

Former Panther all star, Ellis returns to Bullard to share the love as one of new Panther coaches

M.D. 'Doc' Smith
news@bullardnews.com

When Cody Ellis was growing up in Bullard playing ball, he had a love for athletics and can remember thinking during brief breaks during games or in-between innings about maybe returning to coach at Bullard High School one day.

Sometimes, one day comes a little quicker than you think!

Now, Ellis comes back home where he was an outstanding athlete, graduating in 2002.

He was all-state for two years, first team All East Texas, Offensive Player of the Year in 2001, and an academic all-stater for two years also.

After BHS, Ellis was an all-conference record-setter for Tyler Junior College. Named earned NJCAA Defensive Player of the Year as a catcher, played in

the Texas/New Mexico All Star Game, and add-on first team All-American, Academic All-American, and All Region, and the first team All-Region catcher.

Signing on at Arkansas-Monticello, Ellis played for his two final seasons under head coach, Kevin Downing.

Starting to coach right out of college at TJC, as a graduate assistant, Ellis made the most of the breaks baseball has given his entire playing days.

Three years of the first year coaching responsibilities were all warranted to progress along a quick climb up the coaching ladder beginning at one of his old schools, TJC.

As an assistant to Jon Groth at TJC in the 2006-07 season, The Apaches won the national Championship with a 46-12 record, coaching three All-Americans and four All-Regional players,

five All-Conference players, and the NJCAA Player of the Year.

Groth, the recently resigned TJC-mentor from the diamond was a key break for Ellis and one the young Ellis will not forget. "baseball is a game that can teach many life lessons, and he was very instrumental in getting my coaching career off at a great program, and he also had a lot to teach me about life," said Ellis about his coach, and co-coach at "Harvard on the Hill" in Tyler (TJC).

About Ellis, Groth has no doubt he is where God placed him. To work with kid's and teach the game of life as well as baseball.

"Cody was a hard-working player and coach for me at Tyler Junior College, and set quite a few records as I remember," said Groth. "But Cody is a great young man, a very Christian young man that will be a great

asset to his alma-mater there at Bullard."

Ellis then jumped to the high school ranks, accepting the assistant baseball job at Central High School, coaching both the JV and varsity teams.

Last year, Winona High School gave Ellis a shot to run his own program as the head baseball coach, while assisting with linebackers for the varsity and coaching seventh-grade as well.

For Bullard, Ellis will aid head coach Ronnie Dent with baseball, and assist with high school football. Dent is more than happy to have a former player and protégé, back as an assistant that is well familiar with the Dent way.

"I had been trying to set this up for a few years and the opportunity just cam up and I am so excited he got the opportunity," said Dent about the Ellis return. "Cody brings a lot of differ-

ent aspects through playing and coaching that will really benefit the Bullard program.

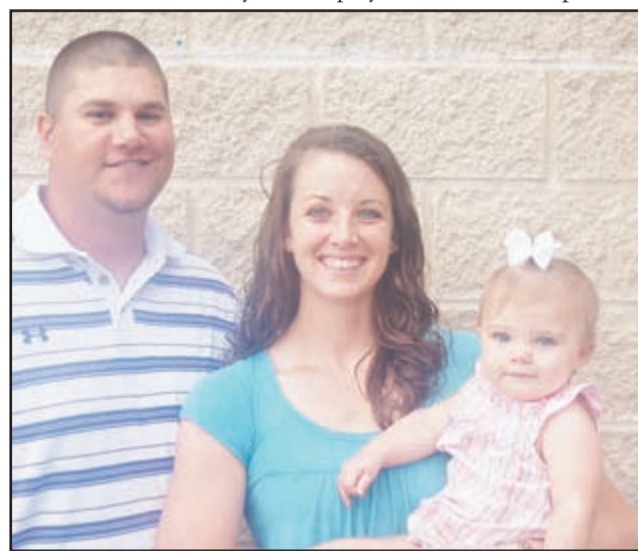
"He is not only a former player, but a great friend and someone I can count on," added Dent.

Ellis returns after his stints at TJC, and Winona with a family, after the addition of a ten-month old daughter, Cadance, and his wife Kathleen, a teacher at Birdwell Elementary in

Tyler.

This also works out to the Ellis advantage. "So this is a perfect opportunity for me to come home and raise my little girl in Bullard ISD," added the current long-ball champion of golf, Ellis. "As you can tell I am pretty excited to be back home!"

Ellis is also coaches the Texas Prospects which have produced over 50 college players since it's inception.



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