

WAKE'S PAUL SMASHES FUN INTERVIEW

Arnold Palmer, Tim Duncan, Brian Piccolo, Josh Howard, Chris Paul, Rusty LaRue, Ricky Proehl and a select group of other athletes make up a large portion of a list of Wake Forest greats. Wake senior tennis star Todd Paul can now add his name amongst that group.

Last week he became Wake Forest's all-time leader in singles wins.

Paul is officially the most decorated player in Wake Forest tennis history. The native of Stamford, Conn., is the first men's tennis player at Wake Forest to be named to the All-ACC team four straight years. In fact, Paul is only the eighth male and 13th student-athlete in Wake history to become a four-time first team All-ACC selection in any sport.

That's huge. I sat down with my favorite college tennis player earlier this week to get his thoughts on being the best tennis player in WFU history. We also talked about James Blake, Young Buck, the NCAA tournament and a few other things. Todd was fun to talk with. It's not hard to determine why so many people like him. Take a look at some of our interview from Tuesday afternoon.



Paul

Anthony: How is everything going, T-Peezie (Todd Paul)?

Todd: (Giggles.) Everything 'is going well.

Anthony: Definitely. You're officially one of the Wake Forest greats, man. (Both giggle.) How does it feel to hear me say that?

Todd: It feels unbelievable. I wasn't really that good my freshman year. I started to make my way up the lineup, and now I'm one of the best. It's unbelievable.

Anthony: How much has your game improved since your freshman year?

Todd: I think every part of my game has improved,



Wake photo
Todd Paul is already mentioned as one of the WFU greats after becoming the school's all-time singles wins leader. He's also a four-time all-conference selection.

especially my forehand. The biggest thing is now I know how to play a match. In juniors I just hit the ball and hoped the guy missed. I didn't really have a game plan. Now I know what I'm doing on the court.

Anthony: OK. You're presently ranked No. 7 in the nation. At one point, you were No. 1. How did you feel when you heard about that?

Todd: I was shocked, really. One of my teammates texted me and said I was one. There's two websites to check rankings, and I went to the one that didn't have it posted yet. I thought he was just joking, so I got really mad at him. (Both laugh.) I started giving him a hard time. Then, it came out later that day. (Smiles.) Yeah...

Anthony: Be honest with me. Did you think that was possible when you first got here?

Todd: No, I really didn't. That's just a long shot. People set their goals high. People want to be in the Top 10 or Top 20. To be ranked one is unbelievable.

Anthony: You just had

the ACC tennis championships this weekend. You guys lost to UVA again. What's up with them. Do they have your number?

Todd: They've killed us the last few times. We're always in the match. We

team. They are two in the country for a reason. They gave Georgia a run for their money, and they're undefeated. It's not good that we lost, but it let us know that we have to prepare hard for the tournament. If we won we

But my college matches were easy after playing with them.

Anthony: Do you see yourself on that (Davis Cup) team one day?

Todd: I hope so.

Anthony: You've got the shirt on.

Todd: (Smiles.) Yeah, I've got the shirt on. They hooked me up with this. It would be great to represent the country. I really never thought about that before this year. Now I know I'm pretty good. Hopefully I will keep improving. Who's to say what I can't do?

Anthony: What is the differences between surfaces in tennis?

Todd: It's the way the ball bounces. It's the movement. You have to know how to move on clay. You have to learn how to slide a certain way. I play better on hard surfaces simply because that's what I've seen during the four years I've been in college.

Anthony: I hear you. Um, what else is going on? Tell me what's new.

Todd: Uh, just trying to get through the last two weeks of school. I have all these term papers coming up. I've really been trying to enjoy these last few days.

I'm going to miss it.

Anthony: (Smiles.) Your grades are straight, right?

Todd: (Laughs.) Yeah, my grades are straight. I'm not close to not graduating. I am definitely graduating. I'm doing well right now.

Anthony: OK. What have you been listening to lately?

Todd: I really like that new Young Buck. I have been listening to him a lot. I also like that song by Huey, "Pop, Lock and Drop It."

Anthony: OK. Let me get your thoughts on the Virginia Tech incident.

Todd: It's unbelievable. We were class and the teacher just flipped on the news. I didn't know anything about it. All they were showing were clips from the guys' phone. All you could hear were gunshots. I asked the guy next to me what was going on. He told me... It was sad. That was really scary.

Anthony: Yeah. Let's go to something else. (Both laugh.) Who's going to win the NBA Finals?

Todd: I'm a big Kobe fan. My pick is the Lakers, but it's not looking too good. Either the Bulls or Houston will win.

Anthony: You're not going with J-Ho and Dallas?

Todd: Nah. The Warriors seem to have their number. They're shooting so well right now too.

Anthony: Do you have any other talents besides tennis?

Todd: I play a lot of video games. I'm a big gamer. I've been playing a lot of 2K7 on PS3.

Anthony: Let's finish with free association. Um, Todd Paul.

Todd: Funny.

Anthony: Wake Forest tennis.

Todd: (Pause.) Struggling right now, but you know...

Anthony: NCAA tournament.

Todd: Exciting.

Anthony: North Carolina (the state).

Todd: I love North Carolina.



almost got the doubles points. We were right there, but didn't get it. They always blow us out in two or three singles matches. All it takes is one day where all of us are just clicking. Hopefully, we will see them deep in the (NCAA) tournament.

Anthony: Is it going to be a good thing to head into the NCAA tournament with a loss, compared to entering that on a high note? Are you doubting anything right now?

Todd: We're not doubting anything because we know they're (UVA) a good

probably would've taken it easy and not worked as hard.

Anthony: OK. The Davis Cup was just here.

Todd: (Smiles.) Yeah.

Anthony: You got to play with James Blake. What was that like?

Todd: Well, I didn't actually get to hit with James. I know James and his coach, Brian. He actually used to be my coach. I got to play doubles with the Bryan brothers. That was unbelievable. It was amazing.

Anthony: How was that?

Todd: They killed us.

Organ Donors Save Lives in the Triad



Jukiya Hayes and family



Alexis McMillian



Syvil Burke
Duke University Medical Center

Jukiya's Story

Jukiya Hayes was five years old when she was fatally wounded by a drunk driver in High Point.

Although devastated by her death, Jukiya's family found comfort in donating her organs. "If Jukiya's heart beats in someone else, Jukiya is still going on in that person," said Jukiya's grandmother.

Jukiya's heart saved the life of a five month-old baby, one of her kidneys went to a five year-old child and her other kidney saved the life of a North Carolina woman. Through death, Jukiya gave life...and hope to others.

Alexis' Story

Organ donation wasn't on Alexis McMillian's mind when she went to the doctor for a routine physical. She was a young, healthy mother from the Triad with two children. But her world changed when she was told she needed a kidney transplant to live. The wait was the hardest part. Dialysis kept her alive for two years, but left her with little energy. Fortunately, Alexis did receive a transplant. Now she lives for two people - herself and her donor. With the generous gift of life, Alexis is now able to enjoy her family and her new life.

Donation and African Americans

More than 93,000 Americans are waiting for organ transplants. The need for organs grows each day, especially among minority communities. While 12% of the U.S. population is African American, 35% of those awaiting transplants are African American. Syvil Burke, of Duke University's Transplant and Dialysis Services said, "As I watch the number of African-Americans waiting for organs increase, just knowing that one donor can save up to eight lives gives me the energy to tell the good news. Organ donation saves lives."

To learn more or to become an organ donor, please visit

www.carolinadonorservices.org

or call 1-800-200-2672.

