "Coach Harris' attitude was always 100%. On days that we had practice early in the mornings, he was loud and brought all the energy. There were plenty of times throughout the long season that we were tired, but he never gave us the chance to be lazy or feel sorry for ourselves. He pushed us to be our best, even when we didn't feel like it," Mathews said. photo Lexie Vinson



COACHING WITH CHARISMA Eighth grader Sam Godfrey receives a different form of entertainment from his wellness class. "Coach [LeRoy] Harris played music every day during our workouts to raise our energy. One time, he started singing along with an old microphone, which made his voice sound super grainy and scratchy. Wellness helped me get in shape, but it also gave me a break from regular classes and everyday duties," Godfrey said. photo Reesi Nesbitt

THE highs and lows of professional football gave Coach LeRoy Harris a special perspective of the game.

"The way the NFL fans and the crowds reacted was something I will remember for the rest of my life. On the other hand, final cuts were some of the worst parts of my year. I went through six weeks of camp with other players. I bled, sweat, and worked hard with them. By the end, half of the team was cut," Coach Harris said.

Coach Harris had an advantage in coaching due to his NFL experience.

"Playing professionally before I began coaching gave me knowledge that I didn't have when I played in high school. I learned how to strengthen myself and my mind, and I could show that to my middle school wellness students. Anyone watching can tell that football is a physical game, but I was surprised to see how much of a mental game football is. Techniques, plays, and studying film all went unnoticed during the game but were very important to the sport," Coach Harris said.

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