

Being a Softball Pitcher's Parent

It's not for the faint of heart!

You were pacing the right field boundary, just beyond the camp chairs and colored umbrellas. As I passed, I asked, "Pitcher's Parent?" The look of anxiety on your face answered before you spoke.

You must know that if you're not one, you can't really understand, suffering the pains of each walk, and the elation of each strikeout. The hours, oh the hours; summer, autumn, winter, spring. You breathe easier during the short holiday break.

You might know that those who haven't walked the path don't really get how much goes into it. But even though you notice their excitement and anticipation after two outs in the bottom of the 7th of a no-hitter, yours runs deeper and stronger than they could imagine. In that moment you feel intensely humbled by the presence of grace that brought you there.

When it's over, you congratulated the outfielder who made the incredible running catch, keeping the dream alive. You high-fived the infielder who went horizontal to stop the hit—you say in her face that she knew what was on the line. You gave a thumbs-up to the catcher. You hugged your daughter.

Then I saw you peek at your schedule to check when this week's lesson and practices would be, and think how you could arrange getting off work to get her there on time.