

SOFT-SPOKEN DJ REVELS IN HARD-NOSED PLAY

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The voice sounds like midnight. Everyone else is asleep and it talks only to you. Low and cool.

"The quiet storm," coos the voice.

The next thing you hear is a soulful ballad by Anita Baker or The Originals. Maybe 20 minutes later the voice reads Robert Frost or Langston Hughes. Soul music followed by soul.

"A lot of people call," Teddy Angelo says off-mike, "just to hear my voice.

"But I wonder what they would think of me if they saw me play football."

Teddy Angelo is concerned with his image. He wants to continue his rising career as a disc jockey for WUMB-FM (91.9 MHz), where he hosts a nightly rhythm and blues and soul show. But he also wants to pursue another passion -- football.

"He is," said Randolph Oilers coach Bob Turner, "a very nice guy off the field."

On the football field, though, his Mr. Hyde side shows. Teddy Angelo becomes Teddy Clinkscale, all-Eastern Football League strong safety for the Randolph Oilers. And the voice changes.

"Watchthesweep, watchthesweep, watchthesweep," the voice rattles in staccato, trying to distract the opposition.

Teddy Clinkscale will intercept a Middleborough Cobra pass and in-your-face point at the intended receiver. He is caught up in the contact and collisions and general mayhem of football. And he is far from the calm and comfort of the radio studio at the University of Massachusetts-Boston.

He struggles with the contrasts in his life.

He decided to change his last name for professional purposes. Clinkscale, he said, did not sound right. So he chose Angelo -- after his sister, Angela. And he wonders about the clash of off-field sensitivity and on-field destructiveness.

"I want to take the other guy out of the game," he said. "But after the game everything is cool."

Days, Teddy Clinkscale, 28, is a teaching assistant and counselor at a school in Cambridge and a football player. Nights, he is Teddy Angelo, disc jockey.

"I leave practice early," he said, "take off my shoulder pads and all that stuff and come in here and play music."

His show is unique in New England, the only one with its format on weeknights.

"This is for Walpole," the voice says, referring to the inmates at the Massachusetts correctional institution.

And he will play a tune from The Girls. It is a code from the girlfriend of an inmate, "just so he knows I'm home."

But Teddy Angelo tells the girlfriend that he cannot play the song every night.

"Can you play 'Dedicated to the One I Love' by the Temprees?" a caller asks.

"You're too young to remember that," Teddy Angelo replies, but he complies with the request.

It is nearly 8:30 p.m. Teddy Angelo announces the time and temperature.

"It's 69 degrees in the city," the voice says.

In three hours, Teddy Angelo will begin winding down the show. He will play the live version of Marvin Gaye's "Distant Lover" -- "for all the people who are incarcerated, or who are in college in another town, this is your song."

By 1 a.m., he will close the show with "Look to the Rainbow" by Patti Labelle.

"That is my life story," he said. "Dream a dream, reach for a rainbow."

"I have the freedom to play what I want to play on this show. It's not like commercial radio where your music director lists what you'll play. There's no spontaneity that way."

But he understands the meaning of the station's hand-lettered signs -- "Remember to thank donors," "Listener-funded public radio." His show -- "Black Expressions: The Quiet Storm" -- like "Celtic Twilight," "Traditional Folk" and "Fusion Latina," would not be a big money-maker on commercial radio. Working for a college radio station is comparable to playing football for the Randolph Oilers: enjoyable but not profitable. He is paid for his 25 or so hours a week at the radio station but not for playing football.

Teddy Clinkscale prefers the exposure and paycheck of WXKS-FM, where he worked as an intern, or WMJX-FM, his favorite station. Just as he would prefer the higher profile and salary of professional football.

"Bernie Kosar is from my hometown," he said of the Cleveland Browns quarterback. "I'd love to be playing against him. But you have to be honest with yourself."

Clinkscale was a "skinny kid" at Rayen High School in Youngstown, Ohio. He was second-string to Terry Taylor, who now plays for the Seattle Seahawks. Then Clinkscale played at Adrian (Mich.) College, an NCAA Division 3 school. He knows he will never play in the National Football League.

In college, Clinkscale was 6-foot-3 but weighed less than the 185 pounds he carries now. He was known as Teddy Bear at the campus radio station and enjoyed the work so much that he changed his major from physical education to communications.

In 1983, he visited his brother, Keith, then a Boston University student and now an employee of Digital Equipment Corp., and decided to enroll at New England School of Broadcasting.

"I didn't know anything about this place before I got here," he said. "I was scared and lonely."

He received on-the-job training at WILD-AM and WXKS-FM.

"All these girls would call up and want to talk to Sunny Joe White," he recalled. "I said, 'This is great.' I ate it up. But I talked to some girls on the phone and set up a couple of blind dates that, ah, didn't work. I've learned since then."

Listener response is the DJ's gauge of effectiveness, though.

"The calls are what keeps me going," he said, "when I wonder about giving up my nights for this, not getting paid top commercial salary, on the air every day. But in Boston I have a name. I'm developing the program, getting a following.

"A girl from a college station told me, 'You're the one everybody is listening to to get ideas.' I look at this as an art. And I love the freedom. But for the money I'd work at a commercial station, sure."

So Teddy Clinkscales endures the taunts of his teammates for also being Teddy Angelo.

"They get on me," he said. " 'You're trying to be so sexy, so mellow.' A lot of guys are rah-rah, but I'm into myself, what I'm doing. I'll walk around on the sidelines and just look at the game. I don't count during calisthenics, and I'm the last one out of the lockerroom."

On the other side, management at the radio station, he said, does not realize the importance of football to him. "They give me trouble sometimes about taking Friday nights off" for the games, he said. "But they don't realize that I really love the game."