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PERSPECTIVES

A Word with the Coach

"Kendra sits the bench, and is losing confidence and interest in the sport. I think I better have a word with the coach." Few parents with a child in sports have not, at one time or another, faced this dilemma. Personally, I have faced it as a parent, as a coach, and as a intermediary between the coach and parent. What are the appropriate ground rules and what is the best approach when a concerned parent wants to "have a word with the coach"?

I once attended a coaching seminar where Lute Olson was one of the featured speakers. He explained that "I tell all my players' parents that I am available all season long to talk with them at any time about anything, with one exception: we never ever will discuss playing time during the season." However, there is no single issue more important to parents and the coach than assigning playing positions and allocating playing time. So – is Lute Olson's rule a fair one?

If your child is playing at the highly competitive club level or higher, Olson's rule is fair. All coaches should, however, still indicate at the start of the season, in plain and simple language, what their policy is with respect to playing time. If they play to win and therefore make no promises of equal playing time, your child and you are accepting this ground rule by agreeing to play on the team and should not later complain to the coach about playing time.

Alternatively, if your child is playing at the recreational league level, virtually all recreational sponsors (YMCA, YWCA, Little League Baseball, Bobby Sox) have rules and bylaws governing the coach's conduct. All coaches and parents should have a copy of these rules and be familiar with them. With respect to playing time at this recreational level, the coach no doubt has written directives to make playing time equitable and it is always appropriate for parents to call him on it if he fails to do so.

Is Playing Time a legitimate question to raise with the coach? At the recreational level, of course. At the competitive club level, perhaps not.



ROADWAY SAFETY AND HELMET LAWS

Bicycle Helmets: Inexpensive Lifesavers

Tucson has been rated one of the premier bicycling communities in the nation. This honor brings with it greater potential for bike accidents. The City of Tucson has addressed this situation by providing designated bike lanes, bicycle education, and enforcement of helmet and traffic laws to reduce the number of accidents and injuries in the Tucson area.

Unfortunately, not every bike rider wears a helmet. Why not? The main reason is that the majority of states do not require riders over 18 to wear helmets. In Tucson, only those under the age of 18 are required to wear a properly fitted and fastened helmet that meets current federal safety standards, or face a \$50 fine. Many riders do not wear helmets, but they should, and the facts prove it: in 1994

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www.kbsds.com

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How to Have Safe Off-Road Fun



As the weather cools down and we head into those glorious days between September and May, many people enjoy exploring the beautiful scenery of Arizona in an off-road vehicle. Thousands of drivable “off-road” miles crisscross Arizona, offering an up-close view of everything from wetlands to spectacular canyons. Enjoying life off the beaten path—even for a few hours—can be relaxing and rejuvenating, although it requires some advance planning and care.

Whether your off-roading is done in a 4x4 vehicle or a smaller, personal ATV, here are some important rules of the off-road:

- **Before heading into the wild, take an off-road safety course.** The ATV Rider Course developed by the ATV Safety Institute provides hands-on training in the basic techniques for riding an all-terrain vehicle. Call (800) 887-2887 or check out atvsafety.org.
- **Keep others informed.** Never ride alone. Always tell others where you are going and when you expect to return.
- **Scout the area you are exploring.** Make sure you have a good map and consider investing in a sturdy GPS device or take a compass.
- **Be prepared.** Pack basic supplies like a cell phone, flashlight, gloves, shovel, spare tire and jack, and a first aid kit.

- **Water, water, water!** Even when it cools down, make sure to take along at least 5 gallons in each vehicle, plus a minimum of 1 gallon per person per day.

- **Watch your speed.** Experts say to drive as slowly as possible and only as fast as necessary. You can get into trouble quickly. Slow down, enjoy the scenery, and understand that there is very little room for error off-road.

- **Be safe.** If you are driving a personal ATV, always wear a helmet and make sure your vehicle is in good working order. Check the

lights, tire pressure and brakes before going out. If you have room, take a spare tire, or at least a tire repair kit.



- **Don't mix alcohol or drugs and off-roading.**

The penalties for DUI are the same whether you are on a paved road or a dirt one, and so are the dangers.

- **Understand your skill level.** And respect the limits of your vehicle.

- **Aim for minimum impact.** Respect the environment and the rights of others by staying on designated routes and areas open to off-road vehicles.

Keep these tips in mind, use common sense and respect the land you are enjoying. The experience will be one you will treasure. Have fun!

— Dev Sethi

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Arizona State Parks – www.pr.state.az.us

Arizona Backcountry – azbackcountry.com

Public Lands Information Center – publiclands.org

Tread Lightly! – treadlightly.org

A Word with the Coach, cont. from page 1

If and when you decide a meeting with the coach is in order, there are right and wrong ways to do it. The wrong way is to surprise the coach in a public setting, such as right after a hotly contested game, and loudly take him to task in front of other parents and players. The right way is to tell the coach, privately, that you want to speak with him and then to arrange a comfortable, private setting to have that meeting.

