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**Caron Butler; Fighting Through Adversity**

**By David Ferraro**

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A friend just recently asked me why no one on the site staff has done an article about the Keyshawn Johnson issue. For those of you who don't know, Keyshawn made remarks saying he didn't like how much he was getting the ball and wanted to leave after this season was over. The Bucs responded by deactivating him for the rest of the season. Anyway, I thought about what he said and I had a great idea.

We are always seeing athletes getting in trouble by saying and doing possibly the dumbest things they can do in their situation. Terrell Owens, mocks the Dallas Cowboys in front of thousands of die-hard fans. Kobe Bryant, possibly ruins his image that brought him in millions. Manny Ramirez, doesn't play in a big series against rival Yankees because of a soar throat when the division and playoffs were on the line. And possibly the biggest jerk in all of sports, Bill Romanowski, has spit in a players face, said he takes steroids to keep up with n\*\*\*\*\*, and most recently punched his own teammate so hard he is out for 6 weeks.

But hey, what's the fun in writing about that stuff? So I figured I'd remind or tell people about a good story in sports at a time we could all use one.

Its the twelfth game in a Miami Heat season that hasn't started out as planned. Lamar Odom has started off slow in his "new start", Dwayne Wade has been terribly inconsistent as he put up 18 in his debut then shot 2-12 the next night, and the Heat are 3-7 (about to go 3-8) with their growing star averaging less than five points per game.

That growing star is Caron Butler, he had arthroscopic surgery on his left knee during pre-season and is taking some big hits from critics. Seeing him daze at the court, it looks like things have hit rock bottom for the 23 year old getting paid 1.8 million this season. However, nothings further from the truth.

## Caron Butler; Fighting Through Adversity

There was a time when it looked Butler's NBA hopes were over. Like too many young players, his dreams were dying because he was in handcuffs being pushed into a van that would be taking him to a correctional facility. At just the age of 14, Caron Butler was caught having a gun and possession of cocaine while in his HS at Racine, Wisconsin. He would spend nine months in a juvenile detention facility and another six in jail. In jail was Butler's lowpoint, after getting in a fight and spending 10 days in solitary confinement he vowed to himself he would change his ways.

When he got out of jail his Mom and Grandmother moved out the neighborhood giving himself a fresh start with new people. While organizations worked to find another high school to let Butler back in, he worked at a Burger King and even had to wear an ankle bracelet to keep track of him. Eventually, Caron Butler played again at Maine Central Institute where he shined.

Now that Caron Butler again proved he was on of the top players in the country, it was time to move onto college. Usually, its hard to get teams to commit to a player with such a bad record, but UConn

coach Jim Calhoun saw Butler's drive and dedication to fixing his life and was awarded by a scholarship.

Butler awarded Calhoun's faith by being the top scorer on the team as a freshman, then going on to lead them into the elite eight before losing to the eventual winner, Maryland as a sophomore. He was also named the CO Big East Player of the Year with Brandin Knight before he entered for the NBA draft.

The Draft , another hard day in Butler's life. Predicted to be a definite top 5 pick, Butler watched as player after player was taken and finally the Heat called his name with the 10th overall pick. All the time Butler was crying, not only because he lost millions of dollars in the drop down, but he again saw the cruelty of life. Apparently, agents mad at Caron for not choosing them spread rumors he had been shot in his knee in the past, dropping his stock.

Caron played the season as if he had something to prove to all the teams that passed him up. However, when it came time for Rookie of the Year, Caron Butler wasn't even really mentioned as he finished third to high schooler Amare Stoudemire and foreigner Yao Ming despite having more than 2 ppg than each of them.

We are finally back where we started. Caron is staring at the court as the Heat lose their ninth game of the season while he played just 11 minutes. Miami fans, always weary are already losing faith in the guy that averaged over 15 ppg. as a rookie, and Butler is feeling the heat once again.

But don't worry, he's faced worse.

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**LET OBSTACLES INSPIRE YOU: Don't let adversity keep you from**

**By Barbara Jeanne Fisher**

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At one time or another, each one of us will suffer from some kind of adversity. Especially in recent weeks, many of us who have always felt invincible have seen evidence to the contrary. Many of us have lost friends or loved ones, and all of us are feeling the pain of loss and invasion.

Some of us have experienced more adversity in our lives than others. Many of us have suffered from financial hardship, physical or mental illness, or other difficulties that never seem to let up. However, as many Americans have said in recent days, we cannot let adversity change our way of life or deter us from living. If we do, the forces of evil and sadness will have found victory. And we simply cannot let that happen.

Such is the case in any aspect of life. From personal experience in battling four incurable illnesses, including MS and Lupus, I cannot even express to each and every one of you how important it is to look adversity in the face and continue on, chasing your dreams.

When I was diagnosed with my diseases, I was utterly devastated. For a time, I thought I'd never achieve my dreams of going to college, teaching, and being a writer. But with the help of a supportive husband and children, I started college at age 46, graduated, and became a published author. I'm now a well-known writer, teacher, and online businesswoman. In spite of all that has gone wrong in my life, I have found success and fulfilled my dreams, and so can you.

Instead of letting life's obstacles bring you down and destroy you, use them. Use your adversities to make you stronger and help you succeed in business, education, or whatever you choose. Use hardship to toughen you.

Telling your story to your customers and associates will undoubtedly get you support, respect, and even success. Don't embellish your tale or beg for pity, but don't be afraid to let people know what you have been through. Being honest about your life's history will inspire trust and understanding in others who may very well have been down the same road.

Author Barbara Jeanne Fisher is author of the acclaimed lovestory, "Stolen Moments" and has used her illness to inspire herself and others to succeed. Her web site, found at <http://www.angelfire.com/ab6/dlipton/> is a virtual library of health information and inspiration. Barbara can be contacted at [mentorsfriend@cros.net](mailto:mentorsfriend@cros.net).

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