

TRAINING ROOM TIPS

FINDING AN ATHLETIC TRAINER

by Michael G. Popson, A.T.C.

Whenever individuals participate on any level of competition whether it be recreational or competitive, there is always the risk of injury and some unseen danger that accompanies it. Unfortunately, there are only a few coaches that know how to handle everyone of these situations, which puts coaches and injured athletes at risk. There is only a small percentage of coaches that don't have to worry about caring for injuries and dangers! Why—because they have the medical support of Athletic Trainers!

From the September '89 Issue of *Bigger Faster Stronger*, every coach; should have an idea of what an Athletic Trainer is and what they do. We must now address the question of; Finding an Athletic Trainer? This is a very difficult question for most to answer, due to the fact that coaches don't know where to look for an Athletic Trainer.

The coaches most at risk are those that participate on the high school level, youth, recreational, industrial leagues, private clubs, small colleges, junior colleges and semi-professional levels due to the large population each possess. The professional sports teams and major colleges/universities have the luxury of possessing Certified Athletic Trainers along with Sports and Medical Physicians at their disposal to care for injuries suffered by their athletes. Besides having medical coverage the main difference between these two groups of sports is the athlete to coach ratio is so grossly different, (Ex. Major University Football staff vs. High School Football staff).

The difficulty is where to find this paramedical professional to assist your sports programs. Unfortunately, there is no listing of Athletic Trainers in your yellow pages. But the best and most accessible site to find Athletic Trainers conducting Sports Therapy Programs are listed in the yellow pages under Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine Clinics. Clinical Trainers serve the community in which they work and are the best connections for more advanced medical coverage. Providing the vital link between your sports programs and the medical community. They can help educate you and your staff in Injury Awareness and Treatment, plus put you in touch with physicians and physical therapists for advanced rehabilitation treatment for your athletes. As you can see, the Clinical Trainer has a much more diverse back up system available to them than others,

but this is just the first step in establishing a comprehensive program. Your school, team or club with the assistance of an Athletic Trainer can establish it's own Student Trainers Program to care more efficiently for your sports programs. Students with an interest in sports and medicine, with the Certified Athletic Trainer's direction and the coaching staff's support, can be vitally important to a teams health and welfare.

If you don't seek any outside sources for assistance with athletic injuries or liabilities, then you better obtain some working knowledge that will help you give proper treatment to your injured athletes such as; American Red Cross – Standard First Aid and C.P.R. training, Cramer classes in taping and evaluation of injuries, or having parents with credentials volunteer their time as your physician, nurse, therapist or trainer. Having the Emergency Medical Professionals at game events is good, but the majority of the injuries occur during the week in practice and that's where you need some advanced knowledge to handle emergency situations.

Until the National Athletic Trainer's Association, Inc. can lobby every state legislature to mandate Certified Athletic Trainers in every high school; which is our goal for a quality program, the best option for limited but comprehensive coverage is through the Clinical Athletic Trainer. The cost of these services vary from clinic to clinic. However, the cost of the program is really insignificant when you compare the service and the peace of mind you will receive for your dollar. Ask the question: can you place a dollar value on an athletes health and well being? By possessing something as valuable as an Athletic Trainer's Service you can cut your losses in half and probably relieve that old pressure of "Can he, or Can't he Play?" Ask your Athletic Trainer!

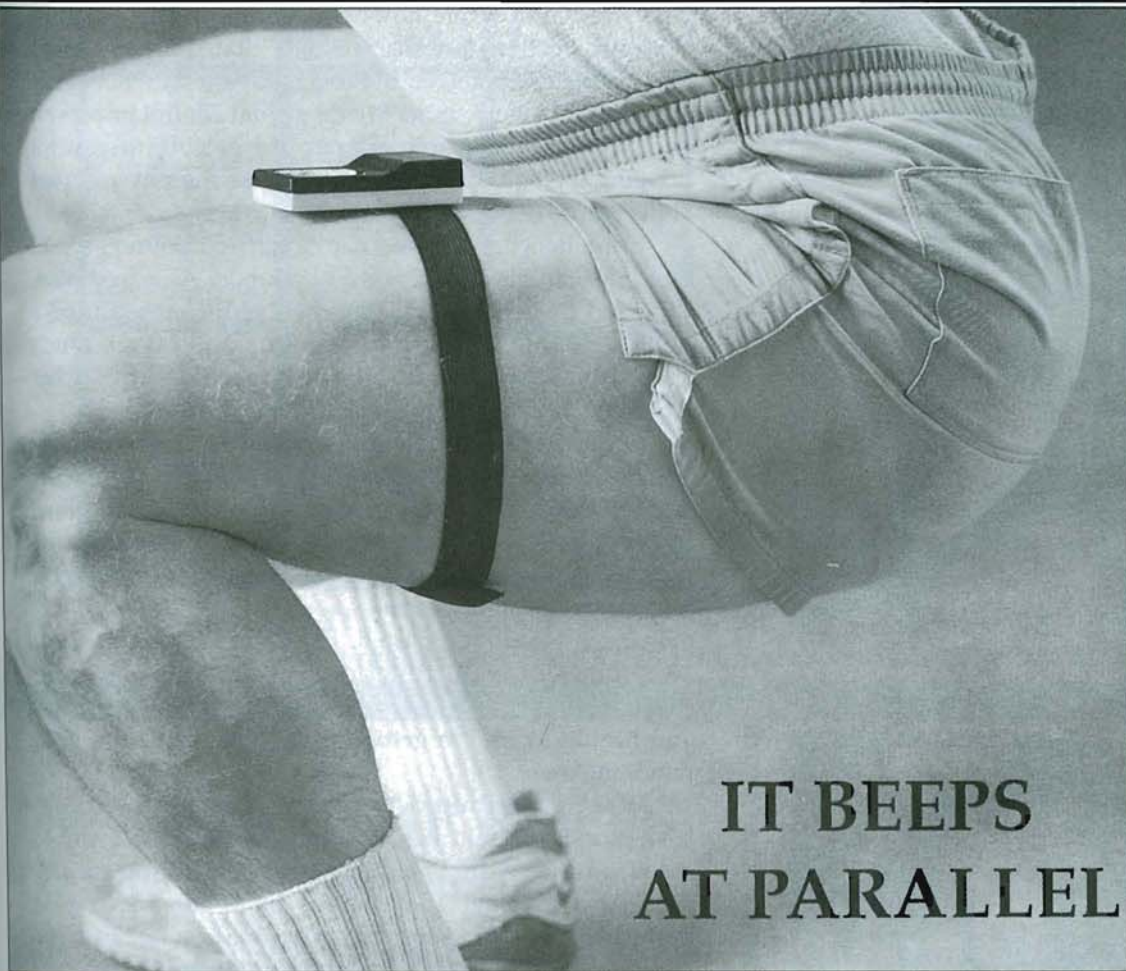
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