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2010 Reds' Coach of the Year – John Guzman



Every team has to go through a re-building year from time to time. The Reds graduated five 3-year starters in 2009, and thus went through a rebuilding year in 2010. As the Reds tried to re-build with a group of primarily sophomore starters, and with zero senior pitchers for the first time in 30 years, the Reds re-building year simply extended a 37-game inherited win streak into a nationally historic 60-game win streak, making the Reds one of only a dozen baseball teams in the history of our country to ever win that many consecutive games. Along the way, the Reds once again won the League Title, for the 30th time since 1979, and won the Regional Title for the 18th straight year. The Reds then went on this past summer to win not only the Class 4A/5A NCBL League and Postseason Championships, the Reds also won the American Legion B League and State Championships.

The only way for the Reds to experience the success that they have, as the winningest baseball team in the country over the past quarter-century, is to have the high school system fed by top players that are already poised to play varsity level competition the moment they take their spot among the varsity ranks. This requires superior coaching at the younger levels.

The Eaton Fightin' Reds Baseball Program is fortunate to be led in the spring by a group of coaches that have put in more than 100 combined years coaching The Pinstripes. In the summer and fall, the Reds are coached by many of these same coaches, in addition to a handful of experienced adult coaches that not only don't get compensated with a single penny, but instead invest hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars into getting the next group of Reds' players prepared to play under the bright lights.

While nearly all of the Reds' summer and fall coaches are former Eaton ballplayers, one special exception is Reds' Coach John Guzman. A star pitcher at Fort Morgan in the early 1990's, Coach Guzman pitched in college for Fort Hays State University. Coach Guzman moved to Eaton in 1997 with his family and started coaching for the Reds in the fall of 2008. The Reds had just come off a Spring State Championship and a Summer State Championship season as well at the varsity level, but had done that with a cast that would nearly all be graduated by the end of the spring of 2009.

Coach Guzman went to work coaching the Reds' 14 year-old team in tournaments throughout Colorado, leading them to many wins via late-inning rallies, as the Reds are known to do. By the time summer rolled around, Coach Guzman was the head coach of the Reds' Legion D team, comprised of incoming freshmen and 8th graders. Coach Guzman led the Legion D team to qualify for the State Tournament, along with a first-round upset win over the #1 seed. Coach Guzman then starting coaching for the Reds' Team 2 in Fall Ball in 2009, leading the team of 8th and 9th graders to play within a couple runs of many schools' junior and senior varsity starters, including a win over Class 5A Denver East's varsity team. Coach Guzman also served as the pitching coach for Team 1 on Sunday games, calling all of the pitches as the Reds' varsity fall team won a historic 3-game series over a combined team from the Greeley schools to wrap up the Reds' 4th straight Fall Championship.

After taking off November and December of 2009 along with the rest of Eaton Baseball, Coach Guzman was back at open gyms in early January 2010, helping to prepare the next generation of Reds for their day in the sun, coaching the 14 year-old team once again. With tournaments played throughout March, April, and May, the Reds won numerous tournament games against Denver-based all-star teams including a tournament championship in April against Class 5A Dakota Ridge. By late May, Coach Guzman was leading the Reds' Legion C team for the summer season, and once again led the Reds into the State Tournament in July after placing 2nd in league standings with a 17-3 record. The Reds won three games at State to finish atop all Class 3A teams in the State. Coach Guzman then turned his attention to the fall once again, where he led the Reds' Team 2 to successes throughout September and October, and once again served as the Reds' Team 1 pitching coach, calling every single pitch as the Reds wrapped up another successful fall season, this time with 6 straight wins against the combined Greeley team. Coach Guzman also spends Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the fall working with pitchers and catchers after school, in addition to hitting grounders or throwing batting practice to any Red that requests it.

As Coach Guzman, along with the rest of Eaton Baseball, takes off a couple months before the start of the 2011 season, www.EatonBaseball.com would like to recognize him as the Reds' inaugural Coach of the Year in 2010. Coach Guzman dedicates hundreds and hundreds of hours every year into Eaton Baseball, and the results are quite evident. Most programs charge their players' parents a large fee for the coaches to be reimbursed for their gas money and paid some amount for their time, the Reds do neither, as it is simply the will to push tomorrow's stars to reach to become all that they can be that drives the Reds' coaching staff. Coach Guzman invests thousands of dollars each year into the Reds' Program.

Beyond his labor of love in coaching the Reds, Coach Guzman has been a laboratory technician for Carestream in Windsor for the past 15 years. He rarely lets his work schedule interfere with his coaching, but clearly serves a key role in the operations of his company. Coach Guzman and his wife, Sandy, have two daughters, senior Jordyn, and 6th grader Maris.

Thanks for all that you do for Eaton Baseball Coach Guzman, much of the credit is yours for championships recently won and those that will be fought to victory in the future.