HOW DEREK CARRIER CAME BACK FROM A MAJOR KNEE INJURY

BIGS, COMBOS & SKILLS: COMPARING REDSKINS POSITIONAL WORKOUTS

TRENT MURPHY'S TRUST IN TRANSITION

A Washington Times Advertising Supplement
Earlier this year as Redskins players were training in the offseason, Trent Murphy received a call. It was his defensive coordinator, Joe Barry. The Redskins had decided they wanted Murphy to transition from his outside linebacker position to defensive end.

In geographical reality, Murphy was moving roughly five feet on the field from where he normally lined up as an outside linebacker during his first two NFL seasons, but his training and diet had to completely change. Murphy needed to gain weight, and quickly, as the defensive end position requires more mass and strength to help stop the opposing run offense.

Murphy, who told his story on his personal website earlier this year, wrote that because the Redskins hadn’t told him about this plan earlier in the offseason, he immediately jumped into a brand new workout and diet plan. As a gym rat, Murphy didn’t have any problem with tackling new workouts that included, “more weight and less repetitions,” to prepare for the powerful offensive linemen of the NFL.

However, his transition to a new diet wasn’t as smooth.

“I hate eating so that was definitely harder, having to stuff your face and always worry about what you’re going to eat when you go somewhere and your calorie count and everything like that,” Murphy said. “So that’s a lot harder to manage.”

Murphy, who admitted that he’s a picky eater, said there were some “pretty filthy-tasting” things that he had to put down.

“Yogurt drinks with spinach and protein powder that you’re mixing up with two different types of protein powder so you just kind of get these thick clumpy green shakes that aren’t always the most appetizing,” Murphy recalled of his worst meals.

It may not have tasted good, but Murphy was doing his best to gain weight without eating poorly. Gaining weight, of course, isn’t hard. Eating unhealthy foods and laying around will add the pounds quickly. But in Murphy’s case, he needed to add, “good weight.”

Carmen Spencer RN, the clinical program coordinator with Inova’s Weight Loss Services, says that when trying to gain weight the focus should be on, “increasing portion size of healthy meals and healthy fats and proteins.”

“If you try to gain weight by eating unhealthy foods you’re going to gain fat mass versus muscle mass,” Spencer continued. “There’s always that tendency when someone has to gain weight for a position to eat junk food instead of choosing healthy options.”

So About That Position Switch...

Following a summer of disciplined eating and training, Murphy arrived at camp with 25 added pounds in...
preparation for his new role. However, the Redskins plans changed, as many plans do for NFL teams when injuries strike. Standout pass rusher Junior Galette tore his Achilles, putting him on the shelf for the season.

Instead of having too many good outside linebackers, which forced Murphy’s move in the first place, the Redskins’ depth at the position was now thin. Murphy once again had a conversation with the coaches, who wanted Murphy to switch on and off working with the defensive linemen and outside linebackers. But after only a couple practices doing that, the Redskins ultimately moved Murphy back to outside linebacker.

“It was pretty tough because you go into the offseason with one mindset and then you have to change, stop running and trying to put on weight and then you make the switch back so then you kind of change up your diet again,” a willing Murphy said. “That’s kind of the business, so it’s not a big deal.”

Ironically, Murphy had already begun losing weight, but by nothing he had done purposefully. He was quarantined in his hotel room for 24 hours at one point due to a bad case of strep throat. He lost 10 pounds.

“There are rumors going around that they planted strep throat because they knew I was changing positions,” Murphy joked in his blog. “If I catch something else and they move me to defensive back, I’ll know there’s something fishy going on around here.”

Just like gaining the weight quickly, losing would have been tough for Murphy, too, who was encouraged to keep most of his weight after his bout with strep throat. In his blog, Murphy noted that, “there are guys across the league who play this position at 280 pounds and they’re a little shorter than me, so you can definitely be a little bigger.”

“With rapid weight loss, it’s important to have medical supervision, because there’s always the risk of dehydration, electrolyte imbalances, and gallstones as well. Malnutrition is also a risk because some people think they can just stop eating or do a crash diet,” Spencer said regarding issues that many people have with trying to lose weight. “The recommendations for weight loss are generally one to two pounds a week, anything more than that is considered rapid weight loss. As a reference one pound is equal to about 3500 calories, to make that adjustment would be require decreasing calories by about 500 a day or exercising the equivalent.”

All’s Well That Ends Well

Maybe Murphy was just being optimistic, but he envisioned a strong 2016 season when he wrote in early August about his eventful offseason.

“In the end, the weight I gained to play on the line should actually help me,” Murphy wrote.

