

48. Sonny Cumbie: Touchdowns and Tenets

Teddy Allen

Hey everybody, thanks for joining us. This is Teddy Allen appreciate you being a part of beyond 1894 Welcome to summertime in Louisiana where it's a little bit sultry out there but summertime means optimism because that means fall is not far behind and Fall means football. So along those lines today, we're lucky to have Sonny Cumbie. Sonny, welcome and thanks for taking time for us.

Sonny Cumbie

Thanks Teddy. I appreciate you having me on

Teddy Allen

Sonny would be the new head football coach since December ish here at Louisiana Tech is first seasons coming up. They're going to play Missouri before you know it. We'll get to that but first of all sunny you're a country guy. You seem to fit in well in rust and tell us about summertime. In Snyder, Texas for little bitty Sonny Cumbie.

Sonny Cumbie

Yeah, summertime in Snyder, Texas was probably similar to what it is for a lot of the youth here in Ruston, a lot of literally baseball, a lot of playing football in the outfield, whenever your game wasn't being played, you stayed at the ballpark all night, you chase down foul balls because you got a free snow cone. Occasionally you would hang around the back of the concession stand at the end. Now my six year old actually calls him and I do not advocate for this guy. But he somehow he calls him concussion stance, okay, and so we're not going to go there. But we'd hang around the back door of the concession stand because all the old hot dogs, they didn't say oh, they would give to you for free. So a lot of baseball and then I we never took a lot of family vacations. We usually just spent the summer working doing some, you know, building a fence. You know, cleaning out a ditch all those things that are a lot of fun.

Teddy Allen

That's fun. Yeah. Your folks were in what business?

Sonny Cumbie

My parents both were, my father worked in the oilfield still does, and as his whole life since he graduated high school, and worked his way up, you know, started driving a truck and has continued to just work his way up. And it's like coaching I found in visiting with my father about the oilfield and it's like everybody knows everybody. And it's really it's really it's the connections and he knows he's kind of the old school and the oil and gas oil and gas industry in terms of there's a lot of new school that's kind of coming out and they this is their new ideas on how to get jobs done. And then when sometimes those don't work then they call my dad I'm like alright, well how do we really get the job done. And then he

comes in and he gets it down and then my mom, she works some in the oilfield but she had three boys so she was a full time mom and then they all they all they have a lot of animals while and they love you know, horses and cattle and different things like that. And then now they're they're baling a lot of hay right now. So they're constantly needing something to do for you know, they're hard workers.

Teddy Allen

Well, I know you love your job, you love ball, and we're gonna get to that but but sometimes in the middle of season when things start dragging, and maybe it's not going like do you just like man, I just I just wish I was it's not a Texas for like two days.

Sonny Cumbie

Not Not really. I love growing up there. But absolutely. The president of where I'm at So where were you out on the Frito pie? Oh, I love real pie that see he tell you that you ask that every chance I get when I'm watching a high school game on Friday nights if I'm out on the road. That's the number one go to is let's see what county Frito Pie this concession stand has this concussion stand the concert Yeah, and I'm really disappointed if they have the nacho cheese. I want the grated cheese. Gotta have Yeah, it's a big difference. I you one thing here Teddy. Do you guys put mustard on your Frito pie? I do not. Okay, y'all. Yeah. And West Texas. You put mustard on about everything. So it's pretty good on the Frito Pie.

Teddy Allen

Y'all are big. Y'all a big time. Yeah. I speak in a big time. We got football season coming up. You've been with your guys during the spring. And we haven't. And I think everybody all of us, Lee's been trying to leave you alone. Just seeing figure out where to buy milk and get bananas and you know, how to get to the ballpark. But now's the time to ask and we'll be hanging around you more here in the next few months. Why should fans have cause for optimism about the 2022 Football Bulldog?

