



Healthy, Wealthy & Wise.

1st EDITION 2020

Words from our NFL Alumni NYC-LI Chapter President

Hello My Fellow Alumni!

During the Holidays it is important, now more than ever, to be conscious of how we treat ourselves during the festive season. This is a time of Celebration, Thankfulness, & Reflection. Be sure to celebrate your accomplishments, but do not be content, continue to evolve. Take time to be thankful for your family and all of your loved ones, as well as your NFL Alumni family. Reflect on your past and use those lessons to help guide you to your Next Self.



Dream Big, and Never Settle!
Happy Holidays
Jude Waddy
President NFL Alumni NY/Long Island



Good day everyone, I hope this newsletter finds you in great health and joyous spirits!

I'm David Caldwell, the Vice President of the New York City and Long Island NFL Alumni Association chapter, as well as the editor of our newly found newsletter. It is with great pleasure and excitement that I present you with "Healthy, Wealthy & Wise." We are very proud to provide our NFL Alumni families and communities with information that is relevant to them in three pillars of life; health, financial education, and professional development. These are three areas that are vital to former players and families when our playing days come to an end, and well beyond!

Enjoy the in-depth articles from our tremendous and credible contributors. We've provided their contact information and we encourage you to reach out to them directly. We also look forward to hearing your feedback, so feel free to let us know your thoughts on the articles and any recommended topics you'd like us to cover.

Happy Holidays to everyone and on behalf of the NYC-Long Island NFL Alumni chapter we wish you an amazing start to the New Year!

David A. Caldwell
Vice President NFL Alumni NY/Long Island
David.Caldwell@NFLALUMNI.org



NEW YORK CITY

Healthy, Wealthy & Wise.

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THE STREET-SMART SALESMAN

Athletes Make High Performance Salespeople

This is a bold statement because a lot of diverse experiences can drive great sales performance. But as someone who has hired and managed well over 500 sales people throughout the years, I have found that athletes have the highest probability of success.

Let's start with a fundamental question: What makes a high performance sales person? On the foundational level, high performance salespeople must possess discipline, a work ethic, creativity, and a winning/competitive attitude. On the intangible level, high performance salespeople possess desire, ambition, and the need to be #1 and be recognized for it. Guess what? All these attributes are built into the athletes DNA. As a result, in general, athletes transition well into a career in sales and former professional athletes more so because they possess instant credibility.

So if you are standing on the sidelines thinking about the next move after professional sports, think no further and learn about the endless opportunities in sales.

Anthony Belli
The Streetsmart Salesman

The first 10 players that reach out to us, we will send you a free copy of The Street-Smart Salesman.

[HTTPS://THESTREETSMARTSALESMAN.COM/](https://thestreetssmansalesman.com/)



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Celebrities Attend A World of Pink Fall Gala

<https://www.longislandpress.com/>

A World of Pink, the leading breast cancer aftercare facility based on Long Island, held its third annual A World of Pink Fall Gala on Oct. 16 at Watermill Caterers in Smithtown.

More than 600 guests, consisting of Long Island business owners, prominent physicians and surgeons, cancer patients, survivors and their families and friends were in attendance along with several big-name sports pros.

The Gala consisted of an open bar cocktail reception, banquet dinner with carving stations, a DJ and Live entertainment, as well as raffle giveaways, all culminating in the Parade of Survivors. This year's Parade of Survivors will be led by Christina Cicinelli, an AWOP alum who was featured in the October issue of Oprah Magazine.

Joining Cicinelli on the runway were other local warriors who have faced down breast cancer. In addition to survivors and their surgeons, A World of Pink's NFL Alumni supporters also took the runway, including former wide receiver for The NY Jets Wesley Walker, Freeman McNeil and Eric Childs also formerly of the NY Jets; Green Bay Packer's former offensive tackle Gary Brown, Jude Waddy, former linebacker for the Green Bay Packers and Leonard Marshall, former defensive lineman for the NY Giants, as well as Jim Leyritz, the former Major League catcher and infielder for the 1996 and 1998 World Series champions, The New York Yankees

Proceeds from the A World of Pink Fall Gala go to support World of Pink Foundation, which provides after-care to women in all stages of a breast cancer diagnosis. For more information, visit aworldofpink.com



Time Is Not On Your Side

By Graham Falbo



We've all heard the statistics. The average length of an NFL career is 3.3 years ¹, the majority of contracts are not guaranteed ², and players who have spent their lives defeating the odds of being the less than 1% ³ of High School seniors to play in the NFL are left scrambling to figure out what is next.

