

# **NFL Extra**

## **Week 12**

<b>Segment</b>	<b>TRT</b>
Charlie Batch – Pt 1	5:59
Charlie Batch – Pt 2	8:50

### **CHARLIE BATCH – PART 1**

THERE ARE FEWER THAN 300 MEMBERS OF THE PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME. MOST PLAYERS AREN'T DESTINED FOR CANTON. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THEY CAN'T VISIT... OR IN THE CASE OF CHARLIE BATCH, BRING ALONG ABOUT 100 FRIENDS.

TOSHA, RAISE YOUR HAND! THAT'S WHO WE'RE LOOKING AT.

BATCH PLAYED FIFTEEN YEARS IN THE NFL. HE WAS THE 2<sup>ND</sup> ROUND PICK OF THE DETROIT LIONS IN 1998. HE DIDN'T WIND UP A HALL-OF-FAMER, BUT HIS CAREER BEGAN RIGHT NEXT TO ONE.

AND I REMEMBER GOING AND HANDING OFF AND I'M LIKE HOLY SMOKES, I'M JUST HANDING THE BALL OFF TO BARRY. I'M SUPPOSED TO HAND IT OFF AND BOOT AWAY, AND I TOTALLY DIDN'T BOOT AWAY; AND THE COACH IS YELLING AT ME, "BOOT AWAY!" I WAS JUST LIKE, "COACH, THAT WAS BARRY. I JUST HANDED THE BALL OFF TO BARRY SANDERS. YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING ME."

THE LIONS WERE SERIOUS ABOUT BATCH'S FUTURE.

HE HAD THE SIZE. HE HAD THE SKILL. HE HAD THE INTELLIGENCE OF AN NFL QB. WE JUST LIKED NOT ONLY HIS PHYSICAL ABILITIES BUT HIS INTANGIBLES AS WELL.

RADIO - CHARLIE BATCH WITH IT. STILL WITH IT AND HE DIVES!! TOUCHDOWN LIONS! 4TH DOWN AND INCHES. CHARLIE BATCH, NOPE. PLAY ACTION. BATCH WIDE OPEN. TD. LIONS! CHRIS CLEMENS!

HE STARTED 12 GAMES IN HIS ROOKIE YEAR, BUT BATCH DID NOT PROVE TO BE THE FRANCHISE QUARTERBACK DETROIT WAS LOOKING FOR. HE WAS FREQUENTLY INJURED, AND AFTER FOUR YEARS THE LIONS MOVED ON.

FOUR YEARS IS ABOUT THE LENGTH OF A TYPICAL NFL CAREER. BUT OVER THE NEXT DECADE, BATCH WOULD PROVE TO BE MUCH MORE THAN THE TYPICAL NFL PLAYER.

HE WAS RAISED IN HOMESTEAD, PENNSYLVANIA, AN OLD STEEL TOWN IN THE HILLS OUTSIDE PITTSBURGH.

THIS WAS HOME. WE WOULD COME DOWN HERE AND WE WOULD PLAY BASKETBALL FOR HOURS.

CHARLIE'S THE OLDEST OF 3. I JUST THOUGHT THAT IT WAS A NICE PLAY TO RAISE YOUR KIDS.

EVERYTHING CHANGED IN 1987, WHEN US STEEL CLOSED THE HOMESTEAD MILL, LEAVING THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE OUT OF WORK.

WHEN WE GREW UP WE WERE ABLE TO WALK TO SCHOOL IN 1ST GRADE 10 BLOCKS AWAY. NO BIG DEAL. AS WE GOT OLDER THINGS STARTED TO CHANGE WITH DRUGS AND GANGS, AND EVERYTHING LIKE THAT.

ALL THESE PLACES USED TO BE BUILT. HOMES USED TO BE BUILT HERE; AND WHEN I WAS ABLE TO EARN THAT SCHOLARSHIP TO EASTERN MICHIGAN, AT 17, I SAID "I'M NOT COMING BACK." AND EVERY TIME THAT I WOULD COME HOME FROM COLLEGE TO VISIT, YOU LOOK FORWARD TO COMING HOME BUT THEN YOU LOOK FORWARD TO LEAVING AGAIN.

HOMESTEAD IS FILLED WITH ALLEYS. ON A FEBRUARY NIGHT IN 1996, WHEN CHARLIE WAS A JUNIOR AT EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY, HIS 17-YEAR OLD SISTER DANYL WALKED UP THE WRONG ONE.