Meetings with coach should be pre-arranged, comfortable and private.

Put yourself in the coach's shoes. If a parent has an issue, wouldn't you like to know ahead of time what the issue is so that you can spend some time thinking about it before you actually meet to discuss it? Wouldn't you feel more responsive and accommodating in a friendly and comfortable environment, with everyone expressing legitimate concerns in a polite and calm manner?

I think you get the picture. Remember, unless you are playing at a very high competitive level, the coaches are mostly volunteers who are trying to do the best they can, and are probably involved because they enjoy the sport, and want to help young people also enjoy the sport, and perhaps, even learn something about it.



When you meet with the coach, keep it friendly. Be direct and specific with your questions, then be

quiet and listen to the coach's answers. Always ask what your player—and you—can do to become more important contributors to the team. Whenever possible, volunteer your time. There is no whining where there is no participation. With open communication, players and parents can make intelligent decisions about which teams they want to play on and they'll be better able to give proper deference and respect to the coach and the game.

—Ted Schmidt

Bicycle Helmets, cont. from page 1

(the most recent statistical year), there were 27 bicyclists killed in Arizona — and not one was wearing a safety helmet!

Nationwide, approximately 540,000 bicyclists visit emergency rooms each year. Of those, 67,000 suffer head injuries and 27,000 sustain brain injury. According to national studies, 85% of those injuries could have been prevented (or at least reduced in severity) by wearing a helmet. Helmets can be purchased at any major retailer for as little as \$10.

Go to dot.ci.tucson.az.us/bicycle for more on Tucson's Bicycle Program and helmet safety standards.



Required or Not, There's No Question: Motorcycle Helmets Protect

Motorcycle helmet laws have been a contentious issue for years. Lawmakers struggle to balance personal freedoms with the costs to society of crash-related injuries. The

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration sets the federal standards for helmet requirements, but gives the states latitude to define and enforce those standards. As a result, many states have repealed their mandatory helmet laws for "all riders," and limit enforcement to riders under the age of 18. Florida discovered that repealing its helmet laws led to a significant increase in accidents, injuries, and related medical costs. Consequently, Florida motorcycle riders under 21 must once again wear a helmet, unless they have at least \$10,000 in medical insurance coverage.

Arizona requires all motorcycle or motor-driven cycle riders 18 or under to wear securely fastened "protective headgear" at all times. This includes eye protection or a windshield. Presently, the term "protective head gear" is still being defined by the state legislature.

As with bicycling, head injury is a leading cause of death in motorcycle crashes. While a helmet may not absolutely guarantee survival, it effectively reduces the likelihood of being seriously injured or killed. So, if you ride a bike or motorcycle, wear a helmet, regardless of whether or not the law requires you to do so. It's smarter. It's safer. And it's easy to do.

—Robert L. Beal

Hospitals Aim to Slash Death Rates

Seven years ago, the Institute of Medicine and the National Academy of Sciences estimated that as many as 98,000 patients a year were dying in hospitals as a result of medical errors. Other studies put the annual death toll much higher. Patient advocates said that if 100,000 people a year were dying in airline accidents, there would be a massive outcry and a substantial effort to correct that problem.

But there is good news. A major effort called the “One Hundred Lives Campaign” has been undertaken by about 75% of America’s hospitals, including most of the hospitals in Tucson. The program has met with unprecedented success, and literally tens of thousands of lives have been saved by the simple, common sense program guidelines.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement is behind the One Hundred Lives Campaign, and has six suggested strategies that hospitals need to adopt in order to save lives. These strategies include:

1. Using rapid response teams at the first sign of problems with a patient, instead of waiting until a patient “codes.”
2. Preventing pneumonia in patients on ventilators.
3. Reducing heart attack deaths by giving aspirin and appropriate medications as soon as possible.
4. Preventing infection of central line catheters by making sure sterile conditions are maintained (particularly hand washing).
5. Preventing surgical infection particularly with pre-operative antibiotics.

6. Preventing medical errors with a system of multiple medication checks.

The Arizona Daily Star has been following the program and has reported dramatic reductions in infection rate and pneumonia as well as a 50% reduction in the number of “codes” in some Tucson hospitals. The obvious result is that lives are being saved and fewer people are dying as the result of medical errors.

In October 2005, the huge insurance consulting firm Aon, Inc., released its *Hospital Professional Liability and Physician Liability 2005 Benchmark Analysis*, which included historical malpractice claims information from 1995 to 2004. For the first



time in the history of the Report, the trend indicated a 1% decrease in claims against both hospitals and physicians.

