

PRACTICE

Building Character Through Soccer



Patience:

State of endurance and perseverance under difficult circumstances

Synonyms: even tempered, long-suffering, diligence, composure

Patience Story

Ken Duke is a professional golfer on the PGA tour. He is currently 150th on the money list and is ranked 200th in the world golf rankings. That doesn't sound too remarkable and while he is a very talented golfer, he is not a household name. His story is one of patience, his climb to professional golf was littered with adversity, and his path was not an easy one.

Duke grew up in Arkadelphia, Arkansas and played golf as a teen despite having been diagnosed with scoliosis, a debilitating and painful condition of the spine. He had to wear a back brace for much of his childhood, sometimes 23 hours per day, and he was often in pain. Despite wearing the brace, Duke's spine continued to curve, and he underwent a surgery to insert a 16 inch metal rod into his back to help stabilize his spine curvature. After the successful surgery and a lengthy recovery, he returned to playing and excelling in golf and in 1987, he won medalist honors at the high school district tournament.

After graduation, Duke stayed close to home for college and attended Henderson State University to study and play on the golf team. Although he continued to battle bouts of recurring back pain, Duke led HSU to four straight Intercollegiate Conference titles and was a four-time AIC Golfer of the Year. In 1992, Duke was an NAIA All-American.

Duke turned pro in 1994 and after more than a decade bouncing around on the minor tour circuit, he finally earned his PGA card in 2007, where he played for 3 years. His success on tour however didn't last very long, and after a disappointing 2009 season, he lost his PGA card and he had to return to the Nationwide Tour. Again he remained patient while working to get back to the top level of golf. Two years later, in 2012, he returned to the PGA tour. Duke's patience paid off when on June 23, 2013, he won his first PGA event, The Travelers Championship, in Cromwell, Connecticut. At 44 years of age, Duke was the oldest first time PGA tour winner in nearly 20 years.

Ken Duke has patiently worked on his golf game, despite adversity and a lifetime of physical pain. He has remained steady in his resolve to achieve his goals, regardless of what obstacles were in his path. His story reminds us that patience is required when challenges are present and success seems far away.

"Patience is not passive waiting. Patience is active acceptance of the process required to attain your goals and dreams" – Ray Davis, author

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Follow Up Questions:

Name two challenges that Ken Duke faced and how he chose to deal with them?

Why is patience important in handling and working through adversity?

Describe a time when you have had to demonstrate patience in dealing with a setback or challenge?

Explain how patience can help in achieving individual goals.
