



April 20, 2009

Dear Hockey Community

Below is an update on the condition of Derek Zike, the Midget Minor U16 player who was injured in January. This is a letter from dad.

Wow! what a homecoming ! As we rounded the corner to our house and to our surprise there greeting us a hundred hockey friends, neighbors, and family members and twenty-five hot pizza's, a huge "welcome home Derek" banner, and a huge show of compassion . Thanks to all of you who helped make this happen. Derek managed well on his trek home, we only stopped once for subway and gas. Renee (Derek's respiratory therapist) called and asked if we made it across the border to Indiana. Renee was instrumental in keeping Derek from getting a trach in Intensive care. MTV rode home with us and documented the trip and homecoming. You should have seen the smile on Derek's face when he got home and opened the van door. He has been excited about being home with his friends .We bought him a tv and xbox 360 and he got to go to the movies to see the "Fast and Furious". His new bed should be here tomorrow and a new shower chair should be here in two weeks. His new manual wheelchair should be here in 6-8 wks.

Robin has done some therapy on her arm and she practiced doing some hair cuts on Derek and his brothers this weekend. Robin also took on preparing Easter dinner for fifteen people today, all went well and we actually had our Easter egg hunt. We strategically located plastic Easter eggs with money in them around the front yard so Derek could knock them into a plastic bag. We got stuck in the grass a few times but we managed to locate all the eggs. We took Derek to the Carmel ice rink and watched his brothers play roller hockey. Derek was chomping at

the bit to get out there. Derek was trying to stickhandle with his little brother Sam and give some pointers.

Derek starts therapy Tuesday and Robin is looking into getting him back into school. Taylor has been taking drivers education and him and Sam have been enjoying spring break .Sam and Taylor went to the Fury spring skate last Thursday. Sam was surprised how big there 95's were and he could barely walk after practice, ha! Sam said it was unusual not being able to see the ice since everyone was so tall. Both boys are trying to get ready for Mid-Am tryouts .and a prospect camp in Toronto, and some Fury tournaments for the Fury.

We would like to thank Mike Shanahan of the New Jersey Devils for sending an autographed jersey. And thanks to the Wolfpack from St.Ignatius college prep school in Chicago for raising \$1400.00 and sending a signed t-shirt. Thanks to Rich and Wanda Butera of USA hockey for visiting Derek and taking his folks to dinner. Thanks to Joanne Gerstner of the Detroit News for writing a closing story about Derek last week (article in Detroit News last week Thursday, April 8th).Thanks to all the wonderful people who have generously donated money to Derek's Trust Fund or helped Robin and I with some day-to-day bills while we have been away from home caring for our son. Back to work tomorrow for me.

Derek's coach from the Fury (Marc Kapsalis) is organizing a bike-a-thon (Bike for Zike) on Memorial Day weekend, from Chicago to Indy and then driving back. So anyone interested in a three day adventure from Chicago let me know, I will give contact information as soon as I get it. They will be taking pledges for the bike-a-thon, and half the proceeds will go to Derek's Trust and the other half will go to the AAA Fury hockey program. Thanks to Mark Kapsalis for being such a huge inspiration to my son and for being so supportive during this difficult journey.

Keep praying that Derek gets as great results from RHI (Rehabilitation Hospital of Indy) as he did from the University of Michigan. Pray that he continues to make gains each week like he was.

Thanks to all of you for your prayers, Mike