

November 4, 1981

# NEWS

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\*\*\*\*\*Sports clinic offers unique treatment facility for injured high school football players.

DALLAS--Sometimes caught in the crunch of football at high school games are the highly vulnerable, fragile knees of the players.

One in every three high school and college players will suffer from a knee injury, according to orthopedic surgeon Dr. Richard Jones.

Jones, associate professor at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas and himself a former college football player at the University of Florida, is involved in a unique treatment program for injured high school players in the Dallas area. A Saturday Morning Sports Clinic, held weekly at Dallas Independent School District's Forester Field House until the end of November, combines efforts of medical school residents under Jones' supervision and DISD athletic trainers.

Players injured in DISD football and volleyball games and practice sessions are sent to the clinic for special evaluation and treatment and, with the presence of the doctors, faster evaluation and treatment of injuries is assured.

DISD Head Athletic Trainer Eddie Lane says he appreciates the involvement of the medical staff. "Besides getting an early evaluation of athletic injuries, we're expanding the knowledge of the athletic trainer by working with the physicians and we're expanding the knowledge of the orthopedic surgeon on the capabilities and limitations of the athletic trainer."

Since, in some areas, sports medicine occupies 20 percent of the workload of an orthopedic surgeon, Jones finds the clinic to be a valuable educational facility for the residents specializing in orthopedics.

Jones and Lane both agree that numbers of player injuries have decreased in the past few years because of better rules in high school football. Until 1978, serious neck injuries were on the increase as players used their heads to block and tackle. "Helmets were not designed to be used as an offensive weapon," says Lane. "They were designed to protect the skull and brain, not as a mechanical aid to blocking and tackling. Today it's unethical to teach the use of the head and helmet as a primary point of contact in blocking and tackling."

Rules have also been added to the books regarding blocking below the waist in order to reduce the number of knee injuries.

But trauma to the knee is still very common, says Jones. "Since the knee is the link between trunk and ground, consequences are significant if damage to ligaments is not repaired and if the knee doesn't heal after an injury. With unstable ligament-supporting structures, the knee's gliding surface can wear out and the players can develop arthritis."

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