Student Back After Recovery From Injuries

**Sigwart Survived Near-Fatal 1960 Fuel Explosion**

By George McQuilling

Chuck Sigwart, the new captain of the Cross-Country Team, is a man with problems. On September 2, 1960, Chuck was standing in a storage room adjusting his home in Phoenix, Arizona, holding three ounces of zinc sulfide in his left hand. The explosive went off and Chuck's problems began. Twenty minutes later Chuck was on the operating table. He was in critical condition. He sustained thirty percent burns, multiple lacerations, and internal injuries. His left hand was gone at the wrist; he lost his thumb and three fingertips from his right hand. He was blind and both ears were destroyed.

Chuck's chances of living were considered slight by everyone but Chuck himself. "A miraculous savior, the man who put me together," says Chuck, "is an incredible pessimist." He proved the doctor wrong though, and the year later he was back at MIT. Chuck learned how to use an artificial hand, and had his ear drums replaced at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. A corneal transplant gave him some vision in his right eye, though he remains legally blind.

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