

Chapter 1

PREFACE

“The strength of the wolf is the pack... On a football team, it’s not the strength of the individual players but... the strength of the unit and how they all function together.”³¹

– *Bill Belichick, after his Patriots won their first Super Bowl*

“I [played for] Cincinnati for all those years. You always wonder... is the grass really greener someplace else. [When] I got to New England, I found out it’s pretty green.”³²

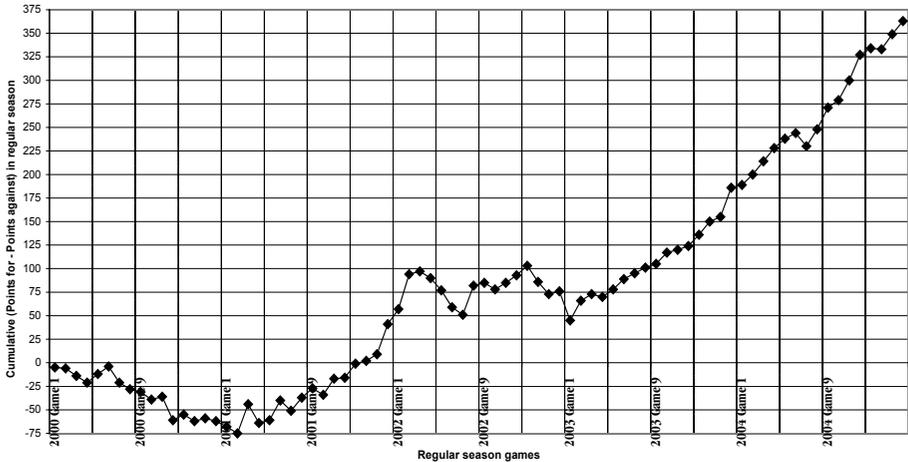
– *New Patriots running back Corey Dillon*

“More important than the will to win is the will to prepare to win.”³³

– *Bill Belichick*

The Patriots have won three of the last four Super Bowls. They also won an astonishing 21 games in a row (their final 15 of 2003 and first six of 2004), shattering the NFL record of 18 consecutive victories. After so much winning, it’s easy to forget how horrible the Patriots were just four seasons ago and how dramatically the organization has transformed itself:

New England Patriots Under Belichick - Cumulative Net Points



In 2000, Bill Belichick became head coach of the New England Patriots, a team in shambles. Belichick needed a 53-man team, but just 36 players’ salaries put the Patriots \$10.5 million over the NFL’s salary cap.³⁴ Even worse, previous management had squandered the team’s 1997, 1998, and 1999 college draft picks, netting few talented young players. Belichick slashed spending by eliminating unaffordable veterans and replacing them with kids fresh from college plus 23

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unheralded, inexpensive free agents. After the talent exodus, NFL personnel directors rated the Patriots' player talent the absolute worst in the entire NFL.³⁵ Four players failed Belichick's conditioning test. Some were so lazy that a furious Belichick declared "We've got too many people who are overweight, too many guys who are out of shape... You can't win with 40 good players while the other team has 53."³⁶ Belichick himself was judged by *CBS Sportsline* the 30th worst of 32 NFL head coaches.³⁷ His 2000 Patriots' 5-11 season exposed yet another problem: "Forget about the gaping holes of talent, ... Belichick inherited [a bunch of] losers."³⁸

Heading into the 2001 season, *Pro Football Weekly* didn't exactly predict a Patriots Super Bowl victory: "Belichick better hope that Robert Kraft is a very patient owner who can still see the big picture if the team is 4-10 and playing in front of 30,000 empty seats this December."³⁹ *Athlon* predicted a last-place finish because "with loads of holes to fill, Belichick tried to cut-and-paste his way back to respectability with cheap free agents."⁴⁰ *Street & Smith's* also predicted a last-place finish since "The Pats signed a bunch of free agents from the NFL five-and-dime store."⁴¹ Belichick's 2001 Patriots lost three of their first four games, the third defeat a 30-10 pounding by the Miami Dolphins, after which Belichick admitted "We just got our butt kicked today."⁴² The New England "Patsies" appeared headed for another train-wreck season.

