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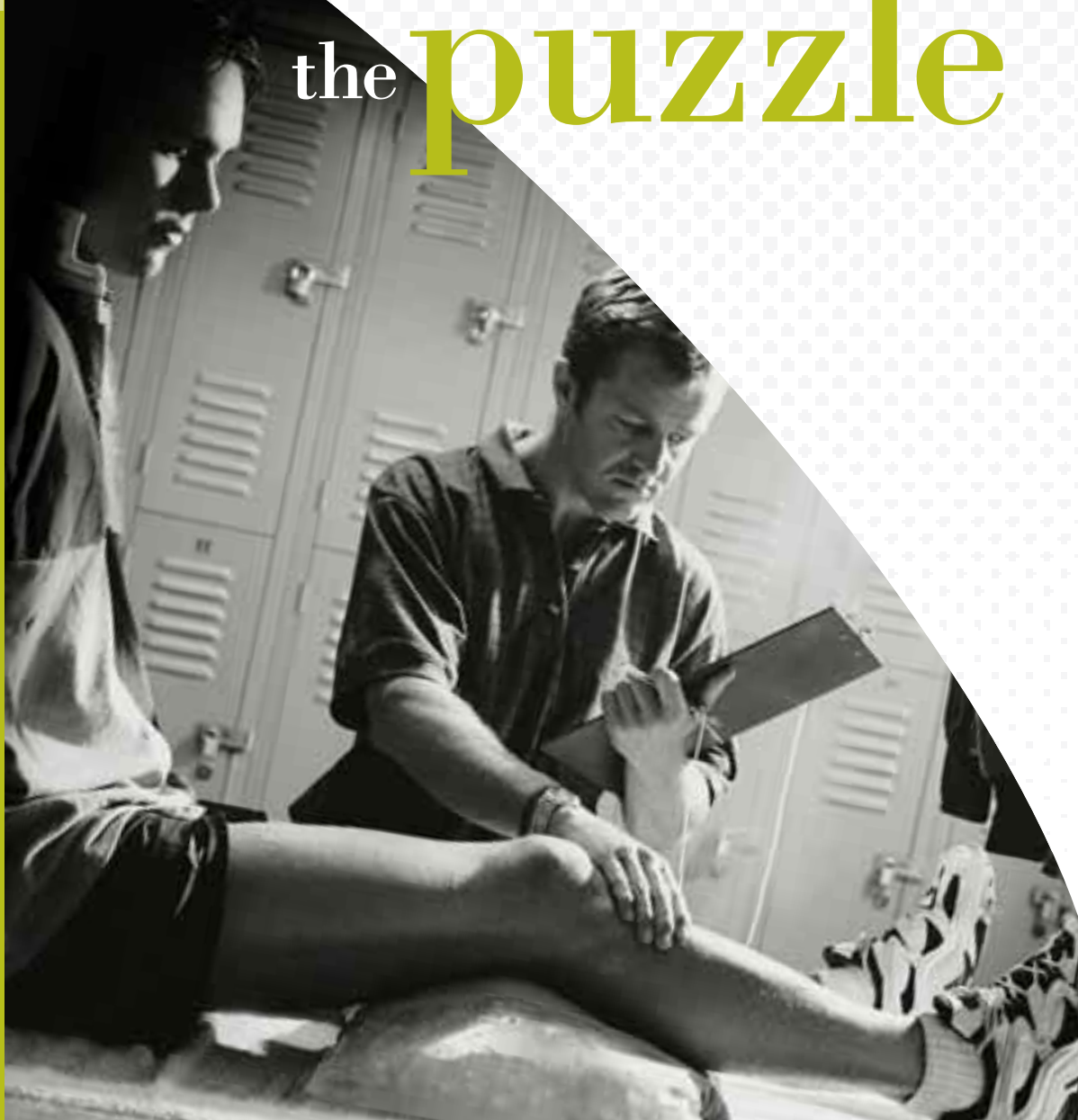
INJURY REPORTING



INJURY REPORTING

Injury reporting is all about gathering information on injuries so that we can learn about why and how they happen – and find ways to prevent them happening again. By monitoring injuries and continuing to gather information, sport policies and practices can even be changed to improve the game for all involved. Coaches should get into the habit of recording injuries as they happen. This will enable them to see if a pattern of injury emerges over a season and to assess whether any introduced injury prevention measures make a difference.

Find all the pieces
to solve
the puzzle



There are three key aspects to designing a sports injury reporting system:

- Deciding what injuries will be recorded (i.e. inclusion criteria)
- Deciding what information will be collected
- Deciding how the data will be collected, analysed and reported.

