



November 9, 2016

Brighton Players and Parents,

On Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, the United States will again observe Veteran's Day. It is a day to honor all persons who have served in the United States Armed Forces. I encourage everyone in the Brighton family, with a relative or neighbor who has served, to respectfully say to that person, "Thank you for your service."

This is also the perfect opportunity to provide a bit more detail into our 2017 team motto, "Band of Brothers."

### **Background**

The 101st Airborne Division, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment was one of the most highly decorated Army combat units of WWII. Within that regiment, an elite group of paratroopers called 'Easy Company' was formed by volunteer soldiers - the majority of whom had no military experience and had never traveled outside of the U.S....they were untested. They began basic training at Camp Toccoa in Georgia. Daily drills at the camp were extremely demanding and always included running to the top and back of the 2,000 foot Currahee Mountain. "Three miles up, three miles down," became the men of Easy Company's motto, who ran Currahee sometimes two or three times a day, always doing more than was required because they wanted to be the best.

The men completed basic training in outstanding physical shape and more importantly had bonded through the process. On June 6, 1944, the 150 paratroopers were dropped into Normandy, France, as part of the Allied invasion known as D-Day. The group relied on their training and were tenacious, tough and could always trust in each other as they fought through German strongholds. In Bastogne, France, Easy Company found themselves surrounded by German forces. For twelve days, the men slept in foxholes, suffering in the extreme winter elements with no cold weather gear, while inundated with deadly artillery attacks. Eventually, reinforcements came but the men of Easy Company insisted that no rescue was necessary. Easy Company gained fame within the American public as heroes for the siege which was heavily promoted in the media. The men continued to fight on the front lines through France, Holland and eventually entering Germany. Their final mission took them to Berchtesgaden, Germany, in which they captured Hitler's Eagle's Nest on May 5, 1945. For 11 months of fierce fighting, they were a true Band of Brothers.

### **Brighton's Band of Brothers**

In previous letters I have drawn parallels between military training and preparation in sports. I believe strongly in the tried and true methods of preparation and hard work. Therefore, each player will need to adopt a mindset of togetherness, toughness and perseverance.

Make no mistake, we are underdogs this year and, like the men of Easy Company, we need to do more than required to prepare for battle. No one outside of the Brighton program thinks we have a shot at the State Championship in 2017. The following are actual comments made to me by other program coaches and parents:

“You lost 16 seniors – so I guess it’s a rebuilding year huh?”

“It’s gonna be tough replacing 70% of your offense and your entire defense, right?”

“I think you guys will end up 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> in the State this year. That sound right to you?”

“I think it’s gonna be Alta and Park City for the Championship this year, what do you think?”

My response... Nothing. I just smiled and I thought how badly I wanted to prove them all wrong. But I can’t...YOU, the players, have to prove them wrong.

I hope this motivates each and every one of you to work hard this winter to get better. We will use the months of January & February to train as a group. But I expect everyone to do extra – it means more than you know.

We will have a conditioning test near the end of February. It will consist of twelve (12) 200m sprints with a one-minute break in between each one. All Varsity players will be required to make all 12 in under 37 seconds. If not, the penalty will be that all Varsity players will run the 12 sprints the next day, and we will continue this daily routine till all players pass the test.

Prepare together. Push each other. Encourage one another. And in the process become a Band of Brothers!

-Coach Schaf  
Band of Brothers