

BERLIN JOURNAL

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 2023

Playing for Peyton fundraiser a slam dunk

On Thursday, January 12 the Berlin High School gymnasium was set up and ready for the girls' basketball program to play games, and it was also filled with a community of players and basketball fans, who know that life is bigger than the game.

The girls' basketball program hosted a fundraiser, Playing for Peyton, Block out Leukemia, to help support head coach Ray Mlada's grandchild, Peyton Bornemann.

Peyton, the daughter of Justin and Brooke Bornemann was just two years old in 2020 when she was diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukemia, following a routine check-up.

Peyton's leukemia type is rare in children and although she is bright, vibrant and full of fun, the little girl is an ongoing outpatient through Children's Hospital of Milwaukee, where they continue to monitor her treatments and health.

While her family said that her prognosis is positive, she remains on oral chemotherapy, which can pose long-term side effects, and



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STANDING TOGETHER following the Playing for Peyton fundraiser are varsity basketball players (front L-R) Callie Kurczek, Peyton Bornemann, Jane Hoffman, Emma Boegh, Kaydence Scofield (back L-R) Madison Mertens, Coach Ray Mlada, Claire Bartol, Anna Kurczek, Eva Fleegal, Lakeilyn Sobieski and Becca Bartol.



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BERLIN GIRLS VARSITY COACH RAY MLADA shares a moment during the national anthem with his granddaughter Peyton Bornemann, ahead of the Thursday, January 12 basketball game where the girls basketball team hosted its fundraiser, Playing for Peyton.

the stress and financial needs can at times be overwhelming. Her medical care will be ongoing, with uncertainty for her future. For that reason, the players wanted to host a fundraiser to give back, as she certainly enjoyed coming to games and watching her grandpa coach and cheer on the players.

Thanks to the generous donations by player parents, of Thrivent cards, the players on both JV and varsity were provided a warm-up shirt supporting Peyton and leukemia awareness, while those attending the games could help support by buying cookies, lollipops, participate in a 50/50 raffle and silent auction as well as buy wristbands.

Beyond basketball, it was a special night with many coming together to make the fundraiser possible, from those who helped by donating items to make it happen, to all the fans attending the game who made donations, purchased items, and cheered for little Peyton who drew the winning ticket for the raffle at the end of half time. A parent from the opposing North Fond du lac team won

the raffle, who called his daughter off the court to give his winnings back to Peyton and her family.

It was a special night, with everyone coming together as one team to back Peyton. The players also provided Peyton with a goodie bag, a big stuffed puppy and a signed basketball from the team.

Following the game, coach Mlada called the players and the student fan section together and shared a few words about the game of life and was thankful to all who brought energy to the gym Thursday night. He felt how special it was to see his granddaughter light up and have the time of her life being in the gym, with so much support from the players, students and the entire Berlin and North Fond du Lac basketball communities.

A check reveal will be held before the girls' varsity basketball game on Thursday, January 19 announcing how much was raised during the Playing for Peyton, Blocking out Leukemia fundraiser. Game time is scheduled for 7:15 p.m. tipoff.