Instead, Belichick dug a hole in the practice field and ritually buried the Miami game ball while players watched. That symbolic moment marked the banishment of the Patriots' losing ways. The 2001 Patriots reeled off thirteen wins over their final fifteen games, including nine straight victories to close the season with a stunning victory over the "unbeatable" St. Louis Rams in Super Bowl XXXVI that national sportswriters judged the "Best Super Bowl of all time,"⁴³ "easily the greatest Super Bowl of them all,"⁴⁴ and "one of the biggest upsets in playoff history... right up there with Joe Namath and the Jets beating the Colts in Super Bowl III."⁴⁵

Few believed the 2001 Patriots "deserved" to win the Vince Lombardi Trophy as the NFL's best team. Even New Englanders were sheepish about two games saved by dubious, obscure rules: Tom Brady's "fumble"-that-wasn't-a-fumble against the Oakland Raiders (ruled an incomplete pass when the referee correctly invoked "the tuck rule": Rule 3, Section 21, Article 2, Note 2), and David Patten's "fumble"-that-wasn't-a-turnover against the Buffalo Bills (ruled out-of-bounds because, after Bills safety Keion Carpenter knocked Patten unconscious, Patten's head lay out-of-bounds while his leg happened to touch the ball, rendering the ball out-of-bounds before Carpenter grabbed it, according to Rule 3, Section 20, Article 2, Paragraph C).

ESPN readers voted the 2001 Patriots the "worst team sports champion of all time."⁴⁶ Worse than any team that ever won a World Series, Stanley Cup, NBA Finals, or Super Bowl. To most football fans, the Patriots were simply the luckiest champions in history. How could the team be the best if no one had ever heard of the players?

“The Patriots are known only to their next of kin. They are the NFL equivalent of a brown bag.”⁴⁷ Anonymous players implied lousy team.

To Patriots VP of player personnel Scott Pioli, however, players’ anonymity actually makes the 2001 Patriots the *greatest* team sports champion of all time... a collection of good-but-not-glamorous football players who out-thought opponents, out-hustled opponents, out-hit opponents, played great together, and made few mistakes. Though the Patriots had few individual stars, they had character and chemistry: “These guys are good players and good people. Football is the ultimate team sport, and these guys fit our system.”⁴⁸ Sure, they caught some lucky breaks, but most Super Bowl champions do.

Reflecting on that season, Pioli told students at his alma mater that Patriot players possessed championship hearts and minds, even if they lacked big name reputations and the league’s greatest arms and legs:

“How we won [the Super Bowl] and who we won it with was just as important to me [as winning]. As a group we were able to validate everything that I was raised to believe in. Everything that was taught to me by my parents, coaches and teachers in life came together in that special season. As a team we overcame a great deal of adversity and countless distractions. Hard work, humility, faith, mental toughness, trust—the building blocks of any solid foundation led us to becoming the best team in football.”⁴⁹

Mike Vrabel was one of those unknown 2001 Patriots, a linebacker who had seriously considered law school after wasting away for three seasons on the Pittsburgh Steelers’ bench. After joining the Patriots as his only other option and then pressuring Rams quarterback Kurt Warner into throwing an interception that Patriots cornerback Ty Law returned for a touchdown to help win Super Bowl XXXVI, Vrabel laughed: “The has-been’s and never-will-be’s. That’s us. That’s fine. We went out and proved here that football’s the ultimate team game.”⁵⁰

The team’s chemistry developed only after months of intensive training. New York Giants quarterback-crushing defensive end Michael Strahan later said of the Patriots’ preseason scrimmage with the Giants, “They were terrible, an awful football team.”⁵¹ Patriots safety Lawyer Milloy said the Patriots’ poor start in 2001 resulted from the acquisition of two dozen free agents who needed time to absorb Belichick’s complex system and work together smoothly: “The first day of training camp was like the first day of school in junior high. You didn’t know anyone. Luckily, we got used to each other before it was too late.”⁵² After months of intense effort, Patriots players and coaches found themselves working together harmoniously toward their eventual 2001 NFL championship (earned with their February 2002 Super Bowl triumph).

