**Let’s Be “Frank”**

Well brother, it’s time to close the books on another North Branford High School baseball season. In my eighteenth year at the high school I try to savor every practice, every inning, every game and every interaction with the players. As you get older, you realize you have fewer years ahead of you than you had behind you. That’s not a sad thought. I have been lucky enough to enjoy all those years and I can relax a little now and enjoy a lot more knowing things I didn’t know before.

We had a great season this year with a group of young players led by a great leadership team of seniors. Made it to the Shoreline Championship game and lost to a team that I still feel was not as good as we were. Lefty Gomez once said “sometimes it’s better to be lucky than good”. I think that might have been the case in this instance. We beat Haddam Killingworth twice, knocking them out of the Shoreline Tournament and they won the State Title. Go figure it.

But getting back to success and failure. The nature of the beast is to aim to win it all. I’m all for that. But only one team out of the masses can do that. Does that mean all the other teams have failed? Cultivating relationships, watching young boys turn into men and watching them work hard to be better, that is the victory. A coach once told me that a championship is the only thing that validates your coaching career. I really feel sorry for that guy. What validates it, is watching kids get better as people and seeing these men come back after college and beyond to say hello and tell us about their lives.

While on the subject of coaching I have been going to see Johnnie play baseball with ten year olds. The coaches are nice and the “mom part” of me tells me they are well meaning. The “dad part” tells me they are full of beans (not his exact word). As I watch them I Can’t help to think that maybe they should read a book or even attend a coaching clinic. I get a twitch listening to them give the wrong instructions. Things like the right positioning or where to back up on a play can all be easily accessed on the internet. They are telling the kids the wrong thing and this bothers me. These kids aren’t going to the majors and I’m not going to be a rocket scientist, but you have to teach the right foundation so they can improve and feel good about themselves. Something else you taught me but neither one of us practiced it as much as we should have. Don’t yell at your son any more or less than the other kids. If you find yourself doing that than you should become a spectator. It’s not fair to anyone.  
Well wish pop a happy Father’s Day. He never taught me the wrong way of doing things. He would simply advise me to ask you.Take care I’ll see you soon.