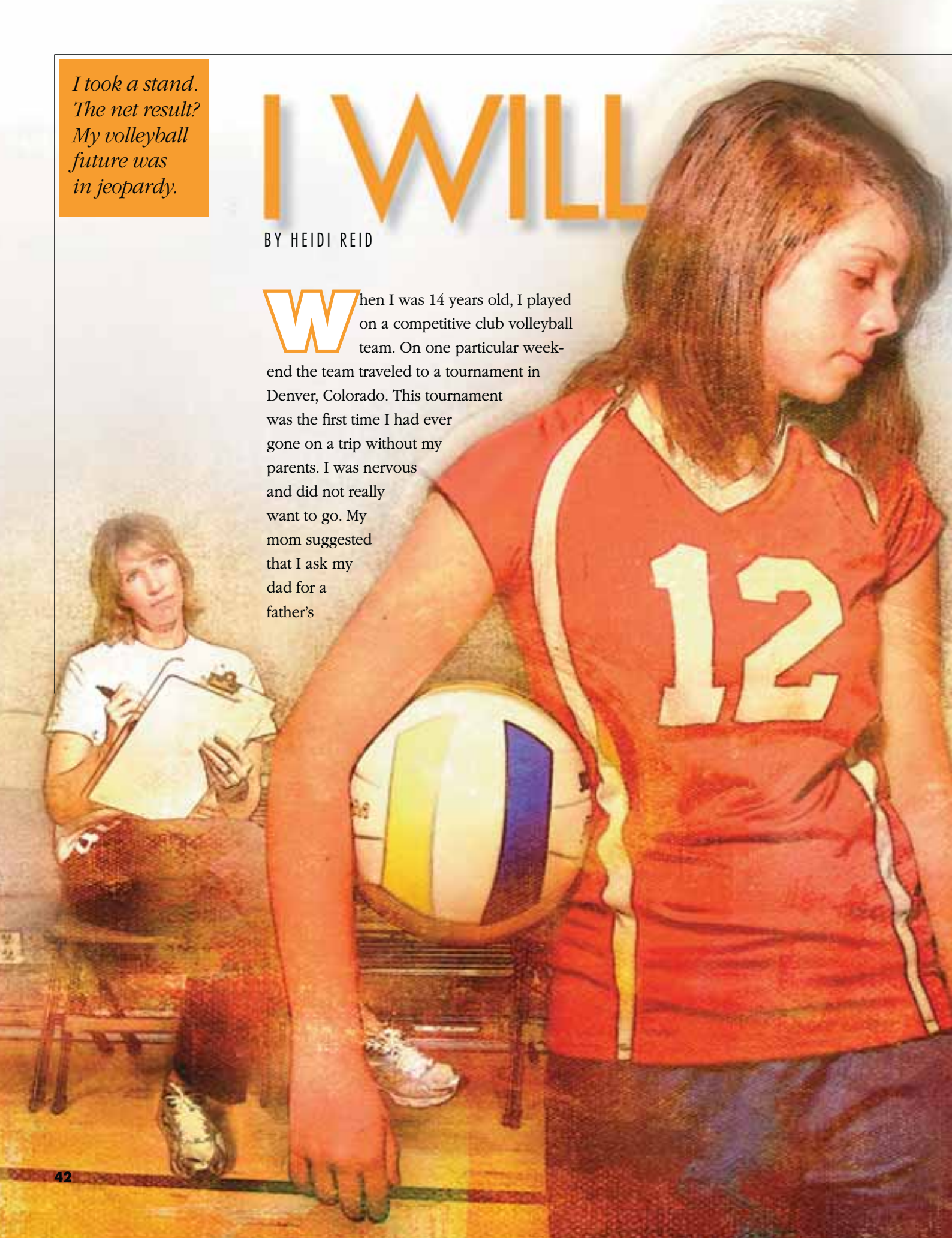


*I took a stand.
The net result?
My volleyball
future was
in jeopardy.*

I WILL

BY HEIDI REID

When I was 14 years old, I played on a competitive club volleyball team. On one particular weekend the team traveled to a tournament in Denver, Colorado. This tournament was the first time I had ever gone on a trip without my parents. I was nervous and did not really want to go. My mom suggested that I ask my dad for a father's



NOT PLAY

blessing the night before I left, and my dad gave me a blessing of peace.