Some of the reasons may seem obvious; bad investments, trusting the wrong individual(s), frivolous spending, and focusing on the short term versus the long term ⁴. But let me pose this question; how many 19-22 year old Chemistry majors that receive 6-8 figure deals would immediately make the right financial moves with that amount of capital?

My bet is that the long-term financial success rate would be similar between both groups. The point is not to begrudge Chemistry majors, nor to point out the statistics of athletes we have read about. Simply put I believe there is an obvious reason that nobody is talking about as to why athletes have the cards stacked against them; time.

Time can be precious, especially when it comes to investing. Albert Einstein called compounding interest the eighth wonder of the world ⁵.

When the other 99% of American 19-22 year olds enter the workforce they tend to earn the lowest amount they will earn for the rest of their lives, and they will work for nearly 5 decades ⁶, or over 14 times longer than the average NFL athlete.

During those early years, mistakes can be made; credit card debt can build, a missed payment or two, lack of retirement savings is allocated, etc. ⁷



So if we can agree that all 19-22 year olds are making similar financial mistakes, how come 78% of all Americans don't go bankrupt like NFL athletes? ⁸

It's because the majority of them have the safety net of more opportunities for career growth, time to make some mistakes and recoup them, and a longer career to rely on.

So how do we fix a broken system that sets athletes up to fail? I'm of the opinion that education and planning are key.

This does not necessarily mean taking more classes, more books, or sacrificing personal time, training time, or time away from your craft to become fluent in your financial lives. It means developing an understanding that every action could have immediate and long term reaction.

1 <https://theundefeated.com/features/why-do-so-many-pros-go-broke/>

2 <https://deadspin.com/why-only-the-nfl-doesnt-guarantee-contracts-1797020799>

3 <http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/research/football-probability-competing-beyond-high-school>

4 <https://www.businessinsider.com/ap-liz-weston-why-nfl-players-go-broke-and-what-you-can-learn-2017-10>

5 <https://www.intentionaladvice.com/2018/11/08/einsteins-theory-of-compound-interest/>

6 <https://www.payscale.com/career-news/2018/10/heres-how-many-years-youll-spend-work-in-your-lifetime>

7 <https://www.moneyunder30.com/common-money-mistakes-9082>

8 <https://www.businessinsider.com/ap-liz-weston-why-nfl-players-go-broke-and-what-you-can-learn-2017-10>

9 <http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/research/football-probability-competing-beyond-high-school>

Every night spent out with friends, every luxury purchase, every interesting direct investment, has an immediate and long term consequence; both positive and negative. Dropping a few thousand dollars at the club, or on a watch, car, etc. can provide an immediate positive reaction. And I am not saying that those things have to stop! This is not an article about being frugal and hiding your money in a mattress.



Time Is Not On Your Side

By Graham Falbo

continued



But think about forced savings combined with spending. If you want some red-bottom shoes that cost a lot, that is your decision, but think about forcing yourself to put that same amount into your investments or your savings. Make it so that your spend and your save are in line. Mentally challenge yourself that the portion you are putting into savings is just that, long term and not available for the next Supreme drop. If you cannot afford to do both, don't sacrifice your focus, be patient, and when you can afford to save and spend, then run out and grab the item(s) you want.

Separating the two, spending and saving, will help to create positive actions and reactions from all your short-term spending by forcing yourself to put money away for the long term. This could allow you, your family, and your future self to reap the rewards of all the hard work you put into being a part of the less than 1% *a*.

I'm looking forward to presenting more ideas and focused topics in this section of the Healthy, Wealthy & Wise with the NFLPA.

If there are any specific topics you'd like to hear about or questions that come up in any article(s) please reach out to me directly. I'm always available for help, advice, and conversation.