Sonny Cumbie

I think the number one reason for optimism for our players is is it starts with our talent. I think we do have a healthy dose of talent in terms of our offensive skill, defensive skill up front on the defensive line. You know, we have some guys that are highly talented. I think the other thing is just the work ethic and the thing, the way of the approach our players have taken since we've been here in terms of being coachable of taking coaching. Football is very important to them. And I think they've bonded together really well. And I think so you have a healthy dose of talent, you have to work extremely hard, which our players are doing right now. And that's what everyone everyone that's playing college football is doing the same thing right now. But also with built in within that how are we separating ourselves things that we're doing from a little difference, different standpoint that the other people may not be willing to do and so that's what the challenge is for our players. We had a really successful spring. We've got to play well at quarterback and we've got you know two guys that we feel pretty good about that are older and Parker McNeil and Matthew downing Landry, Lydia young freshman from Calvary Baptist had a good spring it was good for him to be here and and learn the offense and learn what it's like to go about just a college spring and so that position is always critical. But but I think number one, to answer your question, we do have good amount of talent. And we have a good amount of talent that loves to practice and loves to work. And so we're trying to harness all that in the right direction and play with a

lot of discipline, protect the football, all those things that when you get into it on offense, and defense, it's do you do you turn the ball over on offense? And then do you take it away? Are you good on third downs? Or do you keep the offense off the field on third downs? And did you score touchdowns in the red zone, and then who wins the battle, the explosive play. So really, those are the four things that you look at. And we'll have plenty of time to dissect all that. But I think the optimism is our kids have a ton of energy and a ton of talent. And a ton of the number one thing it takes for anything is want to and right now, the majority of those guys have shown a lot of want to to be a good football player and a good team.

Teddy Allen

And wanting to practice makes makes a big difference. You went a lot of games on Tuesday and Wednesday. 2573631 is the number to call for tickets, you can go to LA tech sports.com/tickets You can get season tickets to the job be rockin this fall. Looking forward to the opener at Missouri. That'll be on a Thursday night, September, the first and then the Bulldogs will be back at the Joe okay. 2573631. You mentioned the guys liking to be together. You're a baseball guy. Correct. And you would probably coach in that if you were in college football. And the baseball team this year, Lane Burroughs and his crew that was one thing special about them was they really did all enjoy being together, we kind of want a bad apple in the bunch. Tell us how much of a difference that makes the chemistry in your locker room.

Sonny Cumbie

Today after going through it and observing other sports. I think I'm willing to coach golf.

Teddy Allen

Because that was many people yelling at you. Yeah, no.

Sonny Cumbie

and Coach Terry, he does a great job here. And, you know, he is he's he's been awesome and very welcoming to me. And but now coach burrows and his team, the Diamond Dogs, you know, they were so much fun to watch, because you saw that, you know, you sat here and said this right across from me about how they enjoy being around each other. Well, if you just watch them, and you watch how they interact, and you watch how they compete, you didn't you wouldn't have to say that. I mean, you pick up on that they seem like they were a group probably that really had a lot of joy, playing with each other a lot of joy and showing up to the ballpark every day and, and doing the little things of being a really good baseball player that probably aren't as as glamorous or aren't as fun. And it's no different in football. And so, you know, I think that's it's really something that we talked to our players about. We showed them the video of when they were in the Conference USA championship, and they beat us yet UTSA and the game before when they had to walk off. So back to back walk offs to win the Conference USA championship and the celebration, because that's what you see at the end is a celebration. And that's what it should look like at the end of your season. But what you don't see is is the showing up right now in the summer, and showing up in the weight room and showing up on the practice field. And those are all the little things that you check in the boxes that allow those opportunities to happen. And they seize that opportunity. And they made the most of it. And I think that is really the underlying

component to a lot of teams success is their ability to connect to one another, and to really have joy being around each other on a daily basis.

