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MUSICIAN FIGHTS BACK FROM CRASH



DETERMINED: Musician Jack Gibbons

A GIFTED pianist is rebuilding his career after narrowly cheating death in an car crash.

Jack Gibbons, who first dazzled concert audiences in Oxford when he was just 15, is trying to regain movement in his left arm which was badly smashed in a head-on collision at Hopcroft's Holt near Steeple Aston. Mr Gibbons, 39, was trapped in wreckage for almost an hour before fire-fighters cut him free.

Surgeons at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, removed his spleen and operated on other injuries including a broken sternum and ribs, and smashed jaw and cheek bones. He was in intensive care for three days.

His older brother, Tom, who is vicar of

By Phil Clee

Radley, near Abingdon, said it was a miracle he had survived the crash.

"If you had seen the car, you would never have believed anyone could have got out alive," he said.

"The fact that he has the movement he has is a tribute to the doctors and staff."

When the accident happened, Mr Gibbons was returning from visiting family in Wales to his home at Duns Tew which he shares with his wife, Diane, who is also his manager.

Two other men suffered minor injuries in the crash.

Mr Gibbons, who is now out of bed and has some movement in his left arm, was

showing "steely determination" to regain full use of the limb, his brother said.

He said: "He knows it will be a long haul, but he's setting himself exercises. He has some sideways movement of his elbow and can move his fingers as if he's playing the piano. The major thing is to get his hand and fingers working again and keep encouraging him. But to have got to the stage he's at just a week after a near-fatal accident is quite remarkable.

"We'll certainly hear him playing again, I'm sure of that. Nothing surprises me about Jack, he's such a strong spirit."

Mr Gibbons, formerly of Farndon Road, north Oxford, is considered to be one of the leading performers of the works of Gershwin.