



# *Mondays with Mike*

## AULTCARE

## Keeping Ourselves at 17 Inches

John Scolinos, former college baseball coach who has since passed away, once gave a talk to the American Baseball Coaches Association on the topic he called The 17 Inch Home Plate. He challenged the audience with the following set of questions:

Do you know how wide home plate is in little league?  
Someone in the audience responded by saying, "17 inches."

And in high school?  
Again, someone responded with, "17 inches."

And in college?  
Once again, the response was, "17 inches."

And in professional baseball?  
Yes, the response remained the same, "17 inches."

Scolinos then asked, "What do they do with big league pitchers who cannot throw the ball over the 17-inch plate?"

No one answered. "They send him to the minors or release him!" he hollered.

What they don't say is, "That's OK, Jimmy. If you can't hit the 17-inch plate, we'll make it 18 or 19 inches."

Wow, what an impactful message!

Scolinos went on to say that this is the problem in our homes, in our marriages, on our ball teams, in our offices, the way we parent, the way we govern, and in the way we lead others in terms of our discipline. We don't teach accountability or that there is a consequence for failing to meet standards. We just widen the plate.

He finished by sharing his further concern that we were losing our competitive edge because of our plate widening tendencies. Are we requiring less and less from our politicians, our spiritual leaders, our teaching professionals, our coaches, our leaders in general?

His closing statement was, "Coaches, keep your players - no matter how good they are - your own children, your churches, your government, and, most of all, yourself at 17 inches."

This week, let's begin to find the "17-inch plates" and fight like crazy to keep them there!

Have a great week!