Teddy Allen

A Spec, in my experience, when that shows up the most is not necessarily when things are good. But when they're getting kind of dicey during a game. And you change plans is where the brother and what's happened like this summer somehow that clicks into good teams heads and they overcome closeness and friendships in terms of team sports, togetherness, have you ever experienced that outside of precisely lock it isn't ball and then how much of a role did that play in your decision to make this a career,

Sonny Cumbie

it's hard, it's really hard to simulate that for me to think back of outside of football and outside of a coaching staff or outside of a team minus your immediate family. closeness and it's just, I think sometimes we live in coaching and in an athletics, it's probably a little bit abnormal life, that we don't realize that it's abnormal, because it's just something that you've always done in terms of the hours in terms of the time of the time that you're spending with, with you know, you're in a room like this for approximately in season. So you approximately three days a week, you're in a room like this for, you know, probably five or six hours where you're just sitting around a room watching a screen. And so you're gonna get to know somebody really well and and also you like you said that the times where we get on each other's nerves. And then and then we get to get short tempered with each other and we get impatient with each other. But as coaches, our our cohesiveness and our chemistry allows our team to have that. And so from the from the standpoint of the closeness of a team and that togetherness, I was very fortunate and last year for the last five weeks at Texas Tech to be a part of something that for me, I think is is is probably a pretty special moment in a coaching career because you were part of a group of men who really decided like we're We're all fired. And we're all going to just bond together and have an environment and provide an environment as best as we can for these players to enjoy these last five weeks, and the players did the same thing, and you ended up winning a bowl game against, you know, against Mississippi State and, you know, fortunate to be a part of a 12 in one Peach Bowl championship team that probably should have been in the playoffs the first year in 2014 TCU. And I can say the, the elation and the joy that you experience after the Liberty Bowl when you're seven and five is probably our seventh and sixth is just as much as when you were 12 and one

Teddy Allen

so when all that went down at Texas Tech just to catch everybody up back last December so December was just we're playing with house money and let's rock and roll and see what happens.

Sonny Cumbie

Well, you know, it was a unique situation and, and, and I've been I was at Texas Tech for for as a GE under Mike Leach, I saw Mike leach get fired. I saw Tommy Tuberville get hired, I was on the staff when Tommy Tuberville left, I was on the staff when Kliff Kingsbury got hired, I was at TCU when Kliff Kingsbury gets let go, then I come back to Texas Tech Under Matt wells. And so I've been a part of all of those head coaches over the last ever how many years that is, and so a unique perspective. And so when when you went through that, you know, it's just I told our players, the situation and the climate,

you know, was was one of kind of doom and gloom for a while. And so you just tell them like, listen, like the the worst thing is already happened all of us, right, we all got fired. So, I mean, there's no reason for us, like we're all going to have, we're all going to be we're all gonna have jobs, you know, we're all a lot better off than we should be, you're going to have a great coach that's going to come in and take care of you guys and care for you. So let's not walk around on eggshells and think what was me, let's just go out, let's enjoy these last five or six weeks, let's make the most of this situation and this opportunity. And unfortunately, we had a group of coaches who who believe that and did that and then it trickled down and we had a group of strong leadership and a trunk togetherness of our seniors that you know, in this era there was a lot of guys on that team that chose to come back for their fifth or sixth year when in college football it's so easy to say hey, you know what, the waters a little bit colder here than I thought so I'm gonna go down the road and see if they got you know the temperatures a little better to my liking and and they didn't do that and so that that part was fun. And but yeah, it was it was a you know, so many lessons learned in this that last season and and you know, so many experiences in that

Teddy Allen

just to break stride for a second you mentioned what an abnormal kind of life it can be. Is it neat being able to wear shorts almost every day to work?

Sonny Cumbie

Well, Teddy there it's only during the summer that we wear shorts. Alright during fall and spring we got business casual, but yes, it is in the afternoon to put our practice shorts on and go out on the field and run around. You know, it's like our two and a half hours two hours of recess.

Teddy Allen

Okay, some irate fan my holler at you every now and then but at least by God, I get to wear shorts all July. What is your dad's first and what is what do they call your dad? Okay, but I'm so new was a double name. Bobby Jack. He can't wear shorts into the oil field. I imagine.

