



Jack Patterson thriving in Kerrville Tivy's secondary

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In this June 25 file photo, Tivy's Jack Patterson intercepts a pass during the Antlers' 7-on-7 games. Patterson has emerged as a lockdown corner in the Antlers' secondary.

Tom Holden



Every week during the summer, Jack Patterson Jr. strolled into the conference room inside the Tivy field house to meet with Antlers' defensive backs coach Austin Galifaro.



They watched a lot of film together in that room. Galifaro showed the junior cornerback coverages he hoped to run during the 2019 season and delivered tips on how to improve his craft, challenging Patterson to become a leader on Tivy's secondary.

Patterson always took these weekly film sessions seriously. Then again, he took all of his off-season responsibilities seriously. After all, he knew he was going to play a critical role on Tivy's defense this season. He was one of just three varsity cornerbacks on Tivy's roster, and one of the few players capable of playing every position in the secondary. In other words, it was clear he was going to spend the 2019 season defending-opposing teams' best receivers.

To shoulder that responsibility, Patterson knew he was going to have to work hard during the off-season. He endured the mono virus, chicken pox and an inflamed liver, but even those illnesses couldn't slow him down this off-season. Patterson added 15 pounds of muscle to his frame, shaved his 40-yard dash time from 4.77 to 4.64 and attended every single optional workout.

"I knew we were low on secondary players," Patterson said. "I knew I had to be a leader, so I worked really hard with the other guys."



All that labor explains Patterson's emergence this season. Patterson flashed some potential last year during a couple varsity starts as a sophomore. But this season? Well, he has an opportunity to be one of the best lockdown corners in District 14-5A Div. II. During the Antlers' 14-13 season-opening loss to Dripping Springs last Friday, the Tigers only challenged Patterson once, and he was ready, breaking in front of his receiver's slant route and deflecting the pass with his right arm. Unfortunately, his fingers accidentally grazed the receiver's facemask, drawing a facemask penalty. Still, The Tigers learned their lesson and didn't pass to Patterson's receiver for the rest of the night. He will look to continue his strong play in the secondary when the Antlers (0-1) renew their rivalry with Fredericksburg (1-0) this Friday at Battlin' Billie Stadium.

"He has gotten better and better," Tivy defensive coordinator Jeremy Hickman said. "He had a great game against Dripping Springs, but each week he has stepped up his game. I find it far fetched to believe that offensive coordinators will want to test him many times over there because his cover skills are really good.

"The kid has invested himself in trying to get better and you won't find a better kid in terms of being



“The kid has invested himself in trying to get better and you won’t find a better kid in terms of being trustworthy. He’s accountable. He’s here every day. He has a great blue collar work ethic. He’s not a talker; he is a doer.”

He also mans a difficult position. Playing far-side corner is not for the faint of heart. The corners are isolated on an island next to the opposing team’s sidelines. Not only are they tasked with defending the opposition’s best receiver, but they also typically have to hear taunts from players on the sidelines throughout the game.

Patterson, though, has the skill set to thrive in the secondary. He’s intelligent, giving him the ability to disguise his coverages and anticipate his receivers’ routes. More importantly, he has the confidence to play the position: He’s not afraid to square up against talented receivers and deliver hits.

“He can do a multitude of things for us,” Hickman said. “He just has a lot of skills and is a great athlete and is super smart. ... If the game is on the line, he wants to make sure he is the one covering their best guy. His belief should be there because he’s done a good job of progressing and getting better.”

Patterson has ~~always possessed that~~ competitive



Patterson has always possessed that competitive spirit. His father, Jack Patterson Sr., remembers coaching his son's 4-year-old flag football team, jokingly comparing coaching 4-year-old flag football players to herding a bunch of chicken. There's a reason, after all, they don't really keep score at that age. Jack Jr., though, always updated the score in his head, making sure he made enough plays during the game to lift his team to victory.

Jack Sr. did his part to nurture his son's love for football. It became their sport. Jack Sr. always believed in his son's athletic gifts, even when Jack jr. was undersized as a football player (he stood at 5'3" and weighed only 95 pounds in middle school). That inspired Jack Jr. to continue to hone his craft. He and his father studied the game together. They watched NFL football on Sundays, college football on Saturdays, and attended Tivy football games on Friday nights. Naturally, Jack Jr. idolized the Tivy players as a child.

"I thought the Tivy guys were gods," Jack jr. said. "I just wanted to be one of them one day. Now, I am one."

Yes, yes he is, and a pretty good one at that. On the field of Antler Stadium on Friday night, Jack Jr. found his father, the person who always believed he could



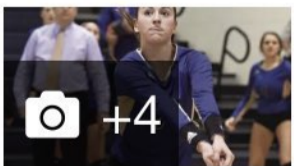
Yes, yes he is, and a pretty good one at that. On the field of Antler Stadium on Friday night, Jack Jr. found his father, the person who always believed he could be a special football player. Jack Sr. made sure his son knew that he was proud of him, and also encouraged his son to flush out the loss to the Tigers and turn his focus to the game against Fredericksburg.

That won't be a problem. Jack Jr. knows how much the rivalry means to the Kerrville community. He's ready to participate in the next chapter.

"I am super excited for that rivalry that we have," Jack Jr. "Our parents have had that rivalry for many years and we kind of renewed that rivalry."



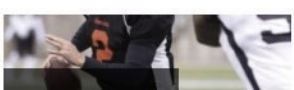
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