

# Seventh Annual McCown's Quarterback and Receivers camp a reunion of football fun-damentals more than just a game

TYLER – The seventh McCown Quarterback and Receivers Camp was held this past Friday and Saturday at Tyler Junior College's, Hartley Field, and although the numbers may have been down a bit from last season, all the participants got what they came for...and more.

All three of the famous signal-calling brothers were on hand, as were several East Texas coaches and a few former pro players to pick up the slack.

55 campers overall split up into groups for quarterback and receivers drills, and competitions. Two of those 55 were Colton and Connor Mebane of Bullard.

For Colton it was a return trip, but for the younger Connor, he just wanted to meet the famous brothers.

Colton said, "This is my second time to come back and it's a great camp." said the Bullard middle schooler. "It helps us work hard, and helps us to set some goals to accomplish both on the field and in the classroom. They really helped me out with the three-step drop, and explained some other things about mechanics and philosophies that really were helpful."

Connor then jumped in to say, "I just wanted to meet the McCown brothers! They teach you how to work hard, and they focus on the little things, and if you really work on the little things, that will help you advance quicker than anything else."

There were also breaks throughout the camp to talk to the participants about training tips, mental readiness, priorities with mind, body, and spirit.

Randy, the eldest is still in great shape and looks forward to the annual event.

"It's something I look forward to every year just because it's fun to get out here with my brothers and try to make a difference for some of these kids," said Randy after workouts on Saturday. "I remember starting out seven years ago at old Mauldin Field behind Jacksonville High School and there were the three of us and about 15 campers.

Randy is a former quarterback for the Texas A&M Aggies. Following his senior season in 1999, Randy left ranked fifth on the all-time A&M passing list, and with the second-best single season in school history. During his four-year collegiate career, Randy connected on 277 of 536 passes (52 percent) for 4,187 yards, 22 touchdowns and 14 pick-offs.

His senior season marked his best, when he hit on 152 of 295 passes for 2,374 yards, 14 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. He piled up 362 yards passing his senior year against Kansas.

"We have some great kids that have really worked hard and it's great to see the kids that come back every year," Randy continued. "But watching the little guys that may not have the ability of the older players, and how they make up for it with hustle is just a joy to be around."

Josh McCown, is the middle of the trio of brothers, and currently quarterbacks for the Carolina Panthers.

The 29-year-old suited up for his fifth different team in as many years after being traded from Miami last preseason. Josh, listed at 6-4, 215 pounds, appeared in two games last season for the 12-4 Panthers, finishing with no passing attempts and four rushes for minus-3 yards.

Josh played for Arizona from 2002-05 prior to one-year stints in Detroit (2006) and Oakland (2007). Over his seven-year career, the former Southern Methodist and Sam Houston State star has passed for 6,582 yards, 35 touchdowns and 40 interceptions.

The youngest of the McCown quarterbacks is Luke, a 26-year-old, listed at 6-3, 212, that played in two games for Tampa Bay last season, throwing one incompleting and rushing three times for 15 yards.

Luke is coming into a big year for himself with a battle for the number one spot at Tampa Bay publicly announced to be a three-way tie right now with Luke vying over drafted No.1 pick, Josh Freeman, and veteran, Bryon Leftwich.

Regardless of the NFL and the brothers, there were two brothers from Bullard there that really enjoyed the camp, and took advantage of tips although two of the NFL receivers expected each had conflicts.

Former pro tight end, Keith Heinrich and OU's, Emmanuel Johnson of Gilmer stepped in and filled the vacated roles well according to the older Mebane, Colton.

"The big name receivers weren't there but the coaches and former pro players and college players that came in to help were really just a great group of guys," Mebane said, "and I can't wait to go back next year."



At top, The Mebane brothers, Connor at left and Colton at right with Josh, Luke and Randy McCown. Above, Luke McCown is shown here in a game of toss with a repeat camper. Below, The McCown brothers and their former high school quarterback coach, and Gilmer's signal-calling guru, Matt Turner. At bottom, Josh McCown warms up for camp on Saturday morning with one of the repeat campers back for his second year.



## On field together again

TYLER – Showing my age once again, I find it hard that it was seven years ago that I went to the old Jacksonville High School Field on the campus in Jacksonville, for the inaugural, McCown's Quarterback Camp, at Mauldin Field.

There they were. Randy, Josh and Luke McCown.

Three collegiate all-stars, one of which was playing professionally, and another that was going into his rookie season at Cleveland, a former all-conference player for the Aggie and about 15 quarterback hopefuls.

Both Josh and Luke remain in the NFL, and giving back is still a priority, and it is seen with it's growth one step at a time.

"This year, we had a little trouble with other obligations with some of the current players," said Luke McCown, the youngest of the trio.

Luke is in a legitimate three-way battle for the top spot for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Josh plays in Carolina, but holds down a solid spot with the Panthers.

Randy McCown is the oldest, and a former Texas A&M record holder at quarterback, graduating in the late '90s.

This seventh camp was special one for more reasons than one however.

The trio had a reunion with their old high school quarterbacking guru, Matt Turner.

Turner is currently the offensive coordinator for a former Jacksonville, and another Danny Long protégé, Jeff Traylor at state power, Gilmer.

The Buckeyes are getting all the preseason nods from media outlets for the top spot in Class 3A football.

"Coach Turner taught us so much, and was always there when ever wanted to talk, workout or anything," said Josh about rekindling with Turner on the football field again. "And just getting out on the field with him again, and watching the enthusiasm he still has for teaching the game was fun to watch."

Turner has never been one for much media talk, but for these brothers and their camp, the quarterback mentor had words of wisdom and hard work.

"With quarterbacks you spend a lot of time where it is just them and you the coach, and you spend a lot of time working early in the mornings, or after practices and until late in the evening sometimes, and things get a little intense," Turner continued.

"But you know, that forms a bond between you that is just a special thing," said the Gilmer quarterback tutor, Turner. "It takes a special person to want to put that extra work in and all three of these guys were in that mold."

And not just the McCowns, guys like G.J. Kinney and Emmanuel Johnson that I have worked with at Gilmer that are here today, they have put in the extra effort too," Turner said, "and all the blood, sweat and tears have paid off, and that is really fun to watch and be a part of."

According to Luke, Turner had him ready for the jump to college ball with great ease.


"Learning and working with Coach Turner was invaluable to me to step up at every level of play," the youngest McCown began. "His work with footwork, just little things A became natural to me from working with him was something totally new to most of the other players that came in at Louisiana Tech.

"But it was also the life lessons coach (Turner) would incorporate with situations that have really paid off both on and off the field."

So when you get a chance to attend the McCown Camp, or any camp with Matt Turner on the coaching list, jump on it.

I assure you, just as the McCowns will tell you, you will take away with you so much more than just football just being around Coach Matt Turner," Josh added in conclusion. "All three of us would have never gotten where we are and without his coaching in our early years, and how he helped us, make men out of us."

**BULLARD**  
**PLAYER of the WEEK**



**BAILEE CALLENS**  
*Sophomore*  
Track and Field

Callens was recently named to the Class 3A Academic All-State Team as a freshman last season, running the distance events at the regional track meet in Humble. Callens made a valiant effort at the district meet picking up vital points while fighting the flu

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