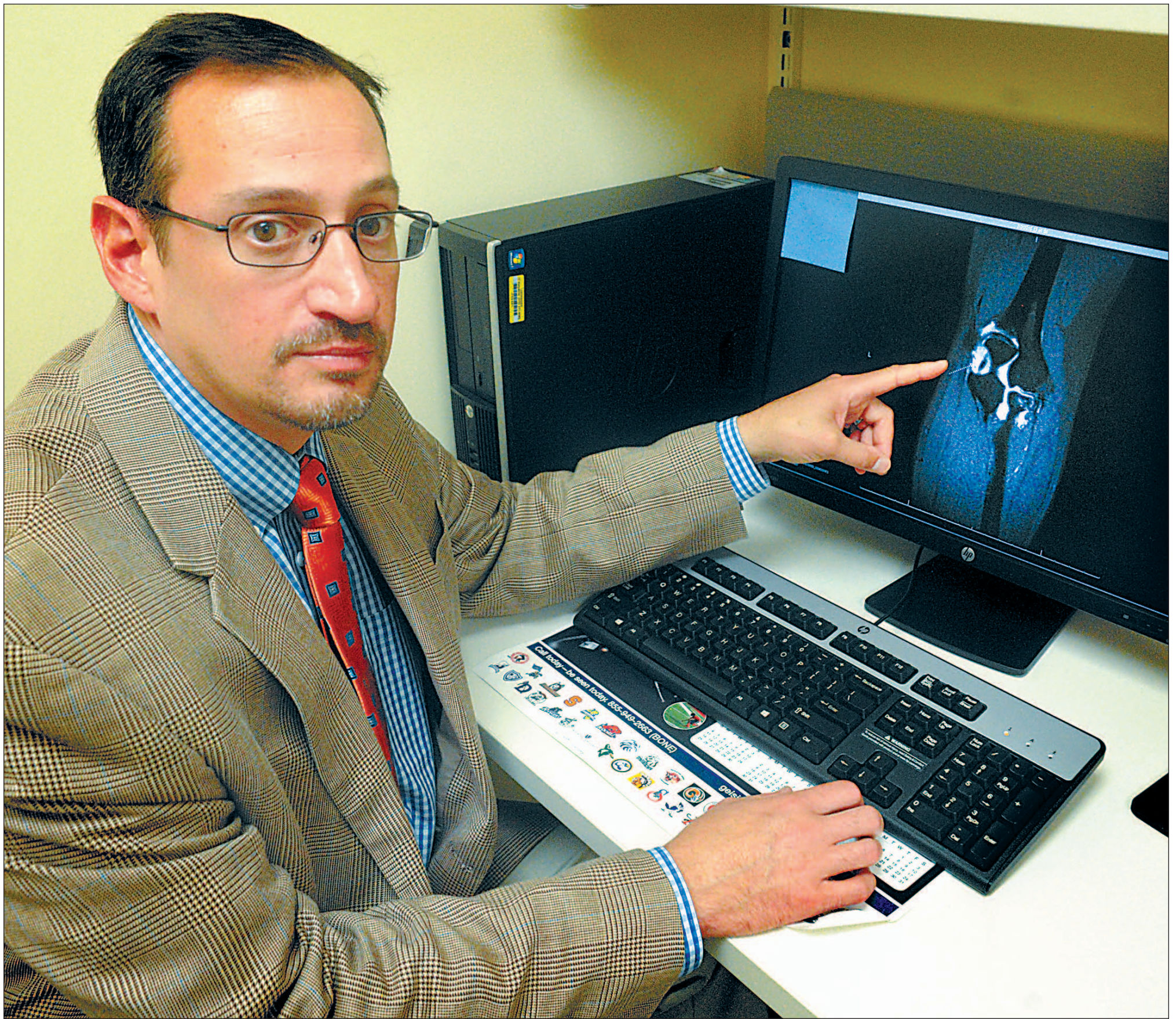


Armed and dangerous



GEISINGER ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON DR. STEVEN GOLDBERG points out a torn ligament visible in a MR image seen on a computer screen on Thursday in Bloomsburg. *Press Enterprise/Bill Hughes*

With Tommy John surgery on rise, pitchers should be mindful of the effects and how they deliver pitches

By ARTHUR DOWELL
Press Enterprise Writer

Millville's Brittan Kittle was in the middle of throwing a no-hitter against Montgomery this past season, though he had no idea.

