

John Boccacino:

Hello and welcome back to the 'Cuse Conversations Podcast. I'm John Boccacino, senior internal communications specialist at Syracuse University.

Ian Eagle:

Once Noah decided that he wanted to do this for a living, the first part of it is just happy for him to make a decision on his direction of where he wants to take his life. But then, the other part is the pride that you have as a dad, that your child is interested in what you do and interested at a level that they want to pursue it and they want to make it their life's work. It has certainly taken our relationship from what is first and foremost father-son into a different dimension, which is colleague-colleague.

Noah Eagle:

I've seen how excited my dad is, I see his interactions, I think this would be awesome. And I see it's possible, I see how the sausage is made, and so I kind of know what to expect with this job and what comes with it. But I didn't really do anything with that until I got to Syracuse, and by the time I got there as a freshman, I think what it did for me was it made me a little bit more singularly focused and where I really had a feeling of what I wanted and so I could attack it.

John Boccacino:

It's a Father's Day themed episode, and we have the honor of welcoming on two of the best sportscasters there are in Ian Eagle, a proud member of the class of 1990, and his son, Noah Eagle, from the class of 2019. Now, Ian just wrapped up his second year as the lead announcer for the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. He can also be heard calling NFL and NBA games on a variety of national broadcast networks. He's also the longtime Nets TV announcer for the YES Network. And his son, Noah, is a rising star in the sportscasting industry. In just six years, Noah has already worked the Super Bowl, been the voice of Team USA basketball at the Summer Olympics, the radio voice of the Los Angeles Clippers, he's also broadcast countless primetime college football and basketball games. And now, they're kind enough to join us here today to discuss their bond as father and son broadcasters, the important role Syracuse has played in their lives and so much more. Guys, thanks for making the time to be part of the podcast.

Ian Eagle:

Great to be with you, John.

Noah Eagle:

Thanks for having us, John, appreciate it.

John Boccacino:

Now, I know there's a lot of famous sportscasters and when it comes to father-son duos, you've got Marv and Kenny Albert, both from Syracuse, Skip and Chip Caray, which you've got to love the Orange pride, we produce broadcasters like nobody's business, and now we've got the Eagle Boys taking over the sportscasting landscape. Ian, how special is it to share not only a profession, but also your alma mater with your son?

Ian Eagle:

John, I actually really enjoy it when other broadcasters come up to me and they tell me, "Oh, I just saw your brother at another event." I'm like, yes, my brother. It's been more than I could have ever expected. Once Noah decided that he wanted to do this for a living, the first part of it is just happy for him to make

a decision on his direction of where he wants to take his life. But then, the other part is the pride that you have as a dad, that your child is interested in what you do and interested at a level that they want to pursue it and they want to make it their life's work. So anything above and beyond that has been gravy.

But it has certainly taken our relationship from what is first and foremost father-son into a different dimension, which is colleague-colleague. And the conversations we now have are nuanced, because it's not just dad and kid, it's someone that fully understands what I've done, and now I'm living vicariously through him as he goes through it for the first time and those experiences and how to navigate it, how to properly handle it, those are a big part of our conversations. But still, very much secondary to what the conversations would be, which are always going to be father-son-oriented.

John Boccacino:

Noah, what has your dad meant to you, and how would you describe your relationship with him as a father?

Noah Eagle:

He's fine, he's okay.

Ian Eagle:

That's really all I strive for, fine.

Noah Eagle:

Yeah. If we're just going to the top of the mountain, that's really where you want to reach. No, I think he nailed it, and for me, everybody asks why I decided to follow in his footsteps, I think it's a pretty easy decision. Once you realize when you wake up and you've got a great relationship with somebody and you see them happy and excited every morning to do what they do and looking forward to working with the people that he got to work with, and then getting to go to games and events with him, and seeing the smiles that he could put on people's faces, I said, "I want that, I want whatever he's got." And so, eventually, that's what I focused on. But the relationship has always been the most important part, and that's never gone away. To his point, it's only been strengthened over the years with the shared experiences and shared partners, which out of context sounds a little weird, but in context is awesome, the fact that we've gotten to work with a lot of the same people has been really cool on this journey.