He was right. It took Murphy just four games to set a new career high in sacks. After recording six total sacks in his first two seasons, Murphy recorded eight takedowns of the quarterback in the first 13 games of this season.

“I wasn’t really there that long,” Murphy said of his cameo at defensive end. “I’ve been an outside backer almost my whole career and I was at end for like five, six weeks. It just kind of confirmed that leverage and pad level, hand placement is the most powerful tool, even being a smaller guy having to play inside.”

Between Murphy and Kerrigan, the Redskins are one of only two teams to have a pair of players with at least eight sacks. The duo effectively ended a Week 14 win over the Eagles as Kerrigan stripped quarterback Carson Wentz and Murphy – moving quickly for a guy who was going to play defensive line at one point – ran over and picked up the loose ball.

“Playing for this franchise, I’m never short of motivation,” Murphy finished his blog post. “I’m super thankful for everyone’s support, and all the love and support that fans have shown on social media and at camp. I’m eager for the season to begin and to do everything I can to help us win.”

Back in his accustomed outside linebacker spot, Murphy has done just that.
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CEO, Inova Schar Cancer Institute

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Derek Carrier’s Return From Injury Took Endurance And Time

**By: Alaina Getzenberg**

On Dec. 13, 2015, the Washington Redskins defeated the Chicago Bears, a victory that began a four-game winning streak to end the season and led to a playoff appearance.

But for tight end Derek Carrier, this game marked the beginning of a much different journey.

Carrier tore his ACL, MCL and meniscus in the game, starting a rehabilitation process and uphill battle that lasted for more than nine months. Now playing once again, Carrier is still working on his knee every day to continue to keep it in the best possible condition and as far away from injury as possible.

Part of what made this injury so difficult to come back from was the lack of range of motion that Carrier experienced in his knee after surgery. Once the swelling began to die down and his initial recovery from the surgery began to kick in, Carrier was able to start the rehabbing process, which, with an injury like this, requires a lot of patience and time.

“First in the short term, you’re looking at trying to get some of the basics down like restoring range of motion in the knee, getting the strength to come back in the knee, working on balance,” Seth Blee, Inova Physical Therapy Center Regional Clinical Director and Team Physical Therapist for the Washington Nationals, said. “That’s all stuff that starts very early on, but then once they get the range of motion and the strength, a lot of what you do is work to retrain the whole leg, working on strengthening and stability of the leg.

“It’s not just that you strengthen the knee, but you strengthen the entire leg and make it work better with the whole system, which is what we call neuromuscular reeducation. That takes a little bit longer, but that is a really key component especially for an athlete. In retraining the leg, you’re essentially re-teaching the brain how to use the leg properly.”

In retraining the body, Carrier went through stretches and exercises during the rehabbing process that were not exactly comfortable.

“One of the things that you really want to get back right away is your range of motion, so knee flexion and extension. All the trainers in there can attest to it. I’m sitting on my butt and my knee is stretched,” Carrier said jokingly. “It’s the worst, it’s like all the scar tissue, the swelling and everything, you have to work past that and work past the pain to get that flexion back. You’ll be sitting on your stomach and I’ll have one of the trainers be holding my thigh down and then pushing my heel to my butt and I had to do that every day.”

Continuing to train and fight his way back throughout the offseason was a difficult process as part of the cure for the surgery was simply rest and time, allowing things to heal.

In order to reconstruct his ACL, the surgeons used a portion of his patellar tendon, tissue in the knee, to replace the tissue that was missing from the injury. While both his ACL and MCL recovered well from the surgery, Carrier developed tendinitis in the area it resected from. Carrying and locations near you visit inova.org/RedskinsPT
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Football is a physical sport. While there are only 16 games in a season, staying in tip-top football shape is a year-round job.

Players, however, come in all shapes and sizes, and training for a championship is not just an in-season task. The work done in March and April is just as important as the work done during the season.

As the Redskins fought for their second playoff berth in as many seasons, their health played a major factor. Head strength and conditioning coach Mike Clark prepares around the clock for his players to be at peak performance on Sundays.

“Training these guys right now is nothing like you would do for someone in general fitness,” Clark said. “Everything we’re doing now is about peak performance. The only way you can do peak performance is if they have laid a fairly big background base of training prior to that.”

In 2016, the Redskins’ passing attack emerged as one of the NFL’s best. The aerial success has been largely due to the emergence of second-year wide receiver Jamison Crowder, as well as the resurgence of tight end Vernon Davis. While the duo became two of quarterback Kirk Cousins’ favorite targets, they are completely different players. Crowder is a shifty, slot receiver, while Davis is a taller, bigger-bodied tight end.

