

**2007**

**Rich Stetler**

**Scholarship Entry**

**Essay #3**

**Winning Entry**

How has playing sports taught me lessons of life and influenced my views on society?

“That's what learning is, after all; not whether we lose the game, but how we lose and how we've changed because of it and what we take away from it that we never had before, to apply to other games. Losing, in a curious way, is winning.” (Richard Bach)

Anybody who has ever heard the cliché “its just a game” never will understand that it is not just a game. Sports, for me, have become a lifestyle. A sport seems to show a persons defining characteristics that make him who he is. Richard Bach puts it well, its “how we lose and how we've changed because of it and what we take away form it that we never had before.” Learning is mentally taking something away from what we never had before. Playing sports has allowed me the opportunity to learn essential lessons to my success as an individual. I have learned that failure is never achieved until you give up trying, I learned that cooperation with others is necessary to accomplish goals, and I have learned to have a plan when a tough situation arises. Most importantly, sports have taught me to try and never make the same mistake twice. Losing, as you know, is inevitable when pertaining to sports. I learned that you keep losing until you realize why your losing. Upon the realization, this is how you learn. Heading off to my first year of college, it is important that I recognize “losing” as an everyday experience in some way. Playing sports taught me to accept losing in a way to improve myself individually. No athlete is perfect and can always seek improvement. There are many areas of my game that I need to improve upon for the good of the team and myself. Losing, to me, is defined as exploitation of weakness. That weakness can be overcome by the determination for self improvement. Majoring in Chemical Engineering at the University

of Delaware in this upcoming fall, I know that I will meet many new people and cooperate as a team with my colleagues. A player doesn't always get to pick his team, a team often times pick the player. I have learned to cooperate with others and work with them to achieve a common goal. Most things in life, you do as a team. Work, family, school and marriage are teams that we are a part of in everyday life. Baseball especially disguises sacrifices for the good of something else. No matter what aspect of the game all successful athletes do what they have to do. Sports have taught me to work with others to achieve a common goal and to accept my role on a team. Playing sports have taught me many essential virtues in life and I will always remember my experience being involved with sports.