After Belichick’s 2003 Patriots won 17 of their 19 games, outplaying the 31 other NFL teams to win Super Bowl XXXVIII over the gutsy Carolina Panthers, the

football world could no longer dismiss the Patriots as “lucky.” Belichick’s Patriots remained unglamorous, unheralded, and virtually unknown as individuals... but were an undeniably successful team. After a shaky (2-2) start, the 2003 Patriots were unbeatable, winning their final fifteen games of the season and posting an unprecedented 10-0 record against teams with regular season records of 10-6 or better.⁵³ Multiple Super Bowl-winning coach Jimmy Johnson considers the 2003 Patriots the eighth-greatest team in NFL history.⁵⁴

Super Bowl XXXVIII featured the NFL’s toughest defenses, so no one was surprised when the epic battle opened with nearly 27 scoreless minutes of smothering defense. But even players and coaches were shocked when the Patriots and Panthers scored a whopping 61 points over the game’s dramatic back-and-forth final 33 minutes. In the fourth quarter, neither defense could muster enough strength to prevent the other team’s offense from marching relentlessly downfield. Patriots linebacker Mike Vrabel said it “was like Ali vs. Frazier. That’s how it felt out there. We hit them, they hit us, we hit them, they hit us.”⁵⁵ In the final minute, Patriots players dug deep and found a way to emerge victorious, as they had in 17 of their final 18 games. Football reporters (again) dubbed the team’s dramatic *déjà vu* second championship (also clinched by a last-minute Patriots drive culminating in an Adam Vinatieri game-winning field goal) the “Greatest Super Bowl of all time.”⁵⁶

In the three seasons since Belichick was named one of the worst coaches in the league, he has collected two Coach of the Year awards and two Super Bowl trophies, and his 2004 team is 11-1 as this book goes to press. Nine of twelve NFL general managers and executives polled by the *New York Daily News* consider Belichick the league’s best coach, one unnamed GM even saying, “Belichick is on the edge of becoming one of the great head coaches in the history of the game.”⁵⁷ *The Sporting News* ranks Belichick #1.⁵⁸ And Belichick dominated in a poll of 354 current and former NFL players, receiving 45% of votes versus just 9% for runner-up Bill Parcells.⁵⁹

The probability that an average team will win 21 straight games by chance is 0.0000477%.⁶⁰ Belichick’s Patriots are a verifiably exceptional team.

WINNING WITHOUT STARS

“What’s a ‘superstar’ if you can’t go to the big game [Super Bowl]? Maybe the team concept isn’t that popular in the league, but it works for us.”⁶¹

– *Patriots linebacker Willie McGinest*

The Patriots have no darting runner like Walter Payton or Barry Sanders, no acrobatic receiver like Lynn Swann or Jerry Rice, no unblockable defender like Lawrence Taylor or Reggie White, and no rocket-launching quarterback like Dan Marino or John Elway. So, the Patriots’ success has football fans scratching their heads and wondering, “*How* do they do it?” Patriots safety Rodney Harrison credits

“concentration, maturity, confidence.”⁶² *Sports Illustrated*'s Peter King concludes the Patriots' magic derives from “knowledge, fearlessness, ruthlessness”;⁶³ in other words, Patriots coaches know their profession, take informed, calculated risks, and decide issues unemotionally to maximize the team's chances of winning. These analyses are as good as any, but no pithy analysis can completely explain how and why the “Patsies” transformed themselves into two-time Super Bowl champs and ran off 21 straight wins. The Patriots' story deserves to be told in rich detail because it is fascinating, fun, and informative. The words of Patriots coaches, players, executives, and owners reveal many truths about great organizations.

