

Re: This Week In Baseball
Air Date: May 10, 2008

TWB #906

The Kansas City Royals were the 1985 World Series Champions, but for the past 22 years they seemed to proceed in an unsure direction. The 2008 team is off to a fast start and may be the team to return the title to KC. Manager Trey Hillman came into spring training with the attitude of keeping the team relaxed and having fun. Hillman raised levels of expectations when he told the team “to believe in themselves and have confidence.” KC is a team with the type of competitive character that symbolizes a “never give up” mind set.

The Royals commitment to youth is continuing to unfold with a solid core of young players. Like third baseman Alex Gordon, the youngest position player in the American League -- and pitcher Zach Greinke. The fans see the potential and are committed to the plan.

Educational theme: High expectations and goal setting are targets you aim for that requires work and planning. These are effective methods to build confidence, increase self esteem and over-all well being.

Educational theme: The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to his commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor. Commitment and triumph are what life is about.

Educational theme: Character and core ethical values are learned when a child is young and are developed through a lifetime. Children, like athletes, learn from people who demonstrate good character traits.

Act Two: Kansas City’s ace starting pitcher Brian Bannister is a master of control and strategy. The son of former Kansas City Royals starting pitcher Floyd Bannister, Brian grew up in a big league family that shaped the future of his game. Day after day, he hung around the clubhouse and the players became his friends.

In 2006, Brian was the #2 starter for the New York Mets. His debut was a surreal experience filled with “the jitters and butterflies” as he pitched 5 1/3 innings of no hit baseball. But during the winter he was traded to the Royals where he proceeded to win 12 games in about three months.

When Bannister’s MLB career is over, his fallback planned profession is photography. Brian sees many similarities between baseball and photography, including concentration and spatial awareness. TWIB followed Brian around picturesque Kauffman Stadium, which he found to be the perfect place to practice his craft.

Educational theme: The importance of a healthy family is demonstrated by striving to promote the physical, mental, emotional and social growth and development of its members. The family is responsible to teach the children life skills and promote values.

Educational theme: One’s ability to properly control tension and stress situations requires one to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Effectively balancing tension and relaxation is the hallmark of champions.

Educational theme: It is critically important for athletes to prepare for a secondary career once their professional or amateur career is over. Nearly all athletes will have a career in something other than sports.

Act Three: The answer to the TWIBIA Question is Jose Oquendo with a .996 fielding percentage in 1990. Jose has the record for the best fielding percentage in a season for second baseman who played at least 150 games.

TWIB presented the Clutch Performer of the Month of April, as voted on by the fans. The nominees were the Pittsburgh Pirates Nate McLouth, Arizona’s Brandon Webb, Philadelphia’s Pat Burrell, New York Yankee Chin-Ming Wang, Boston’s Manny Ramirez and the Chicago White Sox Joe Crede. The winner for April is Yankees pitcher Chien-Ming Wang.

Educational theme: Trivia is seemingly insignificant and superfluous events; however, it is an important aspect of the lore, legend and tradition of MLB. For fans and players, trivia is a source of fun and interest in the American institution of baseball.

Educational theme: Recognition is a way to call attention to and validate one’s performance. The need for recognition is an important emotional need for the growth and development of one’s health.

Act Four – “Baseball Is...”: Baseball is Kansas City beating the vaunted New York Yankees in the first home series of the 2008 season. It sparked memories of the classic rivalries from 30 years ago. The Royals and the Yankees began to wage war in 1976. This was a real rivalry because the players on both teams really hated each other. As some of the players put it, when the two teams played they were “out for blood” with extremely aggressive play. There was an intense animosity that exploded into a bench clearing fight that began with KC’s George Brett and New York’s Greg Nettles.

The Yankees and the Royals clashed in the ALCS with the Yankees winning in 1976, 1977 and 1978 to move on to the World Series. Finally in 1980, the Royals defeated the Yankees to advance to the World Series.

Educational theme: Rivalries can bring out the best in athletic competition. Rivals attempt to equal or surpass another. It is the essence of athletics.

Educational theme: At the professional level winning is the most important thing; however, at the amateur level sportsmanship is expected. The desire to demonstrate good sportsmanship should be equal to your desire to win.

Act Five – “How ‘bout that!”: Set to the music of Tokio Hotel from their album *Scream*, TWIB presented the best plays of the week. Spectacular defensive highlights featured diving, leaping and fence-crashing catches along with catchers making alert pick-off plays and other strong throws. TWIB showed the Minnesota Twins’ Carlos Gomez hit for the cycle, which is hitting for a single, double, triple and home run in the same game. Various dramatic home runs were shown including several game winners, an inside the park job and “back to back” shots.

Educational theme: The artistic value of sport can be found in the grace, beauty and rhythmic bio-mechanical movements of premier athletes. The aesthetic quality of a well executed play enhances the appreciation of baseball.

Educational theme: Children measure athletic success with effort and learning. These are once again terrific examples of the maximum effort needed to play professional baseball.

Educational theme: The pedagogy of sport involves the demonstration and active observation of skillful acts. Once it has been carefully watched, it can be better executed. Children must learn a variety of athletic movements to become physically educated.