

March 9, 2010

<http://detnews.com/article/20100309/SPORTS07/3090314>

College wrestler with spinal injury improving at Saginaw hospital

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Buffalo, N.Y. -- A University at Buffalo wrestler is in serious condition at a Michigan hospital after having emergency surgery on his spinal cord.

Dan Bishop is alert and has regained feeling in his limbs at a hospital in Saginaw, the school announced in a release on Monday. He was hurt on Saturday while competing in a 125-pound semifinal match at the Mid-American Conference championships at Central Michigan University.

Bishop, a senior, has begun rehabilitation, and the initial prognosis is he has a chance to enjoy a complete recovery, the school said.

"The days and weeks ahead will determine more fully his functionality," the release said. "But doctors have indicated that he is ahead of their projections at this point."

The injury was considered life-threatening after Bishop had lost all feeling to his extremities.

Bishop had surgery after doctors determined he sustained a fracture between two vertebrae and damage to a major artery. Doctors fused the vertebrae and installed a metal plate and permanent screws to support Bishop's spine.

Bishop's parents are with him at the hospital. The wrestler, who is from Whitehall, N.Y., will remain in Saginaw until a trauma rehabilitation center is chosen for him to continue his rehab.

"My wife and I are staying here in Saginaw and will be bringing Danny home with us," his father, Norm Bishop said, noting the support he's received from school officials, family and friends. "It has just been phenomenal what people have done for us."

Buffalo coach Jim Beichner credited trainers and emergency officials at the meet for acting quickly after Bishop was hurt. He noted that hospital officials in Mount Pleasant also had the foresight to have Bishop transported to a regional trauma hospital in Saginaw, where the wrestler received specialized treatment.

"The Bishop family and all of us could not have asked for anything more in terms of care and consideration and consider it a complete blessing that Danny has the chance to walk again, considering the magnitude of the injury," Beichner said.

Bishop advanced to the finals with a medical forfeit and finished second in the tournament despite the injury. He finished the season with a 19-7 record, and recorded 51 career victories.

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