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Derick Bowman

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# The Day I Broke My First Bone

A Narrative by Derick Bowman



It started out like a normal day. I went to the first day of the last week of school my freshman year. The first class I had was my athletics class. That's when it happened. The day was basically what you would call a free day. Coaches went off to do more important things, so we were left to do whatever we wished. Since this was athletics class, naturally most of us decided to do something athletic.

"How about we just play football?" my friend Gus suggested. After some goading from a few other kids, we had enough for two teams of seven. This wasn't an actual playing field, because we didn't want to walk over to the practice field. While the practice field and line yards to know where each play would start, we just used a medium sized patch of land about 50 yards long. The practice field, having a sprinkler system, had good grass. The land we were using had very hard dirt. Looking back, that should've made us move to the field. The ground was as hard as concrete, with only the grass to help. There was grass over more than half of the land, but it was very dry. It wasn't exactly brown, but you couldn't call it green. The grass only saw water when it rained.

"Are we going to play 2-touch, or playing regular tackle?" some kid asked.

"We have to play tackle or it won't be fun," I said. I didn't know it at the time, but that decision changed my whole summer. Some people protested that, but we shrugged it off as them being lame about it. It then went to a vote, and we played tackle.

The sky was as bright as a flashlight being shined in your face constantly. That was a factor in both teams passing ability. I was always regarded as a substantially hefty guy, but I had the speed to match most of these guys. I couldn't juke or like Gus, but still could run enough as far as the coach was concerned. I ran the ball a respectable amount of time. But I had an obstacle to overcome... my friend Reece was on the other side.

Reece was my friend because he was my rival in a lot of ways. He was the closest to my size and athletic abilities. We worked out together every day. Always pushing each other to get 315 pounds at benching by the end of the year. We both had at least 50 pounds on everybody else. I had the upper hand in height, intelligence, and speed, but he had me in raw strength and endurance. We struggled against each other the whole game.

By this time, the hour was getting close to be over. The score was tied. We had 1<sup>st</sup> and goal, and we wanted to win. I knew it would be hard. We planned a standard handoff to the far left. I was the one to get ball. I dashed to left, but I saw Reece as a linebacker.

"I got Derek," said Reece. I smirked when I heard that. We hiked the ball. He was coming my way. I immediately turned around to go on the far right side. I was sprinting by this time. It didn't matter that we had 3 other downs to use, this

battle was between Reece and I, and I made it to the end-zone.

I felt myself "fall up," as my friend put it, into the air immediately after crossing. I hit the ground with the force of a truck. I heard my bone make a weird sounding rolling sound, like two rod gears grinding against each other by the tips. I didn't think of that as a snapping sensation, so I got up quickly because it didn't really hurt. I picked up the ball and tried to throw it. My collarbone instantly felt like I was just stabbed by a dull knife that was near the melting point of heat, repeatedly. It only lasted for a split second.

"Wow, that felt fantastic," I said with sarcasm and pain. I knew I had a smile on my face. I was trying to rotate my arm, and it was hard, but I was able to it.

"I think I'm going to sit out for a minute guys."

"My bad man," said Reece. I genuinely thought that funny.

"At least I got the touchdown. That's what counts, right?" I asked.

Since I didn't hear a snapping sound just the rolling sound, I still didn't think it was broken. The coaches were told, and they weren't sure about it either. I went to my history class which was in a building right beside the field. After a while I asked if I could go to office, because there was a continuous small pain coming from my shoulder. I remember right after I left the class and turned the corner, I started crying lightly. That was also the last time I ever cried. I composed myself and went to the office. They called my mom and we went to the Sayre hospital. The hospital smelled like cotton balls. I went and got an X-ray. The X-ray showed nothing was serious, but the doctor wanted to look at it longer and let us leave.

When night came, my mother helped me take my shirt off. When I raised my arm, my collarbone immediately snapped, and this time I definitely heard it this time. The pain this time made the earlier pain feel like a high-five. I bounced up and down in the same spot more than 50 times. I remember that I said "Ow" calmly and repeatedly after every bounce. My mother later described it as a kind of "scream yelling." I felt the bone marrow seep into my bloodstream. I immediately felt sick. My body was laughing at me.

I went to Elk City Hospital the next day with my father. The next X-ray showed the bone split in half completely going down farther into my body rather than out through my skin. The first X-ray showed the bone only had a small fracture going all the way through, barely hanging on apparently. I was out for next football season and had to put off getting my driver's license, because my 16<sup>th</sup> birthday was next week.

I ended up needing to get a plate with six screws on my collarbone for six months. If I wanted, I didn't have to take it out. I left it in and it's still in my body four years later. That's the story of the day I broke my first bone.