



June 17, 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.

Hi everyone,

Derek has been busy in therapy (3 days a week, but 3 hour session) and has been doing 70% to 80% of the transfers from the mat to his chair. Then on the other two days a friend-neighbor-occupational therapist has been working with Derek using his fingers to pick pennies and nickels out of putty and 20 minutes on the leg bike and 20 minutes on the arm bike, he is also doing stretching exercises on the new therapy mat and last week he was on the mat on his stomach and holding himself up with his elbows and rolling putty with his hand and then all of a sudden he fell over and his head landed in the putty, which took an hour or so to clean, needless to say that ended his therapy session for the day.

He has been able to go to his friend's graduation parties and last weekend he visited with his host hockey family from Chicago, he got to go to dinner with them and then went to the Arctic Ice Arena to see Taylor play and then visit with his Fury teammates which gave Derek a huge boost. The hard part was the 3 hour drive home and his wheelchair has no headrest (which I'm making one for him right now). Derek is a lot more mobile now with his manual wheelchair, now he is all over banging into the cabinets and getting into the fridge and pantry and going outside and then we have to go look for him, ha!.

Derek's coach (coach Kap) is going to do the Bike-a-thon starting Wednesday in Chicago and will be arriving at our house on Sunday. If anyone is interested in joining Mark for the full or partial ride, or simply pledge Mark for his ride, contact

Mark at 1-630-915-2885. This is a remarkable feat that Mark is going to pull off considering how busy he is, being the director of hockey for the Fury Organization and having a wonderful patient wife and family and the many other caring things he tries to do for so many people. Mark is a very passionate person who always tackles so much and somehow seems to get everything accomplished. Thanks Mark for everything; you have been very inspirational for Derek.

Last Saturday Paul Skjodt the owner of the Indianapolis ICE (Clark Cup Champs of the USHL Hockey League) presented Derek with his #71 ICE jersey and then he was greeted by Coach Blashill and the assistant coaches and Coach Blashill said he expected Derek to be to be at the players meeting and practices and all the home games and he told Derek he has access to the locker room now that he is part of the team. Derek was really excited about being selected by the ICE in the draft and now looks forward to showing off his jersey when friends and family come over. Thank you to Owner Paul Skjodt and Coach Blashill for such a caring and class act from a great hockey organization.

Thanks to Warrior hockey for sending Derek a hockey stick and several cool Warrior t-shirts. Sam is at Penn State for Mid-Am hockey camp and Taylor spent the weekend in Boston for the Hub-Cup hockey tournament.

Derek was excited Monday morning to wake up to an autographed Sidney Crosby outdoor jersey hanging on his door. Congrats to the Pittsburgh Penguins on winning the Stanley Cup.

Thanks to everyone who continues to pray for and help Derek and his family, Mike