

An Improbable Shot

Basketball season will be cranking up soon, and the thought of it reminds me of a story years ago about a player who had talent for the game, but was experiencing a slump in his contributions.

T.R. was having a terrible basketball game. He had heard enough crowd taunts of “Airball!” and “Brick” to last him all season. He just hoped he could avoid making any more mistakes. His team was behind, but gradually started to pull closer to the opposition. T.R. kept looking to the bench, expecting the coach to pull him from the game. But the coach stuck with his lineup.

The clock was winding down. T.R. glanced at the scoreboard. His team was down by two points. Five seconds remained. T.R.’s team had the ball. Given his poor shooting percentage that night, he was sure no one would pass him the ball.



Wrong.

Because of the miserable night on the floor he was having, T.R. found himself wide open just behind the half-court line. A teammate fired him the ball. He looked desperately for someone to pass to, but no one was open.

As a defender charged him, T.R. let go an off-balance, half-court shot in the general direction of the basket. It looked for all the world like the shot was another brick.

It bounced hard off the backboard – and through the hoop, a three-pointer that gave his team the victory.

As he accepted the congratulations from his teammates, T.R. didn’t dare tell them that he almost didn’t shoot the ball at all because he didn’t want to face the prospect of missing. He merely nodded and smiled the smile of a winner.

The axiom is obvious: The only one who never makes mistakes is the one who never does anything.

Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God (Isaiah 41:10).

– Beecher Hunter