
Sports Concussion: Policies, Procedures and Preparation

Michael C. Koester, MD, ATC

April 19th, 2011

Chair, NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee

Chair, OSAA Medical Aspects of Sports Committee

Director, Slocum Sports Concussion Program

Slocum Center for Orthopedics and Sports Medicine

Eugene, OR

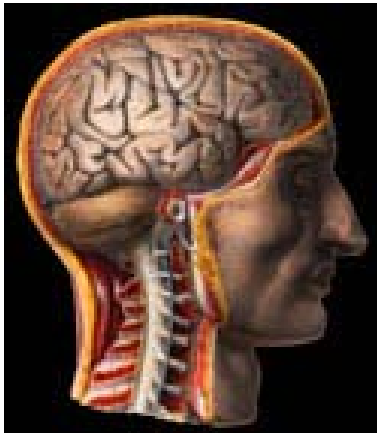


Disclosures

- I am a paid consultant for the Oregon Center for Applied Science, Inc. (ORCAS). They developed the ACTive concussion education program for youth and high school coaches. They are currently developing educational programs for parents and athletes.
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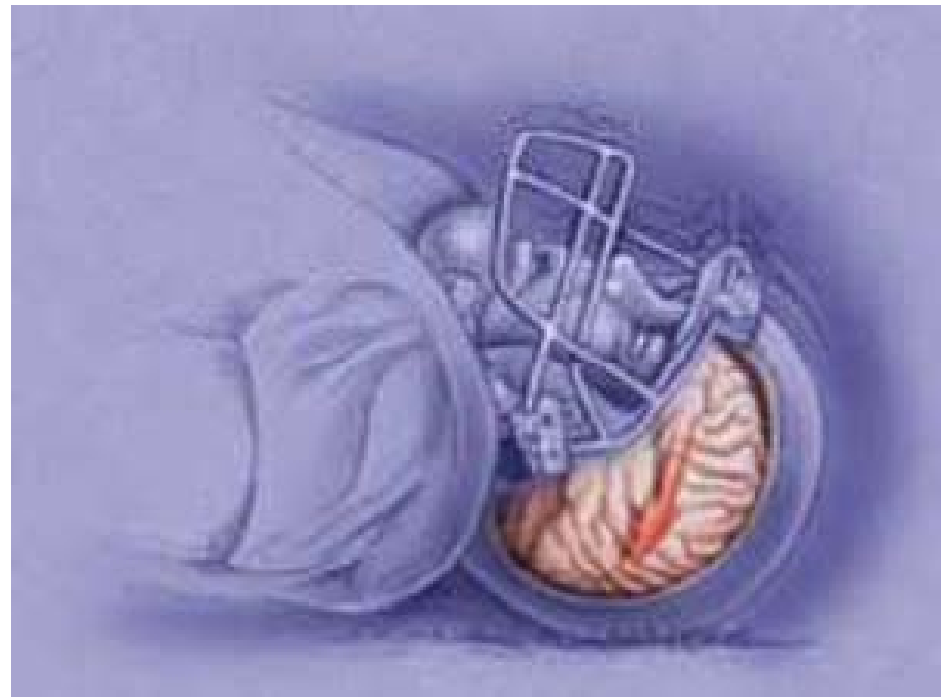
Sports Concussions: Return to Play and Legal Liability

Michael C. Koester, MD, ATC
Orthopedic Healthcare Northwest
Eugene, OR
OADA Annual Meeting
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Liability Issues

- Great potential to “trickle down” to the high school level
 - Large numbers of injuries
 - Relatively poor medical care
 - Few schools have evaluation or return to play protocols



2008-OSAA- A step ahead of the game

- Any athlete...with a concussion...shall not be permitted to return... on that same day.
- No return until... “no longer experiencing post-concussive symptoms, and a medical release form signed by an *appropriate healthcare professional*”



“Max’s Law” 2009

- Mandatory coach education
- Player must be removed from play if “exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion”
- Cannot return to play that day
- Cannot return to play until asymptomatic and cleared to return by a “health care professional”



Potential for litigation just a few mouse clicks away.....

“At Burg, Simpson, Eldredge, Hersh, & Jardine, P.C., our brain injury lawyers represent brain injury victims caused during high school sports in Colorado, Wyoming and nationwide. We have the resources and experience with complex brain injury lawsuits to fully assess your injuries and take your case to a jury. **If you or your loved one has suffered a brain injury while playing high school sports, please email or call us today.**”

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ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS AT LAW

2010 – 2011 NFHS Rule Book Changes on Concussion



- Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. (Please see NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion).
 - Approved by NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee – October 2009
 - Approved by the NFHS Board of Directors – October 2009
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2010 – 2011 NFHS Rule Book

Changes on Concussion

Suggested Management:

- No athlete should return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
 - Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate healthcare professional that day.
 - Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
 - After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms.
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Pennsylvania- 2011