Sonny Cumbie

he didn't wear shorts. I don't think until about you know, 10 or 15 years ago. I never saw him wear shorts. He's always working and have the pants on.

Teddy Allen

Bobby Jack. So I hope he's coming to games. He likes football. I think he'll be coming. Are you mentioned about some guys go into where the water is better, where they perceive it to be better. And you walked on at Tech from Snyder. In 2000, you did not start you were a walk on. But as a senior you lead the country in passing 40 742 yards and total offense 4575. And I should have these numbers memorized Sunny 32 TDs. What can you use from that experience? Do you ever use that to tell a kid about not giving up and just a little bit about what your journey might have been like that first day, and everybody's dressing over here. And you might have been dressing over there in the auxiliary locker room? I don't know in five years later, you're leading the guys to a bowl game?

Sonny Cumbie

Well, there's two lessons that have really derived from that experience that are on the top of my lessons to share list or lessons that have developed are helped form my coaching philosophy is now and the first one is, is as a fifth string walk on that nobody paid attention to for about three years, you know, coaches didn't really talk to nobody really paid much attention to. And then five years later, you're the starting quarterback and all of that flips. And so I remember and I just remember how that felt. And then I just want our coaches and one of the main things that I want to share with our coaches. And one of the main things that I share with families and with our players is your value has nothing to do with whether you're the fifth string start scholarship kicker or you're the first string walk on linebacker, if you're on scholarship and you're playing if you're on a walk on and you're not playing like you're going to be valued because you're part of our program and you're going to be cared for and appreciated because of who you are as a person, and it does not have anything to do with whether you're playing or not. And so that is really one of the things that I talk a lot about with our coaches is I want us to value people for who they are, and not because they may be the starter walk on and the other one. The other lesson I share with players and share with kids that were recruiting is when you get to college, it's going to be really hard. When you get to college, you're gonna meet resistance, and I met resistance after the first fall, I called a coach from Tarleton State. I said, Hey, you guys still got that \$3,000 scholarship that you offered me? And he said, Well, no, actually, we gave that to somebody else. It's not still there. And so I said, Well, I guess I can't go to Tarleton State because the road is hard here. And I just stuck it out. And my point being is everybody meets resistance. And then what do you do once you meet resistance, and fortunately for me, there was a door that was closed. And then I just continued to really anchor your feet in and just to work and my end goal, Teddy was I wanted to coach and my end goal was like, I'm going to do everything in my power to try to play if it works out great. If it doesn't work out, I'm going to hopefully have enough knowledge base of this offense that I could go on and coach it one day and, and I coach because of how I was coached when I was in high school. Fortunately for me, my experiences with coaches were always for the most part positive. And they were coached by men that loved to coach that love to teach that love the sport. They were leading us in and they led us very well. And so it's kind of one of those things where your high school, you know, freshman, sophomore, junior, and you're like, Man, this looks pretty cool. What he's doing. I want to do that one day and, and Sammy ball. His son, David ball was my high school football coach. Wow. And so I'm a little insane Sammy ball. That's right. Yeah. So he lives in rotation. And Sammy did and he would come to Snyder and play the nine hole golf course there. The junior college, they're in town. And he played, you know, is always interesting, because David his son, we never, we never really conversed much about his father. And then and then it was when he got inducted into the Hall of Fame at TCU. And I was coaching at TCU. David has his son and my high school coach came up to me and, and he's like, you know, sonny, he's like, I was watching some old film on my dad. He was a pretty good player Whitney. Yeah, I think you pretty good.

