

DELINEATING ARGUMENTS: CASE STUDY

Baseball Sharks

ISSUE

It is winter and the parents of an 8th grader named Jesse are trying to help him determine which baseball team he should play for in the upcoming spring and summer. Jesse is already a fantastic shortstop and pitcher who is being told by his coach that he is better than most high school players. He wants to play with a good team that challenges him but he hates all the travel required by the teams that are really good. Matt is the coach of the best team in the region, the Sharks. The Sharks will travel every weekend from April through July to play in tournaments. Most of these trips are 2-3 hours or more. These tournaments are played at colleges and universities and give college

coaches and even Major League scouts the opportunity to watch these young athletes compete. Many of these players are then recruited throughout high school by Major League teams and colleges.

Matt, the Sharks' coach, is coming over to speak with Jesse and his parents about playing with the Sharks. Jesse's parents are supportive of him and want him to make the best decision for himself.

COACH MATT

Matt is the Sharks' coach and really wants Jesse to play for him this summer. Matt sees Jesse as a vital piece to his team's success. There are other shortstops that could play for him but none come close to having the skill-set Jesse owns. Matt also believes Jesse can play baseball collegiately and if he continues to get the right type of exposure, he could be drafted into the Major Leagues during high school.

Coach Matt presents the following argument:

Playing for the Sharks will give Jesse the exposure he needs to get an athletic scholarship for college and could lead to him being drafted into Major League Baseball.

Between April and July Jesse will be seen and evaluated by college coaches and Major League scouts. Each tournament provides college coaches and professional scouts access to the best players in the country and allows them to evaluate many players at one time. This access to the decision-makers at the next level of competition should be highly valued to someone like Jesse.

The travel schedule is time intensive but it is a modest price to pay for the opportunities playing collegiate baseball and perhaps professional baseball could provide. We travel a lot. This is because we want our players to have the best possible opportunity to be seen by a variety of coaches from different colleges and universities and by as many professional scouts as possible. It's a sacrifice of time now, but a college scholarship or Major League signing bonus would provide many opportunities.

The competition you will face on a nightly basis while playing for the Sharks is incomparable and will make you a better player. Our schedule is demanding and is created to compete against the best teams in the region and the country.

In conclusion, if Jesse wants to play college baseball and be considered professionally, his best chance is to play with the Sharks.

JESSE'S PARENTS

Jesse's parents want to help him make the best decision. They recognize the dilemma he faces and understand the pros and cons of both sides. They feel that Matt is pressuring Jesse to join the Sharks. They also know the opportunities that playing with them could open up for Jesse but they do not want Jesse to make a decision out of pressure or fear.

Jesse's parents present the following argument:

While the Sharks definitely would provide Jesse the best opportunity to pursue a future baseball career, he may not be ready to make this decision. Jesse is an 8th grader and has several more years before he must decide where he wants to attend school.

Jesse is not ready to commit his entire summer to one activity. While baseball is important to Jesse, we recognize that being well rounded requires participating in multiple activities and we believe that he should pursue those that he wants to. Playing on the Sharks would mean he would have less time at the beach where he loves to swim.

The local team will allow Jesse to continue playing baseball, work on his skills, and not spend all his time on the road. We know the quality and access the local team can provide Jesse are not as good as what the Sharks could provide. Although they are not that bad. He has been able to develop to this point. And his friend Luke is on the team as well. Playing for the hometown team means he gets to continue spending time with his friends as well.

In conclusion, we want Jesse to have all the information necessary to make the best decision for himself. While he does want to play baseball collegiately and have the chance to be drafted into Major League Baseball, he is not ready to commit himself completely to just baseball. We want to help Jesse think about the implications of each option. We will support him whatever he decides.

OTHER PERSPECTIVES:

Jesse - Jesse's older brother Luke - Jesse's friend

PERSPECTIVES