HIS SISTER WAS WALKING HOME FROM SCHOOL WITH A LONGTIME BOYFRIEND. IT WAS IN AN ALLEY WE PROBABLY WALKED THROUGH 1,000 TIMES WHEN WE WERE LITTLE, AND GUNFIRE HAD HAPPENED AND THE GENTLEMAN USED HER AS A SHIELD; AND I USE GENTLEMAN OBVIOUSLY AS LOOSELY AS I POSSIBLY CAN BECAUSE THE COWARD USED HER AS A SHIELD.

AND I COULDN'T EVEN TELL HIM OVER THE PHONE. HE KEPT ASKING ME AND THEN I FINALLY TOLD HIM WHAT HAD HAPPENED. I TOLD HIM HE NEEDED TO COME HOME.

AND I REMEMBER TURNING ON INTO THIS ALLEY AND I REMEMBER JUST THERE WERE YELLOW TAPE THAT WAS HERE, AND I REMEMBER GETTING TO THIS POINT. COMING UP AND YOU KNEW SOMETHING HAPPENED BUT BECAUSE THEY'D CLEANED IT UP AND THEY WERE TRYING TO JUST...O.K. THIS CAN'T BE TRUE; AND YOU'RE TRYING TO PUT TOGETHER THE PIECES TO SAY HOW DID YOU GET HERE? HOW DID THAT HAPPEN? AND BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE ANY WITNESSES THAT ARE WILLING TO TALK, THERE WAS A MISTRIAL. SO THE KILLER'S NEVER BEEN FOUND. AND I DON'T THINK I'VE BEEN IN THIS ALLEY EVER SINCE. THIS IS PROBABLY, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT I'VE BEEN IN THIS ALLEY SINCE I STOOD OUT HERE 17 YRS. AGO. // AND I ALWAYS LOOK AT THE SIGN AND IT'S A NAME THAT I'LL NEVER FORGET. EAST LAUREL WAY. YOU RIDE PAST IT. RIDE UP AND DOWN, UP AND DOWN, AND I'VE NEVER CUT THROUGH UNTIL NOW. NOT ONLY DID IT HAPPEN ON EAST LAUREL WAY BUT THE FUNERAL HOME WAS LITERALLY 1 BLOCK AWAY FROM WHERE IT HAPPENED; AND I REMEMBER SITTING ON THAT PORCH. PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AND, "HEY, WE KNOW WHO DID IT. LET'S GO GET HIM." AND AT THAT MOMENT YOU'RE SITTING THERE THINKING TO YOURSELF. YOU'RE LIKE, IF I DID WHAT I WANTED TO DO, I WOULDN'T BE SITTING HERE TALKING TO YOU.

HE WANTED TO TAKE IT OUT ON SOMEBODY AND I TOLD HIM YOU CAN'T DO THAT. YOU'RE GOING BACK TO SCHOOL. FIGHT IT A DIFFERENT WAY.

AND AT THAT MOMENT THIS WAS IT. WHEN I SAID, "IF I'M EVER IN A POSITION TO GIVE BACK, I WOULD." I REMEMBER SITTING RIGHT THERE ON THOSE STEPS WHEN I SAID IT.

## **02:06:37 - CHARLIE BATCH – PART 2**

AFTER BEING RELEASED BY THE LIONS, CHARLIE BATCH RETURNED TO HOMESTEAD IN SEARCH OF A NEW TEAM.

WHEN I MET HIM IN 2002, HIS DREAM WAS TO BE THE STARTING QB OF THE PITTS. STEELERS.

AND KEVIN COLBERT, WHO DRAFTED ME IN DETROIT, NOW THE G.M. SAID, "HEY, COACH COWHER WANTS TO MEET WITH YOU."

HE JOINED THE STEELERS, AND AT THE SAME TIME, HE BEGAN HIS LIFE'S WORK: A FOUNDATION CALLED "BEST OF THE BATCH."

I DIDN'T KNOW HOW LONG I WAS GONNA BE HERE. BUT AT THE SAME TIME TRYING TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT WOULD MAKE AN IMPACT; AND THE EASIEST WAY FOR ME TO DO THAT IN MY COMMUNITY WAS BASKETBALL.

YOU KNOW HE APPROACHED ME MANY YEARS AGO AND HE SAID HE WANTED TO DO THE BEST OF THE BATCH FOUNDATION; AND I HAD NO IDEA WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT. IT WAS A FOUNDATION...WHERE IT WAS GONNA GO; WHAT IT WAS GONNA DO. THE ONE PLAYGROUND THAT WE HAD THAT WAS TILTED.

BATCH FLATTENED THE BASKETBALL COURTS, AND A SUMMER LEAGUE CALLED PROJECT CHUCK WAS BORN.