But he's meant everything. The best thing he's done and really did was he stayed as hands-off as possible unless I came to him and really wanted something. And every now and then, he would give me some form of advice or a tip on something that I was maybe not doing 100% correct or something I could improve on. But for the most part, he let me learn myself, he let me go through my path and enjoy all of the struggles and everything else that comes with it by myself, and he was always there as a sounding board, he was always there as a form of anything that I needed. And so, I'm incredibly thankful that I've had him along the way, and I'm incredibly thankful that we're in the position right now where we're both doing great events and we both get to share those experiences together.

John Boccacino:

Ian, you look across the room and you see Noah's your only son, you have a daughter as well with your wife, but he's your only son, and he's out here doing the same thing that you're doing. How do you reflect on what you did right to make him be the great man that he is in front of us today?

Noah Eagle:

What did you do right? I want to hear that.

Ian Eagle:

No, the reality was it was a combination of my wife, Alisa, who went to Syracuse, graduated the same year, and myself, in how we approached parenthood beyond broadcasting, but how we looked at parenthood, the teamwork required to do it the right way, the discipline required to bite your lip sometimes and let your kids figure things out on their own, stepping in when necessary. And I think more than anything else, which sometimes might be reiterated in this world, is providing a good example, because ultimately, kids pick up on everything. They can sense it, they can feel it, so if you're one way out in public and a different way privately, they'll see that difference.

And the reality I'd like to think, my wife and I we're the same. We're the same people, we believed in kindness and trying to extract joy out of every day. It doesn't mean that every day is perfect, but I think both Noah and Erin got to see examples of people that were trying to do this the right way, treating people with respect and going through your life with a certain dignity. And my hope is, by osmosis, they figured out a lot of the things that they are now applying to their day-to-day life. Again, it wasn't sit them down, talk to them for 20 minutes and give a real example of what they need to learn from this situation. It's really more just trying to do the right thing in situations, and in turn, them learning that that's the better way to go. There are a couple of different options in every decision that you face in life, and usually the right one becomes instinctual, and I'd like to think that both Noah and Erin figured that out along the way.

John Boccacino:

What are some of the ways, Noah, that that responsibility that your dad was talking about rubbed off on you and the lessons you learned from having him as a father?

Noah Eagle:

Well, I think the key word that he just used was instinctual. I think that he and my mom were big on, for me and my sister, trusting your instincts, and that's something that applies to then what we do on the air as well and how important it is to be instinctual in what you're doing. But what he said in allowing us to make mistakes, they always wanted us to trust our instincts, and then they instilled good values in us, I would say, which is always important.

And then, from there, it's, hey, go and be yourself, and if you make a mistake, you learn from it. And there was never a... Every now and then, sure, there was a frustration from a parent when you do something maybe incredibly stupid as a child, but there was never an anger from them, and I think that was important, that we always felt safe. No matter what our decision was, they would understand, they would support and love us no matter what we decided to do. And so, there's a power that comes with that and there's a feeling of just knowing that everything is going to be okay, no matter how the path takes you and where it takes you along the way.

So for both of us who was trusting instincts and then learning from it and knowing we had a support system there, that was vital to growth as a human being, and then certainly as a professional. And I can see it with my sister, Erin, and how she approaches life and how she's grown into her adulthood. And for myself, I just think back to how I was even 10 years ago, or less, five years ago. It continues into the 20s, and I'm sure into the 30s and far into that. And that's just how great both of them are and have been for us, is no matter what stage of life we've been in, they've known the exact pressure point to hit when we've needed maybe a little bit of a push or when they've needed to step a little bit more back, they've just had a great feel for it.

So I think watching them, to your point, has been paramount to our growth and seeing them, even just it's little situations you don't think about, the interactions with somebody behind a counter and how that can help their day now moving forward, or having to do something a little bit more confrontational and how do you handle that, when you're on the phone with the cable company and trying to get something done and they're taking their time, no, he's the best at that. And my mom's very good at haggling car prices

apparently, which I found out when we went to get a car, and she was like, "This is how you haggle." She didn't necessarily sit me down, I just watched her, and you learn and then you take those experiences, bring them into the tank, and then when you need them, you take them out, make the deposit, whatever you need to do. So it's been a lot of that over the years.

John Boccacino:

Besides watching your dad navigate the phone companies and your mom haggling for car prices, Noah, what are some of your favorite memories of growing up with your dad?

