



THAT DARN TIC

A NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR KIDS WITH TS



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Special Sports Edition for Special Athletes



Andie Rose Crug of Pacifica, California, loves the trapeze and other kinds of acrobatics.



My name is *Andie Rose Crug*. I am 11-years-old. Having TS is not a horrible thing at all. I should know ... I have it. I was diagnosed with TS when I was 8-years-old.

I want to tell you how my sport has helped my TS and helped me to feel great about myself. I found a beautiful sport that I have fallen in love with. It's called trapeze. Trapeze is an aerial art – meaning it's done in the air. I work on trapeze bars and hoops that are suspended from the ceiling. When I first saw someone perform aerial arts, I was amazed. I dreamed of flying on a trapeze but was afraid because I thought I'd tic myself right off the bar. My mom and dad encouraged me to try it. I started taking static trapeze lessons and here I am, five years later, still training and performing. I train in static trapeze, hoop contortion, Mongolian contortion and Chinese acrobatics. It's a dream come true for me. Doing my sport allows me to release all my built-up energy. It allows me to feel free and to physically and mentally challenge myself.

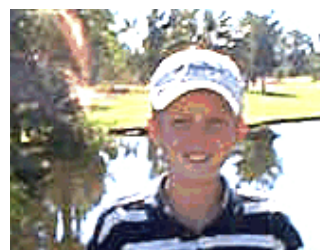
It feels great to be good at something and I know I'm good on the trapeze. I become transformed when I'm in the air and on the apparatus – my spirit loves to fly.

My name is *Patrick Ingham*. I knew that I had TS when I was five years old (I am now 13). I became interested in golf at about the same time. I think golf is one of the most difficult sports to play, at least to play well.

At five years old, my Dad got me started with some plastic clubs and a whiffle ball that I used to whack around. As I got older, I realized that I wanted to get better at golf, so my Dad continued to help me, and then I started to take lessons.

My golf teacher is a PGA member, Mike, and luckily, he is very patient with me, and understands my tics. Each time I go to have lessons, I improve a little more. When I was eleven, my Dad got me a really good set of clubs; now I have metal, woods, irons, and a ping putter too. I started to play at a lot of different nine-hole golf courses that were shorter in length until I could hit the ball far enough to play on the harder 18-hole courses in Phoenix.

I have worked pretty hard at my golf, and in the last two years played in tournaments that are run by the BGC (Boys Golf Club), which is part of the JGAA (Junior Golf Association of Arizona). I have been fortunate enough to win several trophies in my age group and I felt really lucky on those days!



Patrick Ingham playing golf in Scottsdale, Arizona



Adam Meltzer is from Holliston, Massachusetts, and likes many sports especially karate.

My name is Adam Meltzer and I am 8-years-old. I love to read, run, play soccer and do karate.

I started taking karate classes one year ago. I got my yellow belt in March, my orange belt in May and my purple belt in September. My friend, Hunter, takes karate with me. I go two times a week. In karate, I play games like karate dodge ball and I do exercises. I am very good at pushups. I like karate because it helps me learn to pay attention and it helps keep me safe. It is also a lot of fun!

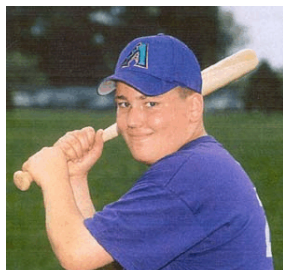
My other favorite sport is soccer. I am good at soccer because I am a fast runner. This year I will be on the same team as my older brother. We have a really good team. Sometimes I have tics when I play soccer, but I can still play. I like soccer because I like kicking the ball and playing with other kids. It is fun!



My name is Jay Geyer, I am thirteen years old and I go to Perkiomen Valley Middle School. I play football, baseball, and basketball for my school's teams. I also play sports in my spare time for fun.

Playing sports means a great deal to me; I get a lot out of it. When I play on sports teams, I always meet new friends. It also helps me do better in school and keeps me busy. Sports also helps me to set goals that I want to achieve, and when I succeed, it makes me feel really good.

When I play, I work hard, and it feels good to know I'm doing something that is worthwhile.



Jay Geyer
Trappe, Pennsylvania

My name is *Kristen Nazzaro* and I'm a 15-year-old living with Tourette Syndrome. TS has not stopped me from doing anything, including my favorite thing - playing sports. I play basketball (five years), softball (nine years), cheerleading (eight years-and YES CHEERLEADING IS A SPORT!!), karate (one year), and I used to play soccer (two years).

