

**The Mirror, Jensen Beach Florida, by Cathie Macaulay
September 4, 1985**

More than anything, he just wanted to appear normal.

20-year old North River Shores resident Scott Burrows has fought for something more than what he was given by a tragic twist of fate. The ex-kickboxing champion and college "walk-on" football player for Florida State University, who ended up a quadriplegic after a serious automobile accident, is taking his best shot at leading life without physical handicaps.

When he first was injured, doctors had little hope he would ever use his arms and legs again. But, over time he regained some use of his upper extremities giving him an opportunity to push a wheelchair. His perseverance eventually allowed him to trade in his wheelchair part time for a pair of Canadian (forearm) Crutches.

Scott's agenda doesn't allow him much time for interviews with reporters. Shortly, he's leaving for the University of Florida where he will share a house with some of his buddies. There they will help him with just a few some simple chores like cleaning and cooking because he still has trouble with his hands since the accident last November that paralyzed all four of his limbs.

Scott finally agreed to an interview. But catching up to him was still hard. Pulling himself up from the dregs of personal catastrophe seemed to be easier for him than giving directions to his parent's home in North River Shores.

"No problem" he said to a lost reporter who was in search of a person she thought was a handicapped youngster.

"Make it to the street and I'll meet you outside the house. Don't worry, we'll get you here," he said over the phone.

Scott is handicapped, but he uses it to the same advantage as a great golfer uses one. His is and advantage that comes from an undefeatable attitude toward life.

He recalls that last night November when the car his friend was driving flipped on an obscure Panama City road. He describes the incident with the same, bland emotion people save for reviewing yesterday's paper; old news.

The Accident - "I remember being in the back of the car, sitting up and suddenly, I thought, Oh, my God, I'm paralyzed." Scott was taken to an area hospital where he received the grim diagnosis: a cervical 6 - 7 spinal cord injury. That portion of the neck, where the nerves branch out and extend to the rest of the body, was severely damaged.

"He is considered a quad." Said his mother. "But, in my heart I prayed".

The once primed athlete dropped 40 pounds in the first month after the accident. With tubes in his throat and his limp body unable to convey any inner emotions, Scott lay in a hospital bed apart from the outside world, and a prisoner in his own restricted one.

"I wanted to scream, he remembers."

Scott has the support of family and friends, but he still had to meet the tasks of coming to grips with himself. His self analysis took it's toll and soon manifested three stomach ulcers.

Family Trauma: Scott's parents were at home when they received the news said his mother Joan.

The first sight of Scott lying in a hospital bed, nearly buried under life support equipment, was met with disbelief.

"When I saw him I couldn't even cry," she remembers. "I thought, this isn't Scott."

That night, in a nearby hotel, the impact hit her. The thought of her son and what he was going through, brought her to tears.

Support: Friends and family banded together. Joan moved north to be with her son, His father kept the family business going while maintaining a long-distance vigil. Their two other children took on more family chores.

"They grew up fast," said their mother.

Friends started a Scott Burrows Recovery Trust Fund.

That same unfailing optimism that made Scott so popular with his Martin County High School friends and college classmates kept his momentum forward.

"If you get depressed, it will only make it that much harder for you" he says.

Breakthrough: Scott had been in the hospital less than two months when his first breakthrough came. "Boom Boom Burrows," as he was known over the radio during the prime of his kick-boxing career, had managed to move his right toe.

Soon afterward, he was able to be fitted with a hand brace so he could learn how to feel himself.

Despite his marked improvement, there were more setbacks. Within the next several months, Scott developed pneumonia and suffered a pulmonary embolism.

Rehabilitation: When he was well enough Scott was flown to the Craig Rehabilitation Center in Englewood, Colorado where he would learn how to live in today's world with his handicap.

At the institute, Scott lived with a 26-year old ex-salesman who was paralyzed in a dirt-bike accident.

Later, the two roommates would team up to play wheelchair basketball in the gym.

The relaxed atmosphere at the rehabilitation center was a welcome change of climate for Scott who, by that time, was used to the sterile confines of a hospital.

Scott was encouraged to attend regular outings.

He also learned how to dress himself. Still, for him, there was no such thing as slipping on a shirt. Such a task could require as long as an hour to accomplish.

"You can't believe how hard it is to do all those things that you normally take for granted."

Despite frustration, Scott's momentum continued.

The pushing paid off. When he left Colorado for home with his father, he walked the entire length of the airport to reach the plane.

"It was something I had to do," Scott said.

Of the past year, Scott will only admit that "its been long."

The days of kick boxing may be over for him, but Scott Burrows remains a prize fighter.