

The Dennis Byrd Story

Dennis Byrd was an up-and-coming defensive superstar for the New York Jets, who was expected to help turn the Jets around.

But on November 29, 1992, as the Jets were playing the Kansas City Chiefs, Byrd was about to sack the quarterback when he collided with a teammate. His spinal cord snapped.

Byrd awoke in the middle of the night at Lenox Hospital in a halo brace, not knowing where he was, why he could not move, and what was happening. Suddenly, he went from dreaming of making it to the Pro Bowl to hoping that someday he could once more hold his daughter in his arms.



From a worldly perspective, Byrd was no longer able to reach his potential. But in God's eyes, he was capable of more than sacking quarterbacks. As the world watched and listened, Byrd told the media that Christ was his source of comfort in his time of tragedy. The doctors said Byrd would likely never walk again, but Byrd said that with God's help, he would.

On opening day of the 1993 football season, less than a year after his spinal-cord injury, Byrd walked to the middle of the Meadowlands stadium while 75,000 fans cheered. His No. 90 jersey has not been worn by a Jets player since Byrd. Although not formally retired, it is understood that no Jet will ever wear that number again.

The miracle in Byrd's life is not that he broke his neck and walked again. The miracle is that the injury that destroyed his career didn't destroy his life.

Sometimes, adversity changes our goals and direction. But we should be comforted with the knowledge that God still has a plan for our lives.

– Beecher Hunter