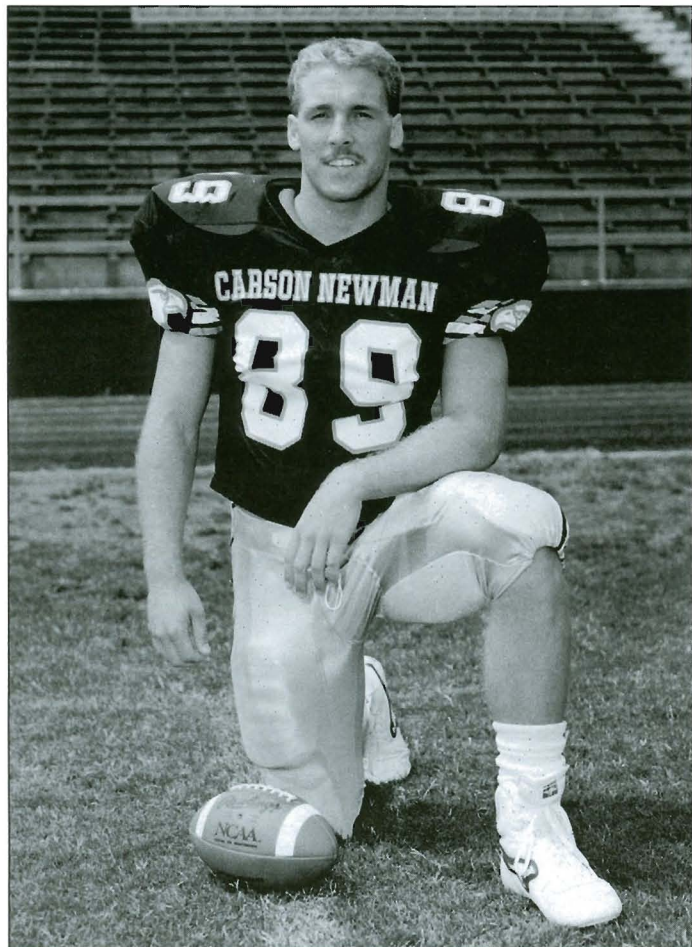


TODD COLLINS 6-3 236

By Greg Shepard



Last August during preseason football practice, Todd Collins was instructed to run a forty by his coaches at Carson-Newman College. Veteran coaches Ken Sparks and Bill Mitchell looked at their watches and couldn't believe it. Head Coach Sparks exclaimed, "He ran his first 40 in 4.3 so we tried it again and he ran 4.3 again!" Todd modestly countered, "It's probably not a true 4.3. I ran three more 40's after that and they were all in the 4.4 range." Coach Sparks shook his head, "This is a guy 6-3, 236, that is coming off major knee surgery. Talk about a horse like he is that can run like that - unbelievable."

Well maybe it is? And where and what is Carson-Newman? And if he can run that fast at that size, what's he doing at - what's the name of that place again? And what's this about major knee surgery? Are these guys ready for the funny farm or way out there in Pluto land?

Well buckle your chin straps folks and get ready for a great motivational story. Todd has been on the BFS program for a long time. He was our Bigger Faster Stronger Athlete-of-the-Year back in 1988. In fact, Todd was one of the most decorated athletes in high school football history. Besides being a first team All-American by USA Today, Super Prep, and Parade magazines, he was also USA Today's Defensive Player-of-the-Year.

Todd worked tremendously hard and smart. He knew what to do in high school and said, "The Bigger Faster Stronger videos really helped. The Speed and Plyometric videos were super. Seeing Stefan really inspired me. Before, I couldn't touch the rim, and in just 2 1/2 months I started dunking with a 360 turn. It was unbelievable. I jumped over the tennis net like Stefan and over high hurdles like in the video. The speed video with Stefan also has helped me down to a 4.75 forty. My lateral speed also really improved."

While at Jefferson County High School in Tennessee, Todd led his team to a perfect 15-0 state championship season. He was 6-3, 228, with a 4.57 forty and 40-inch vertical jump. Todd also Benched 360, Squatted 575, and Cleaned 300 pounds! To top things off, Todd was a great student and a fine Christian. Some felt that Todd Collins



Plyometrics Play A Huge Role In Developing Speed and Power.

