

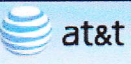

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Injured Leveille aims for quick return

BY MATT SCHOCH
TIMES HERALD

• NOVEMBER 27, 2008

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When Port Huron Northern senior Kelsey Leveille was injured in her first home [volleyball](#) match of the season, she hoped she would be back on the court soon.

Little did she know the severity of her left knee injury might prevent her from even playing on the [tennis](#) court this spring.

Leveille, a Fort Gratiot resident, tore her anterior cruciate ligament. She had the ligament reconstructed from a piece of her hamstring during surgery Oct. 28.

"I heard and felt something pop in my knee, and I knew it wasn't good," she said. "I was really hoping that night that I would be back for volleyball season and that it was a minor sprain. I wasn't even thinking about tennis season."

Simply straightening her leg is the not type of goal elite athletes such as Leveille are used to.

She wears a brace from the top of her left ankle to the middle of her thigh and walks with crutches. She has rehabilitation three times a week with physical therapy specialist Maureen Muzzarelli of Orthopedic Associates in Port Huron. She also does a few quick exercises for less than a half-hour each day.

"Sitting around is something I don't usually do," Leveille said.

Muzzarelli said the road to recovery will be a long one.

"It's very intense," she said. "The number of hours she spent on the court are being traded for the number of hours of rehab."

Muzzarelli said it will be six months to a year since Leveille's surgery that she will be able to play sports again.

Leveille finished last season at No. 1 singles for the tennis team and was a candidate for that spot

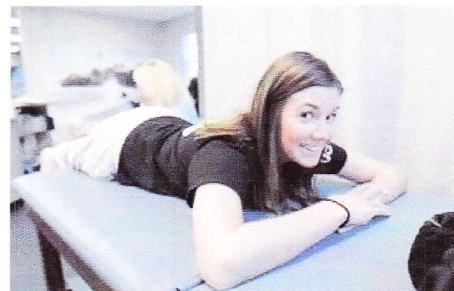
this spring. She hopes for a return to the court, but knows she will be limited if she can play.

"I don't think I'm going to be able to play one singles because I haven't played since the summer time," Leveille said. "I don't think I could handle being in that tough of a season. But I hope to play doubles."

Added one of her coaches, Dave Brown of the Port Huron Tennis House: "The thing she liked most about tennis was the camaraderie with her teammates. Hopefully, she'll be able to contribute and play this spring."

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ROAD TO RECOVERY: Port Huron Northern senior Kelsey Leveille, who recently had knee surgery, undergoes rehabilitation three times a week with physical therapist Maureen Muzzarelli of Orthopedic Associates in Port Huron. Leveille suffered the injury in a volleyball match. (Times Herald photos by MELISSA WAWZYSKO)



HAPPY FACE: Port Huron Northern senior Kelsey Leveille is keeping her spirits up during the long rehabilitation of the anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee.



Dave Brown

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Leveille planned to finish her high school career and not play collegiately, making her injury even more disheartening. She intends to go into the medical field, beginning her studies next fall at [Michigan State](#).

"It's sparked me interest in that kind of field," Leveille said. "Maureen's job, that would be cool to do."

For now though, she said she can't do "basically anything," needing help to get up the stairs, for example. Since it's her left leg, though, she can drive.

Still, Leveille went to every game after the operations, except for one match on the night of surgery.

Six days later, she was there for the final match of the season.

"I was captain, so I felt like I still needed to be there," she said. "If they had to bring me out in a wheelchair, I was going to be there."

Another one of Northern's top athletes, junior tennis/golf standout Patrick Cansfield, is undergoing rehab on an injured arm. The pair trade war stories from rehab during advanced placement chemistry class in third hour.

"We talk about how hard it is," Leveille said. "He couldn't write at school and just had to sit there and listen for a while.

"It's just something you take for granted."

- **Contact Matt Schoch at (810) 989-6288 or maschoch@gannett.com. View Schoch's blog at www.thetimesherald.com/sports**

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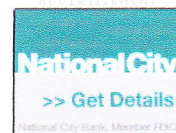
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