1. Inclusion criteria: Which injuries to report?

Deciding what injuries to record will depend on the objectives of the sports organisation. It may, for example, want to collect information on all injuries occurring during scheduled games or practices that require a player to receive treatment, or cause a player to miss part of the practice session or game, or to miss the next practice session or game. On the other hand, it may only be interested in recording the more serious injuries, such as those resulting in permanent disablement or death (e.g. a spinal or head injury).

2. Information set: What information to collect?

Use an Injury Report Form like the one on the back of this sheet to record individual players' injuries – it can be modified to suit your sport. The form provides the minimum information you need for sports injury reporting.

3. Reporting system: What to do with the collected information?

Having decided on the inclusion criteria and the items of information to be recorded, the next task is to decide how the data will be collected, analysed and reported. The reporting system will be influenced by the sports organisation's objectives and the resources (e.g. funds, people, computers) that can be committed to its operation. Issues to be addressed include:

- What is the population from which you are recording information (e.g. elite players only, all grades)?
- During what period is the data to be collected (e.g. club season, whole year)?
- How will the data be collected (e.g. questionnaire completed at time of injury and posted to national office, postal survey at end of season)?
- Who will provide the data (e.g. individual players, referees, team medics)?
- Where will the data be collated and stored (e.g. club, regional organisation, national office)?
- How will the data be analysed (e.g. statistical package, external analyst)?
- How will the findings be disseminated (e.g. annual report to administrators, monthly reports to clubs)?
- How will data confidentiality be protected (e.g. policy on identifying individuals, storage)?

Injury reporting in action

The following are some examples of how injury reporting can be used to reduce injuries. These examples involve reporting systems implemented through a national code, however similar processes can be implemented just as effectively at club level.

RUGBY

Two major surveys of rugby players in New Zealand used results from player injury reporting. The surveys aimed to find out:

- What injuries were occurring in rugby
- How many injuries were occurring
- What factors were contributing to the injuries.

Before this time, the rugby community didn't know a lot about the types of injuries that players were sustaining. The first survey found that there were more injuries in higher grades, that most of the injuries occurred in the tackle, that a lot of injuries were caused by foul play, that players with previous injuries were more likely to have another and that training in the off-season reduced the risk of injury during the season. These findings helped to identify the types of injury prevention strategies to put in place – without this information, the rugby community wouldn't have known where to start.

As a result of the survey, new policies have been implemented, including the compulsory wearing of mouthguards by all players and changes to the rules of the game – particularly in relation to engagement at scrum time. There has also been a big focus on teaching correct tackling techniques.

The second survey in 1997 revealed a reduction in rugby injuries. This illustrates why injury reporting is important – to show sports people that the measures put in place to reduce injury actually work.

HOCKEY

The New Zealand Hockey Federation has worked with ACC to implement an injury reporting system. In 2001, it was shown that of the injuries reported by coaches at the national hockey tournaments, only 33% of players were using protective equipment such as mouthguards and shin pads. This became an area of focus for the 2002 season, with New Zealand Hockey making wearing mouthguards compulsory at national tournaments and actively promoting their use throughout the game for the season.

LEAGUE

League has been undertaking regular injury reporting via its referees since 1997. Over time, this has enabled league and ACC to see that injury rates have been reducing. In 1998, 53% of league games surveyed had at least one injury. In the 2001 season this had reduced to 42% – the lowest on record. The injury reporting has also been used to monitor how many players are using protective equipment – one of the key strategies for injury prevention (see “Protective Equipment”). Over the seasons of injury reporting there has been a steady increase in the use of protective equipment in league. In particular, the use of mouthguards nearly tripled from 31% in 1997 to 91% for the 2001 season, and the proportion of players wearing headgear has doubled.

SAMPLE INJURY REPORT FORM *This sample injury report form can be modified for your sport.*

