

Woodruff's Tyler West credits his grandfather for his drive to succeed



Woodruff's Tyler West (10) draws inspiration from his grandfather, Jim, a former volunteer EMT. [Alex Hicks Jr./Spartanburg Herald-Journal]

By Brian Peahuff, For the Herald-Journal

Posted August 21, 2019 at 9:13 AM

WOODRUFF — Woodruff senior Tyler West learned a lot of his work ethic and drive to be the best that he can possibly be from his grandfather.

Jim West, 71, was a volunteer EMT for Spartanburg County and helped save countless lives during his 36 years of service. Jim is now retired and suffers from a severe case of Type 2 Diabetes that requires seven insulin shots per day. The complications with his legs keep him from getting out much, but he still manages to attend all of Tyler's home football games.

“Ever since I can remember, my granddaddy has had troubles with diabetes, but since he retired it has gotten worse because he isn't active,” Tyler said. “I think just seeing how he pushes himself every day has made me want to always do better. Every Friday when I see him struggling to get up those stands it inspires me. He has always been my role model and it means the world to me to have him there.”

Last season, Tyler helped lead the Wolverines to an 8-3 overall finish. Woodruff dropped a heartbreaker to Broome in the first round of the 3A playoffs.

Tyler hauled in 13 catches for 128 yards with two TD's as a wide receiver and recorded 34 tackles with one interception and caused two fumbles from the safety position. This season, he also is currently the second-string quarterback.

“I am very proud of Tyler, whether he plays football or not,” Jim said. “I do enjoy getting to watch him play football, but that is not the world. But I thoroughly enjoy watching him play. I've always loved football, but getting to watch Tyler play makes it even better. Knowing that I am one of Tyler's role models is one of the highest honors that I could have.”

Besides doing a little bit of everything on the football field, Tyler excels in the classroom as well. He has a 4.4 GPA and is ranked No. 30 in his class.

“Tyler is a terrific young man and one of the leaders of our football program,” said Woodruff coach Bradley Adams, who is in his second season with the Wolverines. “I am very thankful he is a part of our team. When I hear him talk about his grandfather, sometimes, it even relates to me because the most important person in my life was my grandfather, also. I think Tyler’s greatest attribute is his leadership skills. He’s not just a leader by being vocal, he’s a leader by the way that he carries himself the right way in everything that he does.”

Tyler’s home life also has played a major part in molding him into the young man that he is. His mom and dad, Bonnie and Brian, have fostered six or seven children during the past few years. They are currently fostering 5-year-old Taven. Tyler also has one brother, Hunter, and two sisters, Haley and Heidi.

“The fact that we get to help these kids means a lot to all of us,” Tyler said. “I think we all take a lot of the simple things for granted. I am just grateful that we are able to help these children get on the right path. Just being able to shoot basketball with Taven when I come home from school is an awesome feeling.”

“You can’t ask for a better young man,” Adams said. “He stands for good, not only on the field, but off. I think he understands that football is a temporary thing and it won’t last forever and he sees the bigger picture in life.”