

Staying in the game and in school



NEXT: When did you first realize that basketball could take you places, that it was no longer just a game?

TP: My parents grew up playing basketball so it influenced me and my brother. Starting early got me to the point where I am now.

NEXT: What made you choose UK: the basketball tradition, the education, or some of both?

TP: The basketball tradition plays into it, but when you're coming out of high school you also have to look at what players are at which schools and whether you're going to get playing time right away.

NEXT: How difficult is it to juggle college classes with Division I basketball?

TP: It's very difficult your freshman year. In high school you go to classes, practice, and that's pretty much the end of the day. Here you have to set a time schedule because you'll be busy all day. Practice at 6 in the morning, then classes between 8 and 2 o'clock. Then practicing again in the afternoon and then studying hard. You don't really have any free time.

NEXT: Was there ever a time when you just wanted to pursue basketball, or was getting a degree always a goal for you?

TP: Education was always a goal for me. The NBA is taking a lot of young guys nowadays;

In a world fixated with success, it is rare to find someone with extraordinary talent who decides that money and status mean less than the honing of his skills.

The University of Kentucky's Tayshaun Prince is one such man. He made the bold choice to stay in college and develop his game as well as his mind.

When you sit down and look at Tayshaun's statistics, you can't help but wonder what made him stay in college. He was named second-team All-America. He was picked for the Wooden All-America team. He proceeded to be named first-team All-SEC, SEC Player of the Year and SEC Tournament MVP.

So what did the young man from Compton, California have left to accomplish? His education. After all of the years dominating AAU, high school, and now college basketball, he knew that there was still one goal left, a college degree.

the seniors are kind of dropping. But I'm confident in how I play and what I can do on the basketball court. If I can just continue to do what I've been doing, I'll be fine.

NEXT: What was the key thing that kept you in school?

TP: Graduating. Not too many seniors actually get their degree when they're done playing basketball after their senior year. Usually they have to come back for a semester or summer school. I'm in a position where I don't have to do that. I can take four classes in the fall and four in the spring and I'll be through. My mom left it up to me; my dad did as well. But I knew what they were thinking: that the NBA would be there after my senior year.

NEXT: Once basketball is over, what do you want to do with your life?

TP: If I were not able to play, I would help kids pursue their careers and make the right decisions as far as basketball is concerned. I like to attend basketball camps because kids look up to people like us.

NEXT: If you could give teens one piece of advice as far as college, what would it be?

TP: Experience it. Education is important and I hope all those guys who went from high school to the NBA go back and pursue their education. It's hard at the beginning, but when you get used to it, it's a fun experience.

