

## ***SWEEPING THE SHED***

“From the very start, you learn humility. There are these structures in place, like the fact that we always leave the changing room as clean as it was when we walked in.”

~ Dan Carter, legendary New Zealand All Blacks rugby player

**A**s I walked the beach at sunset last week in Hawaii, my eyes were drawn away from the sun and to what people left at the beach.

One night I picked up six plastic cups and nearly 10 plastic straws on a stretch of beach that was at most 300 yards.

And we wonder why our oceans are filled with plastic and how straws manage to get caught up in marine life. But this isn't just about the environment, it's about how we leave all aspects of the world we live in.

I cleaned up after whoever left trash on the beach, but who cleans up for us on the emotional front? When we fail to treat others with respect, who then pays the price for that? The other person's spouse? Their friends? Their co-workers?

My wife, Karen, who is certainly my far better half, taught me this lesson years ago. We lived in a neighborhood where a couple of homeowners never weeded their yards. It was an eyesore. But rather than just complain about it, Karen literally went over one day when the people were away and plucked the biggest weeds out of their yards. When someone left broken glass in the middle of the street, she went and swept it up.

One of the best college sports information directors, Doug Tammaro at Arizona State University, asks media members to “leave it like you found it” when it comes to their spots in the press box. In other words, don’t rely on the cleaning crew to pick up your discarded papers, cups, etc.

When I first heard him say it, I was embarrassed to realize that I was one of those who left stuff in Major League Baseball press boxes around the country and I vowed after that never to do so again.

The New Zealand All Blacks are regarded as the best rugby team in the world and have been for decades. One of their mantras is: Sweep the Shed. It means that after every match, win or lose, no matter where they’re playing, every player helps clean the locker room so it is left in the same condition in which they found it.

Today, think about your world. Are you leaving it as you found it or better? Or is it worse for you having been there? Do people have to clean up after you – either emotionally or physically – when you’re done?

*Win Your Day!*

Steve Gilbert

If you are not on Steve Gilbert’s Win Your Day! email list, but would like to be added, please email him at [winyourday@gmail.com](mailto:winyourday@gmail.com)