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Bath Rugby Captain visits intensive care patient

David Slater, a long term patient at the Royal United Hospital, is still on a high after surprise visit from one of his sporting heroes, Stuart Hooper, Captain of Bath Rugby Club.

Despite spending over five months in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), David from Bath – who was admitted to ICU with Guillain Barre syndrome in June 2013 – is a huge rugby fan and has tried not to miss a game. He has been paralysed from the shoulders down since June, and unable to breathe without the help of a ventilator.

The rugby captain spent a long time talking to David, and presented him with a rugby shirt which had been signed by every member of Bath Rugby team.

“On visiting David in the intensive care unit at RUH, it was heartening to see how well he is being treated there. With his condition, he is utterly reliant on staff to look after him, and not only have they been exemplary in doing that, but they have really gone that extra mile for him. He is a huge supporter of Bath Rugby, and his stay has been made even better by the hospital allowing him to watch our games on television. It was a pleasure for me to visit David in the RUH and talk to him about how our season has been going and the various things happening at the Club. All of us at Bath Rugby wish him the best of luck in his recovery.”

ICU nurse Jane Weston, who has been looking after David for the past few months, said: “I knew that David was a really big rugby fan and loves to watch the game if he can. We even try to organise his physiotherapy sessions around the rugby matches. I had the idea of contacting the club to see if we could arrange a surprise visit and they really came up trumps.”

“David was totally surprised and absolutely delighted by the visit, it has given him a real boost. We are so grateful to Stuart for spending time with David and for his generosity.”

Guillain-Barre syndrome is a serious disorder that occurs when the body’s immune system mistakenly attacks part of the nervous system. This leads to altered nerve function that causes muscle weakness and inability to breathe. David has an especially severe form of Guillain Barre syndrome which can take up to a year to recover from.

David’s partner, Lyn Davidson said: “I would like to take this opportunity to praise and thank all the staff in the ICU at the RUH. They very often go well beyond the call of duty to make sure David is clean, comfortable and pain free 24/7. They have also been very supportive to myself and David’s family, always taking time to talk and explain procedures, while patiently listening to our worries and concerns. David still has a long way to go but I have great faith that the dedication of all concerned in the ICU, and David’s own positive attitude and determination, will get him through.”

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