

Bacteria kills player

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Wade Hampton High School quarterback Kell Grant, whose funeral was Wednesday, died from a common bacteria that acted in an uncommon way.

Grant's death is one of only 22 reported cases in the English-speaking world where the beta hemolytic streptococcus bacteria caused a rapid muscle infection, said Dr. Karl Byrne, the Medical University of South Carolina trauma surgeon who treated Grant.

Grant, 17, suffered a deep thigh bruise in a Sept. 11 game against Hilton Head. Wade Hampton coach Ken Schofield said Grant was treated during the Friday night game and then went to Savannah Sports Medicine the following day. He saw a local doctor two days later, a Monday.

Grant's kidneys failed the next day and was taken to the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Doctors there identified the infection within a few hours and removed Grant's right leg at the upper thigh Sept. 16.

"By the time he came to us, it was too late," Byrne said. "The condition is usually fatal within 48 hours. There was one other case where the patient lived 14 days. The reason he (Grant) lived longer is because he was an extremely fit kid."

The disease led to severe disruption of the clotting mechanism of Grant's blood and eventual heart failure.

Grant's funeral was Wednesday afternoon at Robert Colsey gym on the campus of Wade Hampton High School in Hampton.

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know how the virus works."

Caught in the middle of this is Randy Pfund, the Lakers' rookie coach. NBA teams carry 12 active players.

For the Lakers, that would include Johnson — even for games when he doesn't play, unless he goes on the injured list, which means missing five straight games.

"I think," McGuire said, "the coach of the Lakers would be the last person considered. It's his problem. He can't criticize because this is a move that comes from much higher than him."

"I think it will be something that will be workable," Lakers general manager Jerry West said. "Our coaches are going to have to look at the

problems that having a relatively part-time player might create. But coaches have to be flexible, and they'll have to be more flexible this year.

"Obviously, the more games he played would be great for us. But the most important thing is to maintain his good health."

John Wooden, who coached UCLA to 10 NCAA championships in 12 years, doesn't envy Pfund's tricky balancing act.

"If I'm the coach, I'm terribly worried about playing him because of the condition," he said. "The other things — playing time, juggling the roster — you work out. It's no different than having a player with a heart problem. That would worry me terribly. What are the repercussions if late in the season you needed him in consecutive games?"

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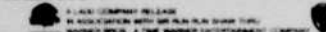
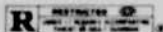
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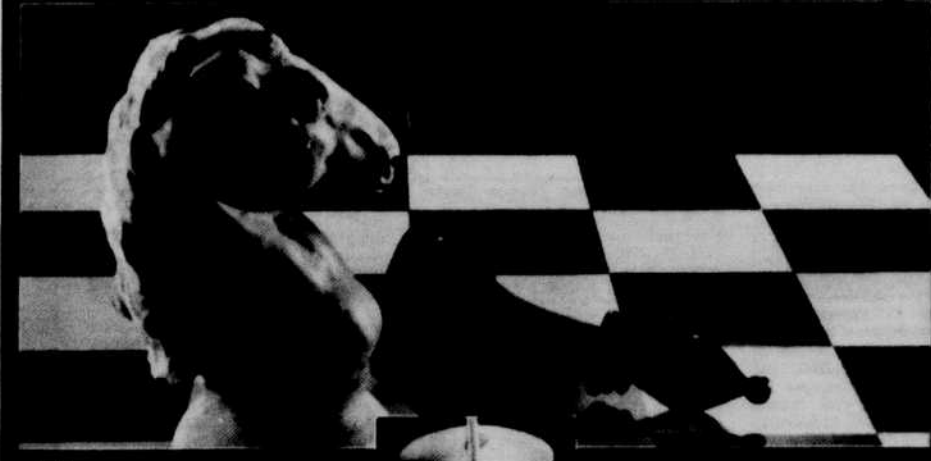
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