

Coach David said, "Okay, now who wants to play catcher?" My hand shot up and I looked around. Three other hands were up. The game was on!

Coach put the three other kids before me, so I was last. Luke was pitching. The three other kids did pretty good, dropping only a few pitches. If I wanted the job, I was going to have to step it up. I put on the shin guards, chest protector, and the mask. Then Coach came over and said, "here's the catcher's mitt you can use," and handed it to me.

I started to put it on, but then I realized it was for right handed catchers, not lefties.

So I said, "Coach this glove is for righties and I'm a lefty."

He replied, "there are not many left handed catchers, so I don't have a mitt for you to use. You will have to use your normal glove." This made me more determined than ever. I went and got my glove.

I was nervous as I walked up to the plate and got into my catcher's stance. Luke steamed the first pitch in, which bounced right off my glove. It stung my hand. After I threw it back, he threw another fastball, this time low, which I caught. I threw it back, and we did this until Coach told us to stop. By now, my hand was throbbing!

He told us to bring it in, as tryouts were over. Then he announced positions, "pitcher - Luke, second baseman - John, first baseman - Mackie, catcher - Will...."

Yes! I thought, I'm the catcher. On the ride home, I daydreamed about being the catcher.

The next day, we went to Academy to get a catcher's mitt. They had one lefty mitt, but it was stiff and expensive. So we went to Dick's Sporting Goods. They also had one lefty mitt. It was mostly black with brown stitching. It felt smooth on my hand. I was thrilled with it, so I bought it. Then we drove home. I couldn't wait to use my new mitt!

The game was on Saturday. I got there early and warmed up with Luke in the outfield. After about 20 minutes of warm up, we went in the dugout and Coach David gave us a pep talk. Since our opponent was batting first, I started putting on my catcher's gear. I put on my shin guards, then my chest protector, and last my mask. Then I got my mitt and jogged onto the field. The gear was awesome and in it I felt like Iron Man.

In the first inning, I got some real action. With two outs and a man on first and second, Luke fired the pitch in. I saw the runner on first taking off. I caught the ball coming out of my stance and launched the ball to the second baseman who caught it and applied the tag. Out! Inning over! On our turn to bat, I hit a solo home run. I ended up hitting three for four and we won 6 - 5.

I cannot wait to get a shot at playing catcher in Major League Baseball. It only gets better because in the MLB, because catchers can signal to the pitcher what pitch to throw and they get to have conferences at the mound with the coach, pitcher, and other players. So far I have had a blast playing catcher because of the action as well as all the cool gear. I hope I can pursue my dream to be the first great left handed catcher in the Major Leagues one day.

Will S.