



# BE GREAT

STRATEGIES, SOLUTIONS, AND SOLID ADVICE TO BE THE BEST AT YOU CAN BE!

An interactive newsletter created by the ATSNJ Secondary School Committee

## DR. SCHWARTZ INDUCTED INTO NJSCA HALL OF FAME

BY: STEVEN BARANDICA, M.ED., ATC, LAT, EMT

Dr. Eric A. Schwartz was inducted into the New Jersey State Coaches Association Hall of Fame in a ceremony at the Pines Manor in Edison, NJ on January 15, 2023. Eric has been an athletic trainer Washington Township High School's since 2011. A native of Ewing Township, New Jersey, he obtained his B.S. degree in Movement and Exercise Science from East Stroudsburg University in 1998, and his Master's Degree in Health Education from the College of New Jersey in 1999. Dr. Schwartz earned his Doctorate Degree in Athletic Training from Moravian College in 2020. He has been a state-licensed and nationally certified athletic trainer since 1999.

Over the years, Dr. Schwartz has worked on various NJSIAA tournaments of champions from wrestling team tournaments, track and field, swimming, diving, and wrestling individual tournaments. He also served on the NJSIAA wrestling rules advisory committee from 2005 to 2015.

Dr. Schwartz has served on the executive council, governmental affairs, ATs care, and public relations committees of the Athletic Trainers' Society of New Jersey, and served as the Society president from 2015-2017. He is currently serving as the NATA District Two Secretary and the Eastern Athletic Trainers' Society Convention Registration Chair.

Dr. Schwartz has received national, regional, and state professional awards. These include the NATA Service Award, EATA Francis George Doctoral Scholarship Award, the ATSNJ Distinguished Service Award, and the NJSIAA Service Award. Congratulations to Dr. Schwartz on a much deserved award and for all he has done for the field of athletic training throughout his career!



Most of Dr. Schwartz's professional career has been spent working with students in the secondary school setting. Dr. Schwartz has been published in various peer journals and magazines on topics from concussion management to specific sports medicine case studies.

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Welcome to the second edition of Be Great! This publication is a team effort provided by the ATSNJ secondary school committee. We hope you enjoy the information and if you have suggestions for future issues please contact us!

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EDITOR

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# EVIDENCE-BASED BITES

## Best Return to Play Decisions following Acute Ankle Sprain

BY: PETE KOENIGES, DAT, LAT, ATC

Acute ankle sprains are one of the most common musculoskeletal injuries among secondary school athletes (1,2). Athletic trainers are well-versed in methods of immediate care, acute care, and rehabilitation. However, there is a lack of consensus regarding return to play (RTP) protocols and decisions.

Creighton et al. (3) developed a decision-based model for various RTP decisions. Clanton et al. (4) utilized this model to guide their literature search to develop a RTP model specifically for athletes returning from ankle injuries. This model includes functional tests and psychological readiness to return scores.

The functional tests identified include tests for range of motion, balance and proprioception, agility, and strength. Specifically, Clanton et al. (4) identified the Dorsiflexion Lunge Test, Star Excursion Balance Test (SEBT), Agility T-Test, and Vertical Jump Tests as the most appropriate functional tests to make RTP decisions.

Glazer (5) reports between 5% and 19% of injured athletes report psychological distress levels similar to individuals receiving treatment for mental health problems. Athletes who demonstrate fear, apprehension, or anxiety, are at a much greater risk of reinjury, and often a negative effect on performance. Scoring systems to assess this psychological component include the Trait Sport Confidence Inventory, or the Injury-Psychological Readiness to Return to Sport Scale (I-PRRS) (5).

**Clinical Application:** To return the secondary school athlete to play after an ankle injury, athletic trainers should utilize an objective system of tests, both functional and psychological. These tests can include the dorsiflexion lunge test, the Star Excursion Balance Test (SEBT), Agility T-Test, Vertical Jump Test and the I-PRRS Scale.



**Star Excursion Balance Test**



**Agility T-Test**

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## PR PROS

*Ways to promote the profession within your community*

BY: CHRISTINA EMRICH, MS, ATC

1. **Interview current or former athletes** about how their AT helped them with an injury and return to play. Include this on educational handouts or pamphlets.
2. **Make a website** with links to resources that provide information about you and your services, helpful injury care tips, and necessary forms for athletes and parents. [Here's an example.](#)
3. **Work with your school's TV production class** on making a video or commercial on basic athletic training topics to play during the morning announcements.



# FACILITY FAVS

## ATs share some of their prized purchases

BY: KEVIN BRILES, ATC

"My favorite item in my AT facility are my foam rollers. The majority of the time, foam rollers provide instant relief from sore and tight muscles. Showing my athletes how to incorporate foam rolling for both their warm-ups and cool-downs has been extremely beneficial in their recovery. This is especially important for those intense preseason workouts!"