Noah Eagle:

Yeah, I don't know, there's just not that many that flood to my mind of great stuff that we've done, whether it was going to the games... I don't know. No, it was a lot of that. Listen, we had a lot of great games that I got to go to with him and those are memories that stick out forever, some of them painful as a fan growing up of certain teams, but that's okay, it was the experience that mattered the most. There were certain times on birthdays where he would take me to trips. I remember the first time I ever got to fly by myself was meeting him going to a Duke basketball game when I turned 13. Or 14, actually, that was that year. 13, we did a different game.

But 14 years old, I went and I flew by myself for the first time, and I'll never forget, we get to the airport, my mom and sister dropped me off, and I get to the security line. I think it was because I had school, and so they picked me up from school and brought me right to the airport. And I got to the security line, and it was going to be tight anyway because of the timing of everything, but the line ended up being a little longer. And so, I looked back and my mom and she goes, "Hey, hey, when you get through, run." And so, I got through security and I sprinted. It was my first ever sprint to the gate moment, and I made it and I got there. So that type of stuff is great, but I really think it's more so just the little moments in the house or going out to dinner to a random California pizza kitchen or whatever it is, those are the things that stick out to me the most, and I'm sure really the entire family nucleus feels the same way.

John Boccacino:

And Ian, from a father's perspective, what are some of those lasting memories of raising Noah that really... You have green light to embarrass him to your comfort level if you want to share some fun stories.

Ian Eagle:

Well, the obvious part is the sports connection that we'll always have and the fact that he was really into this at a young age, and very similar to me, by six, seven years old, studying the stats and learning the names and the backgrounds of athletes, and that is a bond that any sports fan can share, so that was the first part.

But probably the more important part for our relationship was his love for TV and movies and music, and that is probably more of the backbone, believe it or not, of our relationship, that we can go back... He's obviously a young person, but he's got an older soul, and I did allow him to watch all the classics of the 1970s and 1980s movies that absolutely shaped me as a person, whether it be Animal House and Stripes and Blues Brothers and Caddyshack and on and on, there's a certain genre that we seem to be hitting here. So the fact that he has so much love and appreciation for that part of life and can quote movies and quote lines and bring them back from a different experience, I think, believe it or not, I'm sure most people would never believe it based on what we do for a living, that probably is more at the core of our relationship than sports is.

Sports almost takes a backseat to that part of life. And the fact that I had that person in the house with me. When Noah left for college, I didn't know how the dynamic in the house would be. My wife and my

daughter were still around. The one thing I noticed right away is that nobody else was getting Seinfeld references in the house. So when you're tossing out excellent one-liners in the moment and there's no reaction whatsoever at the dinner table, and now I've got to text Noah to let him know that I just crushed it, and I'm not hearing back from him right away as well, it's freshman year of college, I'm not really sure I was a priority at that point. So that probably was the biggest adjustment for me early on, that I didn't have that place anymore that I could go and be comfortable.

John Boccacino:

I love to hear the Seinfeld references carry on from generation to generation. Speaking of the generational lineage being passed down, Noah, your dad mentioned you both having this affinity for sports, for stats, from an early age. I know a lot's been made about the TV dentist career as your fallback, I've seen a bunch of stories. But when truly did sports broadcasting enter your mind as a possibility?

Noah Eagle:

Well, I'll piggyback on what he was saying briefly, just a story to exemplify what my upbringing ended up being like, similar to his. His was he was engulfing himself in all of the television and movies and whatnot, because he had a lot of time on his hands and he was at home and that was a great way for him to kill some time, totally get all of that. The difference for me was he was feeding me things. He was telling me, "Hey, you would like this," and I would listen and I would watch it and I would agree.

And so now, I get into my career and I start making references to these '70s and '80s and '90s things and people are stunned, to the point that the first game I ever actually called with Richard Jefferson when I came back to New York and started working with YES, we were in the middle of the first quarter of the first game we were doing, and I made some kind of reference to something, I don't even remember what it was, and it was a roll to break. And he turned to me and he goes, "What were you doing as a child?" And I said, "Well, I was watching SpongeBob, and then I would piggyback the SpongeBob episode with an episode of Different Strokes and it would balance each other out." And he goes, "That makes a lot of sense." So his point is 100% correct.

