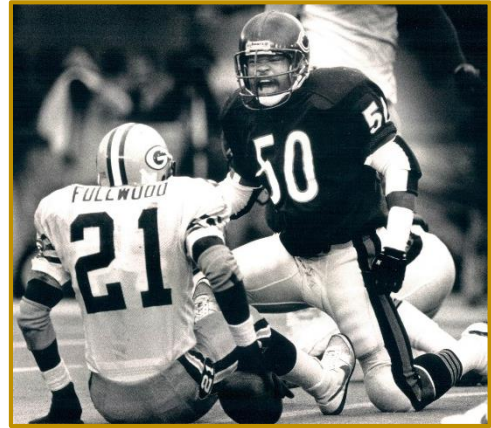


# The Heart of a Champion

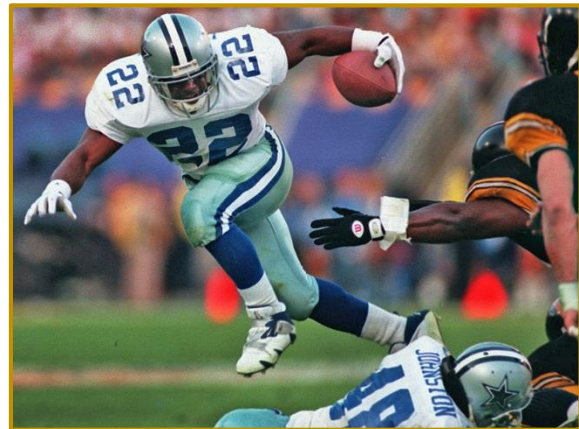
Some things cannot be measured, and the heart is one of them. It's the season for professional football, so let's take a look at some examples in that sport.

Consider these three stars in the National Football League:

- **Mike Singletary**, linebacker for the Chicago Bears, according to the experts was too short and his 40-yard speed was not that great. They could not measure his heart, however, and they did not measure his speed for the first 5 to 15 yards. At that distance, he was exceptionally fast. As a result, when a running back would break through the line of scrimmage, instead of tackling him 5 to 8 yards downfield as most linebackers do, Singletary was able to stop him in the first couple of yards. That made quite a difference.



- **Emmitt Smith**, running back for the Dallas Cowboys, had 40-yard speed. That was not earth-shattering, either, and that caused him to be drafted later than he otherwise would have been. Again, the experts could not measure his heart or the burst of speed he was able to generate from the instant he touched the ball. As a result of both, he was able to break through the hole at the line and pick up those 5 to 8 yards on a consistent basis – and frequently breakthrough for much longer runs.



- **Jerry Rice**, wide receiver for the San Francisco 49ers, is the other classic example. His 40-yard speed also was not record-breaking, but his commitment to excellence and the fact that he was a game-player – meaning that once the chips were down, he was the best – were immeasurable. Videotape of Jerry Rice shows him running stride for stride downfield with a defensive back until the pass is thrown to him. At that point, Rice turns on the afterburners and frequently leaves the defensive back behind.



(more)

There's something here for all of us to learn. Namely, we can measure the I.Q., speed, strength and a host of other things, but the will to win and the commitment to excellence will enable a person of average ability to excel.

So, use what you've got, including, in particular, your heart.

*Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might* (Ecclesiastes 9:10 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter