



Uncommon knee condition nearly sidelines All American's lacrosse future, NCAA national championship

The last thing a highly recruited high school athlete wants to hear is they are going to miss playing their senior year and potentially lose a Division 1 opportunity because of an injury. That is what Lyons Township (LT) High School football and All American lacrosse standout, Kyle Barrett faced when his left knee began hurting the summer before his senior year of football and throughout an East Coast lacrosse camp for collegiate prospects.

According to Barrett, he suffered a number of athletic injuries starting with a broken hand in eighth grade that he broke two more times, as well as incurred hamstring and neck injuries. However, none were potentially as devastating to his athletic goals as the reoccurring knee

pain he developed that fateful summer. "I'd been treated by Dr. Chudik for my past injuries so when the knee pain started, I had to have him check it out," Barrett said.

Neither multiple X-rays nor a magnetic resonance image (MRI) of Barrett's knee provided Dr. Steven Chudik with a definitive diagnostic answer. "They didn't show anything," Barrett explained. "And, because the pain only occurred when I made certain movements, the problem wasn't easily pinpointed," he added.

With no detectable cause for the pain, Dr. Chudik prescribed a conservative physical therapy treatment so Barrett could at least participate in a recruiting camp that summer. "So, there I was at lacrosse camp talking to college coaches about the prospect of playing for their school and all the while I was doing physical therapy for my knee. They had no idea and I certainly didn't want to jeopardize any chance I had at a scholarship," Barrett explained.

However, Barrett's hopes for playing football senior year vanished when his knee pain returned during the first game of the season. "I knew then that exploratory surgery with Dr. Chudik was what I needed to determine what was causing the pain," Barrett said. "I just didn't want to miss my senior year of football, but had no choice if I wanted to play lacrosse in the spring," he lamented.

"Through the years, I have seen—especially in young athletes—this uncommon occurrence when diagnostics fail to demonstrate the reason for a patient's pain," explained Dr. Steven Chudik, board certified orthopaedic surgeon, sports medicine physician and *US News & World Report* Top Doctor for orthopaedics with the Steven Chudik Shoulder and Knee Sports Injury Clinic, Westmont, Ill. "In Kyle Barrett's case, arthroscopic exploratory surgery was the only solution. The hardest part was not being able to tell Kyle ahead of time whether he would miss only football or lacrosse, too," Dr. Chudik explained.

For Barrett, the choice was simple. "I needed to fix whatever was causing my pain since I'd been recruited by Syracuse University for lacrosse at that point. So, I sat out the remainder of the football season and had the surgery," Barrett said. "Fortunately for me, Dr. Chudik treated my knee with a special arthroscopic surgical procedure. It allowed me to recover quickly so I didn't miss out on an undefeated lacrosse season and a spot on the Division I Syracuse lacrosse team," the LT high school All American reminisced.

During his first year as a lacrosse Orangeman, Barrett helped his team win a national championship. Today, the Industrial Services Associate with NAI Hiffman stays active with pick-up lacrosse games, running, biking and his newest sport—rock climbing.