And I think one thing I've certainly taken from him is being on the air, being willing to go to those types of places, I think he's the best at it, he comes up with things perfectly in the moment. They fit, they're tailor-made for every time that he seems to decide to go into that direction, so I've tried to take that. But to answer your actual question, I'd say about 13 years old was when I decided to really focus on this and put the TV dentist thing in the rearview. When I told people I wanted to be a TV dentist, my dad tells this great story about telling his parents at seven that he was going to be a sports broadcaster and they immediately said, "Well, that's what you're going to do." I would tell people I'm going to be a TV dentist, and I think he would go off, "Yeah, we don't think so, we don't think that's... That's not a real thing."

Ian Eagle:

Yeah, I would say, "What you talking about, Willis?"

Noah Eagle:

Nice, well played, well played. Again, it's all tailor-made for the moment. But yeah, I would say 13 years old was about when I lased in. I remember fifth grade, I did a speech, we had to read a biography in class and then you would have to make a speech about the person. And so, I got assigned Bill Gates, and decided to dress up as Bill Gates with a fake big check for my elementary school on a poster board that we wrote out, and I delivered the full speech as Bill Gates and I delivered in... The teacher I had at the time came up to me afterward and said, "I think you've got a future in public speaking." And at that point, I had shifted from TV dentist to NBA player, like a normal child, and I said, "Yeah, well, maybe after I

play in the NBA and win five championships as the point guard for the New Jersey Nets," at the time. And she was like, "I know it, I feel it."

And so, I think a couple of years after that, by seventh or eighth grade, middle school, I really decided, you know what? Again, I've seen how excited my dad is, I see his interactions, I think this would be awesome. And I see it's possible, I see how the sausage is made, and so I know what to expect with this job and what comes with it. But I didn't really do anything with that until I got to Syracuse, and by the time I got there as a freshman, I think what it did for me was it made me a little bit more singularly focused and not tunnel vision, so to speak, but somewhere close to it, where I really had a feeling of what I wanted and so I could attack it. But I didn't really do anything with it until I became a freshman in college.

John Boccacino:

There was this really cool surreal moment that I want to go back in the way back machine to February of 2018 and our beloved Orangemen's basketball team down in South Beach playing the Hurricanes. Noah, you're broadcasting with WAER, and Ian, you're calling the game for CES. I want to start with Dad, just how surreal was that, you're both in the same gym, you've got the same task to call this game for different outlets?

Ian Eagle:

John, I think back to that time, and that time of year is always so chaotic for me. February usually means doing NBA during the week and then heading off to do a college game on the weekend, and that could mean up to five games in a week, sometimes in five different cities. And that particular weekend, my wife wanted to be there, understandably, her parents, my in-laws, wanted to be there, they're based in that area, understandably. I was flying in from somewhere else, Noah was coming in from Syracuse, and it was all coming together. But it wasn't smooth or easy or simple, I had a lot of things going on, juggling a lot of balls in the air.

So I get there, our producer is Mark Wolff, who at the time was producing the Final Form, working with Bill Raftery, who I had started working with professionally in 1995. So a big part of my development as a broadcaster and as a person was thanks, in large part, to Bill and his humanity and professionalism and his approach to life. So I remember getting there and thinking, all right, this will be cool. Noah's doing the game and I'm doing the game. Mark Wolff, the producer, had other ideas, and he really wanted to try to do something special and unique. Nothing that I said to him, "Hey, we've got to do this, we should try this," I really honestly didn't want to make that big a deal of it.

Mark decides to do a pregame interview ahead of time. Mark did not give us any direction as to it, other than, "Hey, why don't we have Noah interview you?" And I said, "Okay." Noah and I did not speak about it one bit. And we pop up for this interview, and it's just our normal banter with a camera rolling, and it's sent out into the world via the internet and social media, and that's that, you start the game.

They didn't tell me they were going to go to Noah at some point, I believe to start the second half, somewhere in there, if I remember correctly, and we now take his live play by play as the game is going on. This is a national broadcast, this is not what I anticipated by any stretch. And I'm nervous as a father when we're throwing to him, I'm thinking to myself, does he know he's on national TV or does he not know, and is it better that he doesn't know? And he nails his calls, they probably go for about 90 seconds and then we come back, and the whole thing was really incredible, just this full circle moment in life.