My team drove to Denver on Friday, and then on Saturday morning the tournament began. My team played really well and had a great position going into the championship matches the next day. On Saturday night I reminded my coaches that I did not play volleyball on Sundays. Due to the importance of the Sunday championships, my coaches were not happy being reminded of my decision.

Later that night, my coaches and the director of the club called me to a meeting and said that if I did not play on Sunday, I would be eliminated from the team. The director of the club told me that if I chose not to play volleyball on Sundays, I would never play college volleyball because the college scouts only watched the Sunday championships. I was sad and felt completely alone in my decision. I had been taught all of my life to keep the Sabbath day holy, and living this commandment had always been simple until then. I loved volleyball and had dreams of playing in college. This was a lot for me to handle, but I told them, “No, I will not play.”

After the meeting, I went to my room and cried. I decided that in order to stand strong in my beliefs I needed to understand why keeping the Sabbath day holy was so important. I looked in the Bible Dictionary under “Sabbath” and found my answer. It read, “The Sabbath was a holy day . . . even from the earliest times. . . . The Sabbath is an eternal principle” (p. 765). After reading this, I knew I would have the strength not to play on Sunday. The Lord rested on the seventh day, and I would rest as well and worship Him.

Nonetheless, it was a difficult Sunday. My team did not play well, and I was blamed for their poor performance. My teammates and coaches were not friendly; many did not talk to me, and some taunted me. When I arrived home, my parents gave me big hugs and said that they were proud of me. The next week at practice I was asked to leave the team.

Over the next four years, I continued to play volleyball for the same club but never on the competitive traveling team. After I had decided on a college to attend, I received a phone call from the director of the club I had played for. She was the new head volleyball coach for the college I was going to attend. She was calling to ask me to play volleyball for her. This was the same woman who four years earlier had told me that if I did not play volleyball on Sundays, I would never play college volleyball. Now she was giving me that opportunity.

The Lord works in mysterious ways. I know that I was truly blessed by making the decision not to play on Sunday. I also know that the Lord will always bless us for keeping the commandments—maybe not in the ways we think, but we will be blessed. **NE**

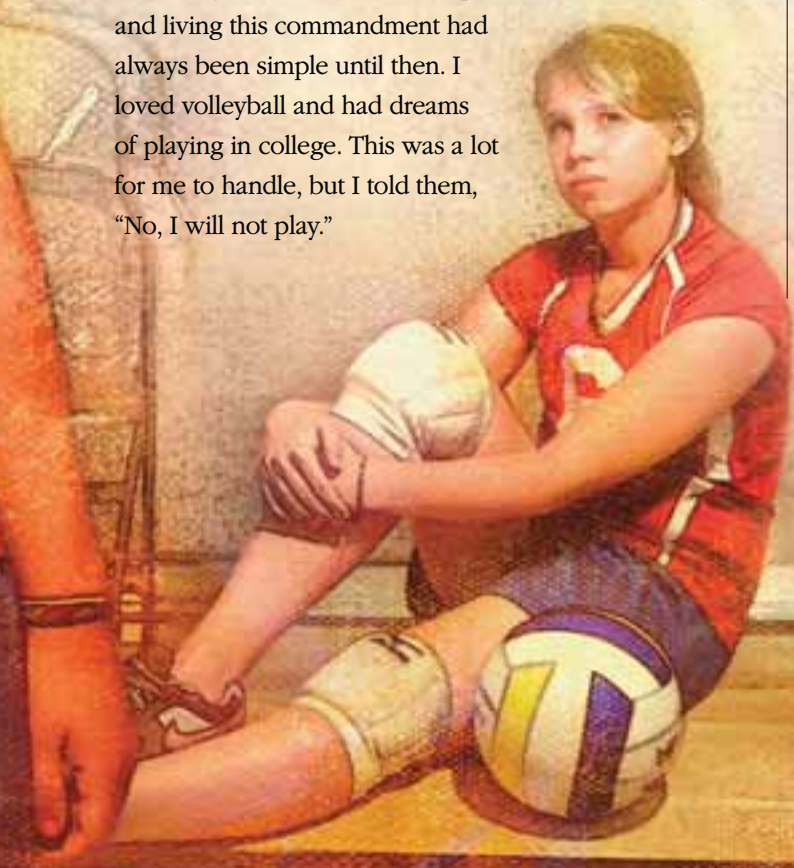


ILLUSTRATION BY CARY HENRIE