'Cat Tracks

Linfield Magazine Staff

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Former Wildcat finds outlet for Wildcat fever

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Carlson created the site to provide a way for Wildcat fans to return to the “Catdome,” a long-held nickname for the Maxwell Field facility, and connect with the Wildcat community.

“No matter where you are, you can always get your fix of Linfield football,” said Carlson, a former business major and defensive end for the Wildcats. “I’m a huge fan of the program and wanted to find a way to give back to Linfield and specifically Linfield football.”

The site has developed a dedicated following — it averages 2,250 unique hits each month and is a useful supplement to the Linfield athletics website, according to Kelly Bird, director of sports information.

Carlson, who works for Synopsys Inc. in Hillsboro, was an honorable mention NAIA All-American in 1997 and still holds the Linfield single-season record for sacks with 18. He spends his off-hours reviewing historical tape, traveling with the team (he hasn’t missed a football game in three years), and creating the digital videos and web content. His involvement is more than just a hobby; it’s like a part-time job.

“Ryan’s love for Linfield and its athletic programs runs as deep as you will ever find,” Bird said. “His main motivation for staying involved is not about personal glory or a pat on the back, but about helping perpetuate the ideals and lasting success of the program that he once competed in.”

Carlson gets feedback on his work from wife, Kelly (Bradstreet) ’00, a teacher at McMinnville High School and former Linfield basketball player. Carlson recently added a second site, catdomehoops.com, for Linfield basketball fans.

“I use Kelly as a sounding board,” he said. “She always has outstanding suggestions on music and content. When I can get her to say ‘wow,’ I know that I have a winner.”

Devoted fans, the couple has a “Linfield” room in their home. Their daylight basement contains a “truckload of Linfield fanfare,” including both Ryan’s and Kelly’s jerseys and a display of football media guides, which Carlson references while working on the sites.

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“Linfield is the reason I am where I am today,” Bird said. “As a former student, Ryan has outstanding suggestions on music and content. When I can get her to say ‘wow,’ I know that I have a winner.”

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Will miss about Linfield: “The beautiful campus and all the great people who work here.”

Balancing sports and academics: “It was hard to do one but I learned to balance my time on and off the field by using my time off the field to study in the library or with other students in class. I may not have a lot of free time during the season but I am willing to sacrifice that time to continue to better myself in school and athletics.”

Career goals: “To find a job that I love going to every day. I enjoy sports, so it would be nice to be able to do coaching on the side.”

“I enjoy cooking and being outside, so someday I would like to have my own business, whether it be a breakfast restaurant or a landscape company.”

“Toby Robillard ’76, who earned five varsity letters in track & field and football. More than 30 years after his graduation, Robillard continues to hold the Linfield record in the shot put and ranks sixth all-time in total tackles. He was a member of two NAIA national championship teams.”

Hall of Fame ’08

Six former athletes and two longtime supporters have been selected as part of the 11th class of inductees to be enshrined into the Linfield Athletics Hall of Fame.

The group is slated for induction on Nov. 8 at the annual AT&T Wireless Hall of Fame banquet, which follows that afternoon’s Linfield-Western Oregon football game. The Hall of Fame class of 2008 includes:

• Two-time football All-American Tony Ayl Yet ’65, a starter on the Caniella Bowl team and member of three Northwest Conference championship teams.
• Dan Beeson ’70, three-time NWC basketball all-star and the school’s third-leading all-time rebounder. Beeson was a member of four straight NAIA national tournament teams.
• Two-time football All-American Floyd Halvorsen ’86, who holds the Linfield single-season record for most unassisted tackles and ranks fourth all-time in total tackles. He was a member of two NAIA national championship teams.
• Toby Robillard ’76, who earned five varsity letters in track & field and football. More than 30 years after his graduation, Robillard continues to hold the Linfield record in the shot put and ranks sixth all-time in the discus.
• The late Kyle Tarpenning ’83, who earned seven varsity letters in football and track & field. A kicker and defensive back, Tarpenning led the football team in scoring three straight seasons, and also captured the 1983 NWC pole vault title.
• Basketball and baseball standout Bill Wallin ’63, who earned All-America honors in each sport and was a member of four NWC championship teams. Wallin went on to an accomplished career as a base-
ball, basketball and football official.
• Jim Wright and Jim Reimann, former missile and athletic venues.

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