



March 06, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

Herbert J. Mols was my football coach from 1969-1973. During those incredibly important years of any adolescent's life, Coach Mols meant more to me than for most of his other athletes, as my family was largely absent. Obviously, his career had national and regional importance and recognition, but let me give you one player's perspective.

Herb Mols expected excellence and gave opportunities for all those he coached to reach their maximum potential. His praise was infrequent and unelaborated, but his encouragement was constant. Despite my extraordinary inabilities as an athlete, I worked myself into starting in my junior year only to have Coach Mols' assiduous fairness relegate me from a two-way starter to special teams player by the end of the season – an accurate reflection of my abilities relative to those who improved during the season. That demotion motivated me to give the kind of effort my teammates recognized by making me captain, and to reach a level where I never left the field my senior year.

Similarly, during that senior year, he uttered his only two instances of outright praise of my efforts – “Good job” on one occasion, and “I saw that” after a play that I felt particularly proud of. But rather than discouragement, Coach Mols' sparse praise kept me focused on obtaining his approval, which came at the Football Banquet after my Senior Year, where his words and his actions let me know how much our four years meant to me (and him).

Although I was completely incapable of any collegiate performance as an athlete, once graduated from college I became an assistant high school football coach for seven years at Branford High School here in Connecticut, including a trip to a State Championship game. When one of my sons seemed to have the desire to play, I used coach's careful encouragement to help him become a three-year varsity player for Hand High, including playing in a State Championship game, and despite genetics, he has gone on to play in college.

I know that if it hadn't been for Herb Mols, I would never have had the desire to coach and I would never have had the objective distance from my son's athletic abilities to provide him the kind of cautious but positive perspective that enabled him to find his own way in football.

That was Coach Mols' way: fair, with high expectations and with complete commitment to each individual kid's abilities – the sort of coaching which changed my life and cascaded down to those I coached, and helped make my son's life richer and more rewarding.

Herb Mols changed people's lives throughout his entire career and he deserves any recognition that is bestowed upon him.

All best,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "Duo Dickinson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Duo Dickinson,  
architect

DD/sep