When You Aim at Nothing, You Hit It Every Time

What supposed barriers hold us back from being all we can be?

Butch Maier



Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint...

-Proverbs 29:18

I attended Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Va., during my 10th-grade year. The primary reason that I decided to go to prep school was for academic benefits, but I also wanted to play a sport during each season—and I could do that more easily at a boarding school.

In the fall, I played football. True, at 5'4" and 117 lbs., I did not strike much fear in the hearts of my opponents, but I was fast and anticipated well.

Still, I was only the backup free safety on the "junior" team—one level under

I wore number 42 for Ronnie Lott. He was the best defensive back in the game at that time, so I thought that I would imitate his aggressive style of play. The problem was that I did not much enjoy tackling people—I usually felt more pain after the play than did the receiver.

In the third quarter of our first game, the defensive line coach wanted to make a substitution. There was no way I was going into the game—the guy playing ahead of me was the team's Most Valuable Player the year before.

"Maier! Hey, where's Maier?"

Wait a sec. I'm a defensive back. Coach, you are in charge of the defensive line. What do you want with me?

"Maier, go in at right defensive end." What are you talking about? I don't have a clue how to play defensive end and besides, all 200 lbs. of Bubba what's-hisname on the other team always runs a trap

hands-on stuff, I knew the game-they called me "Stat" in prep school).

"Just contain. Don't let him get to the outside.'

Contain? My only attribute is that I have long arms. I don't know how to perform the "swim" technique or how to avoid blockers... and Bubba could bench press me two or three times over.

"Alright then, Pollard! Come 'ere!"

Besides. Ronnie Lott doesn't play on the line... well, he doesn't carry the team equipment bags, either.

I could have made a contribution to the team; instead I chose to hide on the benchnot willing to take that risk of failing, not willing to try.

As the season progressed, I saw limited playing time at defensive back and never really made an impact.

That winter, I decided to go out for basketball. I went to the first tryouts for the "junior" cage team. I didn't really have a goal or a purpose. I just played.

After a couple of workouts, the coach posted a "cut" list. Sweet! I had made it through the first trial. The only other cut would occur after the next practice.

I was late to the next practice. I wasn't allotted enough time to stretch. I was assigned to guard one of the best players.

My Washington Semester class visited the National Cathedral that day and was late getting back to school. That's not fair.

Neither was complaining to the coach who hadn't seen an ounce of desire or a pinch of determination in my playing.

Okay. Then came spring. A newness,

to that side (even if I didn't know that fresh and alive, was in the air. The horrid winter gave way to the blossoms of nature. My athletic slate had seemingly been wiped

Dust off those cleats-it's baseball sea-

Now, here I will find my niche. I will thrive on the diamond, I thought. Back home, I had been a Charleston Central Little League All-Star first baseman. I hit .521 and played well enough in the field during my "senior" season to start a couple of games for my All-Star team. We won six straight and made it all the way to the semi-finals of the West Virginia State Little League tournament.

That earned me a "West Virginia District 3 Champions" jacket. I wore that thing everywhere. I wanted people to know that I was somebody, that I was something special.

Yeah: uh oh, here comes trouble.

Of course, I had the jacket at Episcopal and wore it during baseball tryouts. The guys would ask me about it and I would give them my story about All-Stars. They were pretty impressed and got the idea that I was some superstar.

So did I.

I rode that wave as long as I could and the hype surrounding me intensified. But my level of play didn't.

All of the pressures put on me were too much. I became a perfectionist, not allowing myself to make one simple mistake. When I did err, even in the most subtle way, I got mad and frustrated, and soon after developed an attitude... and a bad Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction. case of splinters.

I had concentrated too much on image,

rather than a vision. I lived in the past, rather than looking ahead.

I had approached three tasks with not much more than a wishy-washy mindset. I didn't have a direction in each case. With football, I was content to sit on the bench, rather than take a small risk to play, learn and improve. With basketball, I acted casually, instead of setting high goals for which to strive. With baseball, I got complacent with where I was and the game passed me by.

We must all set goals to pursue. Without them, mediocrity and complacency are certain to appear. I used to laugh off New Year's resolutions, because they were so idealistic. But something can be said for setting lofty

Even though we may fall short of our great expectations, they may be more productive than accomplishing smaller tasks. Reaching all of our goals shows that we aren't dreaming big enough. It shows that we are compromising our

What do you aim to do this year? Why won't you accomplish that? Will you have empty excuses like I did, or will you be able to say that you truly tried? Don't be afraid of taking a chance since there isn't really much risk involved in doing your best-your true

-Romans 12:12

Bowls, Polls Surprise the College Football World

Chris Ward Staff Writer

The conclusion to the 1990 season in college football was both exciting and controversial.

First, let's take a look at the annual meeting between the Pac-10 and the Big Ten champions that is known as the Rose Bowl. The eighth-ranked University of Washington Huskies handled the 17thranked Iowa Hawkeyes 46-34, the highest scoring Rose Bowl in the entire 77-year history of the contest.

The 1989 national champion Miami Hurricanes clobbered Texas 46-3 in Dallas' Cotton Bowl to the amazement of Longhorn fans. Texas had been ranked number three by the polls, but number four Miami prevailed under the leadership of quarterback Craig Erickson.

In a Sugar Bowl of interest to local fans, the unranked Virginia Cavaliers, who had been ranked number one earlier during the season and had later fallen from grace, faced a favored number 10 Tennessee Volunteer team. However, Virginia's star quarterback and one-time Heisman Trophy hopeful Shawn Moore was able to recover from injuries sustained earlier and kept the Hoos in front until a final Tennessee drive with only seconds remaining gave the victory to the Vols.

With the other bowls now covered, the Citrus and Orange Bowls remain as the keys to the 1990 championship. The Citrus Bowl pitted the ACC champion and second-ranked Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets versus the number 19 Nebraska Corn-

huskers. To the surprise of many fans, Nebraska was favored to win the game. The Ramblin' Wreck proved the oddsmakers wrong, however, when they crushed the Huskers 45-21 and emerged as the only undefeated team in NCAA Division I. Georgia Tech's hopes for a national championship then rested in the result of the Orange Bowl in Miami.

The game for the national title involved the number one, but once-beaten, Buffaloes of Colorado against the number five Irish of the University of Notre Dame. The game was a defensive struggle to the very end, as Colorado went ahead 10-9 after a score. With little time remaining, Colorado punted to Notre Dame's superstar Raghib "the Rocket" Ismail. "Rocket" took the ball and ran a beautiful 91 yards for the apparent touchdown and victory. A

clipping call on the Fighting Irish's Greg Davis, however, negated the play and Colorado went on to win.

The identity of the national champion was now up to the pollsters.

At the end of an agonizing debate, the Associated Press Poll declared Colorado the national champion with a record of 11-1-1. Although the Buffaloes had one loss and should have lost another game to Missouri in the now-famous "Fifth and Goal" game, the sportswriters of America made Georgia Tech the number two team

Miami was given the third place vote and the 1990 college football campaign was officially closed after much debate but a lot of great moments as well.