The Arizona Cardinals franchise has won just one playoff game since 1947.⁶⁴ New Cardinals head coach Dennis Green believes he knows how to turn his Cardinals around: “we're going to outwork New England. If the Patriots work from 9 to 4, we're going to work from 8 to 5.”⁶⁵ Coach Green might want to talk with Patriots rookie running back Cedric Cobbs, who reports that Patriots players are “at the stadium all day and all night. It's not an all day thing, it's an all day and all night thing. [It's hard] getting used to getting in at 6:30 am and leaving at 9:30 pm.”⁶⁶ Patriots also don't perceive what they do as “work.” They enjoy hard preparation and pride themselves on mental and physical toughness. According to three-time Pro Bowl running back Corey Dillon, who joined the Patriots in 2004:

“I understand why this organization wins. They work extremely hard. *Hard*. I mean *hard!* My first couple of days here, I [would] call my agent and be like, ‘Man, what'd you get me into?’ It's unbelievable. After that first day, I understood why they're Super Bowl champions. I understand. It's only going to make me better. I know one thing, I'm going to be stronger and faster this year. Guaranteed.”⁶⁷

In preparing so intensely, Patriot players and assistant coaches are emulating their head coach, who leads by example. Bill Belichick has always been fanatically disciplined and passionate about every aspect of football. Phil Simms (quarterback of the New York Giants and MVP of Super Bowl XXI while Belichick was the Giants' defensive coordinator) offers this anecdote:

“[Belichick] was the only person left [in the Giants facility]. He'd be on the bike watching film with the clicker in his hand, sweating like wild. His dedication and attention to detail are unbelievable. He ruined at least one or two bikes because he was sweating so bad... the bikes... would rust out.”⁶⁸

Current Patriots tight end Christian Fauria swears “[Belichick] can tell you everything about an offensive guy or a defensive guy when you've got a question. I think to myself, ‘How the heck does he do it? There just aren't enough hours in the day.’ And it's not like he's reading off a piece of paper. He knows, and the only way to know is to look at the film.”⁶⁹ Belichick expects nothing less from his players and assistants. Former Patriots quarterback Drew Bledsoe says “he's a very intense guy that

demands the same from his players.”⁷⁰ Dedication that appears extraordinary to outsiders merely satisfies Belichick’s lofty expectations. Players and assistants have internalized Belichick’s standards. Each Patriot holds himself and his teammates accountable to extreme expectations. Most Patriots share Belichick’s fanatical commitment to winning football games.

The Patriots’ success derives from something more fundamental than “hard work.” “Hard work” is a symptom. No coach can dictate a player’s work habits, except perhaps during practices. Players must be motivated to work hard 365 days a year, not merely when a coach is observing them. “Hard work” is not a coaching strategy or a training camp strategy but a consequence of hiring players who love playing football and building a competitive, performance-focused organizational culture that inspires players to passionately pursue individual and collective excellence, every day of the year.

To greatly oversimplify, the Patriots have won two Super Bowls because they are a cohesive team unified by daily dedication to collective success and disregard for individual glory. They win because they love playing and winning football games. They win for their fans. They win for their families. They win for themselves. And, perhaps most importantly, they win for one another. The moment Patriots rookie tight end Benjamin Watson caught his first touchdown pass, in a meaningless preseason game, quarterback Tom Brady sprinted downfield so enthusiastically that his hug knocked Watson, who outweighs Brady by forty pounds, to the ground. A moment later, half the Patriots offense piled on top of Watson in a symbolic welcome. The Patriots are a true team of competitive guys who respect one another, love one another, and never want to disappoint one another. With nine seconds left in Super Bowl XXXVIII, Patriots receiver Deion Branch hauled in a 17-yard catch that set up Adam Vinatieri’s game-winning field goal. Branch’s analysis (“I just want to get as close for Adam as I can”⁷¹) suggests the warm feelings players have for one another. Patriots strive to set their teammates up for success.

