

Actor's Path Winds Through Pro Sports, Wall Street

BY MIKI TURNER

Brian White, a former NFL player and the son of seven-time NBA All-Star JoJo White, is not your typical thespian with leading-man looks. The Dartmouth-educated Boston native who is one of the stars of the new romantic comedy *Heart Specialist* is a smart cookie who followed the sage advice of his elders as an impressionable youth.

His father, former Celtic M.L. Carr and other pro athletes told White early on that education was the key. The late Red Auerbach, who ran the Boston Celtics when White's dad JoJo was the team's starting point guard, dittoed those sentiments when White went to college to study political psychology and play sports.

"He told me, 'If you're good enough in sports, they'll find you,'" White said. Scouts did find him and White was drafted by the New England Patriots. He spent two years playing for various NFL teams before

injuries got the best of him.

His first stop was Wall Street.

"I hated it," White said. "I don't like Vegas or Wall Street. I don't mean the town or the people, but I don't gamble. That's what stocks felt like to me."

His next stop was Hollywood, where he was discovered by a casting agent during a chance encounter about 10 years ago. Initially, White told her he wasn't interested, but his football agent convinced him that he was.

"He said, 'It's UPN, that's legit,'" White said. "And the next day I went in and was hired at *Moesha* in a recurring role."

His pro sports and corporate careers, however, have helped White, 35, navigate the twisty roads in Hollywood. He runs two foundations, has his own production company and, if need be, he can broker his own deals. "The No. 1 thing that gets me jobs today is the fact that I have my degree," he said.



COURTESY BRIAN WHITE

In addition to his supporting role on TNT's *Men Of A Certain Age*, White has two new movies and a play coming out this winter. *Heart Specialist* hits theaters on Jan. 14, *Politics Of Love* comes out next month and he's about to hit the road in a David E. Talbert play called *What My Husband Doesn't Know*, starting Feb. 4.

As a newlywed husband, however, White, knows that marriage truly suits him.

Four months ago, White married Paula Da Silva, a beauty expert he'd been dating for six years. "It's a blessing. She keeps me very balanced. She could care less about Hollywood. It's like a new beginning for me."//