

Thoughts From The Dugout



Quick Gain = Quick Fall

As we start off another new year, it seems quite relevant to talk about resolutions regarding our preparation and mind sets. We are also coming off the Mitchell Report regarding Steroid / HGH use in Major League Baseball and immediately besides the obvious affects this has on the game at that level, there are also direct questions regarding how this affects the youth of America from College athletes to High School athletes and below. While we can debate the affects, I think like any good analysis, at some point you need to evaluate and get to the root cause of these issues. While there can and usually are many "reasons" for problems such as these, one key issue in my opinion drives from our current society. In today's society, it seems we want everything RIGHT NOW.

For today's athletes, the competitive environment seems to have taken on an evil life in and of itself. Everyone wants the Quick Gain. I need to win NOW; I want to get bigger, stronger, and faster NOW. I need to have a good year NOW to get that scholarship. Even our lifestyles reflect this belief. Look at the rise in Fast Food consumption, the speeds we drive on the freeway, the Internet (need my information NOW) and just about all other aspects of our life can have many components that drive our need to have everything NOW. As adults, we are not immune from these same thoughts and beliefs just like our children. Everyone can take a good long look in the mirror and what do we see? My son needs to make Varsity NOW so that he can be seen and get that scholarship. So we need to take him to the latest velocity, speed, mental, vision, pitching, catching, whatever trainer to improve him NOW. If these Quick Lesson's do not produce immediate results, we look around for the answer somewhere else. Academics are not immune from this as well. "My gosh, SAT's are coming up, we need to get you into that SAT Prep CRAM course NOW so you will improve your scores".

What get's lost so many times is the appreciation for good old fashioned hard work. We seem to have lost the belief that "nothing happens without hard work". Or maybe we have just redefined "hard work". In many instances, it is the long struggle that not only provides us with the gains we are looking for, but also the appreciation for the journey and the lesson's learned. Sure, I can pop some pills or inject myself with some chemical that will allow me to become something rather quickly that I was not before. But is this magic or merely just a faster route to Quick Gain = Quick Fail. Anything that can be gained quickly can be lost just as quickly.

Athletes want to perform in competition but need to remember what prepares us for competition is the hours we put into practice. Players need to work harder in practice than they would in the games. They need to challenge themselves and be challenged more in practice. That way, anything that happens in the games will have already been conquered in the practice environment. The belief that methodical improvement and hard work builds that strong base which is more difficult to fall from, needs to be the focus. This goes for the academic side of life as well. There needs to be that same focus in putting in the hours learning lesson's in the classroom just as the athletic field. Sure, you can cram it all in the night before a test, and then hope it "spills" out on the paper. But will you really retain anything? Will you have learned how to work hard and reap the long term rewards of that work? Sure, this may work for today, tomorrow or the short run. But at some point, these quick hitters just won't work any longer. Are you going to be prepared to do what it takes if what it takes is more than you are accustomed to doing?

Sure, life has changed. But what has also changed is our belief in how we achieve success. We must start believing that QUICK GAIN = QUICK FAIL. That way, we will do what must be done to truly be as great as we are capable of being for the long run. We might be applauded for what we do today, but we'll be remembered for what we did over the long run. We'll also be remembered for how we did it!