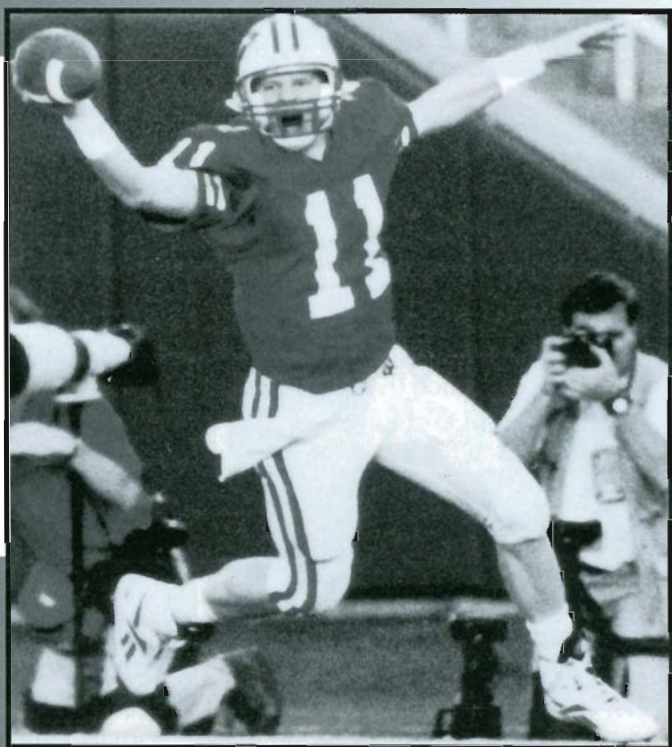


Darrell Bevell

University of Wisconsin
"Win Every Day!"



By Dr. Greg Shepard

A crowd of 101,237 watched one of the most unlikely football spectacles in the annals of sport's history. Darrell Bevell was playing for the Wisconsin Badgers against UCLA in the last Rose Bowl and scrambled for a 21-yard touchdown in the 4th quarter to clinch the win. What was Wisconsin doing in the Rose Bowl anyway? And what was a Mormon Quarterback doing at Wisconsin?

The answer is a testament of courage and an unwavering belief in one of the biggest turnarounds in the history of college football. Let us start at the beginning. . . .

Darrell grew up in Scottsdale, Arizona where his dad was a football coach. Darrell started playing football at age seven with pads in a Pop Warner type league. His dad steered him into the quarterback position and that's where he played all the time. "Darrell always had a good arm and good sense," remembered Coach Bevell. Darrell was coached by his father some in Pop Warner and then again at Chaparral High School where his dad was the head football coach. It was Darrell's dream to

someday play Quarterback for Brigham Young University.

Darrell was also a very good baseball pitcher and played basketball up until his sophomore year. However, football was where Darrell really excelled. He threw for 1700 yards and 15 touchdowns while throwing only four interceptions in his junior year. Darrell received All-City and All-State honors. Darrell came from a large Mormon family consisting of three brothers and four sisters. Every morning they would have family prayer together and always before a

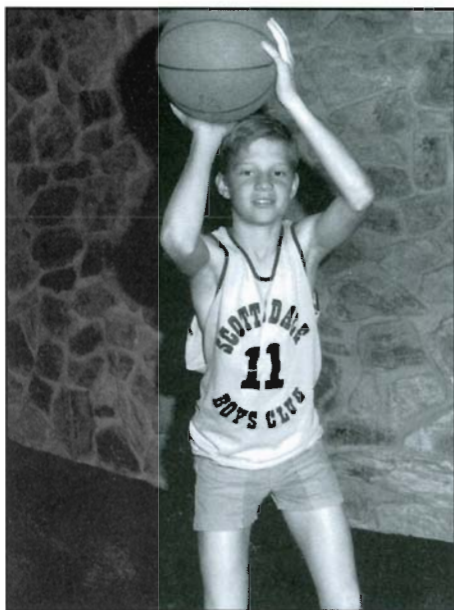
game. Darrell and his family would need this strong faith to get through the next year.

Darrell was rated the top QB in Arizona for his senior year. Preliminary offers were coming in from all over the nation. He passed for 500 yards and 5 TDs in his first two games and then it happened in the third game.

