

Heart of a Coach – December 2011



Name: Troy Rood

Hometown: Mason City, IA

Alma Mater: University of Northern Iowa

Degrees: Bachelor Arts in Education (University of Northern Iowa) and Master of Science in Educational Administration (Iowa State University).

Troy with wife Kirstin, son Jake, and daughter Ali

List your chosen attribute: Leadership

What is your personal definition of this word?

“Leadership is getting the people in your charge to think, believe, do, and become what they might not have without your influence.”

What are some of your favorite quotes from other people about this word?

I think the following quotes really hit on the fact that great leadership is servant leadership. Servant leadership inspires others to be better than they would have been without your leadership:

“There go the people. I must follow them for I am their leader.” -- Alexandre Ledru-Rollin

“A leader is a dealer in hope.” -- Napoleon Bonaparte

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” -- John Quincy Adams

“Not the cry, but the flight of a wild duck, leads the flock to fly and follow.” -- Chinese Proverb

What is your favorite Biblical passage that deals with this characteristic? “

“For am I now trying to win the favor of people or God? Or am I striving to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ.” Galatians 1:10

Why did you choose that particular passage?

As coaches, we are constantly being scrutinized by players, parents, administrators, media, and the community. Great leadership does not give into the demands, expectations, and criticism of the public. Instead, great leadership is about seeking God's advice and doing what is right as a Christian coach. Coaches cannot make decisions based upon trying to please people. When their head hits the pillow at night they must know that they led in a way that honors Christ. That should be our leadership goal as Christian coaches.

Please give an application/example of this word in your life.

As a coach, teacher, and parent I am often faced with conflict and adversity. How I respond to conflict defines me as a leader. We have a saying among the varsity baseball staff at Mason City High School that says, "Stay above the fray." We use that as a reminder to not get caught up in the heat of the moment or gossip. Instead, we try to "stay above the fray" as leaders.

How do you apply this word in your sport?

One of my assistant coaches, Jason Parker, has a son the same age as mine (12). Carson and Jake both play on the same travel baseball team also coached by Jason and me. Early on we both found ourselves getting too caught up in the competitiveness of the game with our kids involved. We were not being the Christian leaders we wanted to be. So, we started fist pounding each other before every game while saying the phrase, "For him." This reminded us that our first priority in all games should be to use the game to further God's kingdom. That's first and foremost. We started doing it before every varsity baseball game as well. In fact, the last thing we said to each other before last summer's 4A State Championship Game against West Des Moines Dowling was, "For him!"

How did you become involved in FCA?

One of the greatest blessings I have ever experienced was when God placed Dan Mason in my life. Dan is the athletic director at North Iowa Area Community College and is also my assistant varsity baseball coach at Mason City High School. Dan is a Christian first and foremost. He walks the walk. Dan has a long history with FCA. Dan and I started a coaches' huddle in Mason City a few years ago and that grew into our campus huddle at Mason City High School. My relationship with Dan has been an amazing blessing. I am a better husband, father, teacher, coach, and Christian as a result of my relationship with Dan Mason.

How active within FCA are you?

I am the campus huddle leader at Mason City High School. I also recently began helping another father in our community start a 5th-8th grade student huddle at Mason City High School on Sunday nights. I am hoping both our groups continue to grow and have a positive impact on our school and community.

What is your athletic experience?

I played varsity basketball and baseball at Mason City High School for Bob Horner. Bob is a member of the Iowa HS Basketball Hall of Fame. Interesting enough, Bob is now my head sophomore baseball coach at Mason City High School and his grandson and my son are very close friends. That's the best part of athletics...the relationships.

What is your coaching experience?

I actually started out as more of a basketball guy than baseball. In fact, I still don't know which sport I like coaching better. My basketball career started as the head sophomore basketball coach at Aplington-Parkersburg in 1994. I had the opportunity to coach Brad Meester, Aaron Thomas, and Aaron Kampman that year in addition to getting to know Ed Thomas. Not a bad way to start a coaching career! I also served as the head boys' basketball coach at Martensdale - St. Mary's for one year before coming to Mason City High School. I served 8 years as the assistant varsity coach for girls and boys basketball at MCHS before becoming the head

varsity boys' basketball coach in 2004. I was the head varsity boys coach for 5 years before deciding just to lead our baseball program in 2009. I currently serve as the head freshmen boys basketball coach at MCHS.

I will begin my 11th year at the head varsity baseball coach at Mason City High School this year. Prior to that, I was the head freshmen baseball coach at MCHS for 7 years. So, in all I have coached Mohawk Baseball the past 18 years.

I have an amazing wife who has been supportive every step of the way and she is a die-hard Mohawk fan. She loves our teams and players as much as I do. It continues to be a blessed journey for my family.