Tat, tat, tat it up
Ink on the field

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Most of FAU’s athletes don tattoos—lots of them. The point guard on the basketball team, for example, got his first tattoo when he was 14 years old. Since then, Ray Taylor’s gotten 14 tattoos, which cover most of his arms and stomach. And on his chest is a word bubble with his trademark saying, “Oh!”

Defensive end James Johnson, from FAU’s football team, believes that nearly 75% of his teammates are marked. His teammates, safety Darnell Wilson, has a mustache of an entire city scrawled onto his body. And receiver Demetris Richardson has so many tattoos that he’s lost count.

The WBB jousters lack the room in order to find the best and bestest tattoos that the athletes of FAU sport.

James Johnson

Even though he’s 6’6” and 270 pounds, Johnson answers every question with “Sir” or “Ma’am.” He was wasted until he was 21 years old, respecting his mother’s wishes, to get his first tattoo.

Now 22 years old, he hasn’t stopped getting inked up. Catching up for lost time, he now has 11 tattoos.

His favorite is a pair of guns on his left arm, Texas six-shooters, which represents home for Johnson.

Demetris Richardson

The world is on his shoulder—figuratively.

At the top of Williamson’s right arm is a globe tattoo, symbolizing the weight of the world burdening his shoulder at all times. On his left arm, it’s not even his favorite. That would be the one on the inside of his arm, a memorial of the Great White Beach where he came from. Besides a state of smoke are the words “Daytona Beach,” with the city’s area code, 386, inside of it, next to buildings from the city.

“Every time I look at it,” Williamson said as he admired the art on his arm, “it just makes me want to leave.”

Darnell Wilson

There are so many tattoos on his body that he can’t remember how many there are. And, for a while, his teammates didn’t even know he had any.

“I had all these tattoos before I came here. As most people didn’t know but as soon as I took my shirt off, they were like, ‘Yay! You’ve gotten a tattoo.’” Richardson said.

His favorite tattoo is a cross intertwined with praying hands on his right arm. The names of his two sons, Dylon and Jaylor, are on the bottom of it.

“After I got this tattoo, I said, the rest of my body looked bad,” Richardson said. “So I just started adding more.”

Ray Taylor

He lifts up his shirt and shows off his favorite tat. On Taylor’s stomach are the words “Hungry and Humble,” outlined in red ink and smoke, with a basketball in the middle, linking Hungry to Humble. Classicly, that’s how I live my basketball life,” Taylor said about his favorite piece of ink. “Because humble, that’s how you have to stay if you wanna get better, and playing for coach Jamison, you don’t have any choice but to be humble and hungry.”

On his chest is a tattoo of a word bubble, with “Oh!” inside of it. He says all the time when he plays, so it’s kind of a trademark.

If I had a motto or while I was playing, anytime I beat somebody, I’ll say it.” Taylor said. “Oh! I say it a lot.”

Ikeology

Ikeology has studied tattoos since fall 2010—now he’s the latest.

The popularity of ink isn’t unique to the FAU’s sports department, according to a campus study about tattoos.

Assistant professor of art history, Karen Leaver, is the principal investigator in a study on tattoos. According to Leaver, nearly 1,200 students answered questions about their tattoos—students of different gender, race, religion and political leaning.

“Leaver said the students were asked about the meaning of their tattoos, what the images represented and how they felt about them.” The study’s results may help to better understand the cultural significance of tattoos.

Leaver said. According to the study’s website, a deeper meaning could be found behind the tattoos. With the survey and the students who are part of it, we are testing a conversation about tattoos as something much more than a fashion trend. One of the main ideas is that tattoos can be seen as a way to express identity and cultural values.”

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