Jessica Judd – WKU Football Head Trainer

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For the first time in the history of WKU football, a female is in charge of the athletic training staff, overseeing the overall health and wellness of the team.

Amy Bingham talks to her in this week’s View from the Hill.

Jessica Judd is beginning her second season as one of only eleven head football female athletic trainers in Division One FBS (Football Bowl Subdivision). She says being the only woman on the field at any given time is something she doesn’t even notice.

 “Football just worked for me. I liked the chaos of it.”

Whether it’s practice or a game, Jessica Judd is never far from the action.

 “She puts her nose down, she works hard. She does whatever it takes to take care of the kids.”

As WKU Football’s head certified athletic trainer, the players health is Judd’s number one priority.

 “There’s surgeries, there’s rehab, there’s you know people in here for up to 9,10, 11 months, we’ve got to convince them to be positive and get them back on the field.”

The Ohio native says an Intro to Athletic training class at the University of Toledo while she was still in high school set her on this path.

 “I was an athlete in high school and in grade school but I knew I wasn’t good enough to actually pursue it at a collegiate level so I still wanted to be around it.”

An internship at Louisiana Tech led to a two year stint there before coming to WKU in 2015.

“You have to love it or you’ll get burned out.”

Calling six am until eight pm a “light” day during football season, Judd says it’s now second nature being on the front lines of a male dominated sport.

 “You learn how to talk to the kids and what works for them. Do you need to be a little tougher on them or be a little nicer to them. From a female perspective obviously they can look at me as a mom figure.”

Gaddie says many of them do.

 “She pours her heart into those kids and will do whatever for them and they know that and that’s why they respond back to her.”

 “I always tell everybody momma wants to know who’se taking care of their baby and that’s Jess.”

Judd graduated from the University of Alabama and received her Masters degree from the University of Wyoming.

Hilltopper football is off to a one and one start on the season and will take on Louisville this Saturday in Nashville.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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