

My name is Ryan Gerhartz and I had the privilege to know Butch for 6 years and to have him as a coach for 4 of them. I felt very privileged to have been able to say goodbye to him in person. If Butch didn't push me to be the best that I could be there is no way I could have received the honors that I did this past season for soccer. Those honors would include the teams MVP, 1st team all conference, and 1st team all area. I still am finding new ways even after his death how he had impacted my life for the better.

In the course of those 30 days between when we found out and Butch's passing, I was a witness every single day to what a special person he was to everyone on our team. He was my motivation to never give up because about a month into our season he was diagnosed with leukemia which would eventually lead to his death. He was being treated in Milwaukee where the state tournament for soccer was being held. We as a team said that we would do everything possible to make it there to see him. I worked as hard as I could everyday to make sure that myself and the team was at the best of their ability every time we walked onto the field. In the conclusion of my last game all I could think of is how we did not make it to state for Butch like the team had said. But I realized that our team was one big family and all of us had the same goal every I also know that we exceeded by far everyone else's expectations for this last season. This all started with Butch pushing up hard at the beginning of the season.

I will not just stop playing soccer with the conclusion of my high school career because I will continue to play in college. I will be attending the University of Concordia Wisconsin. The tuition and expenses will be 32,000 dollars to attend per year and my major is at least a four year course and graduate school is another 2 years. There I will attempt to walk on in their soccer program. I will be attending this university for the degree of athletic training and possibly going to graduate school for physical therapy. These are both really challenging degrees to pursue especially with an athletic in the mix as well.

My life is formed around soccer but I strive to help the community also. I have put in over 22 hours at the high schools wrestling tournaments and another 12 for the athletic training assistant on the Boys basketball team. Also I have done the Zoo Boo. I believe that with all the work that I do on the soccer field, in our fine community, and in the classroom shows my desire to push myself in both an athletic and educational format.

Finally I will have the drive to excel in life because Butch taught me that "Failure is just a stepping stone between trying and succeeding" and I will live my life just that way. Butch was not just another coach to me he was much more; he was my friend and my inspiration. This is because he has done so much and inspired so many people by just coaching something that he really enjoyed. Every time someone asks me about the memorial band or the sticker in my car, I am proud to say that Butch was my coach, friend, and inspiration.