

January 14, 2013

## Avoiding Captain Crunch

I'm so very happy to report things are going well...yes, you read that correctly, things are going well! Believe it or not, I've only seen the doctors when I've had preplanned appointments! Pretty exciting, huh? I thought so, but then again, I've learned to enjoy the very little wins; each and every little win.

As I reported last time, I have been experiencing a bit of a "stiff knee." Two weeks ago, I was bending at 82 degrees and seemed a bit stuck there. When I saw my surgeon, Dr. Wollager, he challenged me to get him to cancel my Manipulation Under Anesthesia (MUA) procedure that he scheduled for Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>. As you might recall, that is where they fully anesthetize me and force the knee to bend, breaking through the scar tissue as they go. Now, although that sounded like an amazing opportunity (for pain and suffering), I decided I'd prefer to bust my buns and avoid it altogether.

Jason, my physical therapist, was aware of the challenge and the consequences of losing the same. During the last two weeks, we've worked hard on getting the knee to bend and fortunately, it has paid off. Today's bending measurement was 100 degrees, almost 20 degrees more than when I had seen Dr. W. Even better yet, the hard stop that Jason was feeling at the end of the bend is now getting boggy, meaning we're slowly but surely beating the scar tissue battle. As planned, I called Dr. W today to discuss next steps (he's nice enough to call me so I don't have to trek to downtown Madison to see him). He was happy to hear it is improving as much as it is and said we should cancel the procedure to crunch through the scar tissue. As long as the knee continues to improve, I won't have the procedure...if it stalls out, then I will have to do it. Seemed logical and was fair enough to me. Whew!

So, since I didn't have to have the procedure, my next question was what the requirements were going to be for me to ride. His response was to schedule an appointment the first Monday in February, which is just shy from my four month anniversary of my surgery date. I don't expect to be cleared to ride quite yet, but will at least know where I need to focus (gee, let's see...strength, suppleness, stability, etc!). When I blew my ACL & meniscus in 2009, it was three months to the date of my surgery when I was released to ride. So, considering I had one ligament holding my knee together this time around (thank you PCL!), hoping for a clearance-to-ride date close to four months is being aggressive. But, why not aim high? Who am I kidding, I'm looking forward to being able to drive and not be functioning compliments of Vicodin.

But, I'm excited to get scheduling clinics and see my "regulars". I miss everyone so much! I'm fortunate to have a few chauffeurs willing to cart my hinder around to clinics. Can't wait!!!

In the meantime, I'm having a blast working with my students at my farm. They're all doing so well, it's very inspiring! And, Jackie is doing an amazing job riding for me, especially on my dear boy, Wally. He loves her riding and sugar dispensing abilities! She's doing a super job keeping him swinging over his back and in a beautiful connection. And she's undoubtedly maximizing this opportunity, learning from every ride. It's wonderful to see her apply what she's learned to her horse and how much it's affecting him in his journey to FEI Prix St. Georges. Love, love, love it!!!

My focus these days is on physical therapy, teaching some lessons and then plunking my buns back on the couch to ice and rest. It's amazing to me how our bodies shut down when they feel they've had enough. Case in point – I've learned when my body has had enough, I get the cold sweats something fierce. It's miserable. As soon as I lie down and ice my knee, the sweats stop. I often have to take a

small nap after lessons in the morning – seems soooo pathetic, but it makes all the difference in my healing. Can't wait to have my energy back and feel like I'm getting things accomplished! This is waaaay more resting than I can take! The queen of productivity is slowly surfacing; I get little projects done around the house on days I don't teach. Last time (2009 injury), my recovery projects included cleaning out each cabinet in the kitchen and matching & labeling the Tupperware containers and their respective lids. Ahhh, can't wait for that! So far, this time around, I've cleaned out one closet...the rest will get their day...insert evil laugh here...buuwahahaha!

Stay tuned for another update. Perhaps my news will contain a goal date for riding...oooooh, that would be wonderful!

Happy riding,

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