



# Douglas County Post-Gazette

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## 10A: Mt. Michael holds on for win over Elkhorn High

# Rolling With the Tide

## OrthoNebraska doctor looks back on early career with Alabama

By Lance Lawton

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ELKHORN—As Alabama won another college football national championship on Monday night, one Omaha doctor reflected back on his time with the Crimson Tide as an up-and-coming orthopedic surgeon.

“I’ve always enjoyed watching Alabama play,” said Dr. Scott Reynolds, who originally hails from Lexington but now lives in Elkhorn with his wife and three boys. “However, when my kids were born in both Alabama and Wisconsin, they admired the mascot and the teams. So, when we came back to Nebraska, I had to teach them about Herbie Husker. Whether you hate them or love them, you have to respect what Alabama has been doing over the years.”

Reynolds attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison for five years for his residency, in order to become an orthopedic surgeon. Following a season as a student doctor with the football team, Reynolds decided to continue with a fellowship (a step higher than a residency) in Birmingham, Alabama, with Dr. James Andrews for the 2006-2007 season.

Reynolds worked alongside Andrews and his other two main doctors, Lyle Cain and Jeff Dugas. In total, six fellows were spread out to cover local high schools and colleges, including Alabama, Auburn, Jacksonville State, West Alabama, Troy and Tuskegee.

While in the fellowship, Reynolds had his own high school to assist (alongside a trainer). Come Saturday, he was assigned to help out at Jacksonville State University. Once the game was finished, he would then fly to Tuscaloosa to learn at the Alabama game that week.

With the main tiers of the medical staff involving the head trainers, the primary care doctors and the orthopedic doctors (in addition to other non-orthopedic doctors and specialists), Reynolds said it boils down to the relationships that are created between the trainers, the physical therapists, the orthopedic doctors and the athletes and coaches.

“My experience, as far as medicine,” he said, “happens a lot behind the scenes, along with the relationships you build. The University of Alabama is a great example of how people can work as a team, with their communication skills and just being able to get along with everyone involved. Whether it’s the trainers and the doctors, or the nurses and scrub technicians, everyone treated each other well and with respect. I was very fortunate to not only spend my

time on the sideline to help others at the smaller schools and learn, but also at many Alabama and Auburn games.”

While he only spent a year with Andrews during his fellowship, Reynolds said his biggest takeaway from his time with the Crimson Tide football team was simply being able to treat the athletes involved in the sport and allow them back onto the field to do what they love most.

“Just like other colleges, Alabama has upper-tier athletes,” Reynolds said. “But, there are also a lot of kids who don’t play as much. Regardless if they are freshman, on the scout team or are starters, when they receive an injury, it’s everything to them. We try to treat each player the same way. It doesn’t matter what level kids and adults are on, when they get hurt, it affects their quality of life. It’s a huge deal, and we treat everyone like they are all professional athletes.

“What also stuck with me was how available Dr. Andrews was to everyone. It seemed like everyone had his cell number, and when they called, he always answered. That really stuck out to me, because by being available and looking out for everyone, Dr. Andrews was a successful surgeon and a great person.”

Although it has been around 15 years since he trained with other medical staff at Alabama, Reynolds said he still comes into contact with Andrews from time to time, along with touching base with Cain and Dugas, who remain team doctors for several of the schools down south. An odd, but entertaining, tradition Reynolds is a part of is when a die-hard Alabama fan and scrub tech texts, “Roll Tide” to him every opening football season weekend.

“It’s just a random text I get from him year after year, but it’s fun,” Reynolds laughed. “There is a huge divide down there between Alabama and Auburn fans, and to this day, he continues to send the same text to me. Even though Nebraska hasn’t really been in the upper tier lately, we all like to send each other little text jabs.”

As for the football team reaching yet another college national championship, Reynolds said it’s an all-around team collaboration to make the team one of the best in the country.

“Those guys know how to run a program,” he said. “Honestly, they are the current example of consistent excellence in college football. It’s not just one person behind it all, it’s the entire team and staff. Coach Saban brought in his coaches, but from top to bottom, whether it’s the medical staff or even the administration,



Photo courtesy of Scott Reynolds

Dr. Scott Reynolds poses for a quick photo on the sideline during an Alabama football game in 2006. Reynolds participated in an orthopedic/sports medicine fellowship in the southern part of the United States for the 2006-2007 season. Reynolds helped teams like Alabama, Auburn and Jacksonville State.

it’s been amazing to see what they’ve been able to consistently do year after year. It’s pretty impressive.”

For the last 13 years at OrthoNebraska, Reynolds has focused mainly on the sports medicine aspect, helping with shoulder, knee and elbow issues and injuries. He is also one of the team doctors for the Omaha Storm Chasers minor league baseball team (the AAA affiliate of the Kansas City Royals). Reynolds also helps numerous high schools in the metro area.

While an avid Husker fan, Reynolds will still keep up with Alabama and will recognize old staff members and friends on the sideline when the camera pans across during a game.

After participating in football, basketball and track during high school, Reynolds knew with his interest in science and medicine, he wanted to take his first steps into the orthopedic industry. He would hang out with his family’s doctor and physical therapist to pick up some

tips and tricks. He also spent time with various surgeons and job shadowing them. After high school, Reynolds first attended Hastings College before moving on to the University of Nebraska Medical Center for medical school.

Reynolds said during high school, he had to have his knee scoped after an injury. During medical school, he tore his ACL. With the help of Dr. Steven Hagan, he was able to have his injury fixed. Following his injuries and experiencing the care from doctors, Reynolds decided becoming an orthopedic surgeon was his true passion.

“I thought it would be a good mix of sports and medicine in general,” he said. “It’s really cool to fix issues others have and to help get people back on their feet and be active again. It’s very rewarding to me, and I’ve enjoyed my career so far and what I do. I’m lucky to be where I’m at today.”

From his early journey in the orthopedic industry and taking care of various athletes, to assisting kids and adults in attempts

to fix their injuries, Reynolds said the absolute best experience he has had is the opportunity to meet and befriend so many people sharing the same interests and passions.

“It’s cool to be involved with so many teams, from high school to college to the minor leagues,” he said. “But the things you remember the most are the relationships along the way. Getting to know so many trainers with various schools and teams is just incredible, and it’s awesome to watch them work and advance to higher and better positions and titles. For me, locally, it’s also being able to work with kids and adults and see them be successful. As kids get older and I see them on a state championship-winning team, or they get drafted or receive a scholarship, it’s a neat experience to say I was there to help them bounce back and get to where they are now.”

“Overall, it’s a very rewarding experience I will never forget.”