Injuries Can’t Stop the Grind

By: Lasherica Thornton

            In sports, especially football, injuries are bound to occur. In such occasions, athletes can choose to slouch around and give themselves a ‘pity party’ or to work hard to recover for the betterment of the team and themselves. Two Bruce High School Senior football players suffered tragic injuries but refused to let that stop the grind. JaDarrius Benson and Tyler Donovan have had to deal with the aftermath of their injuries while still contributing to the team and working towards recovery.

            Besides the physical effects of an injury, one’s emotional state is also influenced. When Benson first tore his ACL, he felt as if he was letting his teammates and coaches down. More recently, however, he has been handling this injury well. Donovan described having a broken wrist and pinky has a struggle, but he proclaims that he is pushing through the situation as best as he possibly can.

            With only one leg or one arm to work with, the boys both have experienced dramatic changes on and off of the football field. Since Benson is unable to play on Friday, he can only sit back and watch his teammates play; furthermore, he cannot walk normally or run.

            He said, “Since I can’t do any of those things, I have to work out harder.”

            For Donovan, his cast causes obstacles 24/7. He vividly discusses his difficulties on a daily basis.

            He said, “Off the field, I can hardly open a bottle or do much of anything by myself. When I put on my jacket my cast won’t fit through the cuffs. On the field I can’t tackle well or hold on due to my casted left-hand and torn labrum in my right shoulder.”

            Due to the season ending consequence of having a torn ACL, Benson pushes himself in therapy. He talked about the relentless work ethic that he must put forth.

            “The harder I work,” Benson said, “the quicker I can recover to continue playing football so that it won’t be completely over for me.”

            Donovan, on the other hand, has not begun therapy yet. Although surgery resulted in a screw in his wrist and a wire in his pinky bone, his season did not come to an end.

            Both Trojans still support their teammates despite the predicaments they are in; Donovan even contributes by playing. Benson goes to every game, cheers on the side lines, and advices them when they make a mistake on a play. Since kicking field goals and kick offs did not require the use of his hand and arm, Donovan played every game. Even more intensely, in the play-off clincher against Okolona, he played not only as kicker but also as linebacker.

            “Against Okolona, I played linebacker to the best of my ability, pushing through my agonizing injury,” he explained, “and also kicking field goals/kick offs, getting the job done.”

            Amidst the time of being hurt, Benson and Donovan have learned life lessons.

“Don’t take things for granted. It helped me become a more humbled person. It teaches me how to be a hard worker,” stated Benson.

“I’ve learned that there’s just going to be struggles you have to tough out and push through to get the job done,” stated Donovan.

For these faithful Trojan players, the painful tormenting injuries of a torn ACL and broken wrist and pinky cannot stop the grind.