

# On Field Management of the Critically Injured Athlete

Preparation and Planning

Success is where preparation and opportunity  
meet

*Bobby Unser*

# Hello and Thank you



- 15th Annual Cutting Edge Concepts in Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine Seminar
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  - Dr. Randy Schwartzberg

## Collaborators and Supporters

- Darryl Conway, MA, AT, ATC (UM)
- David Berry, PhD ATC (SVSU)
- MD State Police Aviation Command
- Univ of MD Shock Trauma Center Staff

## Introduction

- Certified Athletic Trainer (1997)
- EMT-B (97), I(06) Paramedic (10)
- Alpine Ski Patroller (1999)
- Certified Flight Paramedic (2013)
- Certified Tactical Paramedic (2017)

## Positions

- Maryland State Police Aviation Command
- Liberty Mountain Ski Patrol
- Rotational ATC, US Ski and Snowboard



Why are we here?



**KNEES  
ACCOUNT  
FOR 50%  
OF ALL  
FOOTBALL  
INJURIES.**



# This is why we are here



Are you prepared  
for the ultimate  
emergency?

Ryan Shazier,  
Pittsburgh Steelers



We don't just act on the field....



# Conflict of Interest



- The views expressed in these slides and today's discussion are mine
- My views may not be the same as the views of my colleagues

ALWAYS use local protocols and treatments or interventions approved by your medical director or employer.



# Disclosures



- I do not have financial or other associations with the manufacturers of commercial products, suppliers of commercial services, or commercial supporters.
- No Conflict of Interest or Financial relationships
- There was no commercial support for this activity.
- The views expressed in these slides and the today's discussion are mine

Participants must use discretion when using the information contained in this presentation


# Overview of Presentation



At the conclusion of this morning:

- Explain how a pre-hospital inter-professional healthcare team works collaboratively to improve patient outcomes
- Discuss risk management, catastrophic injury planning, & crisis management principles.
- Discuss principles for the effective development of various policies & procedures
- Describe effective strategies for the management of an active threat scenario





**“You are not studying or practicing to  
pass the exam ...**

**You are preparing for the day when you  
are the only thing between the athlete  
and the grave!”**

This is why we are here....



# Why this topic?



- ATs 1st on the scene
- Ability to improve patient outcomes
- Changes in equipment
- Changes in EMS policies
- Developing Interprofessional relationships are key during critical events



This is why we are here....



# Why this topic?



“As the profession of athletic training continuously evolves and ATs practice in various settings, these healthcare providers must have the ability to maintain a high level of preparation and proficiency in all aspects of immediate and emergency care. This ability is critical to minimizing risk to the injured participant.” - BOC, 2015

**HEP HEP**



CHALLENGER  
IN FIGURE SKA

**ERSTE**







**“If it is predictable ...  
It is manageable!”**

# What might we see?



Traumatic Injury

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Environmental Exposure

Spectator or Officials event

School Shooting

Bus Accident

Terrorist Attack

# Risk Management



- **RM Concerns**

- Policies / Procedures
- Supervision
- Documentation
- Training
- Corrective Actions

- **Topics to Discuss-**

- PPE
- Emergency Plans
- Medications
- Medical Coverage
- Concussion Policies
- Special Populations
- Medical DQ
- Team Physicians
- Environmental Issues





# Pre-Event Planning



The Athletic Trainers event doesn't start of game day

- Creating or reviewing EAPs
  - For every facility and every type of event
- Develop and train with inter-professional partners
  - Meet with event medical team and local facilities
- Purchase, practice and prepare equipment



com

FOAM PIT RESCUES, TRICKY FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

41 Action NEWS

5:10 87°

# Inter-Professional Practice



## •Why is this Important?

Facilitate & optimize  
collaborative *patient-centered*  
*care* that is current,  
competent, compassionate,  
efficient, effective, and safe!

Reduce service duplication and  
minimize unnecessary  
interventions while enhancing  
clinical effectiveness!

**Increased engagement!**



# Inter-Professional Practice



## Educate-

- What is the education level & capabilities of EMS personnel?
- Educate fire / EMS personnel about the education & training of ATCs
- EMS capabilities vs ATC skills / capabilities
- EMS protocols
- Joint training opportunities

## Equipment-

- What equipment does EMS have? Sports Medicine have?
- What equipment is available at an event?
- What equipment is necessary for what emergencies?
- What equipment will be used (e.g. Splints, spineboard, etc.)?



# Event Planning



## Questions-

- Just because you hold a certification, are you the best to perform the procedure?
- What are the qualifications of those executing the plan?
- Who is going to be involved in carrying out the EAP at all different times?

## “Pit Crew Concepts”

Cervical Spine Injury

CPR

Other

What personnel are involved in your management of emergency situations?

Before EMS arrives?

Unstable patient?

After EMS arrives?

Visiting Team



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88 MPH

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# Event Planning



## Questions-

- Are your coaches, strength coaches, & other staff prepared to participate?
- Is a coach, strength coach, etc. who has trained with ATCs better suited than a MD who never trains?
- Who travels with injured athlete?
- Will activity be adequately supervised when you leave?
- What Facilities will be utilized?
  - Level 1 Trauma Center
  - Level 2 Trauma Center
  - Speciality Center
- Aeromedical vs ground

**WHO HAS THE CAR KEYS ????????**



# Medical Time Outs



***“Time Out”*** system for  
athletic health care

Convene the health care  
professionals who  
comprise the emergency  
response team

Pre-event checklist

- EAP
- Roles & responsibilities
- Communication
- Equipment & resources
- Transportation plan
- Other / Miscellaneous



# Roles during an Event



- Immediate care
- Equipment retrieval
- EMS activation
- Direction of EMS to scene
  - Meeting EMS if Not on Scene
- Communication
  - Family, Spectators, Media
- Other
  - Gates, Family, Spectators,

