In 2016, a plan began to upgrade the Kent State athletic training facility. The renovation included moving away from a 1,500 square foot facility and into a brand new, 10,000 square foot facility along with major upgrades with the equipment. I wanted to see how the athletic trainers had adjusted to the new facility. My first interview was with head of the athletic training department, Trent Stratton.

BH- Trent, what specifically do you think has been the biggest difference between the old and new facility?

TS- I think its huge. The biggest difference I think is that we have student athletes that come into the facility to get treatment so that they feel good and not like in the past when they would just come in if they were injured or weren’t feeling good. There has also been a difference in emphasis put into recover and feeling better, more so than there ever was before.

BH- About how much was put into this facility, a specific number, into the renovation?

TS- About 3 million dollars.

BH- 3 million… where specifically does that come from? Is that just straight out of the athletic budget and how much time did it take to raise that money?

TS- I know that this was an initiative by the President. To my knowledge, it was money that she essentially gave to the department to make the upgrade. I know that there is a pay back or something in the work over a period of time. There are also some naming rights if you want to get involved?

BH- I don’t have that kind of money yet. What has been the biggest difference for you specifically with the new facility?

TS- I think morale is up. I think that we are viewed a little differently. I think we are viewed in a different light than we were before. I don’t think we were disrespected before but I think we are respected a little more now.

BH- The old facility was around for a long time. How long does it take for everyone to adjust to the new facility and equipment?

TS- I think we are still adjusting. On a day to day basis we understand everything but we are still figuring out how to use the space most efficiently and put things in the right place. But I think we are getting better every day.

End first interview

BH- my next interview was with grad assistant trainer, Drew Fillis. I wanted to get her opinion as to what she thought of the new facility as someone who works in it with athletes on a day to day basis. Drew was a former student athlete at Bowling green and is in her first year of the graduate training program at Kent State.

BH- Drew, you have seen the old and new facility, have you seen a difference in the upgrades?

DF- It’s a big difference. It’s a beautiful facility. We have all the tools and all the equipment you could need. It was a huge selling point for me when I went through the interview process and just knowing that everything is pretty up to date and to get to use this stuff was pretty cool.

BH- Has it been a process in learning the new equipment that a lot of us have not seen before?

DF- Yeah it was cool to learn the alter G, which wasn’t at my undergrad, and something that we call the “core balance” has been awesome. We also have the Chryo- chamber which has been cool to learn how to use and get that exposure.

BH- Do you think this also helps you down the line when you can say that you have used this equipment?

DF- Yeah for sure. As much as you can broaden your horizons and get better is important.

End interview.

BH- To give perspective on just how much the new facility has made a difference, an article written by Elton Alexander of the Plain Dealer, pointed out that there are over 400 student athletes at Kent State. The old facility could allow treatment of 10 athletes at a time. The new facility allows 40 athletes at a time. Its giving these student athletes a better opportunity to stay healthy and its giving peace of mind to people like Trent and drew who dedicate their lives to helping athletes stay healthy.