



## Athletes show hemophilia no handicap

Danielle Sanzone, *The Record*

09/24/2006

CASTLETON - Professional athletes took to the fields Saturday to show kids with hemophilia that the disease doesn't have to keep them down.

The National Hemophilia Foundation and ZLB Behring, a company that produces medicines for the disease, sponsored a sports clinic for children affected by bleeding disorders.

Dozens of children from communities around the region participated in the event, which included professional athletes with bleeding diseases teaching children with hemophilia and Von Willebrand disease that they can still play interactive sports with their ailment, said Peter Turner, CEO of ZLB Behring.

The two athletes, Jesse Schrader, who played for semi-professional baseball teams in Kentucky's Frontier League, and Perry Parker, a professional golfer who helped start the sports clinic program five years ago, act as role models for the kids, said Turner.

"These athletes show the kids that if they continue with their therapy, they, too, can be active and play the sports they enjoy," he continued. "This is a terrific event for the kids since many of them are still told by their doctors that they should not compete in sports. This event promotes awareness of the bleeding diseases and is a fun time for the kids since they meet other children their age who have the same disease."

Hemophilia A affects one in 5,000 male infants worldwide. It is a hereditary bleeding disorder in which blood clotting is impaired and blood finds its way into the person's joints and muscles sometimes causing disfigurement.

Another type of bleeding disease is Von Willebrand disease, which affects women and causes nosebleeds, a prolonged menstrual cycle and easy bruising.

Sports clinics, like the one at Evergreen Country Club Saturday, take place about four times a year all around the country. The clinics were started with the help of Parker and ZLB Behring.

"I helped start the program because I wanted to bring a competitive event to the (children with bleeding diseases,)" said Parker who had traveled from California to put on a golf workshop for the children golf. "And I love teaching the kids golf. This is the most rewarding thing I have ever done in my life."

After the two athletes coached the kids in their respective sports, they had a competitive golf tournament and a scratch baseball game.

"This is a fun event," said Colby Jordan, 13, an eighth-grader at Cohoes Middle School who has hemophilia A and plays golf for the high school's team. "I love golf and I like meeting other kids who are my age and have hemophilia. I've gone to other tournaments like this one. I always have a good time."