

## A Short Biography of Pat Tillman

As a student at Arizona State University, 22-year-old Pat Tillman proved himself to be a superb athlete. After leading his team to a Rose Bowl victory, he was named the Pac-10 Defensive Player of the Year. Shortly afterward he was drafted by the Arizona Cardinals where he quickly earned a spot as a starter and set a team record for tackles in 2000. After signing a 3-year, \$3.6 million contract, it was clear that he had a bright future ahead.

However, in 2002, in wake of the events that occurred on September 11, 2001, Tillman made a surprising decision to quit the NFL and enlist in the armed forces to join the war in Afghanistan. He is quoted as saying, "Sports embodied many of the qualities I deem meaningful. However, these last few years, and especially after recent events, I've come to appreciate just how shallow and insignificant my role is." He joined the army, trained to become a ranger, and served several tours in Iraq before shipping off to Afghanistan.

On April 22, 2004, Tillman was killed in action. Initial reports held that his death was the result of an enemy ambush. Soon after, though, speculation formed around the circumstances of his death. While much controversy around the incident still remains, there is a great deal of evidence suggesting that he was actually killed by friendly fire. Both official reports and eye-witness accounts indicate that Tillman was mistaken as an enemy when he arrived to help his wounded comrades. Furthermore, military officials are accused of withholding this evidence and attempting to cover up the truth. To this day, his family continues to seek answers.

When Tillman died, he left behind his young wife and his two younger brothers. According to Wikipedia, he repeatedly mentioned in his personal journals during wartime service that he drew strength from and deeply valued his closest friendships, parents, wife, and family.

**Scale A:** Pat Tillman's decision to quit the NFL and join the army was

