

Will You Move On From High School?

John Pinkman

A new season of evaluation and preparation is about to begin. This is one of those articles you may want to clip and post. No doubt you have said the same or similar comments to your players. Maybe this will help you get through to them.

I'm sure you believe, as I do, that we must continue to challenge young men to aspire to higher values and work ethics. Many players believe standards are different in various parts of the country. They're not. I truly believe that we all share the same American Dreams and hopes for the next generation.

Do they want to hear the discipline, character and values speech? No! That is too adult. Sometimes we as coaches, especially new coaches, are reluctant to address these issues. We are afraid of not being cool, contemporary, or popular in the eyes of the players. I suggest that is not our goal.

"Great coaches take players to places they never thought they could go." Coach K



Q. Why don't more high school players play college ball?

A. *Because they act like high school players.*

3% of High School players move on to play in college. College players are different. It is your job to find out what different things they do. Go visit a college practice.

If you just want to be one of the high school guys, wait till June... you will be.

College coaches by nature want to compare you to the best in their college program, not the worst on your high school team.

Prepare a plan for practice, a daily goal - don't just show up and wait for instructions.

Dress professionally at practice as well. Raggy sweats, smelly, torn and muddy do say a lot about you – and it's all bad. Is it cool, fashionable in a bizarre way? Maybe in high school.

Learn to ask "why" at the appropriate time, in the appropriate manner. "Why do I have to?" is much different than, "Why does that work?"

A coach who hears "Yes sir" recognizes respect. A coach who hears "yeah" makes a different judgment.

It takes more than profanity to become a man.

Learn the meaning of these words: Honor, dignity, poise, reliability, compassion, and loyalty.

The content of your character is as important as the content of your skill. College players are held to a higher standard. Learn the difference. Most of pro baseball merely pays lip service to character and drug issues. Filling seats and selling concessions are priorities. "IF" winning is important to a particular pro club, integrity and character are expendable commodities.

Luck and politics are never heard from starters.

Leading others by yelling and belittling them didn't work on you why would it work for you?

Breaking team rules does matter even if you are not caught. Sooner or later someone will know. They will know that you truly do not understand the commitment an athlete must make.

It is perhaps the oldest saying in the world but nonetheless true, you are known by the company you keep.

It is rarely the players at the next level who keep you down. It is most always the non-motivated players at your current level who hold you back.

Can you play in college? I know you can! Excellence is a choice.

Respectfully, John Pinkman