I am on an All-Star Cheerleading squad which competes all the time. Last year we went to the nationals in Myrtle Beach, and came in Third Place! When I'm out on the floor competing, the excitement, nerves and the amount of focus necessary makes my tics disappear. For those three minutes, I look and act just like anyone else on the team. I love sports, and nothing will ever keep me from playing - especially not my TS or OCD.



Kristen Nazzaro, from Central Valley, New York, is an all-around athlete but really loves cheerleading.



My name is *Zack Eyler* and I'm 12-years-old. At school, people always make fun of me for having Tourette Syndrome and a few other disorders I have such as ADHD and OCD. So I like to play football because it provides an outlet for all of the anger and stress that builds up during a school day. Also, it helps me focus myself so I have less tics along with providing an outlet for stress. It's a whole lot of fun, and when I do well, I get lots of satisfaction out of it.

Football keeps me in shape with all the push-ups, sit-ups and running you have to do. It provides discipline and most of all, I meet a few friends there. But, I'm lucky because I don't have such a bad case of TS like a few other unfortunate people. As you probably know, TS also provides a small increase of reflex and speed, which really helps when you're trying to get past that big offensive lineman in front of you.



Zack Eyler, Lawrenceville, Georgia



Ike's favorite sports are wrestling and football

My name is Isaac "Ike" Wright. I am ten-years-old and I live in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I am in the Fifth Grade and have been diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Dysgraphia. I am also a wrestler and a football player.

I began wrestling when I was six-years-old and have received many trophies and medals, but I am proudest of the trophy I won when I was runner-up in the State of Oklahoma in the Spring of 2002. I am also proud of the trophy I won for placing fifth in Nationals that same year.

I have also played football for the last two years. I played left guard last year and right guard this year.

I am also a good student, earning mostly As and Bs. I work hard to achieve success in all areas of my life. I feel keeping a positive attitude and a sense of humor is the best way to deal with Tourette, especially on the bad days!!! I am determined not to let TS keep me from doing anything I want.



BASEBALL FANS
Joriel Sharp (left) and Steven Leone
at Disabilities Day at Yankee Stadium

My Name is Steven Leone and I have Tourette Syndrome. Tourette has its ups and downs. One of the ups is that I got to go to a free Yankee game on Disabilities Day with my friends and the down is that if you don't beat it, it'll beat you. I currently play soccer and I am on a competitive swim team. Because of the constant movement during swimming and soccer, there is no room or time for me to tic. I had a great time at the Yankee game with my friend, Joriel. I would like to thank the TSA for letting us go to the game and for sponsoring lots of other things to help TS awareness.

My name is *Branden Martinez* and I am 9-years old. I live in Miami, Florida. I like to run and I am a member of Alpha Omega Elite Track Team. My experience running track and field and cross country with this track team has been wonderful because they have helped me improve my talent. I have been able to accomplish a USA TRACK & FIELD 2003 NATIONAL YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP competition in Buffalo, New York on July 2-6, 2003. I finished 17th in the 800m and 23rd in the 400m in the nation.

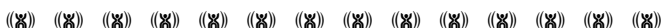
I am now training for a regional state cross country competition in Clermont, Florida where the top 20 move on to Bernalillo, New Mexico, on December 13, 2003, to compete nationally.

I am about to run my last cross country race for my school and my best mile time is 6:09.

Running helps me release stress and energy but preparing for a race I must help myself relax from nervousness. Also I must focus on breathing correctly so I do not cramp up.



Branden Martinez
Miami, Florida



Joseph McNaney of
Rocky Hill, Connecticut

I'm *Joseph McNaney*. I'm eight years old, I have TS and I'm a good athlete!!!! I play a lot of sports, but my favorite is always baseball. When I first tried to play baseball, the first hit I made was not that far, but still pretty good.

Then, two years later, when I was four years old, my dad pitched one right to me and I whaled on it. I played Little League T-ball for two years, and last year I played on a farm league, and once I hit one way out to right field. This year I'll be in the minor leagues!

I also like basketball, hockey, soccer, volleyball, bike riding, and EATING! I just figured out on a website from TSA that my speed and sports skills might be part of my TS! If you have TS, then sometimes you're a little bit faster than other people. And that's it from *Joe McNaney*!!!



Shawna Young of Princeton, Minnesota, was on the Princeton Middle School Diving Team.



My name is Shawna Young and I'm 12-years old, in 7th Grade, homeschooled, and I have TS. I was on the Princeton Middle School Diving Team this year and it was lots of fun. Nobody noticed my tics, and I was glad because I'm not comfortable telling people about my tics.