Ex-Highlands football player sues district over concussions

By Valley News Dispatch

Thursday, April 7, 2011

A former Highland High School football player has sued the school district, **claiming he was allowed to play despite suffering three concussions.**

As a result, Zachary Alt's federal lawsuit states, he sustained traumatic brain injuries that continue to cause him serious problems. He also claims the head injuries **left him unable to concentrate on his studies**, but the **district "intentionally overlooked Alt's academic and attendance issues so as to pass him through from tenth grade until graduation."**

Oregon- 2011

Riverdale student hit by balls at lacrosse practice sues district, Oregon Girls Lacrosse Association

Published: Tuesday, April 12, 2011, 3:03 PM (Oregonian)

A student who was hit in the head and face with balls at lacrosse practice in 2009 has filed a \$435,000 lawsuit against Riverdale School District and the Oregon Girls Lacrosse Association.

While practicing a passing drill, she was hit on the top left side of her head by a ball thrown by Siobhan Sanders, assistant coach.

She sat down, but about **15 minutes later, and without being evaluated by an “appropriately trained health care professional,” Sanders encouraged and allowed Rozek to return to practice, according to the complaint.** Almost immediately, she was struck in the face by another ball thrown by Sanders.

Not Just a Football Problem

Injury rate per 100,000
player exposures

■ Football	77
■ Boys' ice hockey	63
■ Boys' Lacrosse	47
■ Girls' soccer	33
■ Girls' Lacrosse	31
■ Field hockey	27
■ Wrestling	24
■ Boys' basketball	22
■ Boys' soccer	21
■ Girls' basketball	19
■ Softball	16
■ Cheer	14
□ High School RIO 09-10	



Coach Education

On-line training for coaches

- NFHS/CDC Heads Up collaboration
 - Coaches, officials, administrators, parents
 - www.nfhslearn.com
 - Additional resources
 - 150,000+ courses
- **ACTive** (Athletic Concussion Training using Interactive Video Education)
 - Proven effective through research
 - www.activecoach.orcasinc.com



National Federation of State
High School Associations



Concussion in the Classroom

Academic Accommodations

- ❑ No gym class
 - ❑ Stay home/half-days
 - ❑ Naps/rest time
 - ❑ Extended time to complete assignments
 - ❑ Extended time to take tests
 - ❑ Classroom “buddy”
 - ❑ Allow time to visit school nurse for treatment of headaches, if needed
 - ❑ Written instructions for homework
 - ❑ Repeat and present new information slowly
 - ❑ Share progress and difficulties
-

Concussion in the Classroom

CDC- Basics

Heads Up to Schools: Know Your Concussion ABCs

- ❑ Material for teachers, counselors, school nurses, and parents



<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/schools.html>

Concussion in the Classroom

REAP

**Reduce, Educate,
Accommodate, Pace**

Emphasizes team approach
to concussion management
in school setting

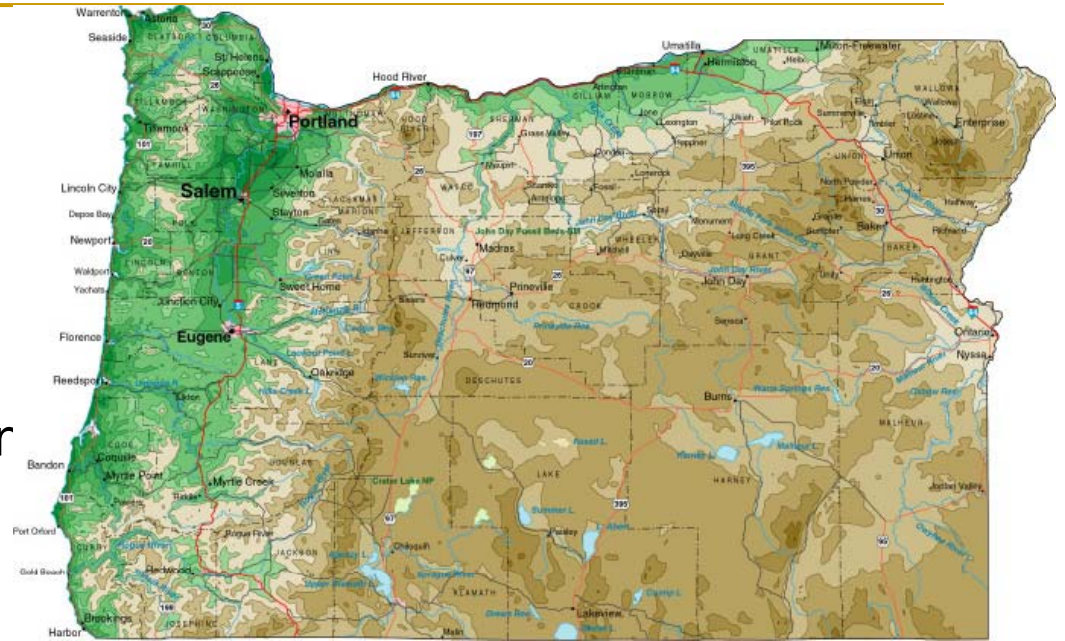
Developed in Colorado

<http://cokidswithbraininjury.com/mild-tbi-concussion-info/>



OCAMP

- Coalition of Oregon Professionals
 - Max's Law Implementator guide
- Oregon has regional TBI teams in schools
- Goal is to help schools properly educate students with concussion
- Find the professionals in your communities
 - TBI support teams
 - Speech pathologists
 - Community TBI resources



