



PBATS NEWSLETTER

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT: NICK KENNEY

From the Farm to the Presidency

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A self-proclaimed farmer's son, Nick Kenney grew up in Wilmington, OH. Since his mother returned to work at the local university, Kenney spent his pre-school days on the farm with his dad, learning at a young age what work ethic

meant. "On the farm, the day is not over until the work is done. That prepared me for what I am doing now," claims Kenney. Nick really enjoyed farm life and wanted to follow in his father's footsteps, but his dad wanted something different for his son, and encouraged him to get an education.

Kenney's mother's worked in the department of math and science at Wilmington College which provided her children with two benefits that unknowingly would shift Kenney's professional path: free rehab services and a tuition waiver. Suffering a torn ACL while playing football in high school caused Kenney to use the rehab perk, which was provided by athletic training students from the college. This experience showed Kenney that, "being an athletic trainer may be where it's at since it seemed like a great way to stay in sport without playing sports," he recalls. The tuition waiver proved beneficial as well, as Kenney went on to get a degree in Athletic Training with a minor in business from Wilmington College in 1994.

Although Kenney did not go into farming, the work ethic he learned from his dad on the farm stayed with him as he graduated from college. "My goal after graduating was to find a job that allowed me to utilize and improve my skills right away, while looking for the ideal job," explains Kenney. He soon took a job at Clinton Memorial

Hospital providing rehab services, having shared his career aspirations with his old program director from college, Maxine Urton, professional athletics or higher level college athletics.

Kenney's first opportunity in pro sports came 5 months after graduating from college. Maxine knew a young orthopedic surgeon that was looking for an assistant athletic trainer to work with the Cincinnati Cyclones of the International Hockey League (IHL). Although Kenney didn't know anything about hockey, he took the job. "This job prepared me for baseball. I had to make quick, accurate decisions when evaluating players, so it would not affect player rotations and the flow of the game," recalls Kenney.

Kenney's position with the Cyclones was contracted thru TriHealth, who also provided rehab services to the Cincinnati Reds. During the hockey off-season, Kenney would work in the clinic providing rehab services to Reds players, offering him another opportunity to hone his skills.



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In 2000 the IHL merged with the AHL. Not all teams joined the merger, including the Cyclones who opted to move to a lower-level league instead. Kenney was not aligned with this move and after 7 years with the Cyclones made a career choice to move into an administrative position with TriHealth as a Program Manager of Sports Medicine. In this role, Kenney oversaw rehab services with local universities and the Cincinnati Reds. Kenney held this position for 3 years, and met fellow PBATS member, Lonnie Soloff, who was working with the Reds at the time. Kenney soon joined Soloff with the Reds as full-time second assistant athletic trainer for the 2003-2004 seasons.

When Soloff took the Head Athletic Trainer's role with the Cleveland Indians in 2004, he asked Kenney to be his assistant athletic trainer. Kenney took the offer even though it moved him away from his home near his parents. He remained in Cleveland thru the 2009 season.

Before the start of the 2010 season, the Kansas City Royals contacted Kenney about their Head Athletic Trainer position. Kenney did not feel he was ready for a Head AT position, but Soloff encouraged him to listen to any job that is interested in him to find out why. Kenney took his friend's advice and was hired as the Royals Head AT in time for the upcoming season.

Kenney spent 12 years as the Royals Head AT/Director of Medical Services, developing and implementing his model for medical care. Kenney currently serves as the Royals Director of Medical Administration/Medical Services, a title he earned in 2021. In this role, Kenney oversees the medical care of the Royals major and minor league players. "In my role I can support KT (Kyle Turner) to be the clinician that he is, that he needs to be and the person that establishes and maintains the relationships to succeed as the Head Athletic Trainer," explains Kenney. "When the team is on the road, I visit our minor league affiliates and meet with our athletic trainers in

those cities. I want to see how we can help them, and how we can develop them" continues Kenney.

In addition to his position with the Royals, Kenney serves on the PBATS Board, something he credits to Ron Porterfield, then PBATS Secretary. "Ron kept telling me to get involved with the Board as he thought I had something to offer," shares Kenney. In 2013 Winter Meetings Kenney accepted his first role on the Board as American League Head AT Rep. Four years later in 2018, Ron became PBATS President and appointed Kenney as PBATS Secretary.

In December 2023, PBATS celebrated their 40th Anniversary and voted Kenney as their 9th President. "It is a tremendous honor and extremely humbling to be President as I was voted to this role by my peers who I think are the best in the business," shares Kenney. As President, Kenney wants to "continue to press educational initiatives, to push inclusion and to stimulate young members to get involved." Kenney plans to be more visible to the membership. "I want to talk with our members, get to know them better and find ways to get more involvement," explains Kenney.

Kenney is excited to continue serving the Royals and lead PBATS into the future. He will do this while spending quality time with wife Patty, and adult children Paige, Colin, Nathan and Madison. In addition, Kenney will continue on the Board of Directors for the Bra Couture Cancer Foundation in Kansas City, as this is a cause very close to his and Patty's hearts.