Graham Falbo, CFP®, CIMA® | Financial Advisor
Soteria Wealth Management | UBS Private Wealth Management

61 S. Paramus Rd. 4th Floor | Paramus, NJ 07652
Tel: 201.587.2714 | Cell: 757.784.2116

Fax: 888.497.1228 | graham.falbo@ubs.com

Graham Falbo is a Financial Advisor with UBS Financial Services Inc., 61 S. Paramus Rd, Paramus, NJ. Any information presented is general in nature and not intended to provide individually tailored investment advice. Investing involves risks and there is always the potential of losing money when you invest. The views expressed herein are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect the views of UBS Financial Services Inc. As a firm providing wealth management services to clients, UBS Financial Services Inc. offers both investment advisory services and brokerage services. Investment advisory services and brokerage services are separate and distinct, differ in material ways and are governed by different laws and separate arrangements. It is important that clients understand the ways in which we conduct business and that they carefully read the agreements and disclosures that we provide to them about the products or services we offer. For more information visit our website at ubs.com/workingwithus.



The Next Chapter: Developing a Personal Brand for Life off the Field

By Elizabeth Lewis

Elizabeth Lewis is a certified personal stylist and professional branding expert who helps corporate women and men elevate their image in the workplace. After spending nearly a decade in corporate brand management and marketing roles at companies including Colgate-Palmolive and Penguin-Random House, she founded her own company, Brand, Style & Bloom! by Elizabeth Danielle, to combine her passions for fashion and branding.

Elizabeth dresses executives, entrepreneurs and public figures in statement-making clothes that boost their confidence and elevate how they're viewed in their industry. Elizabeth has a Masters in Business Administration from the NYU Stern School of Business and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Washington University in St. Louis. She also earned a personal styling certification from the School of Style in Los Angeles. She lives and works in New York City.



Congratulations! As a member of this exclusive club, you are at the top of your field as an athlete. You are known as an expert who knows how to stay focused on the present with a mind for winning.

But what about when you have entered life off the field? Depending on what you decide to do next, your identity as a top athlete does not always translate to this next phase. You may have entered the corporate world or may even have started your own entrepreneurial endeavor. For these next chapters, your identity as a top athlete will certainly be an asset but you may need more tools to help you confidently stand out among your competition.

Enter the personal brand. A personal brand is a unique combination of words that describes who you are and the value that you deliver to others, whether that includes clients, employers, or even just the people in your life who are around you on a day-to-day basis. A well-thought-out personal brand that is consistently delivered can be the secret sauce that takes you from being a rookie in your new field to being at the top of your industry. It can take you from feeling like you are on shaky footing to a feeling of confidence on a rock-solid foundation. I know what you're thinking – this all sounds pretty great...but how do I do it?

As the founder of a personal branding and personal styling consultancy, Brand, Style & Bloom! by Elizabeth Danielle, I help my male and female clients to deepen their confidence through a set of three proven steps:

1. Create a vision board. Your personal brand should reflect not only where you are today but also where you want to be tomorrow. I am a huge fan of vision boards because they help you to see your goals, which can sometimes be hard to verbally express, as pictures. Together, I help my clients to create a vision board that reflects their dreams, aspirations and desired image.



2. Develop your three-word personal brand. With your chosen images in hand, find someone you trust and let them listen to why you chose the images you did. Ask them to identify common themes in the stories you are telling. For example, are you choosing images that represent confidence? Or perhaps you have chosen images of exotic locales that represent the explorer inside of you. Whatever the themes are, I work with my clients to narrow them down to three qualities that represent who they are and how they want to be known (for example, a three-word brand might be Refined, Elevated, and Confident.)

3. Live your brand. One of the most powerful ways to credibly reflect your new brand is through your personal style. I work with my clients to examine their wardrobes through the lens of their new brands. We sort their clothes into three piles – clothes that closely align with their new brand, clothes that might align but will need further evaluation and clothes that do not align at all. For example, if your brand is Refined, Elevated and Confident, you may no longer have room in your closet for clothes that are not carefully tailored to your shape, as loose fitting clothing can give an impression of sloppiness. For clothing that does not fit your new brand, consider donating them. This process will allow people to see who you are by the clothes you wear.

