



2005 HOF Induction Speech

Jack Emmer - Inductee

I have worked at three fantastic institutions and made lifelong friends from Cortland, Washington & Lee and Army. The Army guys are extending themselves in Iraq and Afghanistan and we must not forget how much we owe to them. We enjoy our freedom – they make it happen.

Joanie, my wife, has been there from win #1 thru win #326. Meg grew up at West Point and is Army's #1 fan. She bleeds black and gold. Patrick loved growing up between the gates. What a wonderful opportunity for him.

The three men who had the greatest impact on me were my high school football coach, Bruce Gehrke; my college football coach, Frank Burns and Carl Ullrich who hired me at West Point. His example taught me how to lead and how to treat my men. And I'd like to thank all my assistant coaches through the years. They made me look good.

A current Army player recently sent me this note which I would like to share:

"Dear Coach: An e-mail cannot really express how much you have meant to me as a coach and as a mentor throughout the time we have spent together. You have taught me so much over the years. Now that you have moved on from us it's easy to see why many of your old players always stay in touch with you. You have made such an impact on so many different people's lives...from young to old it seems that you have been able to inspire all that have been lucky enough to have had the opportunity to play for you. It's sometimes hard to truly express the feeling that I and so many others share. You have made me a better person and a better player. To have your support and your wisdom instilled in me has allowed me to accomplish things that I never thought were possible playing here at Army. Now, given my present situation I am so glad that I remained here at the academy...you gave me so many chances to become a great lacrosse player and I truly do owe it all to you. Coach THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart for everything you have done for me and this program. You took the time and the chance on me when many others passed up on me. I will never forget all you have done and I wish you the best in retirement. Tell the family I said hello---I miss you all."

Isn't this why we coach? Isn't it all about the journey? About the experience? About the lessons we learn along the way? It is NOT WIN AT ALL COSTS. It is NOT WINNING IS THE ONLY THING. It is "teaching" the right things and the winning will take care of itself. Teach them to work hard, to persevere and to be unselfish. Life is a team game. We have to care for each other.

Let me finish with this quote from Jeffrey Marx' book—"A Season of Life"

"There is a destiny that makes us brothers. None goes his way alone. All that we send into the lives of others. Comes back into our own."

Thank you very much for this great honor. It is appreciated by the entire Army family.