**Kristen Mandicz, LAT, ATC**  
**Cedar Grove High School**

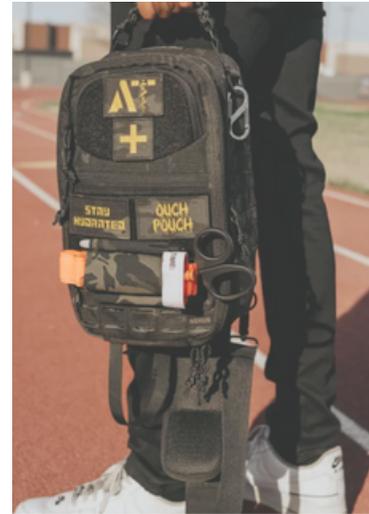


"My favorite item in the clinic would have to be the TheraBand. It is one of the most versatile rehabilitation tools, as it can be used for almost any injury we see as athletic trainers."

**Austin Lee MS, LAT, ATC**  
**Paulsboro High School**



"The Dead Bug is a tactical bag designed specifically for ATs. The designer, Jay Ostia MS, ATC is an athletic trainer and military member who combined his knowledge of clinical practice and experience with top-grade military tactical bags to create this exceptional bag. It is extremely durable, lightweight, and functional. There is more than enough room for all of your sideline needs. The most impressive part of this bag is in the comfort of the large flat "sling-style" strap. It doesn't get caught up, nor does it sling back over in front of you as you lean down to address an injured athlete. MSRP is \$95. However, discounts are available for ATs, students, and the military."



Click [HERE](#) for more info!

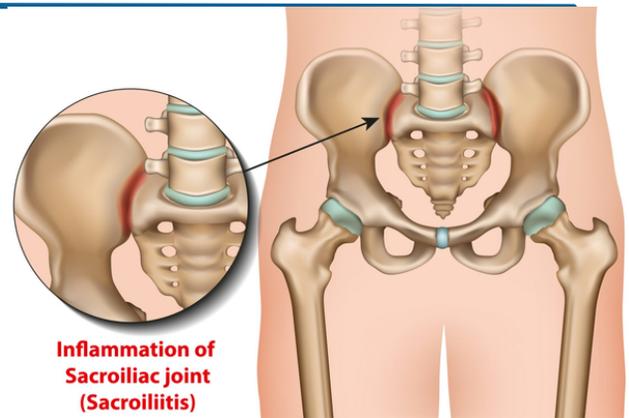
**Carl Lange, DAT, ATC**  
**Collingswood High School**

## TIP FROM THE FIELD

BY: CALI WHEDON, M.D., ATC

### SI Joint Pain Care

SI Joint Dysfunction affects up to 30% of low back pain patients. First, perform a Long Sit Test to determine if a leg-length discrepancy is present. Then perform a Figure-4 stretch bilaterally and a crossover stretch while stabilizing the affected side ASIS to mobilize the joint. Your patient will feel better in no time!



**Watch this 3 minute video for SI joint assessment and mobilization techniques!**



# ATHLETIC TRAINERS AND THE LAW

## Successful heat illness case a reminder to follow best practices

A case of exertional heat stroke during a cross country championship in Virginia highlights the importance of using a rectal thermometer, being prepared with an immersion tub and the legal implications of not following national guidelines.

### ATs action leads to school policy change

According to an article published in a recent issue of the NATA's *Sports Medicine Legal Digest*, an athletic trainer recognized a runner was vomiting, confused and disoriented. A rectal temperature of 107.7 degrees was obtained and the runner was placed in an immersion tub. When EMTs arrived, they wanted to immediately transport, but the AT insisted they wait until the rectal temperature reached 102 degrees. The athlete had an excellent outcome due to the AT's action in following best practices. Prior to this event, the AT had tried to work with school administration to make rectal temperature part of the school policy. However the district refused to grant permission for the AT to purchase one, so he purchased his own. Ironically, while school officials praised him for the positive outcome, they indicated if he chose to use the rectal thermometer again against school policy, he would face 'severe consequences.' Fortunately, the AT was able to convince the school board to approve rectal thermometer use 8 months later with a district policy change.

### Failing to follow best practices can leave you liable

Many ATs face resistance with this very issue. According to a related article also appearing in the *Digest*, ATs and school districts who do not follow best practices in the case of exertional heat stroke can be held liable should a catastrophic event occur. If an AT fails to follow evidenced-based, national recommendations for assessing temperature and cooling the patient prior to transport, the AT can be found negligent due to an act of omission. While administrators may be initially concerned with the patient being a minor and the invasive manner of achieving a rectal temperature, school districts should be educated on the possibility of a catastrophic event should these guidelines not be followed. Secondary school ATs are encouraged to review the NATA heat illness position statement, speak with their administration, school physician and local EMTs about this issue to encourage everyone to be on the same page with best practices.



The Kory Stringer Institute (KSI) recommends the DataTherm II as one of rectal thermometers ATs can use to accurately assess core temperature during an exertional heat stroke emergency. KSI provides resources such as a summary of rectal thermometers and instructions for use.