Want more tips or have questions on the steps above?

I will be hosting a **LIVE FREE WEBINAR** just for NFL alums and their families on Wednesday, January 29TH at 8:00pm EST.

SIGN UP HERE and if you are among the first 20 people to sign up, you will receive a free wardrobe essentials guide!



Paleo vs Keto: Which is best for weight loss and avoiding diabetes?

By Matthew Griffin, MD



Paleo and/or keto is an approach to food intake which focuses on limiting sugar and refined carbohydrates. Carbs are not evil! However, in the Standard American Diet (SAD) they are consistently overemphasized and tend to be predominantly the “refined” type often to the exclusion of healthy “complex” carbohydrate alternatives. A simple way to visualize the difference between complex vs refined carbs is to think about your stomach as a big bowl of acid whose job it is to break down carbs into glucose. If you put your favorite cereal into a bowl of milk it gets soggy. Now imagine putting that cereal into a bowl of acid. Your cereal would then dissolve into a big pile of glucose (sugar) very quickly. Now imagine putting a complex carb (broccoli) into the bowl of acid we call your stomach. It will still break down but at a much slower pace over many hours. When your stomach processes carbs and sugars quickly like with soda, sweets, cereal, bread, and pasta, sugar levels rise quickly which makes the pancreas overwork producing the insulin required to get the sugar out of the bloodstream. Most people know if you drink too much alcohol over the course of your life your liver will fail. Similarly, if you eat too much sugar over the course of your life your pancreas will fail. We call this Diabetes.

Paleo and/or Keto can also help you lose weight while reducing hunger. Your current state of hunger is not based on simply the mass of the food you have eaten or the calories of that meal, but rather on what hormones are currently circulating. The reason for this is that each fat cell in your body produces a hormone called leptin. The more fat you have the more leptin is released. This leptin is known as the “satiety hormone” and it (along with another couple hormones) is what makes you feel “full” vs. “hungry” at any given point in time. Leptin goes to the brain and tells your brain to turn off the food spigot and increases your sympathetic nervous system activity which makes you feel as though you have a lot of extra energy to burn. Remember that nervous energy you had when it was about time for recess when you were in grade school? That energy and excitement is what you should feel all the time if you are overweight. However, as we all know this isn’t how most overweight people feel. Why? The answer is that the leptin signal is blocked from reaching the brain by insulin. Anything you eat which spikes your insulin will shut off your “full” signal and decrease energy.



Paleo vs Keto: Which is best for weight loss and avoiding diabetes?

By Matthew Griffin, MD

continued



Insulin is also the master fat storage hormone. When insulin levels are high, triglycerides are driven into fat cells. A good way to understand and visualize belly fat is as an extra-large size fanny-pack full of fat which you carry around your waist completely separate from you. When you eat a meal a tug of war begins, a competition for the food between the fanny-pack of fat around your waist and you. Like the lever at a train track junction box which changes the direction of the train, insulin is the main switch which determines which track food energy takes. If the insulin level is high it causes your body to store fat in the fanny-pack and if the insulin level is low then you burn it. If you have high insulin and store the energy you will be hungry a couple hours later because you never got any of the energy you needed, your fanny-pack took it all. This compounds the leptin issue previously described.

So what is the difference between Paleo and Keto? With Keto you cut the carbs and sugars even more drastically which induces a metabolic state called “nutritional ketosis” whereby your body easily mobilizes energy from fat and uses ketones for energy instead of carbohydrates, unlocking all your currently locked away/stored energy in fat cells. The lines between keto and paleo can also be crossed often. Some people will use keto to get down to their desired weight but then switch over to paleo to simply maintain the weight loss. Alternatively, many people feel better in Keto than they ever have in their lives and choose to stay in keto indefinitely. If you believe paleo or keto may help you sit down with an experienced physician to discuss your options.

Dr. Matthew Griffin, MD is a board certified physician at Genesis Regenerative Sports and Aesthetic Medicine located on 116 S. Euclid Ave, Westfield, NJ 07090. In addition to weightloss, Dr. Griffin see patients for sports medicine injuries, regenerative medicine such as PRP and stem cell injections for tendon injuries, joint pain due to osteoarthritis, and concussion management.