Coach Bevell thought back to that game, "Darrell got hit in his throwing hand and came over to the sideline. One of his fingers was severely dislocated. Darrell told me to pull it so he



Darrell Bevell and Wife Tammy, Media Day 1994



**Darrell, Age 9
Boys Club Guard**

could get back into the game. When I pulled it, the finger almost came off. It just exploded. We could see tendons. My heart just stopped. It was total devastation. Darrell almost passed out on the way to the hospital. We were stupid for not going to a specialist right away. They took out the bone chips and I was furious. Later, we took him to Dr. Bodell and he did a dynamite job. He could have used those bone chips but he had to use a plastic knuckle to get Darrell's finger back.

"Our religion helped us get through it. I believe you need challenges to make you stronger. Anyway, Darrell was at practice the next morning. He wouldn't take pain pills. Darrell knew he was done for the season but he needed to be there to help the team. Every Division I team backed off after the injury."

Darrell still held out hope that BYU would still want him. Darrell sent them films of his 2 1/2 games. "They kept them," said Darrell passively, "and then they lost them. I figured I wasn't too important."

Northern Arizona, a Division I-AA school was the only college willing to give Darrell a chance and that



**Darrell, Age 10
Little League QB**

was with only a half scholarship. "Darrell got a bad deal," Coach Bevell stated. "But, if it had to be done over again, I wouldn't do it any different. Things worked out. I am now super pleased. I am really high on Wisconsin's strength program as well as what they do nutritionally."

Darrell had been a good student in high school with a 3.4 GPA and his



**Darrell, Age 18
Chaparral High QB**



**Darrell, Age 11
Short Stop - Pitcher**

finger had healed but he still elected to red-shirt in his first year at Northern Arizona. He was slated to be the starting quarterback but he also turned nineteen. That is the age many young men in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) decide to go on a two-year mission and spread their faith. So Darrell, along with 50,000 other young Mormon missionaries, elected to serve his church rather than throw passes. He was "called" to Cleveland, Ohio.

Being on a mission is no way to prepare physically for college football. Darrell got up at 6:30 AM and labored until 10:30 at night. The only time Darrell was allowed any personal time was on Mondays. On this day, he played basketball and threw a football to anyone who could catch. Darrell weighed 170 pounds going in and came out a soft and weak 176 pounds.

Coach Bevell believes, "The growing experience you get on a mission can not be duplicated. A mission helps everything you want to talk about. Darrell's mission really worked out. He did what he was supposed to do." Coach Bevell has two



other sons on missions. One son is in Paraguay while another is in Australia. The latter is the younger son and will soon be blind. Before his mission, he did play football. When Mr. and Mrs. Bevell found out about the progressively degenerative eye condition they were really "shook up". Their young son said, "Don't worry, I'll be fine." The Bevell family knows something about adversity.

Darrell contemplated his odd journey to the University of Wisconsin, If I hadn't have gone on a mission, I probably would have stayed at Northern Arizona and my college career would have been over last year." Brad Childress had been Darrell's quarterback coach at NAU but when Darrell went on his mission, Coach Childress went to the University of Utah and then on to Wisconsin. Coach Childress, who is now the Badger Offensive Coordinator, kept Darrell's name in the back of his mind and decided to offer Darrell a full scholarship.

There are 107 Division I football teams in America. When head coach Barry Alvarez inherited the program four years ago, Wisconsin was ranked in the 107th position. Maybe they were desperate. Brigham Young didn't want Darrell. Statistics were not in his favor. Yes, there have been outstanding quarterbacks at BYU: Gifford Nielsen, Marc Wilson, Jim McMahon, Steve Young, Robbie Bosco, Ty Detmer and currently John Walsh. However, none of those ever served a two-year mission.

