



January 6, 2010

Dear Hockey Community

Below is an update on the condition of Derek Zike, the Midget Minor U16 player who was injured in January 09. This is a letter from dad.

Merry Christmas to all,

Derek is doing well and was really excited for Christmas. All the family are at home and enjoying the holidays. Derek's friends Ben and John came by to visit and spent the evening playing video games, joking around and making plans for Jan. 16th at the Pacer game and his birthday. One evening I walked into Derek's room and he had taken off his jacket on his own. Try taking off a jacket on your own while sitting in a chair, I told him I was very impressed with his accomplishment. It's amazing what we take for granted. Derek has been busy going to his brother's hockey games and to the movies with his friends who take turns coming over to take him in the van. A friend and former coach (Lubos) comes and picks Derek up and takes him to the Indianapolis ICE hockey games.

Derek is doing well in school and has filled out his personal statement for college and has been filling out applications. We had Christmas at our house and we had twenty family and friends over for Christmas Eve. It's was nice to be surrounded by our family and friends, enjoy dinner and watches all the children open their gifts and see the excitement in their eyes.

Derek got a magnificent surprise for Christmas: The Granato family, Wellhausen's, Ferraro's, and Dennis Savard all got together to surprise Derek with a trip to the 2010 winter Olympics in Vancouver for the hockey semi-final games, bronze medal and gold medal games and closing ceremonies. They are working with NBC to do a story on Derek while we are there and they are setting Derek up with accommodations in downtown Vancouver with access to all the Olympic activities. A special thanks to Christi Granato-Wellhausen for coming up to me that

cold February morning at the Carmel ice rink and introduced herself and asked what she could do for our family. She allowed Taylor and Sam to meet their favorite hockey players and she has continued to rally people to help Derek's cause. Thank you Christi for taking the time to help someone you didn't even know 11 months ago. You have turned a tragedy into something more meaningful for my son, and you have been a great inspiration to our son and family. Christy, there have been many tears throughout this tragedy, but you have brought many, many more tears of JOY because of the what you have done for my son, thank you ! Derek opened up his gift to the Olympics last night, and he read out loud the letter that he was going to the Olympics, I have not seen a smile like that in a long time and we captured it on film which I am enclosing with this letter. Thanks to everyone who have helped and continue to help, we could not have got through this without ALL of you! Thanks to the North American Hockey League for raising money for Derek's trust fund during the Minnesota hockey showcase tournament. Thanks to God and all the people who have stepped forward to help us during this journey, Mike
MERRY CHRISTMAS!