



Preface

## Head and neck injuries in sports medicine



D. Greg Anderson, MD



Gregory A. Helm, MD, PhD

*Guest Editors*

As athletic participation has grown in popularity, the importance of sports medicine as a field has increased. Fortunately, most injuries to athletes are minor, but catastrophic head and neck injuries do occur and present a daunting challenge to health care professionals providing medical coverage at sporting events. Because of the potential for life-long disability or death, many health care providers become uncomfortable when faced with a potentially serious head or neck injury. In recent years the evaluation and management of injured athletes has improved significantly, allowing sports medicine providers to differentiate between serious and minor injuries and to institute appropriate treatment early. The goal of this issue of the *Clinics in Sports Medicine* is to clarify the issues facing medical personnel treating athletic head or neck injuries by presenting state-of-the-art information provided by experts in the field.

The articles presented in this issue have been chosen and arranged to cover a spectrum of topics. This issue is designed to update and augment work on topics that have been addressed in previous issues of the *Clinics in Sports Medicine*. The authors have tackled a variety of topics, from the basic science aspects of injuries to practical tips on assessment and management. Common and serious injuries have been given special emphasis. Several articles discuss rehabilitation, return-to-play criteria, and prevention of athletic head and neck injuries. Other practical topics, including the psychological aspects and legal implications of sports injuries, are also covered. It is our hope that this issue will both teach and provide a resource to health care professionals who are faced with treating injured athletes.

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D. Greg Anderson, MD  
*Department of Orthopedic Surgery*  
*University of Virginia Health System*  
*P.O. Box 800159*  
*Charlottesville, VA 22908, USA*  
*E-mail address: dga3k@virginia.edu*

Gregory A. Helm, MD, PhD  
*Department of Neurosurgery*  
*University of Virginia Health System*  
*Neurosciences Service Center*  
*P.O. Box 800566*  
*Charlottesville, VA 22908, USA*