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Injured player begins rehab

BY STAN CALDWELL • SEPTEMBER 19, 2008

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Nine days after he was seriously injured while playing football, North Forrest High School sophomore Justin McCray has begun the long process of rehabilitation.

ADVERTISEMENT McCray, 15, was moved to Methodist Hospital in Jackson, where physical therapists have begun his rehab program. McCray was paralyzed from the chest down while making a tackle during a junior varsity game Sept. 9 at Purvis.

"They're being aggressive with his treatment," North Forrest coach Shannon White said. "He's in good spirits."

White said the Eagles are still dealing with the aftermath of McCray's injury as they prepare for tonight's game at Enterprise (Clarke).

"I don't think (they've put it behind them yet)," White said. "But we've had a good week of practice. We've talked about it every day as something we need to deal with. The kids are in contact with him, but they're doing what they have to do."

North Forrest (2-1) faces a tough road trip against the 2-1 Bulldogs, who are ranked fourth in the state in the Associated Press Class 2A poll.

"This is the 11th year in a row for me to play them," said White, whose Taylorsville teams were in the same region with Enterprise. "I know them well. They're physical and well-coached. They remind me a lot of Purvis. They're going to run the ball and play keepaway with the football."

In the meantime, donations to help with McCray's medical expenses are continuing to be collected through an account at BancorpSouth.

"The family is staying upbeat and positive," White said. "Obviously, they've had their world turned upside down, but I admire them. They have really been strong throughout this."

"They're very appreciative of the support they've gotten from the whole Hattiesburg area."

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