

## BUILDING CHARACTER /

### A Home Run for the History Books

Though Western Oregon senior Sara Tuchlsky often dreamed of what it would be like to hit her first home run, she never imagined it would end with the opposing team carrying her around the bases. Her home run almost didn't become a reality, except for the sportsmanship of Central Washington players Mallory Holtman and Liz Wallace.

Sara's home run came in the second inning of the second game of a double header between the two teams. At stake that weekend was a bid to the NCAA's Division II playoffs. Central Washington needed to win the second game to keep its postseason dreams alive.

When Sara hit the home run, there was a girl on second and third, both

of whom ran home in a celebratory fashion. Sara, in her excitement, overran first base. When she turned quickly to go back, her right knee gave out. Sara went down in agony.

Sara was clearly injured and unable to walk on her own. Her coaches and teammates were trying to decide what to do—if the Western Oregon trainers, coaches or teammates touched Sara or helped her up, she would be out. If they substituted a pinch-runner for Sara, her home run would be counted as a two-run single.

Central Washington player Mallory Holtman was also a senior. She quickly realized that for Sara's home run to count Central was going to have to help



Mallory ran over to the umpires and to Western's coach. "Excuse me," Mallory interrupted, "would it be OK if we carried her around and she touched each bag?" Though surprised, they said yes. Mallory and teammate Liz Wallace promptly picked Sara up, gingerly letting her left foot down to touch each of the bases to get her home run.

This act of sportsmanship contributed to Central's loss. Still, there were no regrets or angry words from Mallory's teammates. They all agreed—helping the opponent was the right thing to do. ■

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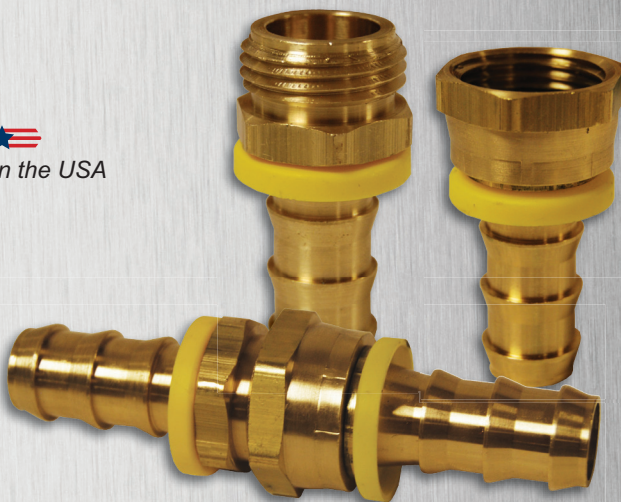
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