The best way to stop medical malpractice claims has nothing to do with insurance rates, capping damage awards, or otherwise altering the justice system. The best way to stop medical malpractice claims is to stop the malpractice. Dedicated hospital personnel have put a program in place to help accomplish that goal. Kudos.

— Jim H. Dyer

Read more about what you can do to avoid medication errors at The Institute of Medicine website at iomed.edu.





Plaintiffs' Lawsuits KO'd by Medical Liens?

After years of relative quiet in the medical liens arena, the bell has rung and the fight is on. The United States Supreme Court has waded into the fray and your health insurer may come out swinging.

Until this May, if you recovered money after being injured by someone else, you had a winning argument that your work-related health insurance could not take that recovery as payback for covering the cost of treating your injuries. You could recover your medical care costs because the courts felt that the person who injured you should not receive the benefit of your foresight in purchasing insurance, but you did not have to repay your insurer because the very purpose of the insurance you had paid for was to protect you from the costs of illness or injury. However, the Supreme Court has recently issued an opinion in the case *Sereboff v. Mid-Atlantic Medical Services* which armed your work-related insurance plan with what could be the roundhouse punch.

The federal law known as ERISA governs most types of employment-related health insurance. In *Sereboff*, the Supreme Court decided that a plan covered by ERISA can recover money from an insured for treatment costs it has paid out when the insured collects on a personal injury claim. There are some limits. In order to collect, the insurance has to be part of a qualified ERISA plan. The insurance policy has to contain language to the effect that the plan is entitled to this kind of recovery. And it has to identify "particular funds or property" in the insured's possession that will be

the source of the plan's recovery. Generally, that's the "pot" of money that comprises the personal injury settlement or judgment.

If your health insurance plan cannot satisfy these requirements, it may be down for the count and you may get to keep your settlement. If, however, your insurer fits within the *Sereboff* framework, all bets are off and you could be forced to pay back your treatment costs. Depending on the severity of your injuries, and the length and complexity of your medical treatment, this could take a hefty bite out of your recovery.

If you have a personal injury claim now or are considering bringing one, you should discuss this recent legal development with your lawyer. As this area of law evolves, your game plan will no doubt change with it.

— Erica McCallum



KBSDS in the Community



The Schmidt's l-r: Savanna, Ty, Anne, Ted and Matt.

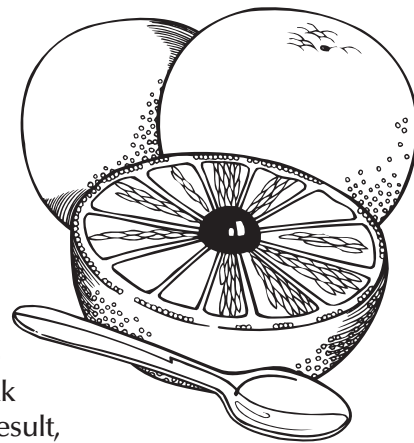
Ted Schmidt received the Walter E. Craig Distinguished Service Award at this year's Arizona State Bar Convention. The award is bestowed on a single attorney who best manifests adherence to the highest principles and traditions of the legal profession and serves the public in his community. Described as "a stellar example of the good that a lawyer can do," Ted's long history of community leadership includes support for local youth sports programs, Boy and Girl Scout leadership, and sponsoring the University of Arizona's Tara Nicole Schmidt "Have A Dream" Scholarship.



Jim Dyer started his term as President of the Pima County Bar Association on May 30, 2006. The PCBA provides legal education and support for local attorneys. Through its monthly newspaper, *The Writ*, the Bar Association keeps its membership

informed and includes a monthly column by the President. The Bar Association has long been at the forefront in providing legal services to the members of the community who could not otherwise afford those services. It is an original co-sponsor of Southern Arizona Legal Aid's Volunteer Lawyers Program, which coordinates lawyers from the community to provide legal representation and advice to the low-income individuals.

Citrus: Not Always Good for You



Grapefruit and some other citrus fruits and juices can block the enzymes in your stomach that are necessary to break down medications. As a result, medications you take after ingesting grapefruit may have a greatly enhanced effect, or no effect at all. According to Food-Medication Interactions, the following are some of the drugs which may have adverse effects when combined with grapefruit:

Cordarone (Amiodarone)	Relpax (Eletriptan)	Orap (Pimozide)
Lipitor (Atorvastatin)	Vepesid (Etoposide)	Viagra (Sildenafil)
Entocort (Budesonide)	Halfan (Halofantrine)	Zocor (Simvastatin)
BuSpar (Buspirone)	Mevacor (Lovastatin)	Rapamune (Sirolimus)
Pletal (Cilostazol)	Mifeprex (Mifepristone)	Geodon (Ziprasidone)

There are at least 50 other medications affected by grapefruit and related citrus. As a result, you should not eat grapefruit, Seville oranges, or pummelos when taking prescription medications, at least until you check with your doctor.

—Jim Dyer

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