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HEALTH CARE



From the Athletic Training Facility to the Press Box Advice for Athletic Trainers Interacting with the Media from AT turned Analyst

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1. **Have a Plan:** Have a “treatment plan”, so to speak, for how you want to share your information with the media interviewer. Maybe you want to use a tell-a-story/make-a-point approach or simply share statistics or maybe you feel more comfortable using a personalized approach to educate the viewers on your role and skills as an athletic trainer.
2. **Two Pointers:** Avoid overloading the media with too much information. Narrow the educational info you want the interviewer to understand to two (2) points. Say to yourself; *“What are the two most important points/facts/stats I want this person to understand with pure clarity?”*

For example:

Point 1: Athletic trainers are health care providers responsible for student athlete safety.

Point 2: However, only XX% of secondary schools in (state) have access to an athletic trainer.

** Customize the XX% of secondary schools with athletic trainer access in your state at [At Your Own Risk](#).

3. **“Small Chunk” It:** Remember, the media professional you’re talking to has dozens of stories, interviews, and reports she/he is working on each day. With that being said, they are looking for small, useable sound bites they can quickly drop into their video or article. Make their job easier. To do this, speak in slow, short sound bites. If you give them long, drawn-out sentences, it is difficult for them to chop up that info and it takes much more time to do. “Small chunk” your details just like expert speakers do.
4. **Be Positive:** Avoid using the media to share gripes or negative comments. Keep your message positive, supportive and optimistic.
5. **Story Telling:** Everyone loves a great story. Use successful injury recoveries or emergency responses to support your Two-Pointers. Stories are powerful and easy to remember. Everyone loves to hear “the inside scoop” with sports related stories. Obviously, get full permission and authorization when discussing any personal medical information.



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6. **Use Examples:** So much of what we know and do as athletic trainers is easy to understand.....for athletic trainers. However, those same injuries, body parts, and rehab techniques are like a foreign language to most people outside of sports medicine. Use understandable examples, anatomy models, well-documented high profile athlete injuries, written diagrams and such to make complicate medical information easy for the interviewer to understand.
7. **Find Co-Signers:** Coordinate others to support your information. Use former athletes, present co-workers, coaches or parents to share their angle to support your Two-Pointers. It can be a simple text they send to the interviewer or a social media post they do to thank you for your impact on their success.
8. **Practice, Practice, Practice:** Taping an ankle in lightning speed is easy. Sharing concise, organized and simplified medical details in a slow and calm manner with hot lights and a live camera in your face takes some practice. Write your key bullet points out and use your smart phone or a mirror to hone your interviewing skills.

As the author of the recently released “Foam Rolling For Dummies”, I wanted to share an exclusive coupon with my fellow NATA members that would like to get a copy for themselves or one of their patients. To get your copy, go to www.wiley.com for 35% off paperback, and 10% off ebook. Enter (NATA1) when checking out. Promo code is valid today - 12/31/21

About Mike D. Ryan

Ryan concluded his career following the 2013 season with the Jacksonville Jaguars, where he served as the team’s Head Athletic Trainer/Physical Therapist since the franchise’s inaugural campaign in 1994. Prior to joining the Jaguars, Ryan served as an Assistant Athletic Trainer with the New York Giants from 1988-1994, and was a member of the staff during the Giants’ Super Bowl championship season of 1990. Ryan’s first NFL experience came in 1984, when he was an athletic trainer intern at the first of three Giants’ training camps.

Ryan is the recipient of the 2015 Professional Football Athletic Trainers Society’s (PFATS) Alumni of the Year award. He has served as the President of the PFATS Research and Education Foundation for 14 years in addition to having served leadership roles with numerous committees and advisory boards focused on sports medicine, including the NFL Foot & Ankle Committee, the NFL Collegiate Athletic Trainers Committee, and the Sports Concussion Medical Advisory Board

In 2008, Ryan also served as a volunteer athletic trainer and physical therapist at the United States Olympic Training Center, assisting U.S. Olympic staff and athletes prior to the 2008 Summer Olympics.

Ryan earned his B.S. in Athletic Training from Central Connecticut State University in 1985, followed by his degree in physical therapy from the University of Connecticut in 1988.

Ryan, an avid fitness advocate, Ironman triathlete and extreme sports enthusiast, is a native of Ashfield, Mass.. He currently resides in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., with his wife Samantha, and their two children.