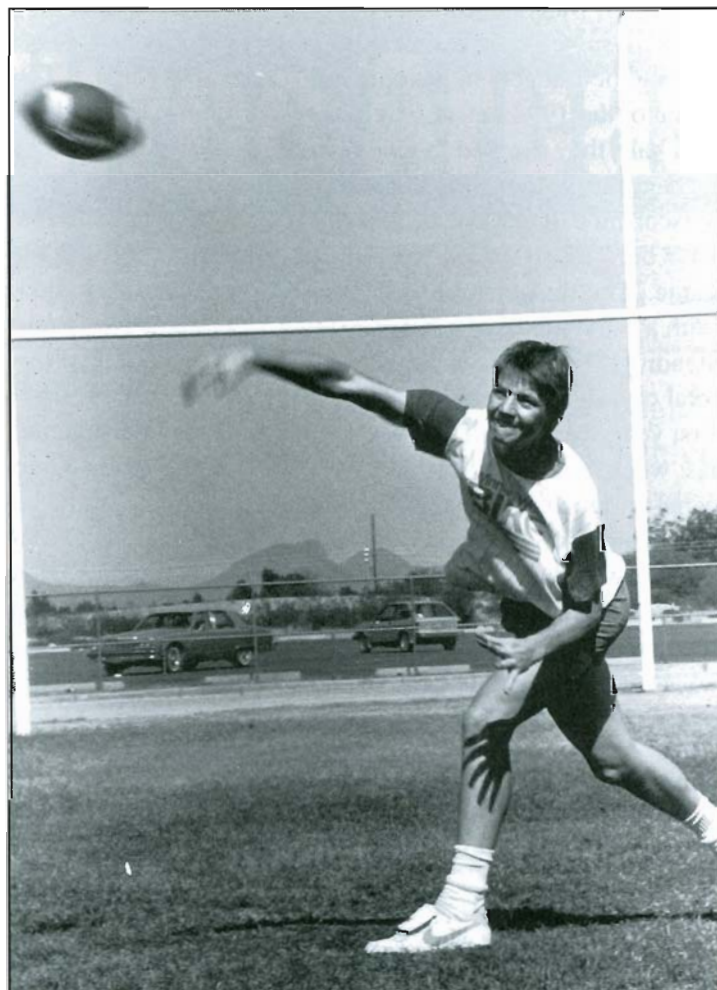
The Badgers had a habit of living in the past. They had a Heisman Trophy winner (Alan "The Horse" Ameche back in 1954 and with Elroy "Crazylegs" Hirsch won a mythical national championship during the war years in 1942. They started football back in 1989, built their Camp Randall Stadium back in 1917 which holds nearly 78,000 and boast in their media guide that they almost won the

1963 Rose Bowl against USC. Their media people had quite a chore in finding things to toot the Badger's horn.

Wisconsin did have the 7th highest graduation rate (81%) among Division I schools. They are the 5th largest college in enrollment with 40,000 students coming from 115 countries and a faculty which has accounted for 12 Nobel and 17 Pulitzer Prizes. They have an academic five-star (highest) rating, the third highest percentage of CEO's at Fortune 500 industrial companies and leads public institutions in private support with more than \$128 million given in 1990-91. But, what they had never had was a Rose Bowl victory. This was something Coach Alvarez coveted greatly. So what was he doing with a 21 year-old kid who had never thrown a college pass and who could barely Bench 150 pounds?

To be successful, Darrell believes you must take care of business yourself. "I identified two areas," said Darrell. "One was physical and the other mental. I was very weak when I first came to Wisconsin so I worked hard in the weight room. I also studied a lot of film to get smarter." Darrell was also slow. He ran a 5.2 forty. "I can run a 4.8 now," said Darrell proudly. "We have a great speed program and we do a lot of Resistive-Assisted sprints.

We also do Box Jumps, Plyometrics and I try to do my flexibility hard. I've gotten a lot better and Coach Dettman is way ahead of other coaches. He works on my speed and depth of my drop." Darrell now weighs 205 and Benches 300, Squats 300 X 10 reps and does 4 reps on the Hammer Press with 370 pounds. Coach Dettman, who is in his third year with the Badgers, has a weight room with 45,000 pounds of free weights, 8 Squat Racks, 8 Benches, 8 Inclines, 5 Power Clean stations and a wide variety of other free weight, machine and aerobic equipment. Wisconsin went 1-10 overall and 0-8 in the Big Ten in 1990. The next year the team improved to 5-6 overall and 2-6 in the Big Ten finishing in 8th place. This was while Darrell was on his mission. However, there was a new spirit and a new optimism about Badger football with Coach Alvarez





DARRELL BEVELL: A TESTAMENT IN COURAGE

Darrell has probably shown as much progress as any athlete I have been around. He will do anything possible to make himself better. I have strong feelings about him as a person and his work ethic, dedication and commitment. Darrell will excel at anything he does.

Darrell is a great leader by example. He's here early and does extra. He will do whatever it takes. When he got here, Darrell was operating on a zero strength base. He could only Bench 155 pounds. Darrell literally turned himself into a physical person.

John Dettman
Wisconsin Strength Coach

who said, "You always try to teach kids about life. We spend time talking about and dealing with adversity, overcoming the odds and being positive. Regardless of what happens, it's important to find the bright side of things and move forward."

