2013-2014 HHS Baseball Insight

This is an email that i sent to my former college baseball coach...& his response...

Coach Cates,

“ Im not sure if you know this, but I was hired as the baseball coach at Humboldt at the beginning of the school year. Our program may never be an elite baseball program, but the kids I have will always prosper later after everything's said and done. Ive taken the approach to my program as baseball coach/life coach. The short time I played with you, I always felt that you prepared us for what's really important: life after baseball. Scripture, quotes, past experiences & simply seeing your guys succeed in other areas outside of baseball. Id like to share with some of the same experiences I have had with my guys at Humboldt.

After Wednesday's game against Trenton, I gave my players some homework. I asked that they go home & find a scripture from the bible and tell how it can relate to the team. This wasn't mandatory, but a couple of players did the homework. One in particular was Quincy Cunningham.

Quincy is a great kid but has been scared of the baseball for quite some time. He is very timid during play, but tries very hard. He is a sophomore but had yet to get his first high school hit...until the very next night vs West Carrol. He also caught an opposing team's ball in right field for an out.

Here is our conversation via text following the game:

Quincy:

"Hey coach I also did my homework last night. My verse was 2 Timothy 1:7 for God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power love and discipline. This scripture was motivational for me to let me know that God didn't give us the mind to be nervous or timid so whenever I feel myself getting nervous I think of this scripture and I took it with me tonight."

Me:

"Well said. I am proud of you, not just for what you did on the field, but for over coming your internal obstacles"

Quincy:

"Yes sir thanks man. Thank you for teaching the thing's you do. I would not have been the improved baseball player I am now if it weren't for you coach.

I have one more scripture. Romans 3:23 for we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We can translate this in to baseball by saying we all make mistakes as its apart of the game & its apart of life. So when we fall down or make errors we must get up and as you would say "want the next one". This motivates me to never give up. If I make mistakes I have to keep fighting and learn from the mistakes."

Me:

"Amen Quincy! You are soo right."

Quincy:

“Yes sir. That's my scripture for tonight to go into tomorrow's game. Im going to try to get a different motivational scripture for every game.”

Me:

"Im on your side! Because we play on HIS team every day of our lives. Thank you for making me a better coach!"

Quincy:

"I try coach with all due respect. You and Vance are already good coaches and have made me better. It's the coaching and stuff. I wish I would've had this my freshman year. I'd be a better player. Hey you've made me a better player. It's the least I could do and it's an honor to know that I could say something to make you feel I made you a better coach"

Me:

"thank you"

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2nd Story

>> Scenario:

>> 2nd game of year. Bottom of 7th. Game tied 3-3. Bases loaded with full count. My senior is batting whom I made captain a day before. Count started out 0-2...he battled with a 2-strike approach and worked the count full. Next pitch he walks...we win....this was my first win as head coach. Ironically my last high school game was a no-hitter thrown by the other team. It was great to get that off of my back. As great as this moment was, it couldnt compare to the text message that was sent to me a couple of days later by this senior player.

Derrick Seymour(One of my Seniors):

" You know when I took that walk with the bases loaded ? I don't think I would've done that if you hadn't told me I was a captain. I think so often you want to play hero ball and be spectacular. But in that situation as capt. I think I had to put the good of the team first and not swing at a junk pitch just to say I hit it. Everybody was joking at school about it lol and my response was "who won". So I just wanna say thank you for making me captain. Hope I'm doing well"

Coach Cates,

I say this all the time.." I have the greatest kids in the school." They all know now, that baseball is a teaching tool for life. There ARE more important things to learn than home runs, double & great plays etc.. I am asked all the time how we(vikings baseball) are doing this year. Most that ask simply want to know our record. I use this time to talk about everything positive that I experience as their coach & the positive strides we are taking to make our sport more relevant within the community. Ive never thanked you but wanted you to know that you did make positive impact on me and one that im using to coach my kids at Humboldt.

Sincerely,

Coach Patrick Bunch

COACH CATES’ RESPONSE…………..

Pat,

I can't tell you how much I appreciate your kind words and how proud I am of you for your approach to your job. The older you get the more concerned you become about whether you have made a difference in the lives of other people. It is evident that you are doing so with your guys. My prayer is that God will continue to encourage you in your work with them and that your players will continue to see Jesus through you. I think you will playing South Gibson in a few days and I look forward to catching up when I see you!

--Coach Bubba Cates