

# Adrenaline rush

Adam Taliaferro will feel it when he leads Penn State out of the tunnel against Miami.

**By Dave George**  
*Palm Beach Post Staff Writer*

At first, staring up at a dreary September sky and the teary face of Joe Paterno, Adam Taliaferro couldn't move.

At last, with Saturday night's triumphant return to the football field upon him, it is virtually impossible for Penn State's human pep rally to hold still.

"The excitement that I felt last year the first time I ran out of the tunnel, I want to get that feeling back,"



**Who:** Miami at Penn St.

**When:** 8 p.m. Saturday

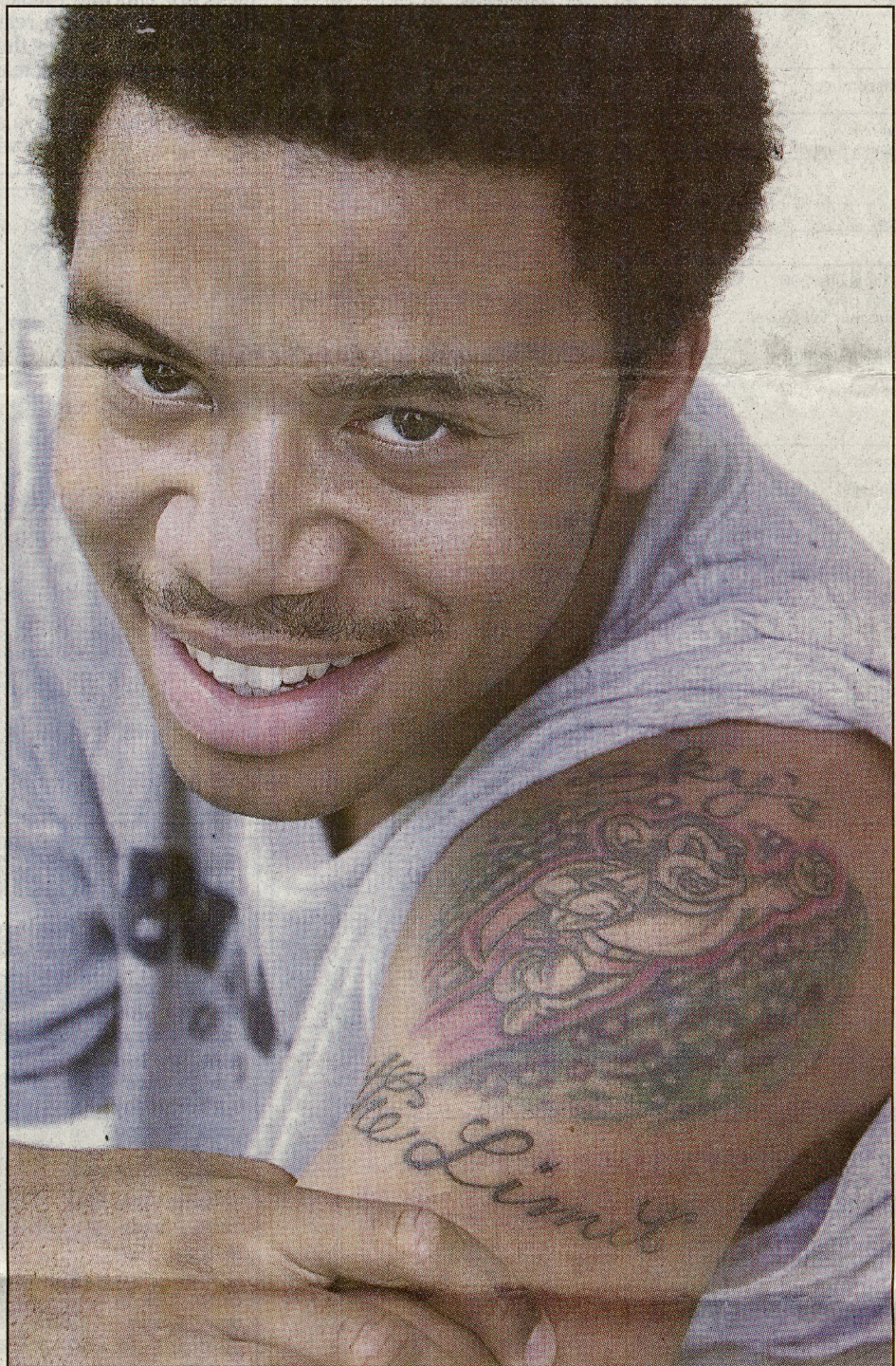
**TV:** WPBF-25, WPLG-10

said Taliaferro, who won't play football again but plans to lead the Nittany Lions into Beaver Stadium for their season-opening game with No. 2 Miami.

