

What's the rush?

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When South Carolina running back Marcus Lattimore was tackled by Tennessee linebacker Herman Lathers and defensive back Eric Gordon, it became obvious something had gone wrong with Lattimore.

It was gruesome to watch on TV. His left leg was pointing in different directions. Lattimore had gone through extensive knee reconstruction in 10 months to be able to play this year. That occurred on his other knee, and he knew this one was season ending.

At that point it didn't matter which team you pull for. It didn't matter how much you hate South Carolina.

No one likes to see what happened to Lattimore happen on a football field.

"Oh, man, it just absolutely took my breath away. I was watching it and it just breaks my heart. I just hurt for him and his family and teammates. This is a guy who represents all the good things that college football should be about."

That quote wasn't from South Carolina Coach Steve Spurrier. It was from Clemson Coach Dabo Swinney, South Carolina's most hated rival and vice versa.

Marcus Lattimore is special. The night before the Tennessee game, Lattimore spoke to his team. One of the things he told them was to always play every play as if it is your last one.

As medical people worked on Lattimore, players from both teams came out on the field and

surrounded him. Many took a knee in prayer.

The news was not good although not as bad as was painted in social media outlet, Twitter. He did not have a broken femur as tweeted.

Doctors reset a dislocated kneecap, but he has multiple ligament damage, the extent of which has not been released,

Hopefully, Lattimore will take a redshirt year to rehab and play two years from now. He was projected as a high round NFL draft choice. These type injuries will lower his stock.

“He is such a good young man,” South Carolina Coach Steve Spurrier said. “Good things are going to happen to Marcus. I don’t know exactly where or how, but good things are going to happen to Marcus Lattimore.”

Lattimore crossed my mind when I was writing in the LP Field pressbox after the Titans game Sunday.

There were three or four youth football teams playing each other on the field, after the Titans game. I don’t know their ages, but they looked like ants from the press box. I guessed they couldn’t have been more than 10 years old.

Do parents need to subject kids that young or younger to football? It is a contact sport.

At any age, injuries are going to happen. Pediatricians tell you a child’s bone structure is not fully developed until much later, putting them more at risk for injuries.

You also should be cognizant that kids are subjected to concussions and we are seeing what

they have done to college and NFL players.

Let them play other sports, like soccer, swimming, tennis, basketball, golf until they are fully developed and then they can choose to play football or not.

Too many youth coaches and parents live out their failed athletic youth through their children.

We saw what happened to Lattimore. It could happen to your child. Think about it.

What is the rush for them to compete in football? What if that was your son writhing on the field instead of Marcus Lattimore? Is it worth it?

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