



TWIN CITIES ORTHOPEDICS

PRESENTS

Q&A WITH
LUFKIN AND
PITTS

LUFKIN TIPS
FOR CAR RIDE
HOME

A TRUE MATCH
MADE IN
HEAVEN

THESE TWO WILL
ALWAYS BE KIDS AT
HEART



BY MICHAEL
IVERSON

GETTING TO KNOW

11U COACHES

BRADY PITTS & ISAIAH LUFKIN

YOUNG KIDS RESPOND
TO THESE TWO!

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Coach Isaiah Lufkin and Coach Brady Pitts are a match made in heaven! I couldn't think of a better combination to coach the 11U group this summer. These two are big kids in their own right. You've got coach Lufkin, the ginger bearded red head veteran that is full of energy, always smiling and knows how to interact with the younger players. My son Gavin played for him during an in-door dome tournament in Sioux Falls over a year ago and he fractured his thumb catching on a foul ball in the championship. Coach Lufkin could see he was hurting physically and emotionally and did all he could to comfort him and assure him it would be okay. The connection between catchers is a real thing.

Coach Pitts has found his calling as a coach in my opinion and the younger generation of players is the perfect fit for his personality.

When I saw the reaction captured in the photo on the right, I immediately told my

wife that it takes a special coach to elicit that type of emotion from a player and for the two to embrace is special. It shows a level of trust between the player and coach.

Both coaches are veterans of the Blizzard program. Coach Lufkin played for Rosemount High School and made Blizzard teams in fall of 2007 thru the spring of 2012. Following high school he played at Waldorf University in Forest City, IA as a catcher and for the St. Croix Falls Bandits during the summer. All through college he would continue to work out at the academy during winter breaks. As a true baseball enthusiast, he came right back to Blizzard following college in a coaching role. He has been a mainstay in the program as a coach since 2016. In total he has been a member of Blizzard for a total of sixteen (16) years! I asked coach his favorite activity away from the diamond and his response was classic, "there is life outside the diamond?" He likes spending his free time hanging out with people he cares most about whether going to Minnesota United matches or traveling with his friends or just grilling out and playing board games with his family.

Coach Pitts played for Orono and Blizzard during his high school career. He is currently a pitcher and catcher at Bethel University where he was a MIAC Champion in 2022. He felt that during his playing days he was playing with some of the best in the state and now as a coach he is working with some of the best people. Brady's rookie season as a Blizzard coach was in the fall 2022 and he has been providing his mentoring and services as a coach in all seasons since. Away from the field you can find Brady spending his time doing anything outside whether it be hunting or playing town ball for the Loretto Larks. He also enjoys fantasy football in the fall.



Q & A with Coach Lufkin and Pitts:

Coach Lufkin - Favorite Blizzard Tournament?

Lufkin: My favorite tournament is when we go down to Vero Beach and play at old Dodger Town. Getting to see the seniors go out on a high and then playing on the same fields where the color barrier was broken and being able to feel the history is why it's my favorite tournament.

Coach Pitts - What are you excited about most this summer and what are your goals?

Pitts: Getting on the field and watching the boys get better from one weekend to the next. Goals are to have fun, work hard and get a little better every day (Kaizen).

Coach Lufkin - What is your best piece of advice for players and/or parents in the Blizzard program?

Lufkin: Players - Always continue grinding, work hard, and always strive to learn something new every day. Hard work and self-improvement will always be rewarded.

Parents - The time when kids quit the most often is after the game on the car ride home, especially if it didn't go well or they felt like they let their teammate/coaches/parents down. My advice isn't to sit in the car for an hour being silent but let your kids drive the conversation. As young humans, they still have a hard time processing the emotions that they may be feeling and then expressing them so let them drive the conversation. If they want to talk about the 3rd inning for 50 minutes, let me, or if they just say, "Yeah, that game sucks" both answers are ok. If they answer the 2nd way here are 4 follow-up questions you can ask to keep the conversation moving and not sound like you are hounding them.

- 1) Did you do your best? This question encourages work ethic and integrity in them.
- 2) Were you a good person out there? This question reminds the child of sportsmanship and helps him/her reflect on his/her behavior and whether they showed their best self in trying times.
- 3) What did you learn? This question also causes self-reflection and encourages further dialogue about always getting at least 1% better.
- 4) Did you have fun? This is a great chance for you to remind them that it's just a game and it's meant to be fun.

Coach Pitts - Favorite MLB team, go to snack/concession item at the field and music?

Pitts: Twins. Dill pickle seeds and an Orange Mt. Dew Kickstart. Anything Country and you've got my attention.

Coach Lufkin - Favorite MLB teams, place to eat when traveling and Kwik Trip or Casey's?

Lufkin: Los Angeles Dodgers. McDonalds, gives me the best bang for the buck. Wherever the coffee is hot and the gas is the cheapest.

