

Rebecca's Story - Update

Rebecca Johnstone - Update

In our January BSC Newsletter we reprinted an article from the Hamilton Spectator about a soccer player in Ontario who was dying of cancer. It told of how Rebecca received a phone call from David Beckham and then later, an autographed jersey by Becks arrived by mail.

A friend had made us aware of the article.

What we had no way of knowing at the time was that Rebecca had passed away two days before we published this heart-wrenching story.

Go to www.mem.com and put in Rebecca's family name - Johnstone - to find out more about this remarkable person and her family

Below is the original article from our January BSC Newsletter.

Normally in the Byte Size Coaching and World of Soccer Newsletters we include a soccer story that will bring a smile to your face. This month's story will likely have a very different effect, but we think it is an important one. The Hamilton Spectator (www.hamiltonspectator.com) in Ontario first carried the story, but over the past weekend it was picked up by most of the major newspapers across Canada.

Rebecca Johnstone is only 19 and she is dying from cancer. It began with a mole on her collarbone that the doctors said not to worry about 3 years ago.

Today, the beautiful young girl's life is measured in days, not months. But before this happened she spent her days like any young teen, enjoying all the great things life has to offer. One of her passions was playing soccer. Another was David Beckham. Rebecca has his posters on her walls. Reads everything she can about him. Follows the English star's career. Loves the way he plays. Even shares a moniker. When she plays, her teammates strap an "M" onto the end of her nickname -- Becca -- and make her sound just like her soccer idol.

But now, Rebecca spends most of her life in bed. So when she got a phone call recently, her mother was loathe to disturb her until the person on the other end of the line told her who he was: David Beckham. She woke Rebecca up. Rebecca didn't want to talk to anyone. Her throat was painful and her voice raspy from all the surgery. But she took the call.

In the most strained of voices, Becca and Becks talked about soccer. He asked how she was doing. Told her he'd heard she was a big fan. Even mentioned that he liked her nickname. He asked if there was anything he could do for her. When she said no, he asked if he could send her something. She didn't say no to that. Then he told her to get in touch if she needed anything.

What joy that must have brought to Rebecca and her family at a time when there's little for them to rejoice about. How grateful they must be to Beckham and the aunt who went to so much trouble to research where and how she could reach David Beckham. And how nice of him to take time out to do this for a dying fan.

Rebecca was too weak to talk to reporters at the paper about this wonderful event, but it wasn't the end of the story.

Just when she needed it most, Beckham intervened again. On Monday, a parcel arrived from Madrid, where Beckham plays. Inside was one of his authentic Real Madrid game jerseys. On the back, next to the number, he'd written: To Rebecca, With Love, David Beckham, 23.

Her dad? "I told her, 'You get better and we'll go see him in person so you can thank him.'"

Becca liked that idea.

If you are a religious person you should pray for Rebecca's recovery. If you are not, then you can hope - as we all do.