



# GROWING UP GRID

FIVE DAUGHTERS OF PRO FOOTBALL PLAYERS DISH ABOUT THE PLUSSES AND MINUSES OF  
*By Jenna Sampson*

Most football fans believe being the child of an NFL player would be a dream come true. And while having a pro as your daddy certainly has its benefits, it can also make for some embarrassing moments and unusual situations. To get the scoop on what it's really like to grow up in the shadow of professional football, we asked five daughters of NFL players to tell us how their childhood helped to shape who they are today.

## Courtney and Ashley Paris

**Dad:** William “Bubba” Paris, three-time Super Bowl champion with the San Francisco 49ers. He’s currently a motivational speaker and president/founder of Champions with Christ Crusade Ministries.

**Profile:** At 6-foot-4 and 6-foot-3, respectively, 19-year-old twins Courtney and Ashley are freshmen at the University of Oklahoma. They’ve done the Paris name justice as two of the nation’s most sought-after basketball recruits. Courtney and Ashley attest that their father has been their biggest fan—for as long as they can remember.

**Not Your Average Upbringing:** Says Ashley: “When I was younger he used to come to our practices, and when we were running lines he would yell, ‘Run, Ashley, run!’ It was so embarrassing.” And both girls have learned to give their dates a heads-up where 6-foot-8, 295-pound Dad is concerned. “I had a lot of boyfriends that were afraid of him in high school,” admits Ashley. Understandably so.

**Drawback:** “When I was younger and I first got started playing sports, people would pick on me and say, ‘The only reason you’re good is because of your dad,’” says Ashley.

**Why Father Knows Best:** “[Dad’s] competitive mentality is awesome,” says Courtney. “He’s the best person to talk to before a game to get focused. He doesn’t know everything about basketball, but as far as competing, he’s a good guy to talk to.”

Now 22, Michelle earned her bachelor’s degree in textiles and clothing last June and is looking forward to entering the next chapter of her life as a clothing designer. “The thing I’m learning even right now is that playing sports is something you do, but it doesn’t make you who you are as a person,” she notes.

**Not Your Average Upbringing:** “For my high school prom, my dad decided to be the limo driver,” Michelle recalls. “He walked out in a tux and said he would be our escort. My date thought it was funny, but it was clear he was nervous!”

**Drawback:** “When I walk in to work, people still say, ‘I can’t believe you’re here! Your dad is my hero,’” says Michelle. “I appreciate it, but it was hard because I was never just ‘Michelle.’ Any article written about me always focuses on me being the ‘daughter of.’ He’s an amazing man, though, so I don’t mind too much. It’s a blessing now.”

## Chrissy Mauck

**Dad:** Carl Mauck, whose NFL career was highlighted by a streak of 156 consecutive games played. He’s currently coaching the offensive line for the San Diego Chargers.

**Profile:** Having grown up around football, Chrissy is now a sportswriter, filing stories as the Internet Services Manager for the San Francisco 49ers. While being a woman writing about sports hasn’t always been easy, Mauck acknowledges the work environ-

Chrissy. “He also ripped a hoop earring out of my date’s ear. But most people know that my dad’s bark is a lot worse than his bite.”

**Drawback:** “For us growing up, when my dad was coaching, a Sunday win was everything,” says Chrissy. “[We were concerned about whether] my dad would have a job the next day. Are we going to have to move? Do I have to switch schools? It’s a totally different perspective [from what most kids experience].”

## Leslie Tuiasosopo

**Dad:** Manu Tuiasosopo, who earned first-team All-Pac-10 honors from 1976-78 as a defensive lineman at UCLA, and who played for eight years in the NFL for Seattle and San Francisco (1979-86). He currently works for Alaska Airlines.

**Profile:** University of Washington women’s volleyball assistant coach Leslie Tuiasosopo didn’t start playing volleyball until the ninth grade, but soon carved out a niche for herself. After helping lead Washington to the NCAA blocking title in 1998, she moved to Murcia, Spain, to pursue a professional volleyball career. “My dad always taught us to play hard, play smart, kick butt, and win,” says the 28-year-old, now in her fifth season coaching for the Huskies. “The biggest difference about pro sports is that you have to take care of yourself. No one is looking out for you, and no one is there to be your friend. Coaches are only worried about performance

# IRON

BEING NFL DADDIES’ LITTLE GIRLS



Courtney Paris



Ashley Paris



Michelle Muñoz



Leslie Tuiasosopo



Chrissy Mauck

## Michelle Muñoz

**Dad:** Anthony Muñoz, a Hall of Famer who was an 11-time All-Pro with Cincinnati—where he still lives—and a member of the NFL 75th Anniversary All-Time Team. He started the Anthony Muñoz Foundation in 2002 to support local charities, and stays busy with speaking engagements and public appearances.

**Profile:** Michelle played college basketball for both Tennessee and Ohio before opting out of her last season of eligibility due to a chronic ankle injury. She earned a reputation as a power forward with the ability to hit shots from outside. During high school, Michelle earned Nike All-America, *Parade* All-America and *USA Today* Super 25 honors three times, and was a two-time Division I Player of the Year.

ment has come a long way. “When I first started, the only women working in public relations [in pro football] were in secretarial positions,” says Chrissy. “Now things have changed. Some teams allow their female PR staff to go into the locker room, but I’ve always been able to get guys right off the field for an interview. It makes it harder [being female], but that definitely shouldn’t be a reason for not hiring someone.” Mauck has also worked with the New Orleans Saints, Chicago Bears and Arizona Cardinals.

**Not Your Average Upbringing:** “One year before a high school homecoming dance, my girlfriends were all at my house, and when our dates arrived, my dad came out in a pair of overalls and yelled to my mom, ‘Vicki, where’s my shotgun?’” recalls

and numbers.” Her father taught Leslie (and her four younger siblings) many things about competition, including the value of off-season workouts.

**Not Your Average Upbringing:** “Growing up a lot of people thought our dad was hard on us,” says Leslie. “They always thought he pushed us hard. What he always told us is that if we were going to do this, we were going to give it 100 percent. We worked hard because we wanted to.”

**Why Father Knows Best:** “Our fathers have a lot of great insight on the basic principles of what it takes to be successful, like commitment, work ethic and team work,” says Leslie. “It doesn’t hurt to listen and learn from our fathers’ experiences. I know it has helped me reach a lot of my goals and aspirations.”