Fittingly, the Patriots win because they best embody the ideal of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson, who proposed the original motto of the United States of America, “*E Pluribus Unum*” (“out of many, one”). On July 4, 1776, our new nation tasked these three founding fathers with designing a Great Seal. These wise men proposed the motto “*E Pluribus Unum*” to highlight the binding together of the original thirteen colonies/states into a single nation. Adams, Franklin, and Jefferson emphasized national unity because they knew it would empower and enrich all Americans.

Not every player is willing to suppress his ego for the good of his team. Not everyone is willing to practice and study and watch film and lift weights from 6:30 a.m. till 9:30 p.m. Though 45% of 354 current and former NFL players polled say Belichick is the best coach in the NFL, only 10% say they would most want to play for Belichick, presumably because Belichick’s system is no country club.⁷² Patriots

scouts and personnel executives search hard for players like wide receiver David Patten, whom no NFL team wanted but who now owns two Super Bowl rings. Patten trains with unbelievable intensity... not because he must but because he loves football and loves winning:

“[Patten] has a heart as big as this [locker] room. You’ll never outwork him. He’ll never give in. He’ll always have the upper hand. Back in high school, he wasn’t the fastest kid in school, but he could make great plays because of his desire. Then, when he went to college, he knew he had to improve his speed and that’s what he did.”⁷³

– *Boston Red Sox second baseman Pokey Reese, who grew up with David Patten*

Belichick picks for his Patriots guys like himself but possessing more physical talent. Patriot players have good (though seldom NFL-best) physical traits, the ability to calculate optimal football tactics (Xs and Os) on the fly, and an indomitable competitiveness and work ethic that matches their coach’s. Belichick says his 2001 Patriots won the Super Bowl not because they started the season expecting to win the Super Bowl but because each player pushed himself and his teammates each minute of each day of each week: “My whole thing with this team was, ‘Let’s just get better. Let’s just get a little better every day.’ And, you know, of all the teams I’ve ever been around, these guys try so hard. They really try to do what you tell them.”⁷⁴

Of the 53 players Bill Belichick inherited when he took over the Patriots, only 15 were still around to celebrate the team’s first Super Bowl victory. Belichick scrounged up the other 38 players by digging through the NFL’s discard bin and the college draft.⁷⁵ NFL insiders simply couldn’t believe the Patriots had won the Super Bowl because Belichick’s players lacked “talent,” as it is traditionally defined:

“One personnel director for a playoff team said he wouldn’t want any of the Patriots’ 17 free agents. Another said it wouldn’t surprise him if New England went 6-10 next year [2002]. ‘It will change dramatically... quickly,’ one executive in personnel said, referring to the Patriots’ fortunes.”⁷⁶

39-year NFL veteran Ron Wolf was amazed by what Patriots coaches accomplished with what he called “a waiver wire team,”⁷⁷ *i.e.*, a collection of other teams’ cast-offs. (Wolf is a personnel genius who knows “a waiver wire team” when he sees one. As Green Bay Packers general manager, Wolf angered Packers fans by trading the team’s 1992 1st-round draft pick to the Atlanta Falcons for a quarterback whose only five NFL passes had resulted in two interceptions and three incompletions. In 1997, that inept quarterback, Brett Favre, became the only player in NFL history to win three “Most Valuable Player” awards.) Belichick couldn’t even keep the “best” of his 2001 team’s “waiver wire” personnel on the field. The 2001 Patriots ranked second in the league

in compensation paid to injured players,⁷⁸ most notably quarterback Drew Bledsoe, wide receiver Terry Glenn, and linebackers Willie McGinest and Ted Johnson.

