



View from the Couch

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Sentimentality and Memories...Yeah, You Got a Problem With That!?

I was fortunate enough to have attended a fund raiser for the Alzheimer's Association of Western New York a couple months back to listen to Jim Craig, the goaltender from the 1980 Gold Medal Olympic team, speak about memories of the Olympics, Herb Brooks, his family and his experiences since then. It was obviously tied into the fund raising effort and awareness about Alzheimers disease but nonetheless, he shared some great stories and some important lessons about life.

Not too long ago, I saw a program on a Canadian broadcast about the life of Wayne Gretzky, which was fascinating in itself but the one thing that hit me was a segment on his father and how he taught "The Great One" to become what he is, on and off the ice. The unfortunate thing about this was Walter Gretzky suffered a stroke several years back and as a result, has lost all memory of the years that Wayne played professional hockey. Everything from the late '80's to late '90's is gone. No memories of Wayne's accomplishments, records, nothing! Even viewing highlight films, this poor man has no recollection of one of the greatest athletes in all of sports, let alone hockey.

Now, what does this have to do with Section6Runs? Well, very simply, it's the whole reason I do the site and why I take the photos that I do, clip news articles and compile results from the coaches and other sources. Memories...links to your past. It's my soapbox, my bandwagon, my sentimentality.

We all take for granted the present moments and more than likely we fail to document those moments. Some are memorable, some we'd just as soon forget. But nonetheless, those moments are a snippet in time of who we are, where we've been or what we've accomplished. They may not mean much to us at the time but to your family or friends, it might just a treasured time to them. Think about this year's Sabres season. There are moments from this past season when we link an event or memory to one of those games. Be it when they came back from a two goal deficit or when Biron and Emery fought, we can say, "oh yeah, I was here or there and doing this or that when that happened at the HSBC Area." It's a reference point in time and in our lives.

I've tried to capture some of those moments in the photos I take because not only do I enjoy being at your meets and invitationals but it might just be that moment where you set a personal best, win the event or it just might be an important moment because you're there with your teammates, friends and family.

It's also a rite of passing for some of you as well. Obviously, the seniors will be moving on to college or to a career and some will continue to run competitively, some will not but this site will have, hopefully, documented a moment in your life that you can look back on in the coming years and smile as a result.

I will miss seeing this group of outgoing seniors who I have watched compete over the past two to three years while my son was competing at North. Some, I have had the privilege to know, others it's been mostly a glance and a "hello" or wave. Either way, guys and gals, you've done well and your parents are proud of what you've accomplished, that you can be sure of. I wish you nothing but continued success in whatever the future holds for you. If you compete in life as you did on the track and XC courses, you have nothing to fear.

I've also had the privilege to meet parents, coaches and officials who have made this project that much more enjoyable. Thanks for your support and friendship.

So remember these times, embellish them at class reunions (you've earned that right!), keep scrapbooks (digital photography makes it soooo easy), keep in touch with your teammates/classmates...they will be links to your past. You don't know how important that is until it is gone.