

Great Champions Are Often Underdogs



Craig Huffhines

Why is it so much fun to root for underdogs? The Cinderella story captivates the minds and hearts of all of us, and the recent Super Bowl game, heralded as one of the greatest upset victories in the history of the National Football League (NFL), was one of those David versus Goliath matchups that ended in heroic fashion. The country boy, little brother quarterback, Eli Manning, now basking in all of his improbable glory as Super Bowl MVP, staged an unbelievable two-minute drive to defeat what many thought to be the “greatest team” in NFL history.

I was ecstatic for Eli, the disrespected young quarterback, who has dodged bullets from the

by it all, and then almost overnight, I became a Giants fan for one game.

Even after the Giants eliminated the Cowboys in the National Football Conference championship game in Dallas, I still couldn't help but root for the Giants. By the time Eli drove his team down the field in the fourth quarter of the Super Bowl, making miraculous play after another and finally scoring the game winner against the league's “best red zone defense,” I became so emotionally attached that I had forgotten for a moment my lifelong loyalty to Dallas. America's team of the '70s and '80s became a distant memory.

Momentum is a wonderful thing. A feeling of something bigger than we are begins to percolate and then slowly boil until there's an eruption of energy that begins to totally overpower the status quo. I believe that same feeling is beginning to resonate within the Hereford business.

The power of positive direction can be unstoppable. When a team, an organization, an industry or even a country all begin to believe in themselves, their mission, their direction, their purpose in life, wonderful things evolve. We are experiencing this momentum shift within the Hereford business. Sure, we could get down in the dumps about the price of corn and feed, drought conditions, cost of land, but when the momentum shifts, positive thinking translates into positive opportunities. The Hereford breed is in an opportunistic position. Breeders are thinking about

how they can make their product better and what the breed can offer the industry during changing times.

This year at the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) and the National Hereford Show and Sale, I could sense the momentum shift. Never in my 18 years of attending the NWSS did I witness a better line-up of cattle from one end to the other. The pens and carloads were as strong as they have ever been. The excitement for the breed was genuine and recognized by breeders of all breeds.

At the same time the Hereford breed was participating in its largest tradeshow event of the year in Denver, National Beef Packing Co. LLC, the American Hereford Association's packer partner and major Certified Hereford Beef® supplier, was airing radio advertisements across a five-state region in the Midwest promoting its desire to purchase Hereford and black-whitefaced cattle. Never before in the history of the beef business, has a packer asked feedlot operators to call the packer to offer the feedlot operators' Hereford fat cattle for premiums.

Can you feel that momentum? Here we are in our fourth quarter drive, executing the breed's playbook for genetic improvement, market access, hybrid vigor contribution, feed efficiency, longevity, docility and beef tenderness. As the playbook unfolds, the momentum is building and more success is soon to come. **HW**

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New York and national media as well as one of his former superstar teammates, Tiki Barber, now turned news anchor.

Now, I grew up in the north Texas area idolizing the immortal Dallas Cowboy days of Tom Landry, Roger Staubach, Tony Dorsett and one of the game's defensive greats, Randy White. It has been next to impossible for me to ever consider rooting for the New York Giants, but I found myself captivated