Darrell watched from the bench as the Washington Huskies were pummeling the Badgers in the opening game of the 1992 season. In the second half, they decided to give Darrell a chance and he made it happen. Wisconsin still lost but what could have been a rout turned into a close game. The Badgers closed the season with a 5-6 record and a 3-5 Big Ten standing. Three losses were by a total of a sheer four points. "In my first year, we went all the way to the last week, lamented Darrell. "We came within a field goal of going to a bowl game. We knew we had a great chance. We achieved many goals and went from the outhouse to eventually the penthouse. Great changes came over the team. The more we won, the closer we became, the more confidence we had and the more we believed. We came to realize that we could actually become winners.

"Coach Alvarez instilled in us to be great members of the team off the field. We began doing the right

things more often and helping teammates in tough situations. Over 70 team members stayed during the summer to work everyday. We worked extra hard. I personally lifted, ran and worked on my quarterback skills."

Darrell ended that first year completing 125 passes on 245 attempts for 1,479 yards, 8 TDs and 7 interceptions. The highlight of the season was an upset victory over 12th ranked Ohio State.

Darrell entered last season (1993) as one of the biggest questions on offense and ended the season as the nation's No. 3-rated passer. He broke 10 school records and established conference marks for completion percentage in a game and season. Darrell had 187 completions on 276 attempts for .678 completion percentage. He amassed 2,390 yards with 19 TDs and only 11 interceptions. Darrell became the first Wisconsin QB to gain first-team all-Big Ten honors since 1962 and was a UPI honorable mention All-American. "In my dreams I could not have made things work out as well as they have," exclaimed Darrell before playing UCLA in last year's Rose Bowl. "It just doesn't happen that a person goes from the Big Sky to a two-year layoff to the Big Ten and then to the

Rose Bowl. It's incredible!"

Darrell's wife, Tammy, agrees; "Everywhere we go in Madison, Darrell gets stopped by fans who want autographs or want to wish him luck or just to talk to him. We can't even go out to dinner without being mobbed." Such was the scene before the Badgers embarked on their first Rose Bowl trip in 31 years.

The 1994 Rose Bowl proved to be a new pinnacle of success for Darrell and Wisconsin. The final score: Wisconsin 21 UCLA 16. It was Wisconsin's only second bowl victory in the school's 104-year history. Darrell Bevell had scored the final touchdown on a 21-yard run in the 4th quarter. "After I got into the end zone, I was laughing," said Darrell with elated emotion. "My teammates were laughing. It was one of the greatest moments of my life." The 10-1-1 Badgers finished as high as 5th in the national polls. Coach Alvarez, who was named to most Coach of the Year honors, remarked, "I just feel that from now on we'll be able to compete with anybody. This gives us a shot at getting some of the top recruits in the country." Coach Alvarez was also the first Wisconsin coach to be named the Big Ten Coach of the Year.

Darrell's father spoke from the

(Continued on page 11)



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heart, "A lot of people didn't believe me when I said that Darrell could play Division I football. That Rose Bowl was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It still hasn't set in. It was indescribable. I cried and wept with tears of joy. It was just unreal. All of our family was there: My wife and everybody, we embraced and cried together."

Darrell entered the 1994 season first in UW career completion percentage, second in TD passes and third in yardage and completions playing just two seasons. Expectations for success were high at the beginning of this season. Ups and downs have been experienced thus far. The biggest down has been Darrell's shoulder separation which happened during the 4th game. Darrell had to miss two games and now there is again talk of going to another bowl game, however, to do so, they will have to finish strong. If anyone can overcome adversity and come back, it is Darrell. The one thing Darrell had planned to do differently was his effort towards in-season training. "Last year I let up, explained Darrell. I think I took a step backward and lost some zip." Before his injury, Darrell had promised to lift hard throughout the entire season.

Darrell is a Zoology major and carries a 2.9 GPA. "Marriage has been a stabilizing factor," Darrell reasoned. "I used to be the only player married but now there are three of us. After football, whether that is pro or college, I may keep my med school option open but I love football which means I'll probably end up coaching."