Then he started feeling pain in his pitching arm and asked to be taken out.

"(The coaches) said, 'Listen, I think you should finish this for us,'" Kittle said. "They

never did tell me I had a no-hitter going."

Despite the pain — something he's dealt with since Little League — Kittle wound up finishing the game without allowing a hit, piling up 10 strikeouts along the way. Kittle estimates he threw 100 pitches.

Yet staying in the game could have cost Kittle his career.

It's a risk every baseball coach and pitcher has to deal with.

"With him, he's somebody that's old enough to know whether I was pushing it or, Eh, it's sore and can get one more inning out of him," Millville coach Andy Belolan said. "His dad was even yelling down, 'One more inning!' But if he wanted to come out, we would have done that.

"It's not worth the pain for a no-hitter." Arm injuries are not new in baseball, but the number of injuries, most particularly

those needing ulnar collateral ligament reconstruction (UCL) — or Tommy John surgery — is on the rise.

The procedure is done when a person needs their UCL replaced. Doctors often use the patient's palmaris tendon — something 85 percent of people have, and does not lead to loss of function — but can replace it with some other tendon in the body or reuse a donated tendon.

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Bloom grad Hock embraces change in an effort to keep his arm healthy

By ARTHUR DOWELL
Press Enterprise Writer

The most consistent thing in Colton Hock's baseball career has been change.

Since his days as a standout at Bloomsburg High School as a starting pitcher, he's changed scenery — attending Stanford, 2,790 miles away from his hometown — and switched roles from being an ace starting pitcher to a reliable Cardinal reliever.

Hock threw 93-94 mph pitches in high school. Though he's generally stayed in that area, he's also been clocked throwing 97 mph.

One thing that hasn't changed, however, is his delivery and arm health. It's something he's grateful for.

"I've never missed a stretch of time from any of my teams," Hock said. "I guess it's a blessing that I wasn't the best player in Little League."

Hock pitched well this past season, ending his sophomore campaign at Stanford with a 2.03 ERA, 25th best in Division I. Hock had 61 strikeouts in 57 2/3 innings.

Those numbers were good enough to get him named to the All Pac-12 team. Hock also received an



Photo provided

BLOOMSBURG GRADUATE COLTON HOCK delivers a pitch during a Cape Cod League game earlier this summer.

invitation to play in the Cape Cod League this summer.

Hock currently plays for the Cotuit Kettleers in the Cape Cod League, which is a hotbed filled with MLB scouts.

"A big part of my success comes from keeping my arm healthy and

being able to pitch on short notice," Hock said.

That was especially true as he made the transition to the bullpen at Stanford.

Hock often took five or six days off with some sort of throwing routine between starts in high school after throwing a high number of pitches.

The same can't be said as a reliever.

"It's hard to know what days you're going to pitch," Hock said. "If I throw 20 to 25 pitches, then I'm expected to be available to pitch the next day."

Hock is dealing with more change as he converts back into a starter.

As of Wednesday, Hock had pitched in seven games for the Kettleers, starting four of them. He's 0-3 with a 3.03 ERA.

At a time when elbow injuries seem to be on the rise at all levels of competition (and some think consistently changing roles as a starter and reliever adds to the numbers), Hock has managed to take care of his arm.

Hock credits Jaeger Bands and the Stanford trainers' year-round workouts for keeping him in shape and getting his arm ready during the long and unpredictable season.

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Press Enterprise/Keith Haupt

ZACH LYNN, right, stands with his father **Greg Lynn** at their home in Danville on Friday afternoon. Zach Lynn had Tommy John surgery at Geisinger last year.

Danville's Lynn had to have elbow repaired by Goldberg

By ARTHUR DOWELL
Press Enterprise Writer

Zach Lynn felt the symptoms in his right arm, his pitching arm, for a year.

He ignored them and continued

to pitch for the handful of teams he played for.

Then in March 2015 while the Danville native was pitching in a youth league game, he noticed issues with his control. He felt a sen-

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