Teddy Allen

If you've never heard of Sammy ball, do yourself a favor and go look him up. You talk about all school and that's back when you you know, after the game was over, you folded your helmet up and put it in your back pocket and walked home. He was a bonafide stud. Yes, he was slinging Sammy ball is a neat story. Well, speaking of adversity, and all this can sound cliché, unless you've lived it. And you know, it's not and that's like the tenants of tech, you know, hope when you're a walk on or trying to

excellence, confidence, commitment, how do you try to work those things and in the tech culture, and until your student athletes when your coach and how does that affect how you handle each kid,

Sonny Cumbie

you know, when I first got here, President Guice, he presented me with a tenants of tech, medallion. And and when you go around, and you read all of them, it's like, oh my gosh, that's like the that's what you would want as a program foundation of an obviously that's what it is here as a school attendance attack. And so you can just go down every one of them and, and present, you know, a strong case for your players. And, you know, the thing that I we loyalty is actually one of the first things that we talk about to our players. And we try to define that to our players in terms of this is what loyalty means to us at Louisiana Tech, football. This is how we can show our loyalty to each other how we can show our loyalty to the city of Ruston. How do we show our loyalty to the University of Louisiana Tech and on campus? How are we loyal to the student body? And so we try to define that and then how we do that on a day to day basis. So loyalty is very important to us. And we boil it down. You know, there's there's a lot of them on, you know, there's, I believe there's there's 12, right 12 tenants of tech. And so with loyalty, we tried it with if we say loyalty our players should say it's about what doing loyalty is about doing loyalty is about doing. And we have these definitions, but it's to snapshot it into one word. So they know that, hey, it's more about what I do, then then then what I can say, in terms of loyalty, I think hope is a huge one, I think hope is so critical for our student athletes. You know, I think sometimes it's twofold. And it goes pretty deep of like, where do you place your hope? What is your hope and ultimately, and then also our student athletes have the ability in a small way to inflect hope from where they're coming from, to people who follow them to people that are in their family. And so that is something for me that is a big word in terms of the hope that we provide others that they provide and then you know, confidence you you you see it and you try to instill it all the time of have confidence in belief in people believing in themselves. And you know, I was fortunate I had a coach that misses the most basic rudimentary description, I drew my confidence off of my work ethic and my preparation. I probably maybe sold myself a little short in terms of my belief in my abilities. But I worked really hard, prepared, worked, prepared. And this coach said, Hey, he said, Hey said, Cumbie, he's like, Have You Ever Have you ever read the book, The little train that could say, well, yeah, did I think I can't, I think I can't, I think I can't. He was like, You need to remember that. And so I mean, it's something that's simple, but and that might not strike a chord with others, but it struck a chord with me, he's cliché to you live. And exactly it is and, and the confidence, I think the number one thing that, that as a coach, you want to have a player, a student athlete, whoever's working in your office, whoever is in your office to have the confidence that they believe in themselves based upon their worth their worth, you know, then what they can give to this world, I tell our players all the time, if you pin yourself into the box, where all you want to provide to this campus, all you want to provide in this world is how far you can punt the ball, then you're selling yourself well short, because you guys have so much more to give. And so in terms of confidence, and believing in one another, you know, integrity, I think that's just for us, it's how you live your day to day life and the choices that you make. And so there's, there's, there's the 12 tenants of tech are, are really interwoven into what I believe we have them in our, in our, in our facility, on on our wall for our players and, and so loyalty is the first one that we've really tackled. And we've really dove into in terms of we're going to be about this. And I think it's it's neat because from a forward thinking standpoint, you always have to, you always have to kind of evolve and you know, Alright, once we get loyalty, and then we've gone into loyalty, connection, consistency and service, you

know, by then but by that we also will pull more from the tenants of tech every year and master those as well.

Teddy Allen

Well, it's always wonderful to hear coaches talk about you know, bubble screen and a gap and cover too and everything but once she leaves school for the majority of us, we're not going to be asked upon a return anything so it's it's wonderful to know that as many young man student athletes as y'all and in other sports student athlete females, that tech is preparing them for when the ballgames are over. I like Sonny Cumbie because he throwaways brushing calm years ago, as did our hair goes his own way. And he was a walk on who ended up starting as a senior because he stuck it out. Y'all were underdog at Texas Tech and you play top five Cal in the Holiday Bowl. Sonny was 39 of 65 and 72 yards and three TDs as y'all dough popped the cow bears I know that's a happy memory for you. Speaking to Texas Tech Cooper Fouts is the quote unquote, one of the coaches at with line in the gang over the love shack and it's been a joy get to know him this year. He was a catcher when you were a quarterback. Did y'all meet at Tech?

