

As I stood at the three point line, the ball seemed to be in slow motion. Screams from the crowd came as the ball dropped through the net. Not only did this shot go in but it dropped through the net with such force that it made a sound that was heard throughout the gym. The gym was packed and the fans were on their feet, I had just hit my first three pointer of my varsity basketball career. As our team set up the press, sweat dripped from my face. I was close enough to kiss my opponent, there was no way he was going to get the ball. He shoved me backward and he planted his foot on mine, he then pushed off and ran for the inbounder. I fell back a few feet and sprinted towards my man. As the inbounder released the ball with a firm push I stuck my hand out in hopes for a steal, SNAP! As the ball was deflected towards the right my man ran and picked it up. I quickly looked down at my finger and with fear and I pain walked over to my bench. My pinkie-finger on my right hand was at a ninety degree angle, as sweat dripped down my face I could feel myself getting hot. My stomach seemed to drop and I was feeling as if I was on a roller coaster. The game had been stopped and I was brought into the coach's room. My assistant coach led me into the room and sat me down on a wooden chair. I began to feel very cold, and my finger began to have a shooting pain. This pain was not present before and was not making itself known that there was something wrong with.

My parents entered the room, my mother carrying a face that I never had seen before. My father with a calm collective look to him. The assistant then began to explain that there was to deal with this, either go to the hospital and miss the game or deal with it right in the room. My mother stared over at my coach when he relayed this message to me and my father seem to agree with my coach. I looked at my coach with eyes

of trust and horror, and then laid my hand in his. He then took his hand and placed it over my pinkie. Which by now was swelling and extremely painful. Soon he got a firm grip and with one quick tug my finger was now vertically correct. My coach then looked at me with bulging eyes and asked how it felt. Being the starting point guard on my schools varsity team there was no way I was going to say that I needed to leave the game. With a convincing nod and a energetic response I was on my way back onto the court. I reentered the game and the crowd began to applaud, I was so nervous. It was like the first time I had ever played basketball in front of a crowd. The game resumed and I ran down the court, my finger throbbled and I could not help but think of it. My teammates snapped the ball quickly over to me and I caught it. I felt like dropping the ball and running to the sideline but instead I got rid of the ball as soon as I could. I then proceeded to run over to the sideline and with a look of pain in my eyes I let my coach know that I needed to come out of the game. As I sat there and watched my team lose the game I could not decide if I was hurting more from my finger or from the fact that I was not in there helping my team. As the coach was screaming and yelling in the locker room I could not help but think about my finger, the pain was no shooting down my arm and I was praying that I did not break it. I showered and proceeded to get dressed. Each time I buttoned a button on my shirt I would get a shooting pain, I began to believe that I should go to the hospital but I did not want to let anyone know. I walked up the steps and there were my parents. My Mom gave me a look of compassion and she seemed very concerned. Sternly, my father said that I should go to the hospital but with a convincing tone of voice I talked them out of it. I went home that night and stayed up thinking about the possibility that I might have a broken finger. As I dazed off to sleep I repeated to myself that

things were going to be O.K.

I woke up in some pain but I thought nothing of it because injuries are always worse the day after. It was Saturday so I had a couple of days to rest my finger, by mid-afternoon my finger was throbbing like it had just been hit by a hammer. At this time I decided that I needed to go to the emergency room. My father and I hopped into the 95 Mazda 626 and off to the hospital we went. On the ride there several things were going through my mind, although I was very optimistic. At most I thought I would miss a month or so, and that was absolute tops. I got to the hospital and filled out paperwork. Actually I filled out endless pages of paperwork that was quite painful to my finger. About twenty minutes later a short, a thin blond hair nurse came out and with a soft voice said "George." I then got up and with a nervous step in my walk proceeded to the examination room. I took a seat and the nurse asked to see my finger. She gently touched my finger. With a stare that made me nervous, replied "this does not look good." With a threatened voice I said "What do you mean," she then pointed out to me that the top part of my finger was twisted to the left. My knuckle was twice the size of any other one on my finger and it had a blue color to it, the kind of blue you see when you have been bruised very badly. I had noticed this before but I had failed to make a big deal of it, then the doctor walked in. He was a tall man with a thick mustache and thick brown hair. He opened his mouth and the words "how did you do this?" came out. I replied in a basketball game and he then began to take a look at my finger. He had a look of concern on his face and before I knew it I was going to have my finger x-rayed. I had this done which took all of ten minutes and then he returned with the results. I had been sitting there in anticipation of the results. I was on the edge of my seat waiting for his return. Then the door opened slowly and the doctor walked in. He took a seat next to me and with a calm voice said "It looks as if you

are going to need surgery." I almost fell out of my seat this would mean that I would miss just about my whole season. Me, the starting point guard out for the season. I looked at my father with hope and desperation hoping that he would have some advice to give me. What could he say the doctor had given his diagnosis and he was right. The doctor then proceeded with a stern convincing voice to say that I had shattered the bones in my right pinkie finger. I would have to have surgery to pin these bones back together, the process is going to take about two and half hours. I picked myself up off the floor and my dad and I got back into the Mazda and drove home. I was extremely quiet on the way home and felt as if all my hard work and preparation for this basketball season was for nothing. Although my father tried to keep my hopes up, it was not having any effect on me. The trip to hospital was one that I regretted and in two weeks from then, would be playing for in the operating room.

The weekend seemed to drag on forever and finally Monday rolled around. Throughout school I had shooting pains in my finger and all I could think about was what exactly my coach was going to say when I gave him the news that I was going to be out for six weeks. The day ended and I packed my school bag as usual, I then headed for basketball practice. I got there and everyone came up to me asking how my finger was, I responded with an upset disappointing tone, that I would be out for six weeks. The team was as surprised as I was when I heard the noise. Although the team felt bad, they were not the ones that were going to have the doctor cut open their finger, and pin tiny bones back together. I had stay on the sidelines and watch the team day in and day out play the game that I loved so much. The worst of it was that I had to watch someone fill my spot, a spot that I had worked long hours for in the summer. Someone was just going to step in and take the spot that I had

reserved for myself. That was worse than the pain of my finger or the surgery I had to go through.

The day had come, and I woke up extremely early that morning. I was not allowed to eat anything and as I was driving in with my father my stomach was growling. We arrived at the hospital and I checked in at the front desk, a rather large woman with brown hair took the information that they needed. They brought me into a room and had me put on a johnny. You know, one of those pieces of clothing that shows your body to the world. I came out of the bathroom and they had brought in a television for my father and I too watched as we waited. We put in "Whit men can't jump" and just as Woody was going to take the court for the first time the overweight nurse walked in. They brought me to the prep room and there I lay just waiting to go under. As they started my IV I began to get nervous. I thought of nothing except for the surgery to come. The doctor then added vallium to my IV and before I could count to five I was out.

I woke up and felt very sluggish, I lay there for a while and then proceeded to get dressed. The operation was over and I was on my way to recovery. Two weeks passed and I was still attending every practice and every game, this was very hard for me because I was unable to play. The season went on and I watched from the sidelines, and on the final game of the season, I got my cast off. However, I was unable to play because I still needed to go to therapy for my finger. My junior basketball season was lost, and I could never get it back. The effects came a year later, May of senior year.

