HOW AN NFL PLAYER REACTED TO THE MARKET MELTDOWN

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On last week's "Behind the Markets" podcast, I spoke with Jordan Hicks, linebacker for the Arizona Cardinals and partner at TopTier Wealth Management, alongside his colleague and partner Mike Brusko. One particular emphasis for TopTier Wealth is their focus "By NFL Players, for NFL Players," with a number of their partners also coming from the NFL, including Trey Burton and Chris Maragos.

Just as many of us are working remotely, Hicks' off-season training has occurred via Microsoft Teams conference calls and Zoom meetings. Hicks is doing virtual workouts and learning the playbooks virtually. The NFL recently announced that training camps could resume, and Hicks believes America needs football back in its life. He currently thinks that we will get to see a season this year!

TopTier Wealth Management was founded based on the personal experiences of Maragos, Burton and Hicks. NFL players often get financial advice from connections in their networks and often do not have proper financial planning, given their short careers and myriad temptations to spend.

Players get a big lump-sum check that can be taken advantage of or spent much quicker than expected. TopTier tries to focus on the finances so their players can focus on their football career, which lasts only about 3.5 years on average.

While TopTier certainly has a focus on NFL clients, given their founders' background, many retirees are in a similar boat and about two-thirds of their clients are not in the NFL.

Getting Invested during the Panic

Hicks was well prepared going into the crisis in March. He received a signing bonus right at the peak of volatility on March 15, yet he was determined to take advantage of the unique buying opportunity to put his cash to work.

It was a long process of education to understand the history of the markets, on top of the ongoing dialogue to create a game plan for getting invested. While many panicked, it was his long-term view and foresight that he would get out of it that gave Hicks the conviction to act.

I find that story extremely impressive at a time when many traditional investors went just the other way, either by selling out of their investments or delaying their buying and missing much of the subsequent market gains.

"Don't Steal from Your Future Self"

One piece of advice Brusko shares with all TopTier clients is the importance of compounding long-term gains in the markets. He explains that the worst 30-year equity return was still up 840%, so when clients look to spend $10,000, he reminds them of the future dollar gains they are giving up with their spending.

Please listen to our full conversation with Hicks and Brusko below.

Behind the Markets on Wharton Business Radio · Behind The Markets Podcast: Mike Brusko & Jordan Hicks

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