Prevention

- “Concussion prevention” has become the “holy grail” for sports equipment marketers
 - ❑ Soccer head gear
 - ❑ Girl’s Lacrosse head gear/helmets
 - ❑ Pole vaulting helmet
- New football helmets, soccer head pads, mouth guards- NO PROVEN PROTECTION FROM CONCUSSION!!
- OSAA MASC “helmet statement”
 - ❑ No helmet is superior to another
 - ❑ Must be properly fit
 - ❑ No initiating contact with helmet!



Illegal helmet contact

The “act of initiating contact with the helmet against an opponent.”

- **Butt blocking** is an act by an offensive or defensive player who initiates contact against an opponent who is not a ball carrier with the front of his helmet.
- **Face tackling** is an act by a defensive player who initiates contact with a ball carrier with the front of his helmet.
- **Spearing** is an act by an offensive or defensive player who initiates contact against any opponent with the top of his helmet.
 - Over 60% of all concussions result from head to head contact!!!

POE in 2011 HS Football Rules Book!!!!

What to do?

- Max's Law Implementation Guide
 - Sample policies and procedures
 - Don't forget academics!!!
- Coach education mandated and compliance reviewed
 - What's actually happening
- Partner with a physician or other health care provider
 - Athletes must follow RTP steps
 - Possible OSAA Return to Play Form
 - Similar concept to wrestling skin clearance and "Sports Physical" forms



Max's Law: Concussion Management Implementation Guide for School Administrators



RECOGNIZE :: REMOVE :: REFER :: RETURN



Pennywi\$e???

- Can you afford NOT to have an athletic trainer?
 - ❑ Only member of athletic dept that will save you money
 - ❑ Partner with local hospitals, physicians, or insurance companies/employers to make it work
 - ❑ Lead member of “Concussion Team”

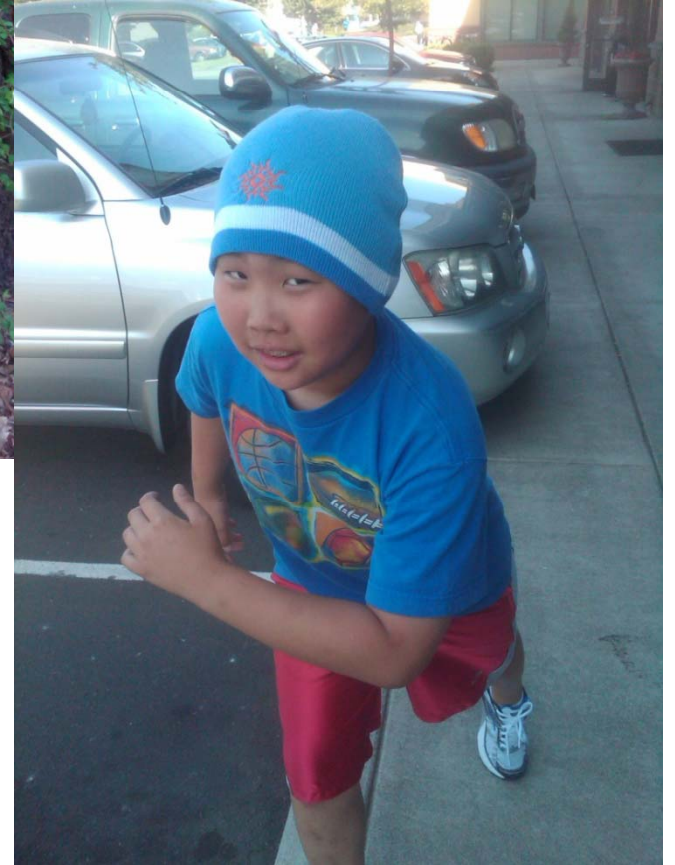


Conclusions

- Educate
 - ❑ Everyone dealing with young athletes must be aware of the signs, symptoms, and ramifications of concussions
 - ❑ Coach education a must!!
- Communicate
 - ❑ Everyone must know role
- Mandate or Legislate?
 - ❑ Concussion management policies must be in place at every level of sport
 - ❑ **If you don't do it, someone will do it for you!!**



**Thank
you!!**



michael.koester@slocumcenter.com

Cell 541-359-5936