THE WHOLE GOAL WAS TO TIRE THEM OUT IN THE EVENING HOURS SO THEY CAN GO HOME AND GO TO SLEEP. I THOUGHT IF I WAS ABLE TO DO THAT NOW WE CAN SLOWLY TAKE BACK OUR COMMUNITY; AND 1 YEAR TURNED INTO 2. 2 TURNED INTO 5.

HE STARTED TO SEE THINGS GROW. HE STARTED TO SEE PROGRAMS GROW FROM MAYBE 100 KIDS TO OVER 352 TODAY. AND THE NICE PART WAS IS HE WASN'T JUST PUTTING HIS NAME OR HIS FACE ON A FOUNDATION. HE'S AT THE COURTS EVERYDAY. HE'S EITHER REFERRING OR HE'S TALKING TO A KID.

WHAT'S YOUR NAME? RAMIR. RAMIR, NICE TO MEET YOU. WHAT YOU BEEN EATING? WHY'D YOU SPILL? WHAT YOU GOT ON YOUR SHIRT? NOW HOW YOU GONNA LET ME GET YOU WITH THAT!

THE PROGRAM HAS GRADUATED SOME BLUE CHIPPERS, AMONG THEM THE NBA'S DEJUAN BLAIR AND RAIDERS QUARTERBACK TERRELLE PRYOR. BUT IT'S NOT ALL FUN AND GAMES.

HOW YOU DOING SIR? GOOD, AND YOU? GOOD. HOW MANY STUDY HALLS YOU BEEN TO? I'M ASKING YOU. DON'T LOOK AT THE COACH. 2. 2, 3. WHAT?!

EVERY CHILD HAS TO ATTEND 3 MANDATORY STUDY HALLS. PART OF CHUCK YOU HAVE TO READ IN ORDER TO PLAY. IF YOU DON'T READ, YOU DON'T PLAY.

YOU NEED TO GET TO THE OFFICE STARTING AT 9 A.M. THAT MEAN YOU HAVE 3 DAYS TO MAKE UP 2. UNDERSTAND?

DWAYNE BLAIR, TERRELLE PRYOR. ALL THEM AT ONE POINT SAT IN THIS ROOM TO DO STUDY HALL.

ON THE COURT, THINGS WERE TAKING OFF. ON THE FIELD, IT DIDN'T GO QUITE THE WAY BATCH PLANNED.

THE STEELERS DRAFTED BEN ROETHLISBERGER IN THE FIRST ROUND OF THE 2004 DRAFT. BATCH BECAME BIG BEN'S BACKUP.

WE HAVE ANYTHING ON THE MAX? NO. THE ONLY THING YOU WOULD'VE HAD WAS HINES COMING ACROSS BUT THEY PLAYED IT PRETTY GOOD ON THE STRIKE.

HE HANDLED IT EXTREMELY WELL, AND IF YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT CHARLIE AND HIS CHARACTER, AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO BE A GOOD TEAMMATE, YOU'RE NOT SURPRISED.

BEING A BACKUP QB IS THE BEST JOB AT FOOTBALL UNTIL YOU HAVE TO PLAY BECAUSE YOU DON'T GET A LOT OF REPS AND CHARLIE WAS ABLE TO TAKE VERY FEW REPS AND PRODUCE.

HE NEVER BECAME THE STEELERS FULL-TIME STARTING QUARTERBACK, BUT OVER THE YEARS BATCH WON SIX OF HIS NINE STARTS FILLING IN FOR ROETHLISBERGER.

RADIO - AND THAT IS A CATCH BY HEATH MILLER! REACHES FOR THE PYLON...AND THEY CALL IT A TOUCHDOWN!

IN THE FINAL GAME OF HIS CAREER, HE PLAYED THE GAME OF HIS LIFE, LEADING THE STEELERS ON A LAST MINUTE, GAME-WINNING DRIVE TO DEFEAT THE ARCHRIVAL, EVENTUAL SUPER BOWL CHAMPION RAVENS.

RADIO - WE GOT A BARNBURNER AT M&T. SNAP IS DOWN. SUISSEM'S KICK IS ON IT'S WAY! THE KICK IS GOOD! AND THE PITTS. STEELERS UPSET THE BALT. RAVENS. CHARLIE BATCH COMES TO BALT. AND COMES UP BIG FOR THE STEELERS. AND LOOK HOW MUCH IT MEANS TO THE 15 YR.