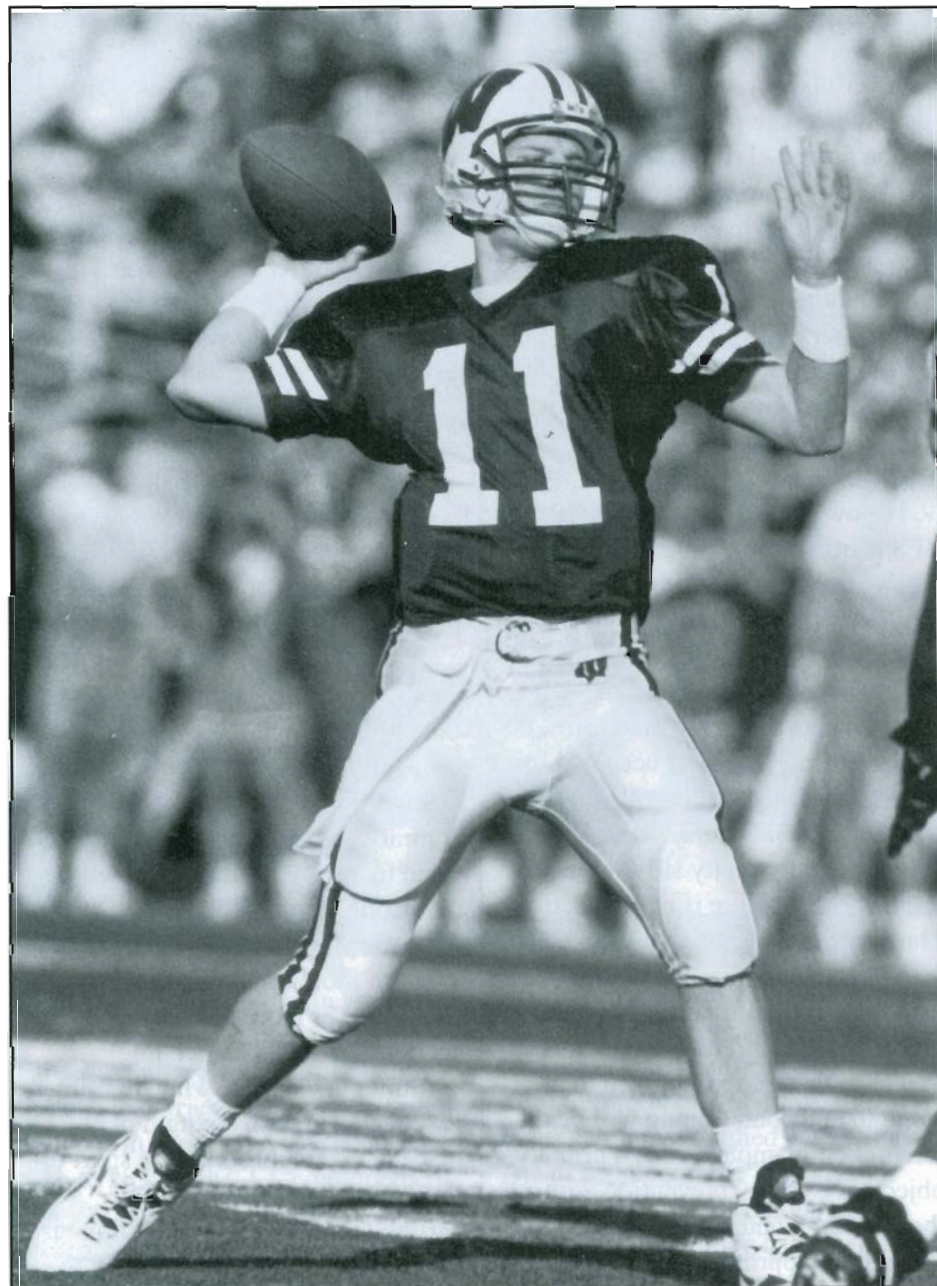
It would be great to see Darrell join the coaching ranks. Darrell has always been a great example. "I am very proud to be able to say that I have never had any alcohol or drugs. I don't believe in peer pressure.

Don't lower your standards to be accepted. My religion and parents always taught me to say 'no'. My decision was made at an early age so it was easy for me when the time came.

"Set your goals whatever they may be. Set them high and don't believe the negatives by other people. Do everything in your power to achieve those goals. For me, my faith in God, my religion and my family

have made the difference and are the most important part of my life."

We thank Coach Dettman for his gracious assistance on this article and special thanks to Coach Bevell for sharing his son's photos and intimate family details that have been expressed. We hope Darrell's Upper Limit example will be followed and that we will try our best to "win every day". Thank you Darrell Bevell!....□



**Once You Start Winning, It Does Strange Things.
You Want To Keep Going.**