

The great game of football brought Nonno and I together. Nonno spent many days of his life at New England football stadiums. He started by playing football when he was a kid. As his younger brothers grew up they played football for their high school and college teams which Nonno got to watch, followed by his son who also played for his high school and college. Then came the grandchildren. Most of us also grew up as athletes whether it was football, track, basketball, baseball or tennis he always loved to watch us play.

I started playing football in first grade. After every game I would call him telling him play by play of my touchdowns, tackles and other highlights. After every game from 2001-2010 I would call Nonno. He always loved when I told him about the big hits I laid on the quarterback and about other times when I crunched the running back. The big hits were what got him laughing and must've made him proud. He would always give me good + like after a really hard loss that kept us getting into the playoffs when we finished one game from perfect. In my second year of football Nonno had a rare time when he could make it to one of my games. In that game I scored my first touchdown. I can remember the smile on his face when the team came out to congratulate me as I trotted to the sideline with a chip on my shoulder. I was always very glad to know that the game he got to go to was a game to remember out of my career.

Going into my 10th year of football and sitting at a first string position as a defensive back on varsity I do not think I could've got here without Nonno. He taught me a lot about the game and was always a big motivation to play no matter how tough the practice was. Going into this season there will be a big gap in my football routine of not being able to talk to Nonno.