

Smith sisters bond over summer recovery

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Senior Addi Smith and sophomore Kinsley Smith smile for their first day of school. In this picture, the sisters are almost one month post surgery. (Courtesy Photo)

Sisters are known to share things such as clothes, inside jokes, a lifelong bond and so much more. This summer, sisters Addi and Kinsley Smith shared injuries after senior Addi blew out her knee and sophomore Kinsley fractured her hip. Their sisterly bond was brought to a whole new level when they had their surgeries one day apart and experienced the recovery process side by side.

“[Kinsley] had surgery July 15, and I had surgery July 16. So our surgery was really back to back. We obviously have two very different injuries that we had and the surgery type that we had. She had a scope done, and I had grafts being done—like reconstruction. So it’s different, but then you’re going through rehab together, we’re going through PT (physical therapy) together. We can bond over not being able to do stuff,” Addi said.

Kinsley’s injury actually happened months before summer started. During a basketball game, she was getting boxed out by her opponent and was knocked down. Two months after getting her hip checked out and doing tests at Ortho Nebraska, Kinsley learned she had fractured her hip. Soon after the results, she visited a different doctor who told her

she tore her labrum and needed to have a scope surgery, which they scheduled for the summer.

“When I initially found out, I wanted to cry because I knew my season and summer was wasted. When I found out I fractured my hip, I knew I couldn’t play anymore. The worst part about not being able to play was watching my teammates play, but I still supported them,” Kinsley said.

While Kinsley has had injuries in the past, she still has a hard time seeing others playing their sport while she is still healing.

“The less obvious sides [of being injured] are what you’re going through mentally because it’s very hard on you. You have to watch other people do what you wish you could be doing and then you have to ask people for help, and that’s very hard,” Kinsley said.

Months after Kinsley’s injury, Addi was injured on June 29, her 18th birthday. She had a home softball game that had been delayed due to rain. After a few hours, there was one acceptable field open and a Kansas City team waiting to play, so the game was on. However, Addi kept slipping while running bases because the field was still too wet.

“In the last 10 minutes that I was playing, I was in left field, and a ball was hit towards the foul line. It was still toward fair territory, so I was still running. I was running towards the fly ball, when all of a sudden, I took a step. I felt the pop in my knee, and my knee buckled and I fell,” Addi said. “I was down on the ground and my knee was bent, and I couldn’t move it and it felt paralyzed by pain.”

Addi found out the results of her injury when an MRI revealed that her Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) was torn, her meniscus was torn, her kneecap was cracked, she had bone bruising, she had joint bleeding and she had a grade two strained Medial Collateral Ligament (MCL) and Posterior Cruciate Ligament (PCL). These injuries would require a mature understanding, but Addi was familiar with the process, having previously torn her right ACL twice.



Sophomore Kinsley Smith poses for a picture after surgery. While recovering from her surgery, Smith spent a lot of the time gluing rhinestones on books, Lego sets and other objects. (Courtesy Photo)

"I think obviously it can be hard on you when you find out that you're injured and you need surgery.

But I think I've been adjusting well because I have a past of going through ACL rehab and all that, so I adjusted better because I know what's gonna happen," Addi said.

Because of their injuries, Addi and Kinsley were limited to what activities they could do while they recovered after their surgeries. They would entertain themselves during physical therapy by either watching shows, crafting or playing video games.

"When we would do our PT at home, we would normally just put on something stupid: 'My Name Is Earl' or 'Honey Boo Boo' or 'Mama June: From Not To Hot.' But we do our PT or we bedazzle together because we couldn't really do a lot of stuff. And then one time after we were done with our PT and icing, we were just playing Brawl Stars, and we couldn't stop laughing at each other," Kinsley said.



Senior Addi Smith smiles for a picture right before her reconstruction surgery. Including this injury, Smith has now torn her ACL three different times. (Courtesy Photo)

Even though school is back in session, the sisters continue to bond over their injuries as it has limited their involvement in school activities and events.

"We decided not to go to homecoming and went out to dinner and just made a night of it because we can't dance, we can't jump, we can't really do these big activities. But just doing the little things make us happy," Addi said. "We both enjoy going to Dairy Queen afterwards (from PT) to get a cute little treat. Just stuff like that, checking up on each other, making sure we're both doing good."

Even though their shared experiences brought them even closer, the injury is harder for Addi since it's senior year and her last chance for activities.

"Being injured with Addi is horrible. I didn't like that she was injured and I was injured at the same time. But it was horrible because I didn't want her to be injured, especially for her senior year," Kinsley said.

While neither wants to see the other missing out, however, it is relieving for them to be side by side through their healing journeys.

"It was comforting to know I wasn't alone in recovery and that me and Kinsley could lean on each other through the process of recovering," Addi said. "I think Kinsley and I have a better understanding of each other because we were going through such a big recovery together."