PRP: Why It's a Game-Changer in Remediating Joint Pain and Tendon Injuries

By Vinay Chopra, MD



If you're experiencing joint or muscle pain, your goal is to regain pain-free movement as quickly as possible. Cortisone injections have been the traditional, mainstay treatment to heal pain. However, recent studies have shown that cortisone can actually worsen your condition by further damaging your tendons and cartilage over time. Because of this, regenerative medicine in the form of platelet-rich plasma may hold the key to treating injuries in a safe, all-natural way.

While the human body needs time to heal properly, therapies that fall under regenerative medicine may speed up this process by tapping and redirecting the healing power within your own body, in this case your platelets.

Here's a look at why PRP therapy is a game-changer in remediating pain and injuries.

Your blood contains four main components:

- White blood cells
- Red blood cells
- Plasma
- Platelets

Your platelets are cells that are primarily responsible for clotting your blood; this clotting ability prevents you from bleeding out. Your platelets also contain powerful growth factors, which they release at the site of the damaged tissue to reduce inflammation and help with repairs.

When they release these growth factors, they call on additional resources in your body, including stem cells, to create the ultimate healing environment.



While your platelets do a fine job of aiding in repairing damaged tissue, the response may not be strong enough to get you up and moving again as quickly as you'd like. Through PRP therapy, we draw some of your own blood and isolate the platelets in a centrifuge. We then take these concentrated platelets and inject the powerful healing resource directly into your damaged tissue.

In other words, we amplify your body's regenerative response by concentrating your platelets which in turn recruit stem cells to the injured site to promote healing.

The use of regenerative medicine is fairly new, and we're only beginning to scratch the surface of its potential. Because PRP is an all-natural therapy that uses your own resources, we've found that PRP is an excellent treatment for most musculoskeletal issues, and the following represents a small sample of its applications:

- Osteoarthritis
- Sports injuries
- Rotator cuff tears
- Knee pain
- Tendinitis
- Tennis elbow
- Hamstring tear

Indeed, any time you damage connective tissue, PRP therapy may play a key role in helping you heal.



PRP: Why It's a Game-Changer in Remediating Joint Pain and Tendon Injuries

By Vinay Chopra, MD

continued



You're eager to find relief from your pain and to have your mobility restored, of course, but while PRP therapy can help speed up your recovery, you still need to be patient. In most cases, one injection is enough. However, in some cases, we perform a series of PRP injections, to boost your body to heal itself. Typical results can take 4-6 weeks and sometimes upwards of 3 months.

As you progress, you should realize gradual improvement, but every case is different in terms of how quickly your body heals itself.

If you believe that PRP will benefit you, sit down with an experienced sports medicine physician who specializes in regenerative medicine to discuss your options.

Dr. Vinay Chopra is a board certified and fellowship trained sports medicine physician at Genesis Regenerative Sports and Aesthetic Medicine located on 116 S. Euclid Ave, Westfield, NJ 07090. He specializes in regenerative medicine such as PRP and stem cell injections for tendon injuries, and joint pain due to osteoarthritis. He has worked with athletes at every level such as the New York Jets, Lakewood BlueClaws, various colleges, and high schools. He has also been voted top doctor by NJ Monthly Magazine in 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, and physician of the year in 2019 by the state of NJ.



Healthy, Wealthy & Wise.

January 29th, 2020



There's No Replacement to Sports

By David "DAC" Caldwell

Playing in the NCAA, NFL and the CFL gave me a hands-on Master's degree and PhD degree in Competition, Teamwork, Accountability, Problem Solving, Adversity, and Goal Crushing.

Attending some of the best schools in the world: Montclair High School, The Lawrenceville School, and The College of William and Mary, many would say I was educated at a very high level. I would agree. However, what may surprise you, is that my highest level of education did not happen in the classroom. My internship at a fortune 500 company? It didn't happen there either. So where did I get my most advanced education? On the field. That's right, playing the same juvenile game I've been playing since I was 8 years old. And don't get me wrong, I appreciate the education I received from some great professors at Montclair High School, The Lawrenceville School, and The College of William & Mary. It's just different than being on the field, and actually unfair to even compare. But before I go any further, I need to be very clear. Without the in-class education, I wouldn't be able to apply the knowledge I gained on the field to opportunities off the field.



