

Ben Utecht

Ben Utecht spends every minute of every day making his dreams become a reality. Utecht achieved football's highest honor when his team the 2006 Indianapolis Colts squad won Super Bowl XLI. Utecht is now 4 seasons removed from his NFL career as a tight end due to Traumatic Brain Injuries from Concussions. His transition has been daunting in many ways, yet amidst the trials of cognitive rehabilitation he has found himself again through pursuing another dream: becoming a successful singer and artist in the world of music.

Along with his singing talents Utecht is an established keynote speaker, budding author, and national spokesperson for the American Brain Foundation as well as an ambassador for the American Academy of Neurology. Utecht's abilities don't stop there, he frequently co-hosts on an afternoon talk show in Minneapolis/St. Paul MN along with appearances as a sports analyst for Fox 9 and KSTC 45 in MN.

Utecht's passions extend onto the big screen as well. Ben has been cast in 4 independent films including the lead actor in a full-length film along with a featured short film at the Twin-Cities Film Festival. You might say Ben Utecht is the definition of a renaissance man who loves using his passions to connect with others through entertainment.

While it's been difficult for athletes to crossover into the music world, the truth is Utecht has been preparing for this transition for the past twenty years. Utecht's vocal style brings a refreshing new voice and sound to an AC/Pop Country genre in need of a new leading man.

Now, Utecht is ready to share his inspired music and giant voice with the rest of the world. "I've been given an opportunity to greatly impact people's lives through music. I want people to truly experience my heart, to connect with them on an emotional level and sing songs that bring meaning to their lives."

Utecht grew up in Hastings, Minnesota in a very athletic and musical family. He'd often spend most of his free time playing sports. But while he had a knack for sports, he also had a talent with the microphone. With music in his genetic makeup, Utecht was blessed with a demanding voice and began singing publicly while in the fifth grade. "I can't help but sing, and I love to prove people wrong...Real men play ball and real men sing!" Utecht stated with conviction.

Believe it or not, Utecht was the Home-Coming King and star athlete at his high school, who happened to be in more choirs than sports. He was offered a football scholarship to play at the University of Minnesota. With one passion taking off immediately, he decided to put the music on pause and chase his football aspirations.

Utecht, an All Big Ten Tight-End signed to the Indianapolis Colts and became a starting tight- end alongside quarterback Peyton Manning. After three seasons with the Colts, they made it to Super Bowl XLI in 2006 against the Chicago Bears and won. Utecht had achieved one of his childhood dreams.

"To find yourself in the Super Bowl, the clock counts down to zero, you just stand there and your life flashes before you," he explains. "You think about all these memories like playing catch in the backyard with my dad and here we are. It's always hard for me to describe because I still put the ring on and ask, 'What? Did this really just happen,' so to be one of the few is an honor."

But then, his life changed drastically. Utecht signed with the Cincinnati Bengals in 2008 and during training camp in 2009, he received a serious concussion that knocked him out for 90 seconds. The concussion would take over 8 months to recover from and permanently put him out of the 2009 season. After that experience, he began questioning whether he should continue his football career.

"I began having serious memory problems and behavioral changes that I couldn't understand. I began to fear my future, a future where I could no longer remember the names and faces of my wife and girls," Utecht shared. "I had to walk away. We had just started a family and now we have three young daughters and I want to do what's best for them," he says. "The hidden blessing that helped me out of the darkness is I had another passion... music." Utecht co-wrote an original song on his new solo album entitled "You Will Always Be My Girls" which deals with the fears of losing his family to brain disease.

Utecht made music his fulltime job, and began building his new team to hit the ground running on a highly anticipated music career. He has recorded three albums one of which, "Christmas Hope" was nominated for Holiday Album of the year by the Dove Awards. Utecht has just completed production on his break out solo album "Man Up" in the AC/Pop Country genre, which is sure to surprise and move all listeners.

Utecht was serious about his education from the University Of Minnesota in speech communication. A natural orator having grown up as a preacher's son he demands attention whenever he steps onto a speaking platform. Standing 6 feet 6 inches 250lbs, how could he not? Utecht is an advocate for brain health along with a fantastic motivational speaker that inspires corporate for greatness. In addition to his speaking Utecht is just finishing his new book where he challenges readers to re-define their life's GPS (Global Positioning System). "If you can recognize your Gifts, incorporate your Passions, and add your Spirit, there is no destination that you can't reach."

Utecht has also become a household name in the Symphonic arena having performed with many Symphony Orchestras including the: Cincinnati Pops Orchestra (Legendary Maestro Eric Kunzel, and NY Pops Maestro Steven Rieneke), Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Colorado Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra, Toledo Symphony Orchestra, Lafayette Symphony Orchestra, Richardson Symphony Orchestra, and the Monroe Symphony Orchestra.

As a national spokesperson, advocate, and author for brain health Utecht has worked diligently to spread education and awareness regarding Traumatic Brain Injury, and recently accepted the 2013 Ambassador Award presented by the Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance. He has also accepted the national spokesperson position for the American Brain Foundation and was just awarded the 2014 Public Leadership In Neurology Award by the American Academy Of Neurology, which is their most prestigious award. To top it off, Neurology Now Magazine made Ben their featured headliner and cover story.

"What I've learned from playing with athletes like Peyton Manning [is] when you put everything you have into your craft, there is no limit to how good you can become," Utecht explains. "I will take everything I learned about becoming a world champion and use that in my passions for music, speaking, and advocacy. I hope that my relevance as a man is that I was a great husband, father and I made a difference in peoples lives."