Whenever I'm concentrating on something, I don't tic. I concentrated hard on learning my dives (which made my dives better). I was sometimes afraid of doing a new dive or afraid of hitting the diving board. But I never gave up and I prayed for God to help me get through each dive and I always did. I had a goal for the year and my goal was to beat a score of 40 at my diving meets. I finally beat 40 and I kept on getting higher and higher on my diving scores until my final meet when I reached a score of 94.55!

I don't let my tics rule me. I go and do the things I like to do, whether it be sports or just playing with my friends. I do my best and have fun.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Micah Smith
Beverly Hills, California

This year I played on my school's football team. We lost most of the time but it was fun because I got to play Guard. I was on the starting line up for the first time.

We practiced four days a week and had games twice a week. The season has just ended and now I will play basketball. It's fun being part of a team because then you get to know the guys really well. I recommend doing sports as a way of releasing energy.



Austin Glissen, nine-years old
Jamestown, North Carolina

I love playing baseball. I have been playing since I was four-years-old.

Last year I played Little League Baseball with eleven and twelve-year olds. It was neat playing for a team with a sponsor because we got water bottles, bat bags, jerseys, wrist bands and hats for free. They paid for all of our tournaments on the weekends. I felt like I was playing for the pros! It was hard work but I love playing. I play second base and sometimes center field.



Austin enjoys baseball, fishing and many other activities.



This summer a dream of mine came true. My team went to the Regionals for the Little League World Series. My favorite moment was when we were qualifying to be in the Regionals. I was the fourth batter and it was my turn to bat. Bases were loaded and we were tied 7-7. It was the eighth inning. We had been tied with this team and just could not seem to get that last run in.

I got up to bat. My tics were terrible because I was so nervous. I just held my hand up for time and stepped out of the batters' box. I then remembered the relaxation tape my mom gave me and said a little prayer to God. I then stepped back in the batters' box and let the first ball go by. Then I cleared my throat, did my facial tic and the pitcher threw the ball. I smacked it into the air and there it went. I hesitated but remembered I needed to run. I could not see where the ball went. I just knew it was time to run. I heard everyone screaming to slide as I rounded third base. When I went sliding into home plate, I could feel the happiest moment of my life. The first Grand Slam of my life!

That is when I realized that I could do anything, be anybody I wanted to be. No matter what disability I had, I am just like everyone else. God just gave me extra strength and that was to live with Tourette Syndrome. I enjoy playing baseball and I practice year round so that I will be a good ball player. My mom and my dad are my best fans.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Zak Hollis
Albuquerque, New Mexico



Have any of you ever flown in a hot air balloon or ever seen one? Well I have. I live in Albuquerque, New Mexico, a place where balloons are well known.

Every year my family goes to the Balloon Fiesta at the Fair Grounds. This year, the New Mexico Chapter sponsored a balloon. There were 750 balloons that flew in the fiesta. Rick, our pilot, gave me a balloon ride. We flew up and over the Rio Grande. It might be scary for some people, but not for me. My mom did not want me to go up at first. She thought I was going to "tic myself out of the basket". Then she saw how excited I was and how much I wanted to go up.

Even though it was 7:00 in the morning it was not cold, because of the burner. The burner is the fire that shoots the hot air up to make the balloon rise. While I was up in the air I took many pictures of the other balloons. I really enjoyed my balloon ride. Next year I hope to fly again.

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My name is Patrick Flynn and I am 8-years-old. I was diagnosed with TS in July but that doesn't stop me from playing soccer, baseball and ice hockey. My favorite sport is hockey. I have been skating since I was five and now I play in a league called Blue Stars.

My coaches like that I work hard and often pick me to lead the drills in practice. I know that my TS won't stop me from playing sports or from doing anything else that I like to do.



Patrick Flynn

Bloomfield, New Jersey



Brian Yuran

Caldwell, New Jersey

My name is Brian. I am eight-years-old. Baseball is my favorite sport. I have Tourette Syndrome. My tics don't bother me when I play baseball. I also play soccer and basketball. I am a very good athlete.

Sometimes my tics bother me, but my family always helps me. I do great in school. I have a lot of friends.

There will be a Children's Program at the TSA National Conference in Alexandria, Virginia
April 23, 24, & 25, 2004

Also, there will be an *Artists' Table* where you will be able to display and sell your wares to fellow TSA members. This includes: musical recordings, paintings, sculptures, photographs, poems, books, and arts and crafts.

If you are one of these talented artists, please contact:

Arleen & Chuck Bentley at:
arleenbentley@comcast.net

The next issue of "That Darn Tic" will feature young artists with TS who like to draw, write stories and poems, etc. Please send to:

That Darn Tic
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