There's No Replacement to Sports

By David "DAC" Caldwell

continued

Competition

I spent my time in the classroom listening, taking notes, and taking test on the information I just learned. I spent my time on the field competing every second for survival, pride, ego, and recognition in a high-level performance-based business environment. An environment that forces us to battle with the opposition on every play and at the conclusion of every play, there is a winner and there is a loser. So as you get up after a play, you're forced to look your competition in the eyes, win or lose, and get ready to do it all over again. All while remembering what play you are getting ready to run and what split-second adjustments you need to make based on your opposition. And let us not forget, not only are we competing with the other team, we are competing with our own teammates. Because like it or not, there's always someone on your team that is fighting and clawing to be in your spot. It's human nature! Everyone wants to be the Top Dog. So how do you manage this? The same way you manage anything else when it comes to competition, YOU WIN. You win by any means necessary and at any cost, while maintaining a foundation of integrity.



Teamwork

Now that we've mentioned teammates, let's talk about teamwork. Fortunately, I earned a spot in the Mason School of Business at The College of William & Mary, where working in groups was encouraged, and in some cases mandatory. But it still didn't compare to the level of teamwork required to be successful on the football field. One of the biggest differentiators between teamwork in the classroom and on the field, was how we competed against other groups. On the field we worked together to directly compete against the opposition. In the classroom we worked together to compete against other groups, but we were never on the field at the same time. For example, one group would present, then another and so on, and whoever had the best performance, wins. In football you're on the field at the same time and my job is to not only perform my task, but also to interrupt you during your performance and do everything in my power (within the rules) to not allow you to fulfill your role. Football is also very different compared to other team sports. No other sports require the number of diverse roles. An offensive guard's role is totally different than a safety on defense, and a wide receiver's responsibilities are totally different than those of a defensive end's. This is what makes football the ultimate team competition. A chess-board full of pieces, all with different roles, working in harmony for one common goal, to win.



There's No Replacement to Sports

By David "DAC" Caldwell

continued

Accountability

With teamwork comes accountability. In most cases regarding my classroom education, I've only had to be accountable to myself and perhaps my family. Throughout my playing days with football, I was accountable to several hundred teammates, coaches, families, school faculty, and even cities. Just think of the economic difference between a winning city's football team and a team with a losing record. That means no playoffs, which is extra pay for every player, coach, and everyone working at the stadium. Less business, for every business in the city that increases profit when their home team is successful. And let's also not forget the emotional toll that affects every fan, player, and anyone else with an association to the team. And for all those who think I'm exaggerating when it comes to the fans and the city, trust me, YOU ARE WRONG. Just imagine playing on Monday Night Football, with the whole world watching, your entire family, and your entire city. Pretty big huh? Now imagine dropping the interception that would have changed the entire course and momentum of the game, and could have turned your team's entire season around. Then when you drop it, the cameras on you, and just you. Then when you come home, everyone from your neighbors to the people in the club look at you with disgust and disappointment. Then, dropping that interception creates a snowball effect and leads you to drop another and eventually lose your confidence. And players who aren't confident, don't last. They get cut and have the dream they've been working for their entire life, taken in an instant. Talk about a valuable lesson in accountability.

Problem Solving

From our early years in elementary school and all the way to college, we learn about problem solving. This is mostly taught through math problems with fixed variables or a hypothetical situation in a business class. The issue with this type of problem solving is the fact that there's not much at risk. The penalty in most cases is a few points on a test/paper or perhaps your teacher giving you a suggestion on a better way to solve the problem. Maybe, every once in a while, getting embarrassed by other students. The football universe is much different. There is always something big on the line. With great risk comes great reward, so how a problem is solved can be the difference between a touchdown and a dropped pass, a win and a horrible loss to a rival, a championship and a failed season, or the difference between earning a scholarship and not going to college. The pressure filled environment in a sport as competitive as football not only gives you the skills and ability to solve problems, but it prepares you for solving issues in the toughest situations where the most is at risk. Therefore, you aren't phased when there's a decision to be made that puts your company's money at risk, or your family's well-being. You address the problem like you've had to on the biggest stages and do what you've always done, WIN.

