

Lewis turned Kirkwood into great program

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John Lewis had been the baseball coach at Kirkwood for such a long time that the school did not have a job description on file. To me, John got to see and play an important role in the growth of the Kirkwood campus and Kirkwood programs.

His coaching and leadership were superb, and his players will tell you they were not only better ballplayers, but better people because of John Lewis and what he did for Kirkwood. And now he gets the thrill of seeing his grandchildren develop their own athletic skills.

For athletic director Doug Wagemester, I think the baseball job at Kirkwood is a fine opportunity to attract a top-notch coach. But Doug should warn the incoming coach, whoever it may be, that there's a lot more to coaching baseball at Kirkwood than just throwing out the balls and letting them play.

Yes, you can coach them, but you also will have to be a father figure and a motivator and a groundskeeper and a tarp-puller and maybe you'll have to wipe off the seats on a wet day and all the little things that Coach Lewis did to make the program great. Because it is the attention to those little things that makes you a winner and makes your team a successful operation.

So Doug, be sure and talk about the little things to the incoming coach, whomever it might be.

And let's give a tip of the fedora to Steve Fish at Marion for 500 career wins in baseball. He, too, has been an anchor in the Marion athletic program. We wish them both the best.