SPORT/ACTIVITY AT TIME OF INJURY:				
NAME (OR OTHER IDENTIFICATION) OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM: e.g. player, coach, GP				
DATE OF INJURY:	AGE:	GENDER:	ETHNICITY:	
LEVEL OF ACTIVITY AT TIME OF INJURY: e.g. recreational or organised competition, grade, age group etc				
PLAYING POSITION AT TIME OF INJURY:			TIME OF INJURY: (HR/MIN)	
NAME OF PLACE WHERE THE INJURY OCCURRED:				
TYPE OF PLACE WHERE THE INJURY OCCURRED:	<input type="radio"/> Field	<input type="radio"/> Gym	<input type="radio"/> Stadium	<input type="radio"/> Court
	<input type="radio"/> Changing room	<input type="radio"/> Other		
1. WHAT WERE YOU DOING WHEN THE INJURY OCCURRED?	<input type="radio"/> Training	<input type="radio"/> Warming up	<input type="radio"/> Competing/playing	<input type="radio"/> Cooling down
2. HOW LONG HAD YOU BEEN TRAINING/ WARMING UP/COMPETING/COOLING DOWN WHEN THE INJURY OCCURRED (MINUTES)?				
3. WHAT SPECIFIC ACTIVITY WERE YOU INVOLVED IN WHEN THE INJURY OCCURRED? e.g. tackling a player, catching a ball, landing from a jump				
4. HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR INJURY HAPPENED? *	<input type="radio"/> Landing	<input type="radio"/> Running/jogging	<input type="radio"/> Colliding with equipment	<input type="radio"/> Developed gradually
	<input type="radio"/> Twisting	<input type="radio"/> Over-exertion	<input type="radio"/> Catching	<input type="radio"/> Landing on another player's foot
	<input type="radio"/> Pivoting	<input type="radio"/> Swinging	<input type="radio"/> Stretching	<input type="radio"/> Heads clashing in tackle
	<input type="radio"/> Falling	<input type="radio"/> Uncertain	<input type="radio"/> Other	
5. DESCRIBE EXACTLY HOW THE INJURY OCCURRED:				
6. WERE THERE ANY FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE INCIDENT? e.g. ground conditions, unsafe equipment, foul play, poor concentration, too much training, fatigue				
7. WHAT PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT WAS USED ON THE BODY PART INJURED?	<input type="radio"/> Nothing	<input type="radio"/> Hand/wrist guards	<input type="radio"/> Brace	<input type="radio"/> Tape or strapping
	<input type="radio"/> Headgear	<input type="radio"/> Padding	<input type="radio"/> Bandage	<input type="radio"/> Thermal support
	<input type="radio"/> Mouthguard	<input type="radio"/> Other		
8. WHAT WAS THE TYPE OF INJURY?	<input type="radio"/> Bruise/contusion	<input type="radio"/> Broken bone	<input type="radio"/> Concussion	<input type="radio"/> Cut/open wound
	<input type="radio"/> Abrasion/graze	<input type="radio"/> Joint dislocation	<input type="radio"/> Puncture wound	<input type="radio"/> Overuse injury
	<input type="radio"/> Stress fracture	<input type="radio"/> Muscle/tendon strain	<input type="radio"/> Ligament/tendon sprain	<input type="radio"/> Dental
	<input type="radio"/> Uncertain	<input type="radio"/> Other		
9. WHERE ON YOUR BODY WAS THE INJURY?	<input type="radio"/> Toes (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Foot (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Ankle (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Shin/calf (L/R)
	<input type="radio"/> Knee (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Upper leg/thigh (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Hamstrings (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Hands/fingers/thumb (L/R)
	<input type="radio"/> Forearm (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Elbow (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Upper arm (L/R)	<input type="radio"/> Shoulder (L/R)
	<input type="radio"/> Stomach	<input type="radio"/> Chest	<input type="radio"/> Back	<input type="radio"/> Head
	<input type="radio"/> Neck	<input type="radio"/> Other		
10. SEVERITY OF INJURY (MEASURED AS TIME LOST FROM PARTICIPATION):	<input type="radio"/> Minor 1-7 days	<input type="radio"/> Moderate 8-21 days	<input type="radio"/> Major 21 days or more	
11. WAS YOUR INJURY TREATED BY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IMMEDIATELY AFTER IT HAPPENED?	<input type="radio"/> Not treated	<input type="radio"/> Physiotherapist	<input type="radio"/> Parent	<input type="radio"/> Doctor
	<input type="radio"/> Yourself	<input type="radio"/> Coach	<input type="radio"/> St. Johns	<input type="radio"/> Other
12. WHAT INITIAL TREATMENT DID YOU RECEIVE?	<input type="radio"/> Manual therapy	<input type="radio"/> R.I.C.E.D.	<input type="radio"/> Water	<input type="radio"/> Sling/splint
	<input type="radio"/> Massage	<input type="radio"/> Strapping/taping	<input type="radio"/> Dressing	<input type="radio"/> Stretch/exercises
	<input type="radio"/> Crutches	<input type="radio"/> None given (none required)	<input type="radio"/> None given (referred elsewhere)	

* This may need to be modified depending on the sport.

For more information on injury reporting, contact:

The Injury Prevention Research Unit,
University of Otago:

www.otago.ac.nz/ipru/

or Injury Prevention, ACC:

www.acc.co.nz.

THE 10-POINT ACTION PLAN FOR SPORTS INJURY PREVENTION

1

SCREENING

2

WARM-UP, COOL-DOWN
AND STRETCH

3

PHYSICAL CONDITIONING

4

TECHNIQUE

5

FAIR PLAY

6

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

7

HYDRATION AND NUTRITION

8

INJURY REPORTING

9

ENVIRONMENT

10

INJURY MANAGEMENT