

Ryan Ulbrich

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Geisinger/Wyoming Valley Medical Center, for putting their son on the road to recovery. Yarczower was most helpful in finding the answers to all of their questions.

They also quickly put their faith in cardiologist Paul Francis and surgeon Gilbert Christian, both members of Geisinger's renowned department of pediatrics at the main hospital in Danville.

Surgery was performed later that same month. The basic problem was a pinching of the aorta. The lower part of Ryan's body was experiencing little blood flow, thereby causing the elevated blood pressure. That needed to be stabilized, and quickly.

Dr. Christian opted for vascular surgery, meaning he was able to get in through the back. Fortunately he was able to cut the aorta and then reattach it.

While the surgery was successful, six of Ryan's eight-day hospital stay were spent in intensive care. Medical personnel kept a watchful eye on the kidney area, again the main culprit was little blood flow to the lower body. Ryan will be monitored for the remainder of his life for reoccurrence, especially through his teenage years. As his body grows, so too will the aorta; the possibility of redevelopment still exists.

The family knew he was feeling much better when Ryan developed a craving for tacos from Taco Bell. A close friend agreed to make the 11-mile trek from Danville to Bloomsburg just to accommodate him.

He may have missed 10 weeks of school, but his grades didn't suffer. With the help of a home tutor, Ryan recorded straight A's. Just four days after Christmas he celebrated his ninth birthday and less than a week later he was able to go back to school. This fall he'll enter the fourth grade at Westmoreland Elementary; his favorite subject being math.

"Schooling was normal," said Jeff Ulbrich, "except there was no recess and no phys ed."

Basically limited to walking from one destination to another, little activity was allowed at first with a gradual increase each month. His parents tried getting Ryan involved in other areas, signing him up for art and piano lessons during the winter, but the interest was slight.

"I was looking forward to playing sports," said Ryan.

Medical experts pointed to a series of stress tests to be conducted in April that, if positive, might lead to increasing Ryan's involvement. Originally he was not to play baseball this year, the main fear being any impact to the chest area. It was then that Bertinelli — whose son Chris lists Ryan among his best friends — asked Ryan to help coach the Cardinals.

"I saw the look in the parents' eyes," said Angelo Bertinelli. "I tried to put myself in their position with my son. I just wanted to get Ryan involved."

Ryan agree to take Bertinelli up on his offer, but in the meantime the results of the stress test provided some positive results. His blood pressure had stabilized and doctors approved an increase in his activity level.

At practice, Ryan started to do small things and, with playing now a probability, locating and learning all about chest protec-

"I like baseball a lot, but I like soccer better."

Ryan Ulbrich
Trucksville

tors became his parents primary objective. Wearing one was necessary to cover the important areas of the chest and back. Once again it was Angelo — declared a godsend by Barbara Ulbrich — to the rescue. The energetic coach mentioned that the league provided such equipment and saw to it that they followed suit in pursuit of one.

Ryan tried two different types. A small tee ball protector was tested for about two weeks before deciding on the big bulky kind worn outside the uniform. If permitted to play soccer — he's already been registered — Ryan will probably opt for the type worn underneath the jersey.

After securing a chest protector, Ryan was ready to play, after missing just three games. The first game back was quite eventful.

"I just wanted to play," Ryan said. "I didn't care what position. My biggest thrill was probably the first time I got up to bat — my heart was pounding. I just wanted to hit the ball."

According to his coach, Ryan proved to be quite an addition to the Cardinals ballclub. He batted at a .514 clip, the second highest average on the team. He was also a good fielder and credited with having a good attitude.

Although he started every game after missing the beginning of the season, his teammates showed no resentment and considered him a welcome addition. They voted to give him a game ball after the Reds game, dubbing it a pitching gem. Ryan also pitched an inning of relief during the team's 20-7 loss to the Red Sox for the overall championship.

"I wondered if he'd ever get off the bench and here he pitches six innings in the National League championship" said a proud Barbara Ulbrich.

Playing the hot corner provided more fun for Ryan than pitching or playing the outfield because you don't have to wear your arm out. He also likes trying to tag out guys stealing third, but admits that the hardest part of the game for him was running the bases. The activity caused him to grow tired faster than usual.

He's hoping to be in much better shape for the start of soccer season. If allowed to participate, this would be his fourth season at the youth level. Ryan usually plays center forward.

"I like baseball a lot," Ryan said, "but I like soccer better. Soccer is probably my favorite because you get to do your own thing."

Life is now finally getting back to normal for Ryan, his parents and seven year old sister Kaitlyn. Doctors have stressed it's important for him to get back into normal activity. There are, however, limitations. Wearing a chest protector will be required for the foreseeable. He'll never be able to participate in football, basketball or wrestling. Swimming is allowed, but not flops or dives.

Doctors are also trying to wean Ryan from the blood pressure medication. The prognosis is that his body will adjust, but there is

also the possibility that he'll need to take the medication the remainder of his life.