The game ends, and Noah, you ended up staying in Miami, correct? We went out to dinner-

Noah Eagle:

Yeah.

Ian Eagle:

... after the game, and my phone is just buzzing, over and over, texts and alerts, and I'm looking online and Noah's seeing it as well, and this little interview saying that we did pre-game is going viral, just because I think people are freaked out about the similarities between the two. They believe-

John Boccacino:

This is your brother calling games as part of a joint broadcast?

Ian Eagle:

Yeah, they believe that there's been some kind of cloning sponsored by the government. We don't know exactly how this happened. The mannerisms are similar, the look is similar, the voice is similar. And that was really the first time that anyone knew that I had a son that was trying to do this for a living or cared that I had a son that was trying to do it for a living. So the whole thing was really a thrill ride and more than I personally ever anticipated. I thought it would be a nice sidebar story, and it turned into a whole lot more.

John Boccacino:

Noah, what kind of pressure do you feel trying to live up to that broadcasting standard that your dad has set?

Noah Eagle:

I think when I first decided that I was going to do this, there was some level of that just internally. But as I started and got more and more into it, and I think as I felt I showcased my own work ethic, in particular, the first two years at Syracuse, most of it dissipated and the pressure just became my own pressure from myself of wanting to be the best version of me and feeling like I needed to put my best foot forward all the time. And so, it was really about me coming to terms with the fact that any of those conversations are never going away, nor should they, and any of those claims are never going away, again, nor should they.

For me, it's, okay, if there's doors opened or if there's anything of that nature that's happened, it's really my job to prove that I deserve to walk through the door. And so, that's been my prerogative the entire way. So there's no pressure in terms of trying to live up to his standard, because I think his standard's impossible to reach, I think it's the highest of standards you could find. It's my own standard now that I'm trying to reach, and I'm always trying to move that forward with each broadcast that I do.

John Boccacino:

Is there anything in particular, Noah, that you've taken from your dad's broadcasting style and incorporated into your own voice?

Ian Eagle:

Yes, that's an excellent question.

Noah Eagle:

Yeah, for sure. I think it would be stupid for me not to, because I think what he does is so good, I think that he's so fantastic at the job. And one of the pieces of advice that he's given to me, that I know he's given to others, that I've then passed to others, is find the broadcasters that you really respect and that you enjoy watching, and sit down and either take physical or mental notes of what you like about them, and then try to take part of that and make it your own.

So for me, the biggest thing that I want to take from when I watch him is every time I watch a game that he calls, I know he's happy and excited to be there because I can hear it in his voice. On top of that, I know he's having fun with the person he is working with. I find that to be important. As someone who's sitting, I want to feel like I'm part of their thing, I want to feel like I'm part of the group. And he does as great a job as anybody of setting up analysts, of making them feel comfortable, of making the back and forth feel natural, organic, from the jump. And so, I try to take a lot of that and incorporate that into my own style.

And then, I think a lot of the voice stuff just happens naturally. A lot of people would say that it's when the highlights happen is when we sound the most similar. And so, it would be hard for me not to take some of those calls, because it's what I've heard my entire life, literally. You can't find somebody who grew up a bigger Nets fan than I was, I watched every single game. And so, I've heard book it and bottom and rack attack, all of these over and over and over again. And so, even sometimes, I don't even mean to say certain ones, I try to avoid a lot of them. But there's sometimes, again, trusting your gut, where it's just unavoidable, it's the first thing that comes to mind.

Ian Eagle:

John, I need to work on some new material, I think that's the moral of the story here.

John Boccacino:

Well, we always have the classic calls from the Syracuse broadcasters. I know, Ian, you gave us the yes from Marv when our show started. Let's pay homage, who are some of the broadcasting legends that you learned from when you got into the business?

Ian Eagle:

Well, when I was growing up, Marv Albert was doing the Knicks, he was doing the Rangers, he was doing the local news on WNBC, 6:00, 11:00, on the weekends, he would then host the baseball pregame show, he would do NFL games [inaudible 00:29:02] he would do boxing events. He was a busy, busy man.

Noah Eagle:

He didn't sleep.

