



If you have spent enough time around youth sports, you know there are usually two games being played.

The first one happens on the field. The second one happens in the car on the way home.

I have come to believe those rides matter more than most people realize. More than the game itself, sometimes.

Kids do not need a breakdown of what went wrong. They already know. They have been replaying it since the third inning. What they need in that car is something harder to manufacture and more important than any coaching point. They need to know that a bad game does not define them. That failure is not a verdict. That one tough night cannot undo all the true things about who they are.

Baseball teaches that faster than almost any other sport. Ted Williams, the greatest hitter who ever lived, failed at the plate six out of every ten times he stepped into the box. The game is built around failure. What separates the good ones is not that they avoid it. It is that they learn to show up anyway, the next day, the next at bat, without letting the last one follow them to the plate.

I think about that outside of baseball too. We all have moments we would like back. Decisions we would make differently. Days we would rather not have on the record. But one hard day is not a story. It is a chapter, and usually not the most important one.

The move is the same whether you are eleven years old riding home after a tough loss or an adult trying to find your footing after something knocked you sideways. Learn what you can. Get back up. Show up tomorrow ready to play.

That has always been true in sports. It is just as true in everything else.

Take care,

Mason