Sonny Cumbie

We did. Yeah, we had a lot of interactions, positive interactions in the weight room. He was in there. He was in there getting swole I mean, he was in there, like, like, you know, under the squat rack and, and so and then when I left Texas Tech, I would come back in the offseason and I would train with the strength conditioning coach that train the baseball team. And so I had a lot of interactions with those guys down in the bubble and, and knew Cooper well from the Texas Tech time and so was really excited. And I had followed him when when he had gone to no he was at Purdue before he came here. And so we knew he was at Purdue and then solid came here Louisiana Tech and so I've had a chance to connect with him some and it's been great. And you know, there's it's so it's so interesting, you know, with Cooper, with Brooke you know with Talvin myself, I know the Texas Tech connections in terms of the coaching staffs here at Louisiana Tech it's it's a small world.

Teddy Allen

It is small all the time Cooper was a catcher. They were y'all had a really good baseball team went to the NCAA tournament back in oh four when you were either junior or senior another one of your coaches your coaches Jake brown we should congratulate him co offensive coordinator and wide receivers coach he and Brittany just had a little boy child correct Yeah, Jackson Jackson is a little brother to Harper That's right. That's right. So I hope he gave Jake a few hours off and it took him a whole day but good for them.

Sonny Cumbie

well you know Teddy, you're you got a good memory. I want to quiz you at some point on our coaching staff and all the kids and who they belong to.

Teddy Allen

I have a room temperature IQ but they try to prepare and do try to work

Sonny Cumbie

thing is true today. We just saw Jake at the facility and I told him I said I said you know what? I was like you better go home and whatever you have to do here it's not that important and and so but now Britney Britney and Jake are are great friends of ours and really excited that they've they've got their second child and he's a good football coach and a good person and Brittany is awesome. She works here on campus as well

Teddy Allen

Okay, Jackson I think they're gonna spell it J-A-X-S-O-N

Sonny Cumbie

Correct, S-O-N. Yeah.

Teddy Allen

Okay, so Jaxson, future Bulldog. Your wife's Tamra your little boys are Grey and Hayes. How old is Grey now? Nine? Okay, yeah. And of course you got two cats. Correct?

Sonny Cumbie

Yeah, they made the move.

Teddy Allen

Got speaking of herding cats. You got Bobby Anderson, I met Bobby Anderson. At the DAC the first of this month. She's a total joy. And she's your mother in law, correct? And she said you were the world's greatest son in law. So I thought if there's any guys listed, how can we put pressure on all Yeah, how would you coach us up to be good son-in-law

Sonny Cumbie

Just being a good listener. Being a good listener, I think is probably the number one thing and then being patient and and just being available when you can be available, which you know, for me challenges that at some point. Yeah, yeah. But very fortunate to have my mother in law and father in law, they moved here to Ruston and, and so they they're here and and they're very loving and they've taken good care of us. But I think that they're really just here, you know more so for gray. And that's kind of

Teddy Allen

I know, they're crazy. Especially about their daughter Tamra but Grey and Hayes where the Yeah, that's what made him want to come here and pursue full scholarships. Well, we'll wrap this up in a second. But let's talk a little bit more football. Nathan Young has a hard job. He is offensive line coach. And I say it because last year the tackles kept getting hurt. It's just and people just don't understand that little unit. Just the littlest thing goes wrong. And it's just dominoes. And there's some wonderful student athletes that play on the offensive line, really bright kids and just great to be around. What is that unit looking like?

