

# Plebes-To-Be Play Safe

In 2003, with 44 days until I-Day, in the early morning, after an all night "Walk for the Cure" event, our son leaped a fence to retrieve a Frisbee. He fell, landing on his shoulder, and broke his collar bone. His first comment was "Man, was that stupid!" It was the first time he had broken any bone!

He was in pain. He could not drive. He needed to ride in the back seat driver's side to protect his right collar bone. He was in a restraining sling. He needed us to put on his socks and shoes for him. He slept sitting up in a recliner. He couldn't exercise. He couldn't go to the all-night after-prom party. His senior trip was a wash. Worst of all, his appointment to the USNA, something he had wanted for so long and worked so hard to acquire, was withdrawn.

What a terrible June!!!

***Plebe-To-Be Parents*** - Please use our son's experience as a topic to talk about with your plebe-to-be. You can print this out and leave it on their bed to read if you think it might help! It might just have them think twice about any "risky/stupid" activities that could cause an accident resulting in him/her not to be admitted to the Academy.

I know we can't wrap them in bubble wrap! However, even if they would just slow things down a bit and have time to think, it would help. Do they know if the person driving will remain 100% sober? Can they lighten up on the gas pedal and make a special effort to drive defensively. At their upcoming parties and get-togethers, could they plan to play (volleyball/basketball/etc) at 75% effort instead of 150% like they usually do? In general - If they could just think I-Day and safety first.

I realize this will be hard... youth believes it is invincible. If they could only take time to realize what is at stake and just notch everything down a couple degrees until I-Day, maybe it will save one of them from a tragedy of a medical disqualification.

Of course, here is the rest of the story and the good news. Bryan did not let this change his dream. He was lucky to be offered a place in the USNA Foundation Program. He went to college during the next year and began working on his new nomination and an appointment for the following year. After going through nomination process one more time, and waiting until mid April to get his appointment, he proudly took his place with the Class of 2008. He has had no problems with his injury since and as of this writing is excelling at being the best Midshipmen he can be!

Good luck to the incoming Class! You worked so very hard to get to this point - Play Safe!

Jim Carlson – Bryan '08