Ian Eagle:

Yeah. I would tell you that he was the one that had the biggest impression on me growing up, because I just found him so unique and different. He didn't sound like everybody else, he didn't approach the game like everybody else. There was a little bit of a sardonic, sarcastic way that he worked with his analysts, and I found it fun and playing. And I was doing an impression of him as I started doing play-by-play when I got to college, it was basically the same cadence of a Marv Albert, because that's to me what the blueprint was.

There were others. I thought Brent Musburger was exceptionally talented hosting the NFL Today on CBS and then working college basketball, eventually did the NBA prior to that, college football play-by-play, the famous Doug Flutie last second touchdown against Miami and his duel with Bernie Kosar. Verne Lundquist, I really enjoyed his style. I appreciated his voice, I appreciated that you got a sense of who he was, and it came through the screen that he really loved being there and I could feel that. Bob Costas, as I got a little bit older, got into college, I just saw someone that was so versatile, was so erudite, and just had a different angle on things and could extract information in a way that I just hadn't heard before.



And I'd say Al Michaels was the other one. I was a young kid when the Miracle on Ice occurred, remember it very well. I avoided the result the entire day, even though the event had already happened. And we sat back and that was a roller coaster ride of emotions, and I thought Al was phenomenal, of course, on the call, and it cemented him as one of the great broadcasters in our country, and then he continued to take it to new heights beyond that.

John Boccacino:

What are some things you really commend your son for bringing to his calls for the games?

Ian Eagle:

What I've noticed with Noah is there is some of me there, of course, in vernacular, in tone, but then he's put his own spin on it, and I've felt that with each year that's gone by. It's funny, you would think the way I prepare is the way that he would prepare because he watched me do it. Not the case.

I'm still everything by hand, he's on the computer. He relies much more so on podcasts, he immerses himself those five days prior to an event of listening to what the information is and allowing it to seep in in that form. I'm still more of a reader and trying to go through each article, which I think he does too, by the way, but I still find that to be the best way for me to learn, and writing it down, physically writing it down. It's such an interesting position, because, John, you could have 100 different Syracuse broadcasters on, literally, and you would probably get 100 different responses as to how they prepare and the best way. I just find with Noah,, that he has found this sweet spot in how to get ready for his games and do them at such a high level.

The part that really struck me, the Summer Olympics, where there was going to be a lot of attention on the US Olympic men's basketball team, and I followed it along the way and I was watching the games just like everybody else as a fan. Sometimes it would be on USA, sometimes they would pop up on NBC or Peacock, wherever they might be, I was there. But I was watching in a dual role, as a fan and an American citizen, and then as a dad, and also someone that watches broadcasts, and you can't help as a broadcaster to watch it through the lens of a broadcaster, what the broadcaster is saying and what information they're using in the moment. So I look back now and realized that I was wearing a number of different hats during that experience.

But the most recent Netflix documentary, Court of Gold, is that what it is, Noah?

Noah Eagle:

Yes.

Ian Eagle:

I just watched it, and it's a six-part series, and I was blown away by Noah's calls and coverage and vocabulary and choice of words in the moment, and that's when it really hits you, because now I know it's a part of history forever. And as it's happening, you don't know the results, so you're up and down based on what's happening in front of you, but now that you know what happened and you can sit back and actually enjoy it and listen to it, he just crushed it, and he'll always have that for the rest of his life, for the rest of his career. Similar to what I mentioned in regards to Al and the 1980 Olympics, it's the same for Noah and the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris.

John Boccacino:

Noah, how does that make you feel? Your dad is so respected in this industry, and you could tell the emotions that he was going through watching you be the voice of Team USA. What does that do for you?

Noah Eagle:

Yeah, it means everything. The support that he, my mom, my sister, everybody within our orbit, has given me through my entire career, starting with my freshman year at Syracuse, has meant everything. It goes back to what I was talking about before, where what I was referring to was life and mistakes, we felt we knew we could make a mistake, so long as it wasn't crazy, and still have the support there. And so, I always know no matter how I am on the air, the support, the love, the respect, the appreciation for the work, it will always be there from them. And so, that for me takes a lot of that pressure away of having to deliver to make sure that they're proud of me, I know they're proud of me. I know that no matter what I did over the course of that Summer Olympics, they were going to be ecstatic that I was there and that I completed the assignment and that I just made sure that I gave it my maximum effort, and so from that point on, the rest is gravy.

