

Never Judge a Book by its Cover

Last September, 2015, Jojo Frye came in for his first lesson. I took one look at him and his Mohawk and thought, “oh boy, here comes trouble.” However, within five minutes he had proven my opinion inaccurate. As I reflect on Jojo today, he is the epitome of class. He is one of the most caring, polite, and hard-working young men that has come through our doors; a very different person than I originally envisioned him to be. Although we may not want to admit it, most of us, including myself, do judge people based on appearance before we even speak to them. It has been an absolute pleasure working with Joe and in a way I feel like he has made me a better person as I work to avoid making unfair assumptions about people. He certainly deserves to be the Athlete of the Month for February, 2016.

On first thought of describing Joe, I feel 100% that he is the type of athlete/person who would run through a brick wall if you asked him. He reminds me a lot like the “Dirt Dog”, Trot Nixon, one of my all-time favorite Red Sox players. For Jojo, like Trot, it isn’t about recognition or fame, it is about doing your job and completing it any way you can. When I asked Joe about his position in football, he said he was the fullback. I said you like to hit people, he laughed and said yes. If you know football, you know the fullback never gets credit for their contributions, is never on the stats sheet, but is absolutely without a doubt one of the hardest working individuals on the field.

Jojo comes to the Strength and Conditioning classes on Saturday Morning and he is always one of the hardest working individuals; and it is 7am! You can literally see that his tank is spent but he is still giving everything he can to be the best. Most importantly, Joe goes about his business with a quiet and listening demeanor. He doesn’t whine when he loses and never gloats when he wins; he just does his job and prepares for the next task. When speaking to other instructors, John Richardi, Brendan Morrissey, Bill Berman and Jay Schnabel about Joe they all agree how diligent he is and that he is a young man with character. The front desk staff also acknowledges that Joe enters the building with a smile and a hello and is one of the nicest people walking through the door. His incredible spirit has the capability of brightening a bad day.

As we nominate people for Athlete of the Month, grades are always a huge factor. When Dave Frye was asked about his son’s grades, he stated, “the kid tries hard at whatever he does. At school, he gets upset when he doesn’t do well so he is very passionate about his work”. Jojo strives for perfection not only at the facility or other sports he plays, but also in the classroom, another admirable quality Jojo exhibits.

As the Braintree Baseball Club grows, my hope is that I am fortunate enough to meet more people like Jojo. I am not perfect and my wife will tell you that I always make mistakes. But when I meet people like Jojo, they remind me that this club isn’t just about baseball, this club is more than that.

I hope Jojo’s story inspires others the way it has for me. I have already scheduled an appointment this week at the barber to get my own Mohawk.

Jojo’s biggest fan,

Jim Joyce