

Robbie,

Congratulations to you for being chosen by Captain Lewis to receive the magical lacrosse stick. The fact that he selected you for this honor is a compliment to your qualities as a young man. So what responsibility do you have as the recipient of this wonderful gift? As a former player and coach who grew up in Mt. Washington and lived on Sulgrave Ave., just down the street from where Jack Turnbull was raised, I would like to share a few thoughts for you to consider.

Success in life, as in lacrosse, is not an automatic. It requires dedication and commitment. I must confess that as a 15 year old, I did not fully appreciate the magnitude of these qualities. It wasn't until later in life when I became a parent, coach and businessman that I fully understood the importance. My advice to you is to enhance the power of the stick and develop your own magic by making the commitment to become the best lacrosse player you can be. Formulate a plan by listing everything you must learn to perfection from scooping, passing, catching, shooting, dodging and all the fundamentals of the game. Implement the plan by listening to your coaches, reading, watching star players, and studying DVD's.

Become a student of the game. For example, take the one category of dodging. List at least eight dodges to learn, (face, inside roll, split, rocker, etc.) Know when to use them, how to bait the opposing player, where to hold and move the stick, plus footwork. Once you have your plan, go for it. Monitor your progress and make changes as necessary. It may take several years, but I know you will reap the rewards. One of my favorite examples of the success of commitment is the book *Undaunted Courage* by Stephen E. Ambrose. It details the journey of Lewis and Clark across the continent to discover a passage to the west and the impediments they faced.

In summary, Robbie, the power of the magic in the stick is directly relational to the commitment of the player possessing the stick. Good luck to you and enjoy the journey.

Sincerely,

Tom Mitchell

United States Naval Academy, Turnbull Award 1961