

History teaches JBM-HH Soldier/athlete

Spc. Clive Smith knows his Jordans and Russells

By Jim Dresbach
Pentagram Staff Writer

Editor's note: In commemoration of Black History Month, The Pentagram is featuring a series about Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Soldiers and who influenced their careers in the arts or subjects of expertise.

Spc. Clive Smith is an aide to the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall command group team during business hours, but when not at his desk in Bldg. 59, he sees to business on the basketball court.

Smith is a member of the JBM-HH men's basketball team and his history on the hardwood is an abbreviated history. The 28-year-old did not start playing organized basketball until his senior year at South Miami Senior High School in Florida.

"I didn't start playing basketball until I was 18," Smith said. "I didn't touch a basketball until I was 18. I played football. I was a defensive end. I found out that I was more athletic in basketball."

Smith called South Miami Senior High School a basketball hot bed, but the school has produced famous athletes, entertainers, and politicians. Football Hall-of-Famer Derrick Thomas, rapper Pitbull, and U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio are famous alumni of the school. Since football was his initial specialty, he rattled off a hand-



PHOTO BY JIM DRESBACH

Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Soldier and base basketball player Clive Smith lines positions himself for a rebound before a foul shot Friday versus Fort Bliss in the 2019 Capitol Classic at the Fort Myer Fitness Center.

ful of players, including Thomas, who he loved to watch.

"I definitely followed Michael Vick and Miami Dolphins Zach Thomas, Derrick Thomas and LT (New York Giants linebacker Lawrence Taylor)," said Smith, who also was a big University of Miami football follower.

Smith successfully tried out for the Division II Florida Memorial University basketball team in Miami Gardens, Florida. His high school basketball coach, Robert Doctor,

recognized Smith's athleticism and talent, gave Smith an opportunity and arranged for the chance to play in college.

"I wasn't even planning on going to college," said Smith, who picked up basketball knowledge by playing in pick-up games and watching basketball on television. "My basketball coach called me one day. My coach asked me if he could get me into a school would I go, and I said 'yes.'"

As for his basketball influences, Smith watches and

admires players he knows he can emulate.

"You know, most people watch LeBron James," Smith said. "I can't do the things he does, so I watch people like Tim Duncan, Amar'e Stoudemire and Dwight Howard. He's my favorite. Howard was 'Superman'."

Smith talked about basketball history and noted winning National Basketball Association team championships leaves a legacy in basketball lore.

"Everyone says (Chicago

Bull) Michael Jordan is the best, and they always say that because he has six rings," Smith said. "But look at (Boston Celtics) Bill Russell. Is he really the best? He has 11 rings. If rings make you the best, it could be Bill Russell. I love Kareem (Abdul-Jabbar), too and that hook shot. I love old school moves. I still go out to the park and watch the guys do old school moves."

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Protecting environment by preventing sewer backups

By Jen Tolbert
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One of the greatest creations of the modern-day era was the development of the sanitary sewer system. While it may not be the most glamorous invention, this system of underground pipes has helped to significantly improve human health and environmental conditions in towns and cities by containing sewage and preventing bacteria and diseases from spreading throughout our communities and the environment.

The sanitary sewer system carries wastewater directly from sinks, toilets, washing machines, and more to municipal wastewater treatment facilities, where the water is filtered and treated before being discharged. Unfortunately, sanitary sewer systems are not fool proof. Occasionally, blockages in sewer pipes cause sewer backups or overflows, which is an unintentional release of sewage to stream or surface areas before it reaches the wastewater treatment plant. Not only are sanitary sewer system backups a complete mess to clean up, they can also severely harm the environment. The wastewater can overflow into the stormwater system, which carries rainwater directly to local streams and creeks.

Sewage overflows can contaminate groundwater and surface water, which can spread diseases via drinking water, recreational water sources, and the food sources through the contamination local fish catch.

While there are several ways a sanitary sewer system can get backed up, including roots infiltrating the pipe system and aged piping, a common cause of backups is the presence of obstructions in sewer pipes. In other words, people dumping things they shouldn't down the drain.

In order to protect the health

of communities and local environment, individuals must do their part to prevent sewage overflows from occurring by learning what can and can't be put down drains and toilets.

Be mindful of what goes down the kitchen or break-room sink. The following food-related materials can cause clogs in the sewer lines and create backups:

- **Greases, fats, and oils (such as cooking oils including barbecue grease).** These stick together and coat the insides of pipes, solidifying as they cool and creating blockages.

- **Coffee grounds.** Grounds do not break down in water, but instead clump together and build up.

- **Egg shells.** The shells break down to a sand-like consistency that can contribute to clogs, and they do not sharpen the blades of garbage disposal as a common myth says.

- **Pasta and rice.** These foods tend to swell when they come into contact with water.

- **Fibrous foods (such as corn husks, celery, and artichokes).** The fibers can get tangled with other materials and cause a clog.

Remember that toilets do not make everything disappear. The following restroom-related products should never be flushed down toilets:

- **Wipes and cosmetic towelettes.** This includes wipes that claim to be "flushable." These items do not actually break down. Instead, they may gather together and create a major blockage.

- **Feminine products and cotton swabs.** As with the items above, these are not biodegradable and are a very common cause of sanitary sewer line backups.

- **Dental floss.** Floss does not biodegrade and can easily become tangled with other items and form clogs.

- **Paper towels and tissues.** While they may seem similar to toilet paper, these paper products are not made to dis-

solve and disintegrate in water like toilet paper does.

By individuals doing their part to keep these items out of the sanitary sewer systems, everyone can prevent the contamination of local waters and the spread of diseases throughout communities.

To report conditions that could cause stormwater pollution or to get more involved with stormwater activities at JBM-HH, call the Environmental Management Division at (703) 696-8055.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WATER.USGS.GOV

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