But the Patriots had unearthed some hidden diamonds. The Pittsburgh Steelers had little use for Mike Vrabel, and no other team wanted him. This reflects poorly on NFL talent evaluators, not Vrabel, a smart, tough, talented, competitive football player. Vrabel runs *after* practices. And he's almost obnoxiously competitive: "Mike just competes. It's like, if you're playing golf with him, and you're a couple of holes ahead, you can tell how Mike's playing by the noises from a couple holes over. It's like, 'Geez, Mike, make a birdie so we can all have some fun.'"⁷⁹ And Vrabel is practically a player-coach. At Ohio State, Vrabel convinced every last teammate to stay on campus and train all summer. Former Buckeyes strength coach Dave Kennedy recalls, "He was my first real enforcer. He held everybody accountable, every single player."⁸⁰

The only people who believed in the 2001 Patriots were the Patriots themselves. Not even the local media sang the team's praises. Players invented an unofficial mantra ("Don't talk to me!") to shout down questions from local reporters who had doubted them. After winning Super Bowl XXXVI with a 48-yard field goal as time expired, kicker Adam Vinatieri said, "We shocked the world, but we didn't shock ourselves."⁸¹ Linebacker Roman Phifer said, "No, baby, it's not an upset. To the world it was an upset, but to us, we were confident. We believed in ourselves."⁸² And cornerback Ty Law said, "Hell, no—we expected to win."⁸³

But the world refused to believe the NFL's laughing stock could become its best team just one season later. How could other teams' rejects propel the Patriots from worst to first? Six months after the Rams lost Super Bowl XXXVI, *Pro Football Weekly* still called the Rams "Clearly the most talented team in football."⁸⁴ Even quarterback Tom Brady, looking back with three years of hindsight, confesses to self-doubt: "Going into that Rams game, we didn't think we'd win. Nobody thought we'd win and then it was, 'Oh my God, we won.'"⁸⁵ And Belichick admits, "The 2001 team that won, it was a miracle to win a championship with that team."⁸⁶

Patriots fans were similarly shocked by the team's spectacular turnaround. Many still find it hard to believe the Patriots have twice conquered the NFL's Mount Everest. *Pro Football Weekly's* Eric Edholm speculated that record-shattering sales of the 2001 Patriots' Super Bowl video *Three Games to Glory* reflected fans' desire to "make sure that they really did see the Pats win it all."⁸⁷ (I recently bought *Sports Illustrated's* commemoration of the Red Sox's World Series triumph for this exact reason. We Patriots/Sox fans are struggling to shed the cynicism that calcified during decades of disappointment. We had grown quite comfortable with self-pity.)

Vegas oddsmakers expected the 2001 Patriots to lose each of their three playoff games. All three playoff opponents landed on the cover of either *Sports Illustrated* or *ESPN The Magazine* before falling to the Pats. In Super Bowl XXXVI, the "Patsies" were 14½-point Super Bowl underdogs⁸⁸ against the star-studded St.

Louis Rams, nicknamed “the Greatest Show on Turf” after scoring 500+ points in three consecutive seasons, an accomplishment unmatched by any NFL team before or since. The Rams’ stars included: 1) quarterback Kurt Warner, MVP of the entire NFL in 2001; 2) running back Marshall Faulk, who earned his third consecutive NFL Offensive Player of the Year award in 2001 after becoming the only player in NFL history to gain 2,000+ combined rushing and receiving yards in each of four consecutive seasons; and, 3) a fleet of cheetah-fast wide receivers whom Patriots cornerback Ty Law called “Definitely the best group of receivers I ever had to defend.”⁸⁹

By contrast, the 2001 Patriots were a bunch of football misfits. The team had just two recognized “stars”: quarterback Drew Bledsoe and wide receiver Terry Glenn. Neither played much in 2001 or remained with the team in 2002. Early in 2001, Bledsoe, the first player selected in the 1993 NFL Draft and a Pro Bowl quarterback in 1994, 1996, and 1997, suffered a life-threatening injury. Despite his \$103 million contract, Bledsoe played only 32 minutes the rest of the 2001 season before shuffling off to Buffalo where he became a Pro Bowl quarterback again in 2002. Bledsoe’s backup: a skinny, slow kid with a weak arm named Tom Brady, the 199th player drafted in 2000 who was earning the NFL-minimum salary of \$298,000/year.