Sonny Cumbie

Yeah, Coach Young has done a really good job he and Coach Barrett, Tye Barrett, who came on board with this is this isn't a line coach to help Nathan, have done a good job of unifying that group. I think that group is the talented group. I think it tackles at times last year, they may be a little bit younger and and forced into some action. But yeah, I think those guys across the board, you know, improve this spring, they took a step in the right direction. The depth that tackle I think is something that we have to continue to develop. And then interior you have to strong leaders in a dolphin and Josh moat that I think will provide the anchor of that group. And then bringing along Dakota white, you know, Byron, he played a right tackle and play the left tackles bounce around, and then a right guard, Isaac Ellis and Jaron Gilbert are really in a battle for that right guard spot. And then we've got a lot of younger guys that have had good springs. And, you know, I think the offensive line and defensive line are the key to your team. And that's the way that you're going to win football games, at least consistently. You're going to win in the trenches up front, do you control the line of scrimmage? Do you live in the backfield tackles for losses from that standpoint on the defensive line, and so I think that our offensive line is in a really good spot. Coach Young is a very good teacher, and he's a good fixer, you know, and troubleshooter which all coaches have to be you know, qualified troubleshooter to be a coach but he's good at that and so I'm I'm encouraged by how they finished in the spring, the summer work that they're putting in right now and then I think you said it the offensive lines closeness in that there there are like a group within themselves within the team and they have to move together and and so looking forward to seeing how they do in fall camp and moving forward this season. Yeah, it's

Teddy Allen

just a hard job they have and we're rooting for him Let him know in the skill guys get more pub if we've got just about three or four more minutes. If you go down the roster number four is BJ Williamson. And number five is Griffin Hebert number six is Smoke Harris number seven's Jaiden Cole what's a really good really good players and you could keep going down the list but what are some emerging names that we have are not aware of that will probably become familiar with this fall we were

Sonny Cumbie

thinking about you guys Teddy with nerd jersey numbers you know and so we're gonna move Trey Harris to number three that works now you got Trey at number three and then you can just add on the list there we wanted to make it easier for spotting boards. And then also for media relations. We need all the help we can get. So you know I think Trey was a is a receiver and it's made plays here in the past I think he is is if he stays healthy he has the chance to emerge and really be a difference maker for us on offense. You know Griffin Hebert I think he's really embraced the the tight end position he's added way even and he's done a really nice job through the spring on defense where she Laos, Rashid Laos really emerged in the mid to late spring and has continued to really take off as a name that you know you may not have heard of a ton but is has done a great job this summer. So Rasheed Lyles, you know Keevy Rose had an excellent spring is is very difficult to block inside and and I think what Coach Bower does up front in terms of his line movements I think will really help those guys create even more tackles for loss. And I think the guy that's been, you know, is when we talk about consistency on our program, you know, a lot of the things that we talk about their their non football related, you know, doesn't have anything to do with football related, but it does. You know that if that makes sense. And Cedric Woods is a guy that right now, you know, fits that mode of consistency. He's been been very, very eager to learn. And you know, he's been a very coachable player and I know he played last year

but said, Woods is really had a nice spring and summer. And so those are the names of guys that were here on the team last year, that you're gonna look out there, I hope this fall and see you make plays and be like, wow, you know, where did that guy come from, and, you know, he was here and, and so those, and there's, there's several others that are out there. And then we also, you know, we've added some players, you know, from the, from the time spring ended. And part of that is just the necessity of, of, if you have 85 scholarships, which they give us, we break it up with 41 on defense 41 on offense, which is 82. And then you got three specialists, which gives you 85. And so our allocation on defense was we had 32 of our 41. Guys, so we were non scholarship short on defense. And, and so there have been a few guys that have, have have, we've lost and so now you're 30 And so you're 11 scholarships short. And so we really needed to bolster our ranks on defense and not bolster on with just people but just with quality people, and that are that are good players that we can hopefully develop here and be here because we don't lose any seniors on the roster on defense. I know there's some guys that are usually played so but now we those are the main guys, you know, so Rasheed Lyles, Keevy Rose, Griffin Hebert and Trey Harris.

