

TED BARRETT

Story By
Greg Shepard



*Ted Barrett Sr. FB 5-10, 205
University of Massachusetts*

“Ted Barrett is an extraordinary young man as well as an exceptional football player. In my eight years of coaching, I have never seen more determination in an athlete to overcome life-threatening barriers and strive to be the best. Ted sets a great example for all the young athletes in our country by challenging the odds, never quitting and persevering relentlessly until reaching his ultimate goal.”
—Ian Pyka, Strength Coach, Univ. of Mass.

I was all set to introduce Ted Barrett as comeback-player-of-the-year. He overcame a great deal and was at the peak of his football career. Ted was running a 4.42 forty and under a fine and caring strength coach Ian Pyka, Ted Parallel Squatted 450, Benched 375, Power Cleaned 280, and Inclined 325 pounds. Ted also had a Vertical Jump of 32 inches and a Standing Long Jump of nine feet nine inches. Yes, this was Ted's senior year at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst. He was slated to start at fullback for the Minutemen but then something happened to prevent that.

Ted's courage and determination throughout his life is worth telling although in one way it does not have a happy ending. However, in another way it has a great ending because every athlete must face what Ted faced last fall. Let's start at the beginning...

Ted went to North Attleboro High School in eastern Massachusetts and played football for Coach Ray Beaupre. He was captain of both the football and track teams. From his tailback position, Ted scored 27 touchdowns in a 9-1 senior season. He was 5-8, and 170 pounds, and ran a 4.55 forty. Ted started lifting in the 9th grade and by his senior year Ted had a 320 Bench, 325 Squat, and a 440 pound Dead Lift to his credit. Ted remembered, “I know that Squat was low but we didn't have a Squat Rack and it was kind of scary.”

Avon Prep School was Ted's next step. It was like an extra year of high school to get “Prep Classes” to get into a prestige school. Avon Prep played in the Erickson Prep League where each school is allowed three post graduates. Ted was then recruited by a number of schools, but chose the University of Massachusetts/Amherst early because he liked the people and the location. “Also, the academics at U Mass. were excellent,” stated Ted. U Mass. has 25,000 students and Ted majored in Human Services and will graduate this spring.

Ted began to have stomach problems in Junior High School. When examined, he was diagnosed as having ulcerative colitis, which the doctors tried to control with medication. He tired very easily and could only practice football 2-3 days per week. Ted never was able to play a full game of football.

These problems continued at UMass. However, Ted started a few games in his freshman year and returned kickoffs. He again started a few games in his sophomore year, but the next spring are when the problems really surfaced. Over a span of 9 months, Ted underwent a series of three operations (June, December, March) to totally remove his large intestine. During that time, a colostomy was performed. Ted reflected back to those depressing

DON'T QUIT

days, "I had no choice. I was losing weight and was always tired and weak. I could realistically only play half the game. No matter what I ate, my system could never tolerate it. I thought it would never get better. It was really frustrating. The doctors finally told me that the only way to solve the problem was through surgery."

Ted continued, "Wearing the bag was the hardest thing I ever had to do. I didn't tell too many people. Geez, I had to empty it five times per day and change it twice per week. I didn't feel many of my friends and teammates would understand. It's difficult to explain to people about having waste attached to you, it's not like talking about a bad knee or shoulder."

Ted tried to train the best that he could. He ran and lifted and just wore sweats over everything. "I never thought I'd play again," explained Ted. "I got really depressed but I still dated."

The surgeon who performed the operations had no idea of the intensity with which Ted trained in between operations. Ted weighed 175 pounds before the first operation and left the hospital weighing 145 pounds. At one point, he weighed 135 pounds while in the hospital. He was in the hospital for one month.

Ted said, "I felt the training I did in-between operations allowed me to come back as quick as I did."

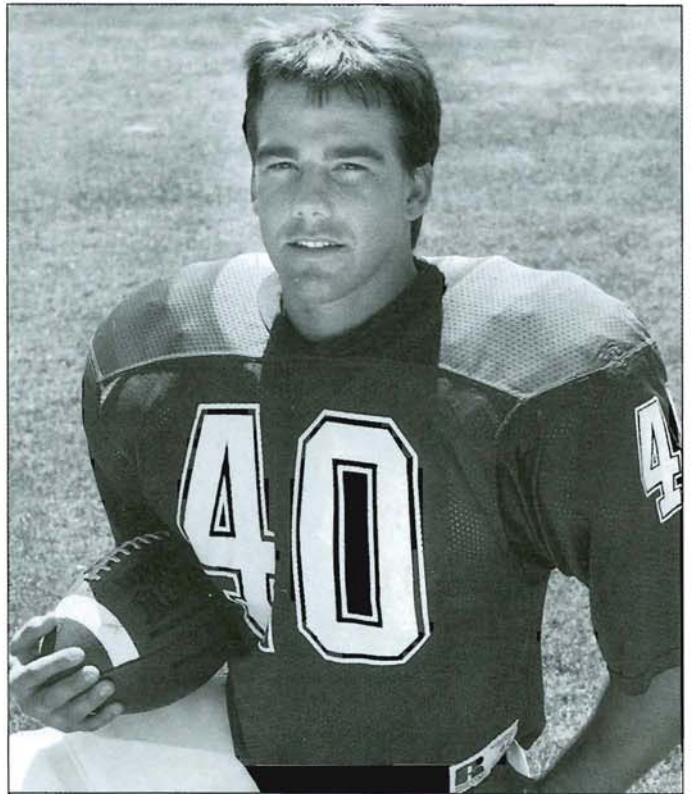
But, the story is not over! The third operation was supposed to be simple, but there were complications. Waking from the operation, Ted experienced internal bleeding. he went into shock, experiencing an extreme loss of blood. "They told me I lost 8 units of blood" said Ted. This occurred in March.

