

My name is Kaitlyn Jurss and I am a Junior at Kettle Moraine High School. After working hard all summer with a trainer and attending camps (including Adversity camps) I was able to make the Varsity team for the 2nd year as one of the starting setters. I was so excited and ready to work hard. But then it all changed. Two days before our first scrimmage we were running a drill at practice and as the ball entered into the drill the passer wasn't able to get the ball on the net so I had to run to the middle back. While running I had remember yelling "Mine! Mine! Mine!" focusing on the ball with my arms fully extended when all of a sudden another player collided with me. I instantly felt a sharp pain in my shoulder and heard a crack noise. My whole body pushed forward and it felt like the wind was knocked out of me. My coach had asked me if I was alright and I just kept nodding thinking I could just push through it but as I tried to set the next ball I could barely lift my arm. I sat out until warmups of our first scrimmage where I tried to bring my arm above my head but felt a sharp pinch in the front and back of my right shoulder. After trying to throw the ball at the ground I soon discovered that I physically couldn't do it and the pain was unbearable. My coach realized I couldn't play and afterwards I called my mom crying saying that there was definitely something seriously wrong. I was so upset and scared. That was the beginning of 7 months of physical therapy and ultimately shoulder (labrum) surgery to reattach my muscles. I missed my entire Junior year Varsity season as a player on the court but I continued to go to every Varsity practice, work out with the trainer as much as possible, and attend every game to cheer on my teammates. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done. I wanted to be on the court so badly. My confidence was low and there were times where I felt like giving up but my parents told me that I'm not a quitter and they were right. So I took advantage of my time watching and learning new techniques on where to place the ball, when to release faster, and when the defense or offense needed to speed up, etc.

My surgery was in November and now I was faced with what was I going to do about club. Who would help me? I just had surgery and no idea when I could play 100%. We reached out to people we knew to see if they had any options or ideas and it was Coach Pauers and his staff gave me that opportunity. I have known Coach Pauers since elementary school and he has always given me great advice. Whenever he sees me he always asks me how I'm doing. After he heard my story he asked my dad and I to come to tryouts. On the last day of tryouts Coach Pauers spent a lot of time talking to us and showing us around his facility. I told him how hard I wanted to work and how badly I wanted to play. After we left the next day he called to let us know that he could help me through his practice player program. I was so excited and grateful for the opportunity. My coaches and teammates have been great and I've been working out with them since the beginning of the season, learning new forms and techniques, and doing more and more as the doctor reports improved. I was cleared in April to play and with everyone's support and encouragement I am getting back to where I was. I have made some amazing friends, my confidence is high, and I just love to play volleyball. I cannot thank Coach Pauers, Coach Mohr, my other coaches and my teammates enough for all of their support for believing in me and helping me recover.