Teddy Allen

latechsports.com/tickets or 257-3631. For season tickets. We're really looking forward to coach you haven't lost the game yet, which is awesome. We could tell from the Liberty Bowl that you had a blast. That game is acting head coach, it was a lot of fun to watch. So it can't wait to watch that in the Joe, have you to close this out? Or getting close to the end? Have you got Are you getting more comfortable with being the head coach in stuff that doesn't have hardly anything to do with football?

Sonny Cumbie

Yeah, I have. I mean, it's always, you know, I've said this before, it's like being a husband or a father, you can read all you want, you can probably listen to some really neat and informative podcast or watch them, you don't really know until you do it. And so it constantly, there's things that come across your desk all the time. And it's just time management of how you organize it and how you go about attacking those tasks. And, and I really think that if we can continue to push the season back because I like being on the feet and it's been fixed. We're gonna stay on the feet as long as possible. But you know, it's a lot of fun coaching when you're winning. And you said it earlier on. Coaching really matters whenever you're going through those momentums that are going against you. And so how we handle those will be very important as coaches but it's been great being here. I've enjoyed Ruston, I've enjoyed Louisiana Tech, the campus we had a faculty day, when we were going through spring practice had a lot of faculty representation at our practice. And we'll continue to do that our players we want them to be active and we want them to be and I stole this from from Sam speed on campus, but we want our players to be university citizens and we want them to be guys on cross campus that are approachable guys that are respectful guys that are showing up and doing what they need to do in class. And so that's important to us. And so it's been great and we look forward to win a lot of games and look forward to having a lot of success and and continuing on the tradition that really everyone before us has built this program in terms of the name recognition and the brand and the tradition of success that Louisiana Tech has had.

Teddy Allen

Well it's been a pleasure spending time with you we want to take away from this a couple things. One is that we want to teach our students teach our student athletes and all of us come into contact with from now now and again that they have value and the life's difficult it's going to be it's going to be hard John Wang said the movie life is hard it's hard if you're stupid. So let's try to coach ourselves up and encourage each other because it can be a jungle out there. But ball sure is fun. I'm glad you're here you obviously are having a you know a ball and we can't wait for the season start please tell Miss Miss Bobby Anderson we said hi and it's Bobby jack right?

Sonny Cumbie

Yes, my father. My mother's Gwen.

Teddy Allen

Can't wait to meet 'em and our best to Grey and Hayes and especially to Tamra. anything else you got for the fans before we let you go?

Sonny Cumbie

Well I just have enjoyed this time with you Teddy and and the thing that we always always like to just whenever you can is is the support for our student athletes and all sports is is showing up and cheering for them and they put in a lot of time and effort much like everyone in this community probably does and their profession and their job and and they it means a lot to our players whenever there's support there to support them. And ultimately you may get mad at me you may get mad at Apple They call you may get mad at something that a coach does. But at the end of the day our players they do a lot for this, this sport and and they're and they're there. They're afforded a great opportunity here at Louisiana Tech and I cannot wait to see the city of Ruston and Louisiana Tech campus support our players and we want to return that support to them

Teddy Allen

as well. Yeah, just please remember what and you're a fan Sonny Cumbie, I'll tell ya, is a fan of ball he will be he'll show up at a scrap and be cheering he keeps up I guarantee and you may follow him on Twitter. That's a joy. But please remember what your student athletes are doing is not easy. What they're trying to do is terribly difficult. college ball is a bit of a different ballgame though the team has scholarship players too and they're trying hard. So let's encourage and let's ever loyal be and until we get to be together again at the ballpark. Thanks for your time till next time see you.

Gavin Kelly

Thank you for listening to beyond 1894. Please subscribe and rate us wherever you listen to podcasts. For more information about this episode, check out our show notes beyond 1894 is produced by Louisiana Tech University's Office of University Communications