**“Athletic teams excel because they practice! It is not conceivable that personnel responsible for emergency management cannot practice and expect to excel at the time of an emergency”**

# Recommendations



- AED
- Airway Management
- Bleeding Management
- Splints
- Spine Board (and head Immobilization)
- Heat Illness equipment
- Medications
  - Epi, Albuterol, Narcan
- EAP will “provide directions” but is not the exact final road map
- EAP must be flexible“
  - adjust on the fly”
- A written EAP, will become your minimum standard of care



# Closing



**“In times of stress, you will always fall to the level of your training, not rise to the level of your expectations”**

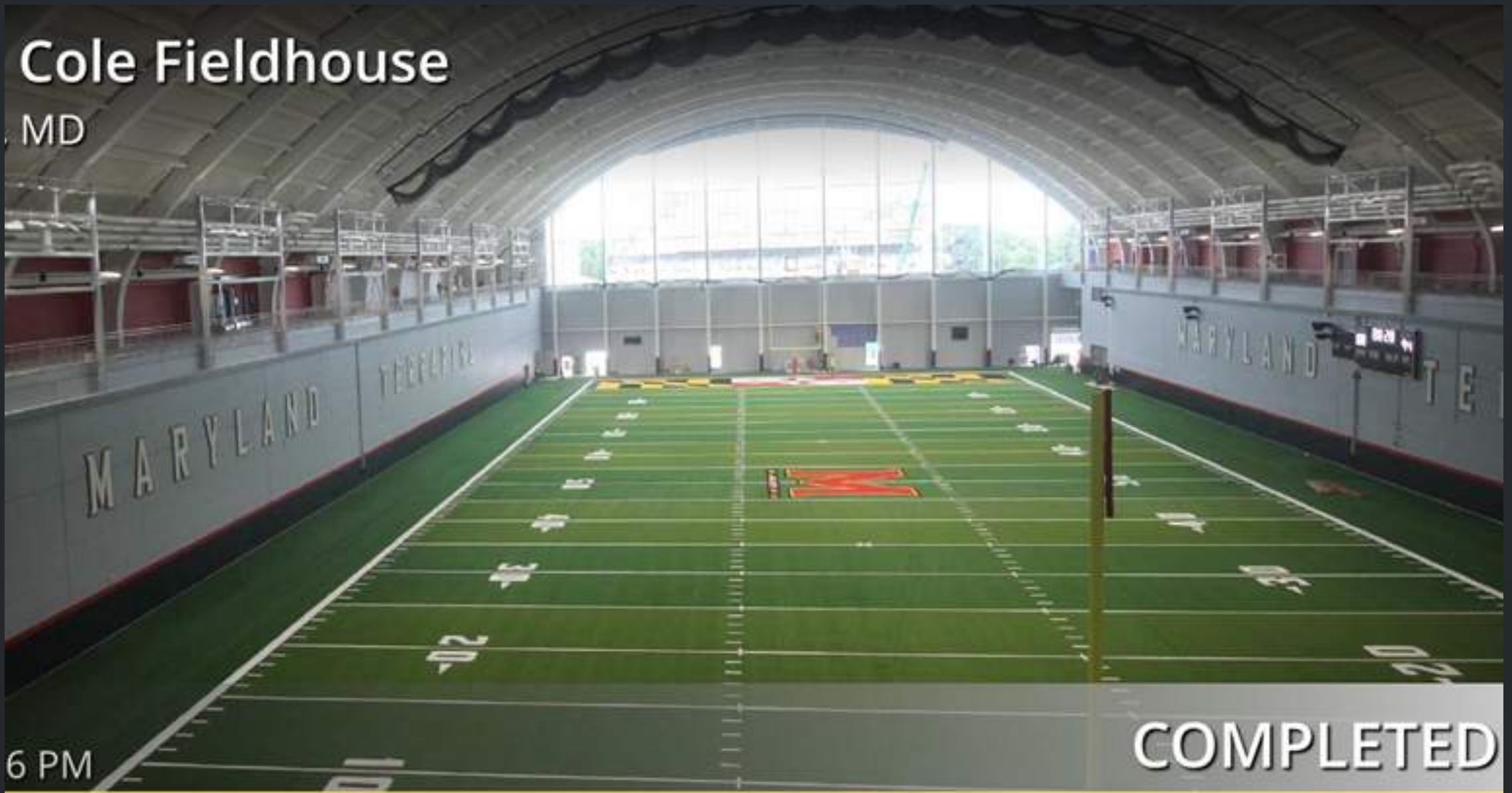
John Sims, AA County Sheriff

# Thoughts



## Cole Fieldhouse

MD



6 PM

COMPLETED



# Thoughts



# Thoughts



# Changing your thinking



- International Travel Considerations
- Unique Environment considerations
- Atypical Event considerations

# Morning Review



- Discuss various situations we may present emergency management
- Change IF WHEN thinking to WHEN THEN thinking
- Explain how a pre-hospital inter-professional healthcare team works collaboratively to improve patient outcomes
- Discuss risk management, catastrophic injury planning, & crisis management principles.



Thank you

QUESTIONS





# Resources and References



- Appropriate Prehospital Management of the Spine-Injured Athlete 8/15
- Exertional Heat Illnesses (September 2015)
- Management of Sport Concussion (March 2014)
- National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Preventing Sudden Death in Sports(Feb. 2012)
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- Catastrophic Incident Guideline Plan, May 2003 NATA News, Timothy Neal, MS, ATC
- National Incident Management System
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- NCAA 2014-15 Sports Medicine Handbook



# Resources and References



- National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Preventing Sudden Death in Sports. *Journal of Athletic Training* 2012;47(1):96-118.
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