When forming a training regimen for his players to follow, Clark starts by distinguishing each player inside one of three categories: bigs, combos, and skills. The “bigs” category is designed for the lineman, “combos” are linebackers and tight ends (Davis), and “skills” is everyone else (Crowder).

“They’re all different,” Clark said. “The bigs and the combos do some things the same. Some, but not all. A lot of times the bigs can’t do stuff the combos can do. The combos and the skill do some things the same, but it just depends.”

In-Season Workouts

Both Crowder and Davis have the same goal every week – to win and catch touchdowns. But how they train and prepare to excel on Sunday’s is very different from one another.

In a long season, the last thing coaches want are their players being overworked during the week. Clark tends to keep the in-season workouts light, with the goal that players maintain the strength they built up in the offseason.

“Every Sunday is a max effort day,” he said. “Every Monday is a total rest day. Every Tuesday is an active recovery day, active rest day. Every Wednesday, Thursday is a training day. Friday is half of that, so your central nervous system gets a chance to rest. Saturday is, again, an active recovery day. So each week flows like that.”
“[It’s] nothing too taxing,” Crowder said on the in-season lifting workouts. “Obviously your body is still poor at this point in the season; your body has been up and down. So the lift isn’t really too much at this point, it’s pretty much trying to maintain your strength. You don’t want to overdo it, because you don’t want to break down those muscles completely, just break them down a little bit so you maintain strength.”

While skills don’t do as much strength building in-season as they do in the offseason, combos and bigs still do plenty of work in the weight room during the season. Davis’ game goes far beyond just catching the ball, and the strength he has built up has allowed him to establish himself as one of the better blocking tight ends in the league. As a combo, he trains with both the bigs and skills groups.

“We lift, when it comes to tight ends, we lift with the offensive lineman,” Davis said. “We can run with the wide receivers, so it’s kind of both worlds there.”

Despite the challenge of trying to keep up lifting with linemen or running with receivers, Davis embraces the challenge.

“I don’t think it’s more work, I think it’s just something you become accustomed to over the years,” he said. “For me, just working hard, I feel like that’s my forte. That’s what I have always done, and that’s what I like to do when it comes to work and putting that extra work in.”

“There is a difference [in the way we train them],” Clark said. “Crowder runs much more yardage during a game. So for him, it’s more about handling his own body weight, his quickness, his explosives, breaks, all those. You still have to do that with Vernon, but Vernon has also got the addition of the hand-to-hand combat, so much more of it. His strength base has to be much greater and his power base has to be greater to a point.”

**Offseason Workouts**

The 2016 success that Crowder and Davis attained began with personalized offseason workouts. As an 11-year NFL veteran, Davis has an offseason routine that he’s followed for several years.

“During the offseason, I do a lot of speed and explosive work,” he said. “Hills – whenever I run, it’s all on the hills. I do all my running routes on the hills. I do sprints on the hills, everything is on the hills.”

While Davis has had a consistent offseason regimen for more than a decade, Crowder is coming off his first full offseason as an NFL player. After the busiest football year of his life – from the NFL combine, to the draft, training camp, OTAs, and his first NFL season – Crowder decided to take a month off to give his body time to recover. But once the calendar turned to March, Crowder was back on his feet.

“I took a break just to have my body recuperate from the long season, long whole year from last year,” Crowder said. “In the offseason where it picked back up as far as running and everything, which I’m in great condition. As far as squats, upper body, lower body, core work, it’s a pretty intense workout.”

While most of Davis’ offseason training dealt with cardiovascular routines, much of Crowder’s was strength-building – particularly leg strength. Crowder combined Clark’s advice with a workout routine he had from his college days at Duke to train this offseason.

“It kind of even goes back to college, too, because the strength coaches got me on a good workout routine as far as building my body;” he said. “At this level, we do some things with coach Clark and find ways for each individual to excel in the weight room. But I still have some things I picked up from college that I just brought here and incorporated here.”

**EXOS Training**

As noted above, one of the hardest tasks athletic trainers and team doctors deal with is finding the best way to train each individual player – from off-season workouts, to dieting, to recovery – in order for the player to reach their peak athletic performance.

That’s where EXOS, a human performance company geared to bring the most out of all their athletes, comes in. Founded in 1999, EXOS takes all of their clients through a basic fitness training program, then tailors a workout regimen for each player.

“Essentially, EXOS is a one stop refuge for human performance,” Paul Cauldwell, EXOS Director of Performance, said. “If you think about strength and conditioning and performance training, what we strive to do across our four pillars, which are mindset, movement, nutrition, and recovery, we provide all of those services to our clients.”