The team’s other star, Terry Glenn, was the seventh player selected in the 1996 NFL Draft and talented enough to earn 1999 Pro Bowl honors and receive a \$50 million contract extension in 2000. But Glenn always had trouble staying focused on football. Coach Belichick finally said “enough’s enough” during 2001. Glenn missed most of the season and was later shipped off to Green Bay.

With the Patriots’ #1-drafted quarterback and #7-drafted receiver sidelined during Super Bowl XXXVI, who caught the only touchdown pass thrown by #199-drafted Tom Brady? That would be the undrafted David Patten, whose illustrious post-college career included stints planting shrubs for his father’s landscaping company, playing Arena Football, and a full-time job hauling 75-pound sacks of coffee beans; Patten had even been cut by the Canadian Football League’s Edmonton Eskimos during training camp!⁹⁰

Having grown up cheering for decades of horrible-to-mediocre Patriots teams, I was astonished to witness the Patriots transform themselves from a 5-11 team in 2000 into Super Bowl champions in 2001 and 2003. Winning the Super Bowl was amazing. Winning it twice with players whose names only fanatical Patriots fans recognized was unbelievable!

LEADERSHIP, NOT LUCK

After the Patriots’ first Super Bowl win, Tom Brady said, “Call it a fluke, whatever you want. But the scores are there for eternity now.”⁹¹ Winning the Super

Bowl is never a fluke. Many Super Bowl champions, including the 2001 Patriots, have benefited from an occasional lucky bounce. But 31 other NFL teams don't roll over and hand you the Vince Lombardi Trophy.

Asked repeatedly whether they had taken the Patriots lightly, St. Louis Rams players and coaches insisted they had anticipated a tough game, similar to the 24-17 regular-season game the two teams had played in November 2001 that the Patriots might have won if not for a questionable fumble by Patriots running back Antowain Smith as he stretched the ball forward for a touchdown ("I felt my knee was down. If not my knee, then my forward progress was stopped. The whistle never blew."⁹²). After that game, Rams head coach Mike Martz called Smith's fumble "The telling point for the whole season no matter what happens the rest of this year; the telling point is that the defense took the ball away on the three-yard line."⁹³ Martz also said, "I told the guys that night they beat a Super Bowl-caliber team. They were certainly the most physical team we played."⁹⁴

After the Super Bowl, Rams wide receiver Ricky Proehl said, "We knew coming into the game they were a good football team. Everyone else was writing them off, but we weren't."⁹⁵ Coach Martz was offended by the suggestion they had taken the Patriots lightly: "Oh, please. That's insulting to me. This is the Super Bowl. How can you overlook somebody in the Super Bowl?"⁹⁶ Those who persist in believing the Rams deserved to win forget that the Patriots nearly crushed the Rams. The Patriots almost intercepted several additional passes, and only a penalty on Willie McGinest nullifying a Tebucky Jones fumble recovery and 97-yard touchdown return kept the game close.

Belichick's rapid reconstruction of the "Patsies" into two-time NFL champions involved hundreds of informed and inspired personnel, management, organizational, and tactical decisions plus insanely hard work by players, coaches, scouts, and executives. As both a life-long Patriots fan and an economist who previously researched "high performance work organizations," I have been obsessed with the Patriots' turnaround.

Many months of research later, I now understand how the seemingly impossible happened. The Patriots' success no longer seems improbable. Instead, success seems the inevitable outcome of building a superb organization peopled with competitive individuals who believe their success is intertwined with the organization's success and with leaders who lead by example, give helpful direction and training, and constantly act in the organization's best interest.

You too will enjoy learning how the Patriots leapt from worst to first and how you can apply the Patriots' management "secrets" to improve your organization. The Patriots' "secrets" are no secrets at all. They are time-tested management fundamentals... well applied and well executed.