"Everybody knows Todd is a great player but he also got a unanimous vote as team leader. He has spiritual leadership capabilities. The players see it in his actions, not just words.

After his knee surgery, Todd worked hard everyday to recover. He's overcome things most people have a hard time with.

Todd is so much fun. We went on a leadership conference up in the mountains for two days in August. We called it our family outing. It was a time we became close.

Head Coach Ken Sparks, Carson-Newman College

FASTEST LB IN USA

was the top recruit of the nation.

Todd literally had his choice of any school in the nation but chose Georgia for two reasons. It was close to home and his brother Brent was already there playing. It seemed like a rosy future for Todd. What could go wrong. So far his life had been like a dream.

Maybe there's a purpose for adversity - that it makes us better and stronger in the long run. Well, Todd was about to go through a lot of adversity and many tests of faith. During the first day of practice, Todd broke his foot with severe torn ligaments. He was always in rehabilitation. To make matters worse, Todd got mono. "It got discouraging," remembered Todd, "I had a lot of high expectations, I wanted to go out and show them but I wasn't allowed to do anything."

Then, Brent left Georgia to play for Carson-Newman college in their hometown. "I was at a real low," said Todd quietly. "Brent was a big factor in me coming to Georgia. I talked to Coach Dooley and he signed a release for me to play with Coach Majors at Tennessee."

Todd was willing to give up one year of eligibility. He still wanted to play major college football and Tennessee was only 25 miles from home. Anyway, local people had hated to see him leave to the enemy down in Georgia so they were glad to see him back. Todd's recovery went well but then he separated the AC joint in his shoulder. He kept trying but lost out on Spring football. Hurt and low again, Todd did a lot of thinking. "My brother got drafted in the seventh round by Buffalo. I wanted to play pro ball so I figured if Brent could do it, I could."

One week before August practices, Todd transferred to Carson-Newman College. Since they are an NAIA school, Todd would have no loss in eligibility like he would at NCAA Tennessee. However, during the second game of the 1989 season, Todd tore up his ankle and missed three weeks. As he began limited practice, he suffered a severe thigh bruise which cost him another three weeks.

Carson-Newman is located in Todd's home town of Jefferson City, Tennessee. Coach Ken Sparks has an amazing 60-10 record at their home stadium and at this writing has an overall record of 110-30-1 with 5 national NAIA Division I football championships since 1983. This year Carson-Newman is undefeated and ranked number one again. Founded in 1851, the college is affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention and has more than 50 areas of study to choose from.

Anyway, after that discouraging 1989 season, Todd had a good off-season and made it through 1990 Spring ball without incident. However, he soon got into a motorcycle accident. Todd broke and dislocated his thumb and missed a lot of his summer workouts. He was in a cast for nearly four weeks.

Things looked good during last year's season but then it happened in the 8th game. It just snapped. Todd shredded the anterior cruciate and destroyed the lateral collateral ligament of his knee. Todd underwent surgery during Thanksgiving in Birmingham, Alabama with Dr. James Andrews who has done surgery on many famous athletes including Bo Jackson. "Dr. Andrews told me that if I wanted to rehabilitate hard, I could make it - that it was all up to me."

Todd spent 8 months of intense rehabilitation. "Everything came back better than before," beamed Todd. "I got my confidence back up during two-a-days and running that 4.3 forty was fantastic."

Five months after surgery, Todd posted a 211 lb. reading on the Cybex machine. Two months later, he was the strongest that Dr. Andrews had ever seen with a 240 lb. effort. Todd also had a 40-inch vertical jump, an 11-9 standing long jump and did a 4.52

"Todd is self motivated. I just line him up and say "Go Get 'em." He's a once in a lifetime kid to coach. Todd makes it fun. I've had about 10 All-American linebackers and Todd's the best. His personality seemed perfect for us. Todd's the kind of guy that's always trying to get better."

