



August 9, 2006

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**JEWETT ORTHOPAEDIC CLINIC PATIENT CLIMBS MOUNT EVEREST
AFTER KNEE REPLACEMENT SURGERY**

WINTER PARK, Fla. – Orlando resident and former Atlanta Falcons linebacker Ken Mitchell recently climbed Mount Everest four years after having his left knee replaced by Richard M. Konsens, M.D. of the Jewett Orthopaedic Clinic.

In this, his first attempt, Mitchell scaled 24,000 feet on the northern or Tibetan side of the mountain over the course of several weeks in April and May to reach Camp Four. Severe weather conditions kept him from continuing to the 29,035-foot summit, but he plans to return in two years to reach the peak.

“Climbing Everest has always been a goal of mine,” said Mitchell. “I have three children who suffer from Tourette Syndrome and have always encouraged them that they can achieve whatever they set their mind to. After my knee surgery, we had our weekly family meeting, and they challenged me to still pursue my dream. As hard as it was, my knees worked great. I can honestly say that I have never seen or felt anything so beautiful. I will continue to train and can’t wait to go back and stand atop the peak.”

Currently an asset manager for Primerica Financial Services and a father of nine, Mitchell, age 57, had enjoyed a lifetime of athletic pursuits that took a toll on his body, especially his knees. He played high school basketball and baseball in California, spent a short time as a catcher with the California Angels organization, served in the Marine Corps special services and then attended the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV)

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on a basketball and baseball scholarship. His junior year at UNLV, he decided to try football as a walk-on, made the team and played linebacker for two years. While he was not drafted, he pursued pro football and played for the Atlanta Falcons from 1972-1975. After football, he stayed active by participating in Ironman triathlons and mountain climbing. Eventually the pain became too much. He had his right knee replaced in 2000 and his left knee replaced in April 2002.

Knee replacement surgery involves removing the worn cartilage and bone and replacing it with metal and plastic joint surfaces that relieve pain and restore alignment and function. Approximately 500,000 of these procedures are performed in the United States each year.

“When I went to check on Ken after his surgery, he told me of his plans to continue mountain climbing. I was thinking he might start with Mt. Dora. I never imagined he would scale Everest,” said Dr. Konsens.

True to form, Mitchell pushed through his recovery and therapy. He quickly gave up the cane and all medications. He began swimming and climbing stairs. Six months after the surgery, he was riding his bike 50-100 miles at a time. Over the next few years, he continued to build up his strength, flexibility and stamina, climbing Mt. Ranier before tackling Everest.

“This was an unbelievable feat of determination and endurance,” said Dr. Konsens. “Every patient who has a joint replacement has specific goals and needs. While Ken’s were extreme and rare, it proves just how far the knee replacements have progressed. We are allowing people to get back to truly living and accomplishing their goals, no matter how lofty. People like Ken are challenging us to raise our expectations when we do these surgeries.”

Mitchell is far from done pursuing his athletic dreams. In addition to climbing Everest again, he plans to scale the Matterhorn and Switzerland’s Mt. Eiger as well as enter the Hawaiian Ironman Triathlon and swim the English Channel.

“I have always felt that I am just an average athlete who works extra hard. I am so grateful to have my new knees and still have a lot I want to accomplish,” he said.

Voted one of Orlando’s Top Doctors in 2002, 2003 and 2004 in *Orlando Magazine*, Dr. Konsens has practiced in Winter Park since 1990 and has served as a team physician for the Orlando Magic and UCF basketball teams. He graduated from Dartmouth College and received his medical degree from the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. Dr. Konsens completed his residency at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland and a fellowship in joint replacement at Oxford University in England.

Founded in 1936 by Eugene L. Jewett, M.D., the Jewett Orthopaedic Clinic has been recognized internationally as a pioneer and leader in orthopaedic care for more than 70 years. Jewett doctors performed some of the first total knee replacements in the state of Florida and some of the first arthroscopic knee surgeries in the Southeast. They have also designed and developed several innovative joint replacement systems used worldwide. The Clinic’s 23 board-certified/board-eligible, fellowship-trained physicians, ten physician assistants and team of healthcare professionals provide a full range of orthopaedic care, specializing in sports medicine, joint replacement, foot and ankle care, surgery and rehabilitation of the hand, and care for spinal injuries and conditions. Jewett serves as the team physicians for the Orlando Magic, the University of Central Florida, Rollins College, the Orlando Predators, the Orlando Ballet and Cirque du Soleil. The practice has seven offices throughout Central Florida.

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