

RUMBLE

AN OFF-THE-BALL LOOK AT YOUR FAVORITE

Shot heard 'round world

Church's slam reaches brother in Iraq

Ryan Church's personal fan club extends all the way to Iraq, where his younger brother, Matt, is in his second tour of duty. Minutes after Ryan's first-inning grand slam Wednesday in Milwaukee, Matt Church was notified of his brother's feat by an e-mail sent by Allan Krutchkoff, the President of Adopt a Soldier Platoon.

"We been sending items and gifts to service men and women since 2003, and we adopted Matt because we

are gigantic Mets fans," Krutchkoff said. "As soon as Ryan hit the home run, we e-mailed him and told him what happened."

Church and his brother correspond a few times a month, mainly on Mets off days.

"We reach out to each other through e-mail and the Internet," Ryan said. "I'll find out when he's free and I'm free, and we'll sit in front of our computers and video conference with each other.

I think about him every day. Sure it's been a difficult year for me with my concussions, but it's nothing compared to what he goes through on an hour-by-hour basis. He's the real hero."

Matt Church's platoon recently received 20 Mets hats, which arrived courtesy of Adopt a Soldier Platoon. "It's good to have those guys rooting for us," Ryan said. "They are true-blue Mets fans."



Ryan Church

AP

PICTURE OF THE WEEK