

Kelly Schoen – Mason and Dalton

This is Kansas Profile. I'm Ron Wilson, director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University.

“Family.” As the football team comes running out of the locker room, the word “family” is displayed on a wooden block held up high by the players. Lots of athletic programs use the word family to describe their relationship with the fans. Today we'll meet a family which literally has family members playing in not one, but two, college sports at the same time. It's today's Kansas Profile.

Kelly and Kristi Schoen are the parents of this athletic family. Their two sons are making their marks in college athletics in two different sports.

Kelly Schoen is originally from a farm near the rural community of Downs, Kansas, population 873 people. Now, that's rural.

Kelly went to K-State and got a finance degree. Kristi is from Manhattan and also went to K-State where the two met and ultimately married. Kelly got an MBA at Creighton and went to work for a large accounting and consulting firm in the Kansas City area. He later became CFO of another company and started Freedom Bank in Overland Park with some partners in 2006. Today he specializes as a consultant in strategic planning, corporate transactions, and mergers and acquisitions.

“I really enjoy it,” Kelly said. “Our bank serves the community and works a lot with small and medium sized entrepreneurial businesses.”

Kelly and Kristi have three children. “They don't send you home from the hospital with an owner's manual,” Kelly said. “When you start to raise your own kids, you reach back to those values of faith, family and hard work that you learned from your parents and grandparents. We were taught to value education and to always do your best,” he said.

Their older daughter Chandler learned the value of caring for others. She is a nurse in Kansas City and is working toward a doctorate in nursing practice.

The Schoens' two sons also excelled in academics as well as athletics. Mason, the older son, was a two-year letterman on the Blue Valley Northwest High School basketball team. As a senior and team captain, his team went undefeated and won state.

Mason chose to go to K-State and earn a finance degree while walking-on with the K-State basketball team. Today he is the lone senior on the K-State basketball roster. He has made the Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll for six straight semesters, was a National Association of Basketball Coach's Honors Court Recipient, and made the 2017 Academic All-Big 12 First Team.

His younger brother Dalton was a standout multi-sport athlete as well, but his college sport of choice was football. He considered the Ivy League and then looked at the top engineering schools in the Midwest, including K-State. When a walk-on position opened up on the K-State football team, he made that his choice.

For years, there has been a pattern of Kansas kids who develop remarkably in the K-State football program. Dalton Schoen seems to be another example.

2017 was his break-out year as a wide receiver. The season started with a bang. In the first game, he took his first catch of the year 70 yards for a touchdown. That sounds like a lot, but his next touchdown catch was for 82 yards against Texas! (This has to make for a pretty good average.)

During the ten games in which Dalton played, he averaged more than two catches per game. It was especially exciting to see the catches he made in crunch time. Against Texas Tech, for example, he caught five passes for more than 100 yards, including the two-point conversion that sent the game to overtime for an eventual win.

The two Schoen brothers lived together in the summertime and now get to see each other at the athletic training table. “All that work and preparation has paid off,” Kelly Schoen said. “From a parent standpoint, I’m just happy that they get to live their dreams.”

Family. That’s a good term for the relationship of sports teams and fans. We commend Kelly, Kristi, Chandler, Mason and Dalton Schoen for making a difference with their values and hard work. It’s good to see that it’s all in the family.

For the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, this is Ron Wilson with Kansas Profile.