

# Injury fails to stand in way of Geneva athlete's goals

## Hardy headed to Ithaca College

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

GENEVA — Although he has tremendous athletic ability, Todd Hardy has never allowed himself to succeed on skill alone.

"I've been a fighter all my life," Hardy asserted.

Hardy's talent and tenacity has been a welcome combination for the last few years at Geneva DeSales High School, 90 Pulteney St. He was a .400-plus hitter on baseball teams which captured three consecutive Section 5 championships from 1990-92, and was also a 20-points-per-game scorer on the Saints' basketball squad which tied for the Finger Lakes West division title in 1991-92.

Hardy, however, has not been able to contribute to these teams in recent months. Instead, he's been immersed in the biggest struggle of his life, and it's been strictly of the individual sort: a battle to salvage his athletic career and, in doing so, fulfill his dreams of attending college.

And, so far, Hardy is once again emerging victorious.

It all began last January during basketball practice, when Hardy planted a foot as he cut to the basket but then collapsed. He had suffered extensive ligament damage in his right knee, bringing a painfully abrupt finish to his high-school sports career.

Following surgery on Feb. 5, Hardy's big concern was whether he had become "damaged goods" to college baseball and basketball recruiters.

"I wondered if coaches were going to stop calling," the 18-year-old Hardy remarked. "For me to get into college I needed some sort of scholarship, and I wondered if I was going to get my complete ability back and be the same

person I was before the injury."

Rather than sit around and worry, Hardy invoked his fighting spirit by launching an intense rehabilitation program. He says that the process is now six months ahead of schedule, and the knee has regained most of its flexibility.

And, despite the fact that Hardy did not play a single inning of baseball his senior season, he received an offer he couldn't refuse just one month before graduation.

That's when the 6-foot-2-inch, 160-pound Geneva resident committed to play baseball for Ithaca College, a perennial national power at the NCAA Division III, which has enjoyed 55 consecutive winning seasons.

After playing shortstop in high school, Hardy will be converted to the outfield under Coach George Valesente. He plans to be ready for the Bombers' fall season, although he will have to wear a knee brace during the autumn months.

"No doubt the coach is taking a risk, because my knee could rip out again," Hardy admitted. "But he was willing to give me the opportunity. If all goes well, I'll be ready to play in September even though the normal average time to be out with this kind of injury is a year."

Not only is Hardy joining a quality baseball program, but he's also getting a tremendous deal on his education: the annual price tag to attend Ithaca is \$21,500, but Hardy will be responsible for less than 10 percent of those expenses.

Hardy, who ranked 13th in his graduating class of 36, plans on pursuing a criminal justice career in college.

Simply receiving the offer to attend Ithaca has been as memorable for Hardy as any of his championships at DeSales.

"I love sports; sports is my life," he acknowledged. "It was taken away, but I kept a positive attitude and fought this (injury) all the way."



Todd Hardy, who will attend Ithaca College in the fall, stands by the numerous baseball and basketball awards he earned at DeSales High School.

## Softball game raises funds, pays tribute to Aquinas grad

SCOTTSVILLE

— Every reunion game is special because of the trip down Memory Lane that participants get to take.

But rarely do the memories focus on a single person as much as they did during a softball contest played on Saturday, July 10, at Ronnie's Ballpark, 9076 Union St.

That's when former youth-baseball teammates of Tommy Camillaci, along with family members, gathered for the second annual game in his honor.

Tommy, a Sacred Heart Cathedral parishioner and Aquinas Institute graduate, died of cancer in 1990 at the age of 21. The first game in his memory was held in 1992, raising more than \$1,700 for Cancer Action Inc.



Based on that event's success, another contest was held this year with the American Red Cross being the beneficiary. According to Tommy's mother, Judith, approximately \$2,000 had been collected through July 16.

"The kids are talking about doing it again next year, and it just fills my heart," Judith Camillaci remarked.

Two events connected with the game will be held in the near future. A euchre tournament to benefit the Red Cross will take place on Aug. 8 at 12:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus hall, 431 Bonesteel St., Greece. Also, a blood drive is set for Aug. 9 from 3-7 p.m. at Sacred Heart School, 311 Flower City Park, Rochester.

For details on either event, call Judith Camillaci at 716/458-7192 or Steve Donofrio at 663-3131.

— Mike Latona

## Openings available in three charity golf tournaments

Three benefit golf tournaments in the diocese are scheduled to take place in the upcoming weeks.

Openings are still available for the Respite Cares! Inc. Tournament, to be held on Monday, July 26, at Blue Heron Hills Country Club in Gananda. To register as a player or sponsor, call Janet Coyle at 716/262-2190.

The Monroe County Bar Association is sponsoring a tournament on Friday, Aug. 6, at Chili Country Club in Chili,

to raise funds for the Greater Rochester/Finger Lakes Muscular Dystrophy Association. For details, contact Mark Goodemote at 716/424-6560.

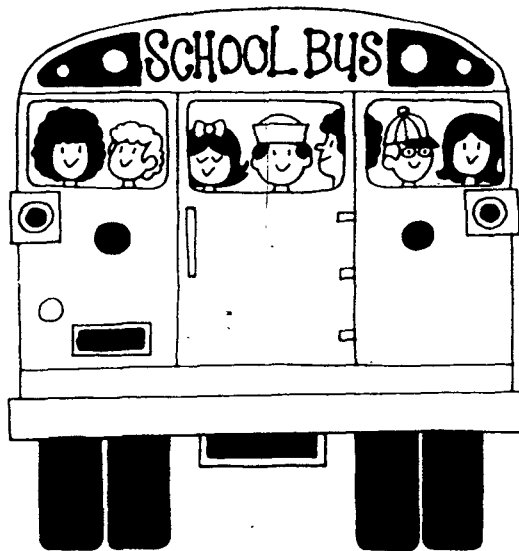
The Bill Gray's Restaurant Charity Golf Tournament, to benefit the Greater Rochester Amateur Athletic Federation and Monroe County Special Olympics, will take place on Monday, Aug. 23, at Ontario Golf Club in Ontario. To play or serve as sponsor, call Colleen or Dan Gray at 315/524-2950.

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