



PETTY
ORTHOPAEDICS
THE VERY BEST IN SPORTS MEDICINE



Ryan Welch
Brentwood, TN
Pitcher, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

PROBLEM

“My arm started to really bother me, throwing—sharp pains. I went to my trainers and they said, ‘Take the week off.’ It got progressively worse. I couldn’t pick up a ball and throw it without terrible pain. I saw the University doctor and he said, ‘Oh, it might be a slight tendonitis; do this program.’ He thought it would just get better. It didn’t; it got worse. I would try to tell people who asked, ‘Well, where does it hurt?’ It was right in my shoulder socket. When I threw I felt like my arm was loose. I took a red shirt that year. I did all the programs, all the rehab and I got fed up.”

SEEKING HELP

“I decided to come home because I knew I could get help there. I had an MRI at the Bone & Joint Clinic in Franklin and it came up negative. The orthopedic surgeon there recommended that I go see Dr. Petty because Dr. Petty’s had experience with baseball injuries and is team doctor for the Nashville Sounds.”

DIAGNOSIS

“When I first talked to Dr. Petty and was telling him about my arm, Dr. Petty described how a labrum tear feels and I said, ‘That’s exactly how it is.’ He was extremely knowledgeable and knew how to relate what was happening to me. He was a good guy and really personable—straightforward. I trusted him: this guy knows what he’s talking about. He explained every step.”

OPTIONS

Exploratory surgery for a possible labrum tear (which does not always show up on an MRI)

OPERATION

“Dr. Petty was able to fix it completely. I’ve been able to pitch and I’m now back at 100%. Dr. Petty warned me that it would be tough trying to get used to a new shoulder; you’re not going to feel 100% in your first year.”

RESULTS

“But in 12 1/2 months it’s great. I have two 3-millimeter scars on the front of my shoulder and one 3-millimeter one on the back. You can hardly see them. People, the trainers, were telling me I wasn’t going to be able to pitch at all this season, but I was able to pitch effectively by the end of the year. I have two university years left to play—and now I can.

Dr. Petty took the extra time even after the surgery to sit down with me for 25 minutes and explain the surgery and he even showed me pictures of the surgery. He went 110% for me.”

Dr. Petty’s Comments: Ryan was one of those rare pitchers who had a 92+ mph fastball. His biggest problem was that his shoulder was actually slipping forward out of the socket when he threw. We fixed it by performing a special Arthroscopic Capsular Shift, as well as fixing the labral tear. I told him he only had a 50-75% chance of pitching again in college with this problem, but this didn’t phase him. He probably just ignored that comment and focused on his rehab. He’s back now and I’m proud of him.