I DIDN'T KNOW IF THIS WAS IT. I DIDN'T KNOW. AND IF THIS WAS THE LAST START EVER IN MY NFL CAREER, WHAT BETTER WAY TO GO OUT? ALL I COULD TELL YOU IS IF COACH TOMLIN, KEVIN COLBERT OR THE ROONEY FAMILY NEEDS ME, THEY KNOW I'M 15 MINS. UP THE ROAD.

EVERY SPRING BATCH MAKES A PILGRIMAGE TO CANTON. HIS COMPANIONS: 100 CHILDREN FROM HOMESTEAD.

HE SHOWS EACH OF THEM THE CASE THAT HOLDS ALL OF THE SUPER BOWL RINGS. WHICH ONE WOULD YOU PICK OUT OF THESE 2? THEN HE SHOWS THEM THE TWO THAT HE WON AS A STEELER.

WHEN I GOT THAT RING I WANTED EVERY KID TO PUT IT ON. THIS IS WHAT IT'S ABOUT. YOU CAN'T SIT UP THERE AND TELL ME YOU CAN'T GO OUT AND LIVE YOUR DREAM.

SUPER BOWL RING. CAN I SEE THAT? I MIGHT HAVE ONE OF THESE ONE DAY.

IT IS OFTEN SAID THAT THE BACKUP QUARTERBACK IS THE MOST POPULAR MAN IN TOWN. // CHARLIE BATCH TOOK THAT LINE TO HEART.

CHARLIE MEANS MORE TO JUST PITTS. THAN HE MEANT TO THE TEAM. I TELL HIM ALL THE TIME. IF HE WANTED TO RUN FOR MAYOR, HE WOULD WIN THIS YEAR.

BATCH BUILT HIS FOUNDATION HEADQUARTERS JUST A COUPLE FOOTBALL FIELDS AWAY FROM WHERE HIS SISTER IS BURIED. FOR A LONG TIME, PROXIMITY BROUGHT HIM NO PEACE.

AS I WOULD DRIVE TO MY MOM'S HOUSE THERE'S THIS FORK IN THE ROAD, AND THIS FORK IN THE ROAD IS YOU DEAD END RIGHT AT THE CEMETERY; AND FOR YEARS I JUST COULDN'T MAKE THE LEFT TO GO TO MY MOM'S HOUSE. I WOULD ALWAYS MAKE THIS RIGHT. I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MAKING THIS LEFT ANYMORE. I THINK RIGHT NOW I'M AT PEACE WITH EVERYTHING.

YOU NEVER KNOW HOW LONG SOMEONE NEEDS TO HEAL FROM THE WOUND OF A LOSS OF A LOVED ONE. HE'S FINALLY GRIEVING, AND GRIEVING IN A HEALTHY WAY. HE ACCEPTED IT YEARS AGO BUT HE ACCEPTS IT MORE NOW. HE'S ABLE TO TALK ABOUT IT SO PEOPLE CAN HEAR HIS MESSAGE ABOUT IT'S O.K. TO HAVE A TRAGEDY IN LIFE BUT DON'T GET HUNG UP ON YOUR TRAGEDY. YOU HAVE TO CONTINUE TO GROW AND MOVE FORWARD. PEOPLE ALWAYS ASK, "WHY DO YOU GIVE BACK TO A COMMUNITY THAT TOOK THE LIFE OF YOUR SISTER?" AND HE'S JUST LIKE, "YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO GIVE BACK OT THE COMMUNITY THAT HELPED RAISE YOU. THE COMMUNITY DIDN'T TAKE HER. STREET VIOLENCE OF PEOPLE THAT HAD NOTHING TO DO TOOK THE LIFE OF HER.

I BROUGHT YOU SOMETHING. I MISS YOU SO MUCH. IT'S HARD TO COME UP HERE AND SEE YOU. I KNOW YOU'RE SMILING DOWN. HOPEFULLY YOU'RE PROUD OF ME. IF TEARS CAN BUILD A STAIRWAY AND MEMORIES A LANE, I'D WALK RIGHT UP TO HEAVEN AND BRING YOU HOME AGAIN.

A GOOD BACKUP QUARTERBACK IS, ABOVE ALL, RELIABLE. FOR OVER A DECADE CHARLIE BATCH HAS ALWAYS BEEN THERE -- FOR HIS TEAM AND FOR HIS TOWN; LIVING PROOF THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE ENSHRINED IN THE HALL OF FAME TO BE REMEMBERED.

SOME PEOPLE THAT DON'T KNOW ME WILL REMEMBER ME FROM FOOTBALL. FOR ME IT WASN'T ABOUT WHAT I'VE DONE ON THE FIELD. IT WAS ABOUT BEING ABLE TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON MY COMMUNITY.

(END