**John Urschel Interview**

1. **How old were you when you started to play football?**

* 13 years old & more physically developed
* Dad played college football and his parents support his decision

1. **We have read that many young athletes hide the fact that they are hurt in order to keep playing, have you ever done that?**

* Yes “ Never as a high school or college player, but I play football for a living. I am paid to perform. When you are older and have a job and you don’t feel like giving something, but it’s your job, it’s just something you have to do.”
  + (Responsibility!)

1. **Did you suffer from any concussions as a kid? Did you continue to play?**

* None as a kid
* This past august was his 1st
  + Protocol for his concussion:
    - Didn’t play for 3 weeks
    - “It’s very important for brain injuries to get proper rest and to make sure your head is 100%”

1. **What were the significant symptoms of your concussion?**

* Knocked unconscious, severe headaches, light bothered him, trouble sleeping, headaches & nauseous while trying to exercise

1. **If you have kids would you allow them to play football?**

* “Of course I will allow them. When you have children, you have ideas of what you would like them to do and every opportunity of what they can have. Children, they are their own person, you have to let them do what they want. I won’t ever push football in my house. I’d be much happier if they became mathematicians.”
* Will let kids start in high school when their bodies are fully developed. There is other great sports at different ages

1. **Doesn’t starting football at a later age put you at a disadvantage later on?**

* “I don’t think it’s a disadvantage. If you don’t play any sports, that’s a significant disadvantage.”
* “As long as you’re an athlete, whenever you start playing football, you will be successful.
* Urschel played soccer, basketball, and lacrosse
* Played football 4 years in high school and earned a college scholarship to Penn State

1. **Do you think football is getting any safer in the NFL?**

* “A lot safer. A lot of changes have been to the rules, how it is played, safer on special teams. Safety hasn’t changed for Guard in 20 years but for other positions.”

1. **Why did you do “high level” math after your recent concussion?**

* “ I like Math. I enjoy it.
* After Effects
  + Short Term – headaches, hindered abilities
  + Long Term- “my brain didn’t necessarily work as quickly and as sharp as it should be”

1. **What happens if you get a concussion during the game?**

* “Typically one of the trainers will recognize it. There is an independent person in the booth that looks for it. You go through protocol and perform certain tests to see if you have one. You have to pass in order to play.”

1. **What was your most severe injury from playing football**

* “Blessed as far as injuries”
* Broken 3-4 fingers, wrist, sprained ankles, neck injury, shoulder injury, concussion was by far the worst

1. **We have read that you envied another player for quitting football at a young age. Would you ever consider quitting?**

* Quitting- wrong word to who he was referring to. “At some point your body doesn’t let you play anymore. You have to think of concussions in a different light than spine or neck injuries, or knee injuries that limit you from coming back. Some players can’t come back because risks are too high. I respect this player’s decisions.”
* “I will have to consider it if I have another concussion.”

1. **CTE: Over exaggerated or rare phenomenon?**

* Not sure if any of us know.
* Only anecdotal evidence from former football players
* Research isn’t there not, it’s not matching claims

1. **If you had to choose between math and football, which would you choose?**

* “Math over football. You can only play football for so long. The career after football is what lasts you the rest of your life.”
  + (Life lesson, Importance of education!)

1. **When you were a kid did you ever think you would make it to the NFL?**

* “No, I never thought the NFL was a thing for me. I’m more practical than most, it would be amazing if it did happen, but I never expected it or thought it was a real possibility.”

1. **Can you really life 500 lbs??**

* “Yes.”

1. **How did you balance football and college? Was it difficult?**

* Course it was challenging at times. I love both and spent all my time doing both. Some aspects of my life suffered, but no regrets on my college career.

1. **What if you couldn’t play football or do math?**

* “I wouldn’t want to live in a world like that.”

1. **How do you have time to do everything?**

* I like and enjoy all of these things. I allocate my time to do it all and still get enough sleep!

1. **Does football teach any life skills?**

* “Commitment, toughness, resiliency. A lot of times in football you have adversity, things holding you back, maybe you don’t feel well, but you still have to go out there and do what you’re suppose to do. That’s a lesson I’ve learned from football.”

1. **What other serious physical problems are there in football?**

* “They don’t talk about prescription drugs, it doesn’t get its due.”

1. **We’ve read you liked football for the aggression and “hitting people”.**

* “Something fun about football, if any of you wanna play, is that it’s you against the person lined up across from you. You’re giving them everything you got and they’re giving you everything they got. The aggression and competition of being successful is what I love.”

1. **How can you make youth football safer?**

* Teaching proper technique, 7v7 flag football, middle school can be 11v11 padded
* “The key is teaching correct fundamentals of the game.”

1. **Any piece of advice, or words of wisdom about education, sports, or life?**

* “Sports are a beautiful thing. It’s a great way to make friends, learn life lessons, and it’s extremely fun. Academics are extremely important too. Whichever subject, these are the things you’ll be doing the rest of your life. Pay attention, do what you enjoy- foster that and let it grow. You’ll be doing it the rest of you life and you want to love what you do.”