

AKWASI -“HAVING FUN MAKES ONE HAPPY!” September 1, 2009

The summer break is over, and that means I have to get back to work again here in Utah. The first year as freshman went by quickly and I am now in my second year, also being called a sophomore student. From the moment of being a sophomore one is no longer considered a greenhorn or rookie in America. You do not fully belong yet, but you are acknowledged slightly more than a freshman. For me being a second year at the Utah Valley University (UVU) means getting a second chance. It also means that my head coaches Scott Houle and Kirke Adamson continue to believe in me and that they have decided to give me a second chance despite having a disappointing first sporting season. By means of an operation in my groin, which I obtained through a sporting injury, I was not able to run for my school at athletics meetings last year.

For my first semester as a sophomore I have chosen the following subjects: English, Mathematics, Introduction to Mass Communications, Introduction to Speech Communication and . . . guitar lessons! These subjects are called generals, and are meant to help and guide a student in his/her pursuit in obtaining a diploma in your choice of study. For me, that is communication with an emphasis on public relations. The guitar lessons I have included are for the sake of having some FUN.

Fun would be the correct word for my second school year here in America. My goal is to have fun in my study and in my sport. My desire to always go for the ultimate goals in life should not become less, but this time with a bit more fun. Motivation and perseverance are good characters, but having too much pressure is not healthy. It leads to stress and dissatisfaction. ‘You rather want to be yourself and stay plain. All eyes on you can kill you . . .’

During my summer holiday in the Netherlands I have talked extensively with my girlfriend Kimberly and with Allyson Anan, director of the Johan Cruyff Institute. It concerned all kinds of stress that I carry with me in my pursuit to obtain certain goals in life. As a matter of fact, I am not that proud of my sporting career of the past five years. Because of my sporting goal, to participate in the next Olympic Games, and the attention of the media, I have obtained a lot of respect. But, that respect has also diminished by some mediocre sporting achievements in the last few seasons. Also, my social involvement is less and less seen. People are beginning to judge me more and more on my sporting achievements and performances. Perhaps I make myself guilty by sending out the wrong signal. If you make promises you must stand by them and deliver, no matter what. This could probably come down to man's ego! Maybe I am too much busy with what others would think of me when I do not achieve my sporting goals. At times I find myself being too consumed by these thoughts that it gives me much stress. Through this I lose the fun that I had when I first started with athletics as a 15-year old. That fun resulted in me winning a gold medal as a junior in

the 200 meters at the National Championships back in 2003. My aim is to look up and find that fun again. In no means do I want to lose sight of my goals, but the way in which I want to reach these goals can become a bit more relaxed with more FUN added to it. Eventually I am the one that must make myself happy, whether I obtain my sporting goals or not.

Discipline, respect, and perseverance are characters that I will always use to gain success in this life. The summer break is over and I am back to continue my study and back on the track, but this time with LOADS OF FUN.

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Akwasi playing his guitar in Utah, America.

Column September, 2009

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