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Coaches are always talking to their athletes about how you must overcome adversity if you are going to be successful. There are times when things just don't look like they are ever going to be right for you, but if you stay with it, work hard, keep improving that break will probably come.

This season in professional football, if you want to see a guy who personifies all of that and then some, take a look at North Platte's Danny Woodhead.

Here is a kid that is not very tall, not very big, and he has been told all his life that because of those two things, he can't play at a certain level.

He never got much of a look from any major college team after graduating from high school at North Platte Senior High, where he was Nebraska's Gatorade Player of the year, and he ended up at Chadron State where he was the Nation's most productive running back for a couple of years.

He also had the career record for rushing (7,962 yards) in D2 for a year or so.

Woodhead was the Harlon Hill Award winner two years in a row at Chadron. The Harlon Hill Award is the Division 2 version of the Heisman trophy.

After graduation the same old song and dance got him again, not big enough to play at the professional level.

He finally got a chance as a free agent with the New York Jets, but tore an ACL in his rookie year (2008) and spent the entire season on injured reserve.

In the 2009 season he spent the first five weeks on the Jets practice squad but was signed to the 53 man roster in October and played in 10 regular-season games.

This year he got cut by the Jets and later signed with the Patriots and when injuries hit the running backs in front of him, he got his chance and he was ready.

Since that time he has become a "cult" hero in New England. He has been interviewed a number of times after games and is becoming a hero because of his work ethic and success.

He is a player who is ready to play wherever the coaches need him. He certainly is far from a "Prima Donna" in the fact that he plays on the offensive side of the ball and on special teams.

What I think stands out with Woodhead showed up a couple of weeks ago in a game where he scored a touchdown and then on the kickoff, made a one-on-one tackle on the return man. See if TO or some of those guys want to play on special teams, not going to happen.

Woodhead did get a little longer term contract now that he has been on the field more. The Patriots signed him through the 2012 season. He didn't get Tom Brady money or anything like that, but it was reported that he got a \$425,000 signing bonus and he is due base salaries of \$550,000 in 2011 and \$700,000 in 2012 along with incentive clauses worth up to \$575,000 in 2011 and \$600,000 in 2012. Don't know how that lines up with most NFL paychecks, and I am pretty sure the cost of living is pretty high in the New England area, but I am sure it is more than what he was getting paid on injured reserve.

He was a math major in college, so I imagine that he has already “crunched” the numbers. It is good to see him making a name for himself and how he is going about it.

Way to go Danny!