Adversity

Perhaps the biggest area in which my education on the field outweighed my in-class education, is when it comes to dealing with adversity. The most adversity I ever faced in the classroom, dealt more with managing my time to complete assignments, while working a grueling full-time job plus overtime (NCAA D1 Football). On the field, I've been dealing with adversity for as long as I've been playing sports. The amount of adversity only grew in college and the NFL due to their being more at stake. I've always noticed how my girlfriend and others who didn't grow up playing sports, don't approach adverse situations the way I and others who did play sports do. For example, I can remember her calling me in a frenzy because she had just started a new position at her job and had been given the wrong assignment to complete for her new role. It was just an honest mistake and miscommunication between her old boss and new boss. Now she was panicking because not only was she not able to fully prepare for the right assignment, her new boss was sick and she had to fill in during the company meeting. This meant presenting to other managers and executives. I told her NOGAS and to use the situation for exactly what it was, an opportunity.



NOGAS was a saying in football we used when dealing with adversity. We don't make excuses because "Nobody Gives A Shh..." I'll let you fill in the rest. Things aren't always fair, and situations aren't always ideal. In fact, when I think back to my playing days, I don't know if I would use ideal to describe most situations I was confronted with. In football, we embrace chaos, because with chaos comes opportunity. If the starter gets injured, we can't pause the game and reschedule for a later date. It's a "Next Man Up" approach and an opportunity for the backup to shine and "Show what ya got!" A backup is always taught to prepare like a starter, because all it takes is one play for him to be promoted. Whether it be a twisted ankle, torn ACL, or lack of performance, just like that, the backup is the starter and is expected to perform just as the starter would or better.

Adverse situations allow you to figure out what type of leader and teammate someone is.



There's No Replacement to Sports

By David "DAC" Caldwell

continued

Goal Crushing

The ultimate judgement for any individual, business, sports team and any other organization, is whether or not you accomplish your goal(s). All the topics I've discussed above, play a pivotal role in determining this outcome. But at the end of the day, even if a person does well in all those other areas, if they fall short of their goals, they have failed. I've learned this lesson countless times through football. Nobody gives you a pat on the back when you do some things well, but you ultimately lose. Only losers find comfort in that. There are no such things as participation trophies in the real world and that is why a true competitor always takes a loss the only way there is to take a loss, AS A LOSS. I always think back to my college coach, Bob Shoop, telling us that "Playing well isn't good enough when better than well is required to win." This is another area where I learned more on the football field than in the classroom. Playing a highly-competitive game, with amazing athletes as your opposition, you can technically do well and still get beat. I always hear commentators say "That was good defense, but just better offense" when an offensive player makes a great play. Well I have news for you, when the team is evaluating your performance, all they care about is whether you make the play or you don't make the play. Maybe a 1st round draft pick or a pro-bowl veteran has some leniency with this, but the undrafted player I was, did not. So once again, either you make the play or you fail. Either you accomplish your goal or you fail. There is no in between, and this is made apparent when the stakes are the highest. And can you think of higher stakes than competing for a dream you've been working your entire life for? What pressure?!

I'd like to finish by once again making it very clear that I appreciate the high-level education I received at some of the best academic institutions in the world. I also have to acknowledge that without focusing and doing well in the classroom, there's no way I'd be in a position to receive the opportunity to use the education I received through sports, in the "Real World." Being the son of a career teacher and a first-generation college graduate turned attorney, succeeding in the classroom was prioritized above sports. As a matter of fact, a low grade on a test meant there were no sports! Whether that meant missing a practice or the championship game, it didn't matter. And I thank my parents very much for doing that! Equipping myself with the tools I learned in the classroom, along with the invaluable lessons I learned through sports, has prepared me for success for the rest of my life. And when I do face challenges and obstacles, which I always do, I remember "NOGAS, win!"

By David "DAC" Caldwell