

D1 Sports Training

Will Bartholomew was a full-back for the University of Tennessee Volunteers from 1998 through 2001 and a member of the 1998 National Championship team. Shortly after leaving the university, Bartholomew, a free agent at the time, sustained a career-ending knee injury during training camp with the Denver Broncos. Determined to remain a part of the athletic world, he founded D1 Sports Training in a small warehouse outside Nashville in 2002.

“When he was doing his rehab, he was sitting there thinking, ‘Wouldn’t it be great if I could go to a place that not only would have rehabilitation services, but would also have sports training services or a gym?’” says Jason Studwell, the facility coordinator for D1’s Knoxville location, which first opened in 2005.

Today, the small warehouse in Nashville has grown into a national company with more than 20 facilities nationwide, stretching from Pittsburgh to Colorado Springs. True to Bartholomew’s vision, D1 now specializes in serving as a one-stop shop for sports therapy, strength training, and recreation.

“Let’s say I tear my knee up, and I have to come in for rehab,” says Studwell. “Well, not only can I rehab my knee, but I can also work out for whatever particular sport that I’m going to play.”



D1’s Knoxville branch—co-owned by Broncos quarterback and former Vol Peyton Manning—moved from its Lovell Road location to a 33,000 square foot facility on Hardin Valley Road in 2010. D1 offers programs for all ages. Classes are offered for children as young as 7 years old, and adults have access to strength classes for muscle training and “boot camps” for general fitness. D1 also offers specialty classes such as training in soccer goalkeeping and baseball fieldwork.

One of these classes is Mixed Martial Arts, led by instructor Ben Harrison. Harrison had an MMA school in

Lenoir City when D1 hired him to lead their own program. The martial art Harrison teaches, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, is a popular self-defense tool as well as what professional fighters use in MMA leagues, and its many uses are mirrored in the variety of students Harrison teaches at D1. Housewives and college students train alongside competitive fighters.

“When people come to class, 99 percent are here for something other than actual competition,” says Harrison. “Whatever their goals are, we’ll cater to that. Our deal is that everyone’s going to have a different goal.



LOCATION: 10258 Hardin Valley Road
FOUNDER: Will Bartholomew
ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE (LOCAL): More than \$500,000
WEBSITE: www.d1knoxville.com
SLUGAN: “The Place for the Athlete”
CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS: Nashville, Tennessee