Incredibly, that wave of adrenaline in the stadium tunnel is the only sensation he has yet to regain since a devastating injury at Ohio State on Sept. 23. Taliaferro's fifth cervical vertebra was crushed while making a tackle, raising the dark curtain of paralysis, but his spinal column was bruised and not severed, offering at least a slim hope that the barrier might some day come down.

"When I woke up in the hospital, I realized it was pretty bad," Taliaferro said earlier this week, "but my parents and doctors never told me there was a chance I might not walk again."

In a way, this whole story is about chance, about opportunities lost and gained for no conceivable reason. In Taliaferro's case, a promising college football career as a freshman cor-



PAT LITTLE/The Associated Press

Adam Taliaferro displays his tattoo of Mighty Mouse and the words 'Sky's The Limit.'

Please see **TALIAFERRO, 10B**

## More college football

■ **USF loses in final seconds:** Field goal lifts N. Illinois. **9B**

■ **Karen Crouse:** Voters owe Oklahoma. **9B**

■ **Homecoming:** Pruett returns to Swamp. **10B**



# Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

## SUNDAY

ONE OF AMERICA'S GREAT NEWSPAPERS

### The college try



Lake Fong/Post-Gazette

**PENN STATE'S** Adam Taliaferro, above, who is recovering from a paralyzing injury from last season, leads the Nittany Lions into Beaver Stadium for their opener against Miami last night. Penn Staters were hoping Taliaferro's emotional return to the sideline would boost the Lions against the heavily-favored Hurricanes.

**PITT WINS ITS HOME-OPENER AT HEINZ FIELD OVER EAST TENNESSEE**

**WEST VIRGINIA SPRINTS TO AN EARLY LEAD BUT WILTS AT BOSTON COLLEGE**



Penn State vs. Miami

# HEART OF A LION



JOE HERMITT / OF THE PATRIOT-NEWS



# Taliaferro returns in storybook fashion

BY DAVID JONES  
OF THE PATRIOT-NEWS

## STATE COLLEGE

**T**he scoreboard flashed the word "BELIEVE."

All in plain, white capital letters, but isolated in small type on a vast background of blue.

Moments later, Adam Taliaferro, the Penn State defensive back felled and paralyzed for a month by a hit in last year's Ohio State game, bounced out of the tunnel at Beaver Stadium to waves of roars from 108,000 fans on hand for the Nittany Lions' season opener against Miami.

As flashbulbs winked by the thousands, Taliaferro bounded up and down on legs that once could not move, waved to the crowd with arms that once were limp.

Then, as if just to prove he could, Taliaferro broke into a halting jog past throngs of news and television photographers and pogoed to near midfield, waving his hands up to incite the crowd.

Before the entrance, a 30-second short was shown on the jumbo screen atop the south stadium addition, showing Taliaferro grimacing as he endured therapy last winter. After the grimace, came a smile.

Obviously, he believed.



Adam Taliaferro, above and left, made a dramatic return to Beaver Stadium last night before the Penn State-Miami football game. Taliaferro, a defensive back who was paralyzed for a month in last September's game against Ohio State, bounded and jogged his way onto the field ahead of the Nittany Lions.

