

Tyler Believes in Self

Sophocles once said, “A human being is only breath and shadow.” The question is, is this shadow representative of the relationship between celebrity and mere mortal, or symbolic of the relationship between KU basketball’s own Coach Bill Self and freshman Tyler Self?

Tyler’s love for the game at the mere age of three can put this shadow to rest. He appreciated being placed around the game of basketball, but it was never something force upon him.

“I just always loved basketball, said Tyler Self. “All my earliest memories were formed around basketball and it’s always been something I’ve loved to do. I was involved in it just through my dad’s job, but it was never forced on me to play—it just got me to know the game more and therefore like it more.”

Although the game was never forced on Tyler, there’s a difficult aspect of being the son of Bill Self that not everyone gets to see.

“I’ll always think of it as just being another player out there,” said Tyler. “I think that he has to be a little tougher on me at times just to show that I’m not getting the easy way out.”

On top of the pressure from his father, there’s also the treatment from other people that has given Tyler second thoughts.

“I would hope that people don’t treat me differently because of my dad, “ said Tyler. “I guess there’s always things that people will say just because of who my dad is, but I try not to buy too much into that.”

Tyler experienced pressure from all angles, but these pressures did not skew his decision to come play basketball at Kansas.

“I was thinking about going to OSU,” said Tyler, “but after sitting down and thinking if I had the opportunity to play basketball at Kansas, that’s anybody’s dream, so it was hard to pass up that opportunity—I couldn’t do it.”

The Kansas basketball legacy undoubtedly brought Tyler to his decision to play for his father, but he also stressed the talent that his dad possesses as a coach.

“I would say playing at Kansas is what you come here for,” said Tyler, “not necessarily to play for my dad even though I think he’s a great coach. My dad’s work ethic and passion truly separates him from other coaches. He loves the game and he loves to win. To him, anything other than winning is not acceptable. I think that’s what pushes him to the top.”

Coach Self indisputably passed on his coaching values to his son, but Tyler also received support from his mom, Cindy and sister, Lauren throughout the years.

“They’ve always been real supportive of me and really been good influences in my life,” said Tyler. “I’d say they’re a different support than my dad because he keeps it so real, but my mom and sister are always so loving, supportive, and are always encouraging me and making me feel good.”

Tyler hopes that his support through his dad and family will jumpstart his basketball career and help drive him to his goals while at KU.

“I’d like to get a degree in something, I’m not sure what in yet,” said Tyler, “and I’d like to hopefully continue the conference title streak and maybe do some damage in the post season.”

No matter what your title is on the KU basketball team, Tyler believes as a KU basketball player you have a tremendous responsibility and role in the Lawrence community.

“You owe it to everyone who’s played here and coached here before to give it your all and work hard everyday,” said Tyler. “I would say you just owe it to the university to give it your all and keep the legacy going.”