Those clients include a record 80 players who were selected in the 2016 NFL draft, which is equal to 32 percent of this year’s total draft class. Redskins’ first round wide receiver Josh Doctson, as well fellow draftees Kendall Fuller, Matt Ioannidis and Nate Sudfeld are all supported by EXOS.

“Partnering with Inova, now we can bring this human performance element to the D.C. Metro area,” Cauldwell said. “We have a great partner from the medical standpoint. Aside from performance, athletes will also have access to Orthopaedic Surgeons, Primary Care Sports Medicine Physicians along with Physical Therapists at Inova Sports Medicine. Collaborating together provides a complete experience to meet the needs of all athletes and individuals.”

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Redskins FITT: A Youth Health And Wellness Initiative

The Washington Redskins Charitable Foundation (WRCF) teamed up with District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and the American Diabetes Association (ADA) to launch Redskins FITT [Frequency, Intensity, Time & Type], a youth health and wellness initiative designed to encourage an active lifestyle and assist 7th grade students in the development of a personalized two-week fitness plan.

The 2016-2017 program includes three key elements:

The FITTbook is an in-school curriculum for every DCPS 7th grade student. The interactive workbook includes lessons on physical activity, nutrition and cognitive development. Students use the FITTbook through their health and physical education courses as they develop their fitness goals.

FITT Videos are monthly instructional fitness videos that feature Redskins players, coaches and health and wellness experts. Each video highlights stretches or exercises that teachers and students can reference during in-class instructional time and at home. Video topics have included dynamic stretching, static stretching and easy at-home exercises.

FITT Workshops feature a visit from the Redskins FITTness Vehicle and FITT Staff. The workshop activities focus on physical activity, nutrition and cognitive development. Each participating school has the opportunity to host two FITT Workshops during the course of the 2016-2017 school year. WRCF has partnered with local organizations including, YoKid, Teens Run DC, Playworks-DC, American Dairy Association North East, Real Food For Kids, Deanna Jefferson Fitness and GO-Adventures to co-host unique and engaging FITT workshops.

The program officially launched on Monday, Sept. 19 with the first Redskins FITT Special Event held at Johnson Middle School in Southeast Washington, D.C. Redskins outside linebacker Houston Bates, joined by the First Ladies of Football, helped kickoff the workshop that included four intense physical activity stations. Representatives from both DCPS and ADA were on-site to experience the event first hand, including Kathy Burk, the Area Executive Director of ADA, National Capital Area Chapter.

“We're thrilled to be partnering with the Washington Redskins Charitable Foundation and D.C. Public Schools,” Burk said. “Diabetes is an epidemic in the country and it's also an epidemic with children. The sooner we can get to children, the more impact we can have on the choices that they make for the rest of their lives.”

In October, Redskins wide receiver Pierre Garçon and the WRCF teamed up with the American Dairy Association North East to host a Redskins FITT – Fuel Up to Play 60 workshop at Kelly Miller Middle School. This special event focused on nutrition and healthy eating, while adding in fun physical activity elements. The following month, Redskins offensive lineman Arie Kouandjio and wide receiver Ryan Grant attended a teambuilding workshop at Jefferson Middle School Academy with the help of ADA and facilitators from GO-Adventures. Teambuilding, communication and cognitive skills development activities were featured with each student participating in activities that encouraged them to think outside of the box and work with classmates to complete each task.

Throughout the first semester of the school year, the WRCF distributed more than 2,000 Redskins FITTbooks to the 29 participating DC Public Schools. The WRCF hosted a total of 30 Redskins FITT Workshops and special events that impacted more than 1,000 students.

Redskins FITT Workshops will resume in February 2017 for the second semester of the 2016-2017 school year and will reach all 29 schools and more than 2,500 students impacted. The Redskins FITT – End of Year Celebration is scheduled for spring 2017 at FedExField.

To learn more about the Washington Redskins Charitable Foundation’s FITT initiative, visit www.redskins.com/fitt
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Redskins Hit The Weights

The Washington Redskins entered the 2016 season ready to get their bodies in shape. Check out these shots of players getting in a lift to start the year.
The mission of the Washington Redskins Charitable Foundation is to make a positive and measurable impact in the lives of children in our community.

In 2016, the Foundation partnered with District of Columbia Public Schools and the American Diabetes Association to launch a youth health and wellness initiative called Redskins FITT [Frequency, Intensity, Time & Type]. This program encourages students to exercise regularly and eat properly to help maintain an active lifestyle. This is just one of many programs the Foundation conducts annually to support children in our community.

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