

Pass It On®...

Everybody Gets on Base.

Measuring the victories of life, one single at a time.

From the heartland to urban parks, the release of school kids onto the baseball diamonds signals the beginning of summer. There was a time when baseball was the only summer game. But with competition from soccer and lacrosse, the clap of leather gloves in around-the-horn warmups is not as omnipresent as it used to be. Still, America's game is a place for young boys to prove themselves in their pre-adolescent tribes.

Tim was one of those boys. His build was slight, unfinished. Some boys seem to have the makings of athletic ability through every growth phase. Tim seemed to be growing in odd ways: long arms and legs, thin shoulders, more teeth than space allotted in his mouth. No meat on his bones. But he loved baseball. And game after game, he stood at the plate, dropping the heavy bat into a half swing at the first three pitches. Strikeout after strikeout piled up in the stat sheet. The desire was there, but the body doesn't respond to dreams and wishes. It needs to be trained. Progress was slow. Tim was determined. The strikes continued.

Tim practiced his swing every day, and every strikeout brought two things to the surface: determination and a few tears that Tim quickly wiped away before returning to the dugout. His teammates encouraged him. His coach worked with him. Even opposing teams held their breath, wishing for a hit, just one hit for a boy who seemed to deserve it more than any other 10-year-old kid in the world.

What teammates and parents and even the coach never saw was a gray van that pulled up each game in the parking lot adjacent to left field. Inside was Tim's father, too weak from the advancing cancer to get out of the van. It's a tough assignment to watch your kid strike out, even tougher when you don't have the strength to pitch to him.

But life sometimes pushes you along in the right direction, and toward the end of the season, Tim stood at the plate as determined as ever. On the first pitch, the bat fell from his shoulder in a

downward swing and somehow made contact. The ball dribbled down the third-base line, and Tim galloped to first. He stood on the bag wearing a smile as big as the outfield. He didn't have the chance to advance, and when the pitcher retired the final out, Tim ran straight into left field, climbed the fence and dove into the front seat of a gray van, into the arms of a frail father whose wish for his son had finally materialized.

Sometimes it is more than a game.

Love...PassItOn.com

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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