

Demetrius still Means business

By [Danny Colvin](#)

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Demetrius Means is still enjoying his sports radio gigs in Virginia. WEST BRIGHTON — Last week, Demetrius Means must have been thinking to himself, "If they could only see me now."

Growing up in a large West Brighton family and given the go-nowhere tag by community naysayers, the 52-year-old Kilmarnock, Va., resident had Staten Island on his mind when he eased into a TV broadcast seat to do color analysis for the seventh annual North vs. South All-Star high school basketball game in Chesterfield.

Phrases such as "you can't do that" or "be nothing" were constantly hurled at Means during his Prall Intermediate School days before he became the head of Mickey Burns' 1976 McKee High School quintet which went to the 1976 Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) basketball final, a success which turned him eventually south toward telecasting dreams.

"No one does it alone on this planet," says the faith-based Means, who has been doing radio broadcasts of high school basketball and baseball at WWKI for 14 years.

"Someone, somewhere along the line always helps out. In this business, everyone has a goal and a dream. It is highly competitive. You have to work hard at your trade and have faith."

Lots of it.

His wife Patricia of nearly 25 years (silver anniversary July 14) obviously is an understanding and patient woman, who doubles as the principal of the Richmond County Intermediate School (VA). Familial support continues with son Demetrius II (senior at Virginia Union) and daughter De'Ane (frosh at Christopher Newport University).

Means was in his element for the Fox TV gig. He had radio-broadcasted the AA and A district and regional finals in second-nature mode and, with the voice of Virginia Commonwealth University Robert Fish as play-by-play partner, the two-day all-star competition was as easy as breathing oxygen.

"I did my homework and did my thing," said the hard-working Means, who had a life-learning experience this past fall when he took the Old Dominion University football sideline reporter assignment.

Brock Petrie, the CBS market manager, and Chuck Gray, general manager of ODU Sports Properties, thought the East Virginian would be a nice mix with play-by-play announcer Ted Alexander when the Bob Wilder-led Monarchs took to the gridiron for the first time in 69 years.

"I had to admit football was totally different," conceded an overwhelmed Means. "I knew and was very comfortable with basketball and baseball, but not football. I had to find a comfort zone and it took me a couple of games to get the groove."

Means found himself in Bob Uecker (front row) seats, chatting with the school president (John Broderick), and doing more preparation than if he were studying for the MCATs, the test for admission to medical school.

"I'd drive two hours to ODU practice and got to know everyone from the guys who pour the Gatorade to the head coach. I now have a whole new respect for those sideline reporters. It was fun after awhile and you eventually learn how to seek out and find interesting tidbits.

"Some would shy away from such a challenge, but I figured the more you can do, the more versatile you become, it has to help you in your pursuit of a broadcast career."

Being a church elder and an active member of his community, Means does not short-change his plans.

"I'm out there talking to teens and giving back. I know where I came from and everyone could use a helping hand."