Through it all, the articulate youngster has handled the entire situation with maturity beyond his years. He's been most cooperative with family, friends and physicians alike and knows his limits.

"He handles it very well," said Jeff Ulbrich. "His expectations aren't beyond what he can do.

He's realistic."

"I want to be able to do more," Ryan added. "I just want to have fun and play different sports."

Anyone who truly knows Ryan realizes he loves his sports, but he's also proven to be quite a competitor in the game of life. He has a penchant for pulling off a surprise and has the opportunity to continue to do so.

More than likely he will.



Black Knight diamondmen move on

Lake-Lehman High School senior members of the 1996 team plan on continuing their academic and baseball careers beyond high school.

Shown, from left, front row: John Oliver, will pursue a professional baseball career with the Cincinnati Reds and pursue his college career with Penn State or Bloomsburg in the off season; Harold Roberts, will compete at LCCC and Mike Adamshick has turned down some baseball scholarship money to compete at Penn State Wilkes-Barre. Back row, from left, Ralph Wasiakowski, will compete at Allentown College; Mike Pitcavage, will attend Penn State Wilkes-Barre; and Tom Fostock will compete at Penn State Wilkes-Barre.

Jen Smith on PAC all-star team

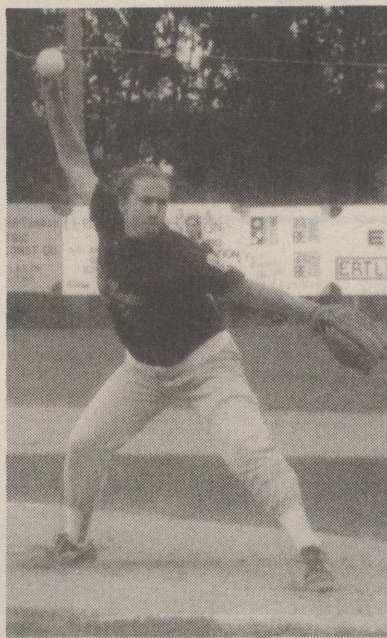
The College Misericordia softball team placed pitcher Jen Smith on the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference all-star team, Tuesday. In addition, head coach Charlotte Slocum was named PAC Coach of the Year.

Smith concluded her spectacular collegiate career by leading the Cougars in every major offensive category including batting (.480), hits, (72), doubles (19), home runs (6), runs (55) and RBI's (55).

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Softball

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Maureen Paley allowed only one hit in four innings on the mound against Mountaintop.

hit a single to center scoring Simonitis. Paley came to bat with runners at second and third and singled to drive in two runs, leaving the BMT up 4-0 entering the bottom of the third.

Nanticoke answered with two runs in the bottom of the third. Both teams went scoreless in the fourth.

BMT added one run in the top of the fifth. The combined pitching of Sarah Stolarick and Paley in relief completed the fifth inning. After loading the bases and no outs, Paley was called to relieve Stolarick. She pitched out of the jam, retiring the side leaving the bases loaded.

Nanticoke added one run each in the sixth and seventh to finish the game.

Back Mountain now has a bye until Sat., July 13, when they will play at home. They'll play either at 6 p.m. or 8 p.m., depending on whether the Junior girls win during the week.

Harveys Lake all-stars

Harveys Lake Major League all-stars

Jack Cobleigh
David Harris
Adam Heacock
Matthew Ide
Douglas Johnstone
Dwayne Kalinay
Dustin Kapson
Phil Kasper
Gaise Lacey
Colin Martinson
Louis Spaciano
Jeff Taylor
Galen Waltman
William Weber
Manager: Dave Kapson
Coaches: Galen Waltman and Jeff Taylor

Harveys Lake Little League girls all-stars

Susan Barber
Jessica Cook
Leigh Dodson
Ashley Heacock
Stephanie Jones
Danielle Julian
Laura Matzel
Christine Parsons
Katy Pitcher
Melissa Sutliff
Megan Thorne
Lindsey Walkowiak
Desirae Waltman
Gena Weaver
Manager: Donna Yachim
Coaches: Trisha Waltman and Gary Thorne

Field hockey camp at Lehman July 22-26

The Lake-Lehman Field Hockey Parents Association will sponsor a field hockey clinic for students entering 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. The clinic will run from July 22-26, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Lake-Lehman field hockey fields. The cost of the clinic is \$40/student and includes instruction, hockey stick, hockey ball, shin guards and mouth guards.

If interested, please call the Lake-Lehman High School at 675-7458 for more information. Registration must be completed by July 11.

IN THE SERVICE

McDonald completes Navy basic training

Navy Seaman Recruit Daniel L. McDonald, son of Lawrence J. and Christine M. McDonald, Shavertown, recently completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, IL.

During the eight-week program, McDonald completed a variety of training which included classroom study, practical hands-on instruction, physical fitness, naval customs, first aid, fire fighting, water safety and survival and a variety of safety skills required for working around ships and aircraft. He is on duty aboard the USS Constellation.

He is a 1992 graduate of Dallas High School.



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