MICHAEL FERNANDEZ / OF THE PATRIOT-NEWS



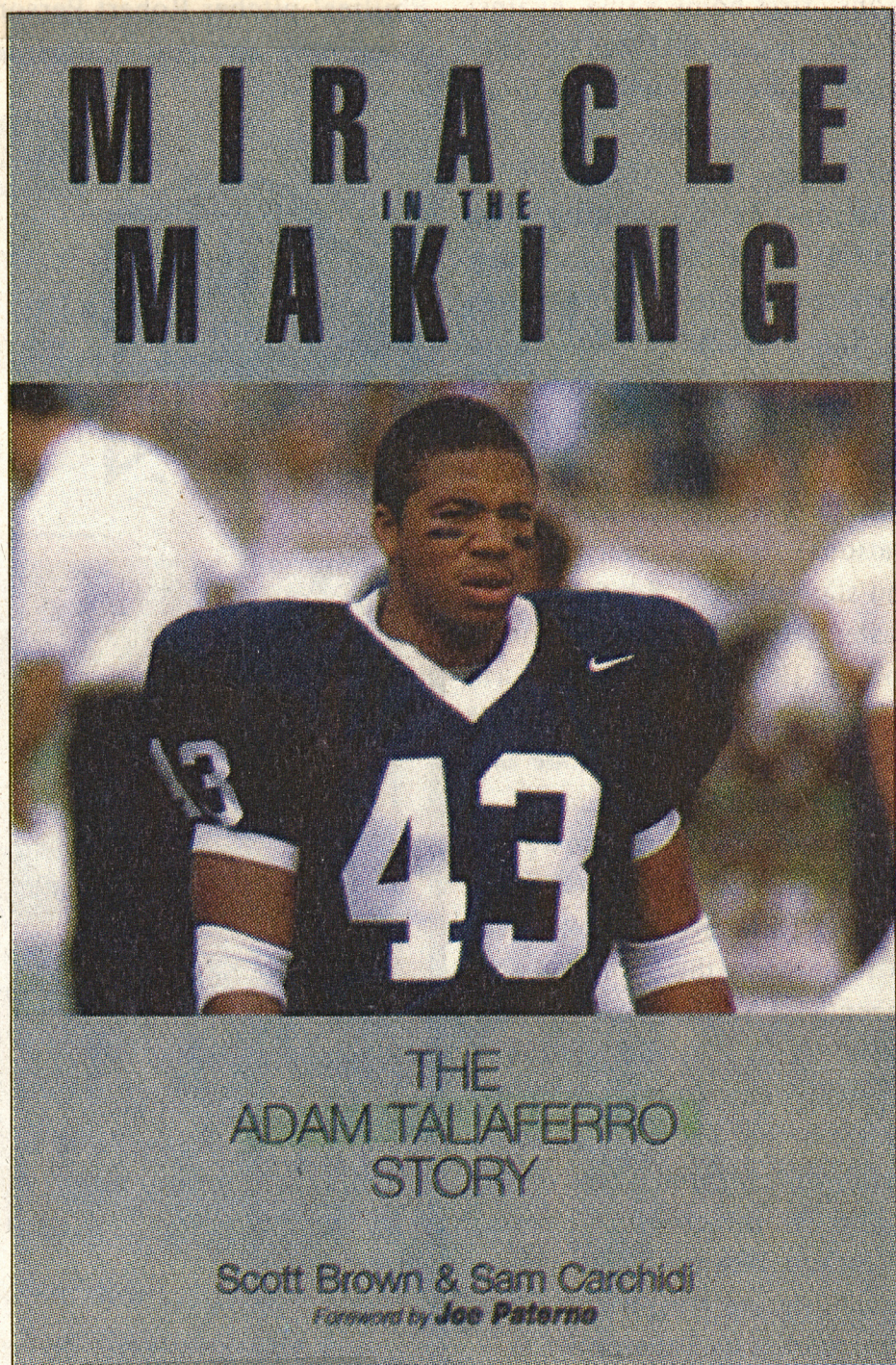
# Authors describe Adam's miracle

By Donald Hunt  
Tribune Staff Writer

Adam Taliaferro should be an inspiration for anybody who's down and thinking about not getting up; reach down a little further and pull yourself up. That's exactly what he did.

A year ago, Taliaferro seem to have it all: intelligence, an easy-going personality, and great athletic talent. But the Penn State freshman cornerback, paralyzed after tackling an Ohio State running

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back, didn't look as if he would ever walk again.

However, he has defied the odds and can not only walk, but also run. That was evident when he led Penn State's football team out of the tunnel in the Nittany Lions' first home game, against Miami. In fact, that was the only bright spot of the day. The Lions were clobbered by the Hurricanes.

**Miracle in the Making: The Adam Taliaferro Story** (Triumph Books, \$16.95) written by Sam Carchidi *Philadelphia Inquirer* sportswriter, and Scott Brown *Florida Today* sportswriter, highlights Taliaferro's promising start as a National Honor Society student and star athlete at South Jersey's Eastern High, his introduction to college life, devastating sports injury, grueling rehab, and immediate return to Penn State as a young man with big dreams.

As much about the power of family and community love as it is about Taliaferro's triumph over extreme odds, the book hails his parents (Andre and Addie Taliaferro), who found themselves raising a promising athlete in the shadow of celebrity and facing potential tragedy.

The book credits Thomas Jefferson Hospital and Magee Rehabilitation Hospital for their great work with Taliaferro.

Sports celebrities who visited

him at Magee included Kansas City Chiefs' head coach Dick Vermeil, former Sixers' forward Tyrone Hill, Pat Croce, ex-Sixers' backup center Todd MacCulloch, Sixers' rookie guard Craig "Speedy" Claxton, former Flyers' goalie Bernie Parent, Phillies' pitcher Robert Person,

and Eagles' quarterback Donovan McNabb.

He received a moving letter from Christopher Reeve, who played Superman. Reeve became a quadriplegic following a 1995 horse-riding accident.

The book is laced with a number of photos, including one

of Taliaferro with Bill Cosby during a Temple game at the Liacouras Center.

Although Taliaferro will never play football again, he's touched a lot of people.

**NOTES:** Joe Paterno, Penn State head coach, wrote the foreword for the book.