



July 14, 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 All,

Very busy lately, Derek has been doing therapy at RHI three days a week and twice at home with a friend/occupational therapist. Two weeks ago he got more feeling on the tops of his hands and he has been going around the block several times a day in his wheelchair. His friends stop by often and visit and even load him up in the van and take him to the movies. And a week ago he said he got a little more feeling on the inside of his hands.

Derek's coach arrived a week ago after his 200 mile bike ride from Chicago. Coach Kap rode his bike through the hottest weather of the year and tried to dodge thunderstorms and crazy drivers. After being chased by a dog on a gravel road and thinking this could get really bad really quick and taking a wrong turn on the last day which took him 14 miles out of his way he arrived in the neighborhood on a Thursday around noon, as he turned the corner to his surprise was Derek waiting for him at the front of the neighborhood. Coach went to shake his hand and Derek said eww your all sweaty, so Coach gave him a big hug !ha !. Coach Kap raised a large amount of money for Derek's therapy and talked to Derek about setting goals and pushing through on the difficult days. Coach Kap called him the next day and said it wasn't so much about raising money as it was about setting a goal and following through with it, that if you set your mind to something you can overcome many obstacles. A big thanks to Mark Kapsalis for all that he has done and for being so supportive. Mark continues to be a big inspiration to Derek.

Last week one of Robin's long time friends/client visited Robin and talked about Derek and all the trials that he and his family have went through lately. We just try to keep moving forward and pray that God helps us each day, we just keep putting one foot in front of the other and Robin's friend (Meg Osborne) said she wanted to do something so she took the "put one foot in front of the other saying" and put her creative twist on it and made some great t-shirts that have Derek's helmet sticker on the front " # 71- strength, hope, and prayer, and on the back it has feet and shoe marks with the "Faith with Feet ". These t-shirts are so cool and Meg is selling them to raise money for Derek's trust fund.

Also MTV visited for the last time trying to wrap things up for the show, to be aired sometime around the 18th of July. Patrick and chuck from MTV were great guys to be around , they made everybody feel comfortable and they have been there when Derek was still in the early days of recovery and still had the neck brace on and wires and tubes connected all over and his daily struggles just to breath and consume enough calories to take him off the feeding tube, and to get a regular bath every three days instead of a sponge bath, and all the medicine he was on and the breathing machine (shaking vest) three times a day that he totally hated, and eight weeks after he arrived he got to go outside to the movies even though it was 10 degrees out. They rode home with us to Indy for his homecoming and spent the Easter holiday with us. They went to his therapy sessions and got to see how quickly things became stressful when we got home with just us to take care of him. Patrick and Chuck were very professional and fun to be around. And we enjoyed having them around during the stressful times and each day when Derek made some progress. Thanks Patrick and Chuck ,what a journey !

Please continue to pray for Derek that he gets more feeling and movement and that his mind stays strong and that he continues to make progress in therapy. Thank all of you for everything !!!!!
Mike