

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jerod Boyd; I'm one of the lacrosse coaches at Kettle moraine. My whole life I wanted a younger brother. I wanted someone to watch over. I wanted to help someone avoid the same mistakes I've made. Being the youngest of three I realized quickly that wouldn't happen... Until I met Cole. Today I have the privilege and honor to tell you who Cole Philhower was.

I started coaching Lacrosse my freshman year of college. I went to the first tryout of the year where I met Jim. Jim introduced himself to me and quickly began to promote his son to me. My first thought was "oh great one of these parents," and "this is going to be a heck of a year dealing with him," but that was before I met Cole. When I met Cole I saw something different in the way he carried himself. Soon after meeting Cole, we began to click, and the brother relationship I had always desired and would soon grow to love, began to form. After about a year into our relationship I was sitting on the couch with him at Jim's. For whatever reason he wanted to show me a text conversation. As I'm reading the conversation I saw a little farther than he wanted me to. The text from the person read, "You know Jerod too?" His response back was "Yeah he's like my big brother." When he saw that I had seen the text he looked at me and said "Sorry." As if he had done something wrong. I looked at him and said, "You know I feel the same." Over the past four years I have learned a great deal from Cole that I get to share a little with you today.

The first thing I learned about Cole was the selflessness and humility he owned on and off the field. Cole Philhower never lived or played for himself. Instead, he thought of others before himself. I use to

joke with Cole telling him he had the most diverse friends I had ever seen a high school kid have. I later realized that's who Cole was. Cole Philhower wasn't about who you are or where you came from. He was taught to show everyone respect and love, and that's how he lived his life. He didn't care what your past was like or what you did wrong that day. As long as you showed him and the others around him respect, he would do the same. However, as soon as someone stepped his friend's toes he'd be the first one there for support. This year Cole proved that to everyone in the varsity game vs. Lakeshore. After a late hit on a fellow teammate, after the play, Cole was the first one there to knock the kid to the ground. Like an enforcer does in hockey, Philhower rallied his team back from a 4-goal deficit to beat Lakeshore 6 to 5.

Cole was a natural born leader. All of my adult life I have been in a leadership role of some sort. I can tell you right now Cole was a much better leader than I am. Because he knew the importance of following before leading. His humility and selflessness is what made him a great leader. He was never leading for himself. He knew when the team needed someone to step up, and man would he step up. I always said he was fearless on the field. In times of war, soldiers look to their platoon leader to guide them through it. In times of doubt and hardship on the field the players turned to Cole. You could never get in his head on the field, because he knew his job and as his father taught him, he was going to take pride in that and be proud of his work.

Some of the best times we had together were sitting on the turf after shooting. One of the times we had gotten into a deep conversation and I asked him "What makes him feel alive?" His response shouldn't

shock anyone, family, friends, and lacrosse. I looked at him and said something along the lines of, "Concentrate on what would make you a better person, and you'll be fine." He looked back at me with his grin and said, "I think I reached perfection." Obviously he was joking about perfection, but Cole put his effort into those three things day in and day out. Cole was a lacrosse player, a son, a friend, and a great little brother. He changed me as a person and a coach forever.