Bill Mitchell: Linebacker Coach, Carson-Newman



Todd Made Vast Improvement In Speed and Jumping Upon Seeing Our Speed and Plyo Video In High School

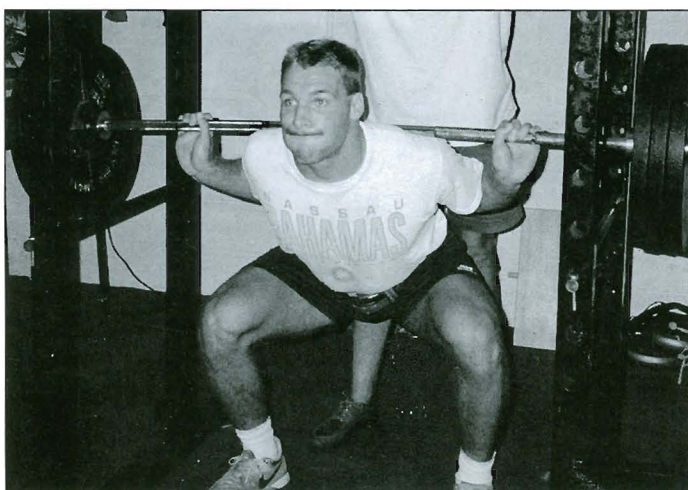


Daily Flexibility Work Is One Of The Key Ingredients To Blazing Speed.

TODD COLLINS AMERICA'S FASTEST LINEBACKER



Todd Has a 425+ Bench Press



Todd Has Parallel Squatted 620 Lbs.



Todd May Have Set A Record For Intensity In Knee Rehabilitation Workouts.

Forty; seven months after surgery. His bench soared to 425 pounds with an amazing 5% body fat level.

Dr. Andrews said that Parallel Squats were fine and so Todd trained hard during the in-season by doing Benches, Squats and Cleans. The Parallel Squats came back fast. Even at the end of the summer, Todd was able to do 400 pounds with 8 reps with no problem.

Despite all the injury problems and playing for an NAIA school, Todd was ranked last September as the nation's 7th best linebacker as only a junior. Todd's agent Zach Cisco, feels if Todd can continue to remain healthy, he could be a first round draft choice this year.

"My experience at Carson-Newman has been great," related Todd. "The coaches are super. I've loved it. Coach Sparks is a strong Christian and provides a wonderful atmosphere. My linebacker coach, Bill Mitchell, well, I love him to death. He's really pushed me and helped me to be mentally tough. The best thing is that he makes it fun."

I then read Todd's message that he gave back in our 1988 BFS Journal and he remarked, "That's good for me to hear again. My trials have built character. It's made me a better person. I still stay away from alcohol. I've never had a beer in college. I still don't know anything about steroids. I've never seen anybody inject or take steroids. I still stand by everything in that 1988 message."

We thank Todd, his coaches and parents for being Upper Limit. Here's Todd's message as he gave it three years ago:

"Success comes from within. Never let anybody put you down. Do what you can do-do your best. Never be satisfied with any accomplishment. Always strive to be better. God has given us the common sense to know what's right and wrong. Use that inner feeling. Heart power is what's important. Use it; stay off drugs, for example.

"Be your own person. That's the best way to combat peer pressure. It takes guts to stand up and say 'No' but after awhile they leave you alone. We didn't have drugs around our school. However, alcohol was big. It's common sense for me to stay away. I spend too much time bustin' my butt to get better. It's insane to put something into your body to tear it down. My real friends and buddies, we stick together. I'd say choose your friends carefully. True friends won't get you into a bad situation. In today's world, true friends are hard to come by.

"I've never seen steroids, but I don't plan to even think about them. I don't want to ever depend on some artificial aid. I want to do everything on my own.

I feel the best thing to happen to me is growing up in a Christian home. My motivation and inspiration comes from the Lord. I know the body is the temple of God, so I take care of it. Being in the FCA has been important and good. The spiritual things are lasting and eternal. I've gone to FCA camps in North Carolina, and they have been a tremendous source of spiritual strength. My father, mother, and whole family have been close spiritually, so I pretty much know what's right."