### ATSNJ Secondary School Committee

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## Experienced ATs share tips for retirement

BY: DAVE CSILLAN, MS, ATC

Following a long athletic training career, it's easy to feel lost in retirement. Some people transition to per diem work, others sought employment in another field or simply acquired a new hobby. A few retired secondary school athletic trainers were asked to share their "golden nuggets" on how to prepare for life beyond medical kits, fanny packs and coolers.



### Embrace the Opportunity

"Wait....life really does continue and I'm going to be OK!?" Retiring is a strange word that means "the action or fact of leaving one's job and ceasing to work". After 35 years, that can be a bit scary. Eventually, a light came on signaling it really was time, but I was much too young to stop WORKING. Actually, I never really stopped working... it has just taken on a new meaning and rather than working for someone else, I'm working for me...and that's ok! I'm enjoying doing things on my own terms. Life really does continue. New opportunities constantly arise, and they oftentimes have nothing to do with Athletic Training. I continue to learn and be challenged. I find myself motivated by other "projects", but I'm not really "working." It's the fear of the unknown that can be scary, but if you can embrace the opportunity retirement presents, you'll find out that retirement really is a pretty good deal."

*Eric Nussbaum, MEd, LAT, ATC – 35 years as an athletic trainer including 22 years in the secondary school setting. Year of Retirement Full-Time: 2021, when not on fishing excursions, employed part-time in the clinical setting. Trying to stay one step ahead of the reaper!*

**"Working has taken on a new meaning and rather than working for someone else, I'm working for me."**

**"Retirement allows you to refocus, re-energize and set new priorities/goals."**

### Share Your Experiences

"What got me through my athletic training career was being passionate about doing a "job" that really was a labor of love. However, you'll know when it's time for something new and different in your life. Athletic trainers make so many sacrifices during their careers. Retirement allows you to refocus, re-energize and set new priorities/goals. I choose to retire and spend real quality time with those who supported me during my career; my spouse, family, and dear friends as they are my "rocks." I'm eternally grateful for the input of my athletic training peers who helped me prepare for the big "R" both mentally & financially. Although retired, I continue to mentor the young athletic trainers in my school district. I'm very fortunate to even have a former student-athlete step into the athletic training position at my former high school. In closing, I love the field of Athletic Training and encourage everyone, at any stage of their career, to share your life experiences with your loved ones and your peers. Value those friendships always and leave the profession better than when you entered it".

*Debrah Morante, MS, AT – 38 years as an athletic trainer with all 38 years in the secondary school setting. Year of Retirement: 2015, currently enjoying retirement.*



Please take a few minutes to update your information in ATLAS, a project developed by the NATA and Korey Stringer Institute. ATLAS helps determine the extent to which athletic training services are available nationwide and helps to promote our profession.

[\*\*Learn More\*\*](#)

## TAKE CARE OF YOU

### Life balance lessons to keep you healthy and happy

BY: LEAH FRANZWA, ATC

Liza Sylvia, ATC at Maple Shade High School shares how she achieves work-life balance.

#### What do you do for self-care and wellness?

*I enjoy going to the gym about an hour each day to have that time to myself. I also really love going to watch my two kids play in their sports games and going on walks with my dog.*

#### Are your employer or coworkers supportive of personal time and creating a strong work/life balance?

*My AD is super supportive to the point where he will typically run any scheduling changes by me to see if it interferes with my plans. There's been times where I have told him I have a pre-scheduled function and he won't schedule a game that day knowing substitute ATs are hard to find.*

#### What tips can you provide to other AT's regarding leaving work at work and personal matters at home?

*To remember that it is not always an on/off switch and to follow your instincts.*

#### What advice would you give to a new AT on building a rapport with your coaching staff and administrators, in regards to scheduling of events or respecting personal time?

*Be upfront with your expectations, be confident in your schooling, and be humble in times of compromise.*

#### Do you feel that you have achieved work/life balance?

*I definitely feel like I have achieved this because I look forward to going to work every day because I love what I do and the people I work with. I also feel very fulfilled at home with my family.*

## SELF CARE TIP

### "It's much easier to do your job helping others, when you've done something for yourself first."

Secondary school ATs often have some free morning time before headed to work. Take a walk, read for pleasure, get a workout in, or tend to your garden for some quality me-time. Almost everything will work better if you unplug it for a while, including you.

## NATA RESOURCES

### DID YOU KNOW?

The NATA provides numerous documents and resources for secondary school athletic trainers including:

- Secondary School Value Model
- Program Assessment for Safety in Sports
- Guidelines for Developing a Team Physician Agreement
- Secondary School Position Proposal Guide
- Time Outs
- Secondary School Sports Medicine Course Outline
- Secondary School Sports Medicine Course Outline
- Secondary School Value Handout
- Secondary School Case Studies Workbook

Click [HERE](#) to access these documents

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