But to hear all the kind words and to hear what it really meant. The back-end of it, he was telling me how he and my mom were watching really nervous during that Serbia game, we were nervous calling the Serbia game, but it completely changes the conversation if the United States loses that game. Now, everybody looks at us and says, "Well, they were on the call when they lost." And so, the entirety of how you're viewed is opposite. Now, they were on the call for these classic games, some of the best games basketball has ever seen. Instead of, man, they were there for the choke job. So it's just, I can't even imagine, because we were feeling that in the moment, I can't even imagine how they were feeling watching it at home. But hearing it all on the back-end, it is incredibly special and it's certainly something that I will carry with me the rest of my career. It was amazing to be there, and even more amazing that I've gotten to share it now past this with Court of Gold and everybody else following along.

John Boccacino:

The Eagle family tree is painted Orange when you look at it, Ian and Noah and Alisa and Erin has the advertising degree from New House, so much pride in being a Syracuse alumnus. What does it mean to each of you to call the Orange home and to say you learned your formative educations here on campus?

Ian Eagle:

Well, for me, it is the backbone of what I do. I showed up my freshman year, I had nothing other than a dream of what I wanted to do. I did not dabble in this in high school. Other than calling fictitious games on my bed using baseball cards, or in my shower because it had excellent acoustics, I had no background whatsoever in sports broadcasting. And everything I learned was based on that school and that experience and the people that I came in contact with and the people that I met and the people that I befriended and the people that took me under their wing.

So for me, it's the professional part and then the personal part, some of my closest friends to this day are Syracuse people that I did not know until I showed up freshman year in 1986. My wife, would never have met her, who I believe is my soulmate, somehow in Flint Hall in 1986 playing a video game and a mutual friend of ours told her, "You should really meet Ian, you guys would hit it off." And she comes to talk to me while I'm trying to get the high score on Galaga. I was not interested in what she had to say, I was interested in putting my name, which is always great for video games, my full name, I-A-N, on the top of the leaderboard. And she came over to say a few words, I showed very little interest, which probably created more intrigue, little did I know at the time, and the rest is history.

So really special on so many levels, and obviously for our kids to go there and experience Syracuse. And we really did not push, I know that might be hard to believe. We were cool with wherever Noah wanted to go, wherever Erin wanted to go, they both looked at other schools, they both visited a bunch of other schools. Ultimately, they both decided that that was best for them.

Noah Eagle:

My mom best described it when we went to visit. I'll never forget, we show up, and really, the second time we visited in particular, it was the first day of classes my senior year of high school, so fall of 2014, and we walk up and it's a perfect day outside. It might've been 84 degrees, sun was shining down on everybody, everyone was out smiling, excited, you could feel this kinetic energy around the campus. And my mom and I walk up right in front of the Quad and she just sighs a deep breath and says, "This is my happy place." And I said, "Huh, interesting. Why do you say that?" And she goes, "You'll understand one day if you come."

And I think after my four years and then being back on campus for the first time a couple of weeks ago for the first time since I graduated, she's right. Every time you go, it's easy to have a smile on your face, and all of the memories, and in particular for us, the family connections, just flood your brain, and it is a special small bubble that you just feel a kinship to forever. And the pride that we feel for representing Syracuse and being part of what is a historically great lineage of broadcasting legends, it is amazing and I just feel that, I feel that pride. It's a brother and sisterhood that never goes away. And so, from a family perspective, it's our happy place. I think from a work perspective, it is as proud as you're going to get to know you're a part of the Newhouse Mafia.

John Boccacino:

We've really learned a lot here on the episode, and I can't thank you guys both enough. It's really been a pleasure, on this Father's Day episode, having Ian Eagle and his son, Noah Eagle, join us on the podcast. Keep up the great work, keep repping the Orange, and I know we'll be following from afar all of your accomplishments on the national broadcast.

Ian Eagle:

John, thank you, a pleasure, truly. Thank you so much.

Noah Eagle:

Thanks, John. Appreciate you putting this together.

John Boccacino:

Thanks for checking out the latest installment of the 'Cuse Conversations Podcast. My name is John Boccacino, signing off for the 'Cuse Conversations Podcast.