After that last operation in March, Ted was determined to make it back to the gridiron for his junior year in the fall. He worked out all the time. He did flexibility training everyday and worked on sprints and plyometrics twice per week. It took Ted only four months to get back into full shape with his lifts better than ever. Finally, the doctor and his parents gave their consent. Ted Barrett became a starter by the fourth game and finished the remainder of the season!

Story continued on page 71

"Ted Barrett is one of the most determined young men I've ever coached. Very few athletes would have been able to endure what he did and still have the courage to play football. He is a fine example for all football players."

Jim Reid, Head Football Coach
University of Massachusetts



Ted Barrett Says

- ★ Don't Quit
- ★ Don't underestimate yourself
- ★ Keep everything positive
- ★ If something bad happens, don't dwell on it.
- ★ Look forward not back, you can't change what's happened whether on or off the field.

PECATONICA FOOTBALL

Continued from page 24

magical, mysterious and wonderful happened. It started in the winter with a group of athletes who decided to make themselves as good as they could be. They worked out together: they pushed themselves and their friends to new levels. They found they could do much more than they thought. What once was dreaded work became something exciting, something to look forward to. It seemed that new records were being set every week. The players stuck together; they made sure everybody was involved. It was such a change that people of the town and school took notice and were puzzled: they didn't know what to think. Never before in the history of this little high school had an entire team bonded together to make themselves as good as they could. Never had an entire team had the courage to reach for greatness! Yet these athletes continued through the summer. In fact, they not only continued, they seemed to increase the intensity of their workouts. They knew that their school had been a laughing stock, even an embarrassment, at times over the years. They burned with a desire to change that image. They wanted desperately for the town and the high school to have pride, to have great pride, in itself. They knew they could do as much as anyone to have their town and high school have a great name. They were truly driven in their quest for greatness.

Finally their season began. Everybody was ready, the townspeople were filled with anticipation; they knew something was different about this team. The team itself was ready, they knew it was time to cash in on the work they had put in. When the first game was over, the fans were shocked with what they had seen. They couldn't remember the last time they had seen their team so thoroughly dominate another team. The team played with such emotion and intensity it sent a shiver of excitement down everybody's spine.

During the next week the townspeople, the parents, the students, the teachers and most of all the players looked forward to the next game. They all knew that this would be a great test. The opponent for this week was a big rival and a traditional powerhouse. If the little school could go into enemy land and come back with a win, that would really open some eyes. It was a hard fought game from the beginning. Tension was high and mistakes were many. At halftime it looked bleak indeed for our little team, but this was not a normal team. They had no thoughts of letting up. They had great confidence that they could overcome any obstacle. They proved just that in the second half. The bus ride home was joyous to say the least!

Now, many years later the townspeople still talk about that season. They call it the "Miracle Season." There are still faded newspaper clippings that hang in the barbershop, bars, hardware store, etc. The trophy is still in the center of the trophy case. The banner still hangs on the gym wall. Many of the players are gone now but they are not forgotten. They are remembered as the players who had the courage to reach for greatness, and these players reached it!

CRAIG HODGES *Continued from page 54*

completed upon reaching a full leg extension. There is only about 15° degrees of movement in this exercise. This exercise modification along with the Quarter Squats is designed to decrease stress on the patellar tendons which are chronic sore areas on many basketball players.

The 1988-89 season with the Chicago Bulls should prove to be another challenge for Craig Hodges. Fortunately for Craig, he still maintains a very positive attitude towards strength work and its relationship to his profession. Not only has he become stronger, but, he feels as though the added strength has increased his shooting range. And when it comes to dropping-in long range artillery, Craig Hodges is the "General in Charge."

TED BARRETT *Continued from page 61*

Ted put in a great year of training and was getting ready for his senior year of ball. He was in the best shape of his life. Ted was finally on top. I talked to him before the season and asked him what he had learned. He responded, "You can do it if you want. I worked hard, didn't cheat and things fell into place. I learned you can't take anything for granted. My diet is better. I learned that my health is most important and it should have been all along.

Ted has lived an exemplary life and has never been involved with drugs and alcohol. "I don't see how you get started. I worked out so hard and went through so much. I'm not going to be stupid." stated Ted.

Okay, now we should be all set for a happy ending; like Ted Barrett makes All-American. It didn't go down that way. Ted was running sprints and his hamstring tore just before the season started. It was his first pull ever. "I didn't think I'd be out the whole year," said Ted. He tried to play in the third game of the season and the hamstring popped again. Ted tried one final time during the eighth game but it was no use. The hamstring again tore. Ted stayed out the entire season and helped out best he could.

The first thing Ted said to me was that the team had a good year. The University of Massachusetts/Amherst won eight games and went to the Division IAA playoffs. Well, it was a real tragedy that Ted missed his senior year but everyone must face the last year sometime. What counts is the lessons learned by the effort along the way. Did Ted gain something? You be the judge.

"If I had it to do all over again, I'd do things the same way. I was really down for awhile but I'm sure it happened for a reason. I've got no regrets. I enjoyed everyday that I was out. I played with great people and had a great coach. I really had a great time. Just being involved in trying to make it happen is what's important," concluded Ted Barrett.

It's plain to see that Ted Barrett is an Upper-Limit person. He will carry his spirit of determination as he goes into his chosen profession which happens to be in the area of Federal Law Enforcement. We want to thank Ted and his strength coach, Ian Pyka, for being such great examples and for their help on this story.