

From the
DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS
Kris Weems



My First 100 Days

In my first 100 days as Menlo's Director of Athletics, I've thought a lot about our program's philosophy of providing opportunities to develop mind, body and character. And looking back

over my own life as an athlete, I've been blessed with the same kinds of opportunities.

Though I grew up in Kansas City, KS, I call the Bay Area home (don't hold it against me that I'm still a Royals fan). I began my freshman year in 1995 at Stanford, where I was a three-year starter for the basketball team. My experience as a Stanford student-athlete was similar to that of Menlo student-athletes. It prepared me to advocate for myself, be responsible and accountable, and to develop strong relationships and mentors to guide me once I was done with college and my playing career was complete.

After several months playing professionally in Tel Aviv, Israel and a few months in my hometown, I moved back to Menlo Park in 2001 to begin my career as a coach at Menlo College.

I met my wife, Neda, in 2004, which was my first season coaching boys' varsity basketball at Menlo School. Neda was a three-sport athlete in high school and participated in intramurals in college, so she had an understanding of how busy my schedule would be on a daily basis. After 10 years of knowing Neda and five wonderful years of marriage, I truly appreciate her being a sounding board for anything and everything athletics. Neda is also plenty capable of breaking down offensive and

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defensive sets during a basketball game. Let's just say I scored big when she chose me!

We are now raising our daughter, Aaliyah Jazmyn, and look forward to seeing her try a few different sports and activities as she gets older. (I've told myself I won't coach



any of her teams, but I'm not so sure her mom will follow my lead!) Neda and I have enjoyed building relationships with so many great Menlo families and student-athletes. Our great hope is that raising Aaliyah in this environment will expose her to many of the opportunities and mentoring that our students enjoy during their time on campus.

I officially started my new gig at the end of June with three new coaches to hire (baseball, boys' lacrosse and boys' basketball) and a number of processes to review going into the new school year. While there have been a lot of to-do lists to manage and meetings to attend, I am really lucky to inherit such an experienced, talented coaching staff, led by Assistant Athletic Director Buffie Ward and Middle School Athletic Director Joe McDonald. Their 27 combined years of experience have been a tremendous help in my transition.

As I met with coaches one-on-one in the spring and summer, my message was always that I'm here to support them, their programs and their students. If you take a look around the Main Gym in the Athletic Center, you can see how successful Menlo School Athletics has been over the years. Our trophy case is full of honors for each of our programs, including the many scholastic awards, showcasing the consistency and commitment to excellence that our teams strive for. Our student-athletes give their best and work to be their best. I feel blessed to work with students and coaches with such high character, strong values and competitive spirit. Every day I come to work charged up and ready to play an active part in strengthening our vision for developing coaches and athletes while helping them prepare for their lives after Menlo.

One thing I noticed in my early morning workouts during the summer months was the constant stream of alumni athletes in the weight room, taking advantage of the facilities and training by Head Strength Coach Jesse Lindenstein. Our alumni bring a competitive spirit that is motivation for our current student-athletes. I am so appreciative of our former athletes coming back to train in our facilities and showing current student-athletes how to be true ambassadors for Menlo School.



I wasn't brave enough to join in on any of those summer training sessions; I learned my lesson doing drills with the Warriors' players for two seasons as a coach. But being around allowed me to see how far strength and conditioning has come since I was recruited in high school. Our athletes must have the discipline to train their bodies for competition, knowing that they will not only perform better in the pool and on the court and fields but will also be healthier, more engaged students—sound body, sound mind.

One special part of my day is giving a short presentation to prospective students visiting campus as part of the admissions process. I often speak of the balance that Menlo School provides, with different classes, activities and sports you can try. I'm excited for those future Menlo students to take advantage of the opportunities here, and watch with pride our current students doing just that. My hope is that Menlo students feel the same way I did during and right after college: each practice, game and match is important; take pride in your effort; compete every day and encourage others to do the same! More importantly, every facet of learning they go through and the adversity we face is preparation for a fulfilling life.

KnightLine is published in .pdf form on the Menlo School website each month, with an email alert including a link sent to all parents. For questions, please contact Alex Perez, Director of Communications, via email at alex.perez@menloschool.org or by calling 650.330.2001 ext. 2330.

