



Mini Page Heroes: Team Hoyt



photo courtesy Team Hoyt

Mini Fact:

The Hoyts have competed in triathlons that include three stages: running, biking and swimming.



photo courtesy Team Hoyt

When Rick Hoyt was 15 years old, he wanted to take part in a 5-mile (8-kilometer) benefit run to help a young person who had been in an accident. Rick shared his wish with his dad, who agreed to do everything he could to help Rick make it happen.

For many teenagers, a run like this wouldn't be such a big deal. But Rick was born with **cerebral palsy**. Cerebral palsy is a brain disorder that affects muscles and the way people move. Rick couldn't walk or speak.

But that didn't stop Rick and his dad, Dick, from dreaming big. Dick would serve as his son's legs in the 5-mile run, pushing Rick to the finish line in a wheelchair.

Beating expectations

Facing challenges head-on was nothing new to the Hoyts. Rick has cerebral palsy because he didn't get enough oxygen to his brain during birth. The reduced airflow injured his brain.

Many people doubted that Rick would ever live a productive life. Doctors advised Dick and his wife, Judy, to put Rick into a long-term care facility.

But his parents always knew that an intelligent, capable person was living inside a body that was holding him back.

Dick and Judy fought to make it possible for Rick to attend public school. They had a special computer made that allowed Rick to communicate, unlocking the smart boy inside.

Rick went on to graduate from high school before attending Boston University. He graduated in 1993 with a degree in special education.

Taking off

Their spirit of accomplishment and **tenacity*** kept Rick and his dad going when they completed their first 5-mile run. At the time, they had no idea that they were beginning a long, inspiring journey. They became known as Team Hoyt, and YES YOU CAN! became their motto.

Over the next few decades, Team Hoyt competed in more than 1,000 races, including marathons, duathlons and triathlons. They even completed six Ironman competitions!

Rick and his dad finished 32 Boston Marathons, one of America's most famous races. In 1992, they even tackled a trip all the way across the United States that covered 3,735 miles in 45 days!

Rick says: "When I'm running, it feels like I'm not handicapped."



photo by Walt Malone, courtesy TeamHoyt

Rick and Dick Hoyt compete in the 2002 Boston Marathon.

* Tenacity is the quality of sticking with something until it's done.

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Inspiring others

Team Hoyt was honored in 2013 with a special ESPN award called the Jimmy V Perseverance Award. This award is given to someone who has overcome great challenges.

The Hoyts' story has inspired others with disabilities to say, "Yes I can!" Your challenge is to learn about other athletes like Team Hoyt and then share their stories with your friends and family.

What about in your school and community? Are there individuals who have overcome handicaps to reach athletic achievements that seemed impossible?

What about outside of sports? Can you find people in the performing arts, such as music, dance and acting, who aren't held back by their disabilities? Don't forget the visual arts, such as painting and sculpting.

Resources



This issue of Mini Page Heroes is based on a chapter from "50 American Heroes Every Kid Should Meet" by Dennis Denenberg and Lorraine Roscoe. To order the book, go to heroes4us.com and click on "50 American Heroes Book" and "Order a Book."

On the Web:
• teamhoyt.com

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of Team Hoyt are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



ACCOMPLISHMENT,	N E G Y X O C L A R B E R E C
AWARD, BENEFIT,	L G R A D U A T E P A L S Y H
BRAIN, CEREBRAL,	A W A R D I S A B I L I T Y O
CHALLENGE, COMPUTER,	N O H T A R A M M U S C L E S
DISABILITY, GRADUATE,	L C C O M P U T E R I P S N I
HANDICAPPED, INSPIRE,	T E N A C I T Y T I F E N E B
IRONMAN, MARATHON,	T A C C O M P L I S H M E N T
MUSCLES, OXYGEN,	E R Q E H A N D I C A P P E D
PALSY, RUN, TEAM,	A U C H A L L E N G E X H S I
TENACITY.	M N H I R O N M A N I A R B S

Cook's Corner

Figs Stuffed With Cream Cheese and Raisins

You'll need:

- 8 dried figs
- 4 ounces light strawberry cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar



* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

What to do:

1. Slice off stem end of each fig and, using a small spoon, scoop out the center.
2. In a small bowl, combine cream cheese, raisins and vinegar. Mix until well-blended.
3. Spoon cream cheese mixture into figs and serve. Serves 4.

Adapted from "The Robin Takes 5 Cookbook for Busy Families" with permission from Andrews McMeel Publishing (andrewsmcmeel.com).

Puzzling

Unscramble the words below that remind us of running.



inrat _____

ictenads _____

ehtleat _____

emtcop_____

Answers: train, distance, athlete, compete.

Mini Jokes



Randy: What is harder to catch the faster you run?
Ralph: Your breath!

Eco Note



A remote, uninhabited island in the Pacific Ocean has been found to be polluted with the world's highest density of plastic trash. More than 3,500 pieces of plastic wash up each day on Henderson Island, roughly 3,000 miles from the nearest major land mass.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

Thank You



The Mini Page thanks Dennis Denenberg, former teacher, principal, superintendent and university professor, and Lorraine Roscoe, a champion of heroes of every kind, for help with this issue.

Teachers:

For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bit.ly/MPstandards

Books from The Mini Page are wonderful resources and make great gifts! See all of our Mini Page products at MiniPageBooks.com, or call 844-426-1256 for more information. Mail payment to: Andrews McMeel Universal, Mini Page Books, 1130 Walnut, Kansas City, MO 64106. Include \$4.00 shipping and handling per order.

