

Tim Tebow, the Media Is Not Your Friend

A good, God-fearing man, born to Christian missionaries, comes to New York to help the team win. How will he handle the Big City, and will the media give him a chance? It sounds like a sappy made-for-TV movie—but it is the reality that will be playing out in the biggest media market in the world very soon.

Tim Tebow is already a marketing sensation—highly visible. He is appealing and one of the most popular athlete-celebrities in the world. Tebow claimed his **religious beliefs** from his parents, and his entrance into this world was nothing short of a miracle. Tebow's mother was very sick, his fetus appeared injured, and her doctors were preparing for a stillbirth. They recommended an abortion, but the Tebows' religious beliefs would not allow it, so they prayed—and now we have the phenomenon known as Tebowing. **Home-schooled** to impart Christianity, and raised in small town America, he was a high school all-star, playing to the Friday night lights and going to church on Sunday.

Until today, he has been a star—but in markets like Denver and Florida, surrounded by the heart of America with a major Christian presence. Coming to New York City, the stage and opportunity—as well as risk and reward—bring Tebow exposure to a completely different level; a big city, filled with so many distractions.

When one thinks of sports and New York, one envisions nightclubs, bars and women filled with alcohol and professional athletes. Stadiums sell beer, not Bibles, and fancy restaurants pour champagne as if it were tap water. New York is a great city, and Tebow will be an asset to the team and its fans, but can he stay true to who he is living in the

city that never sleeps?

He will if he is strong enough and disciplined—but it's a big test for anyone, let alone a 24-year-old multi-millionaire—and rest assured the liberal New York media will relish any slips. If he is seen partying, the paparazzi will snap the photos and spin his joyful moments. If women are around, they'll position it as if he was enjoying their presence too much. Whatever he does, Tebow will be watched—and is a target. Whatever the press sees, they may convey it with a twist.

Tebow has prided himself in being humble and private—values even harder to maintain in New York. Mark Twain once wrote “There is no suffering comparable with that which a private person feels when he is for the first time pilloried in print.” Until now, Tebow's media has been positive—in New York City, I can assure you it won't continue to be.

How many enterprising liberal, **anti-religion reporters** will try to cut their teeth in the brutal industry of journalism by “exposing” Tebow? I'd advise Tebow to try and follow the advice **Jeremy Lin** gave him: “Everyone gave me some advice. They said make sure not to read the papers.”

As the CEO of a top 25 PR agency, who has represented celebrities and athletes—as well as some of the leading evangelicals in the country, I know how liberal the media is and how anti-religion so many of them are. Media often reports harshly on religious people and leaders sans objectivity. How many reporters are clamoring to be the first to show Tebow's flaws?

Tebow will be seen around town, he will hang out with his teammates, take pictures with fans, enjoy the nightlife, and media will be close by—waiting to pounce. Just how long of a honeymoon will they allow the quarterback before the prying eyes and conspiratorial comments start hacking away at him? That is the question. Tebow is a **man of faith**, but there is

one thing more Tebow can have faith in now that he's coming to New York City. There are members of the media who will want to hurt him. The question is: How much?

In a world where heroes are people who throw touchdowns and dunk basketballs, someone like Tebow seems different. He is seemingly a good and decent man, and represents what a real role model should be. One wonders if he can handle the scrutiny, possible lies and the harshness of what the New York press can produce.

From a lifelong New Yorker who works with the media on a daily basis, 10 tips Tim Tebow should follow:

1. Remain strong, maintain your faith. Your belief in holiness and goodness is a clear message. Even with liberal media in this big city, heroes can be real. Keep your faith.

2. Be natural and real. There are many posers and characters in this great city. You may be young, but you are loved and made it this far being yourself.

3. The media are not your friends. Beware. Don't trust them for some will try to bring you down. They can and will try. They aren't balanced, and are biased.

4. Have a good media advisor. They matter, and they look out for your interests. (The Jets will look out for their interests as your employer. It's different than looking out for Team Tebow).

5. Don't stay out too late, too often.

6. Do focus on your football (after all it's what got you here). Everyone loves a winner.

7. Follow Jeremy Lin's advice: "Everyone gave me some advice. They said make sure not to read the papers."

8. Beware of the big city.

9. *Continue to laugh, joke and smile. Laughter make everything easier.*

10. *Don't buy any bridges in Brooklyn; none are for sale.*

As the ink dries, Tebow should begin to prepare himself for one of the toughest games he's ever played. He is up against the New York media and it's one hell of a game.

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