

Doctor volunteers time to help high school athletes

By **VALERIE JONES**
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He treats players who endure concussions, sprained ligaments and take the hard hits. He doesn't do it for the money, but instead for the enjoyment and fulfillment he gets from watching the kids and helping them return to the game they love to play.

Dr. James Fogarty knows the frequency of injuries sustained on the football field.

Fogarty is an orthopedic surgeon at North Cypress Medical Center and founding partner of Advanced Orthopedics and Sports Medicine. He also volunteers his time as a team physician for both Cypress Ridge and Langham Creek high schools.

"I've been doing this for 25 years now," Fogarty said. "As a team physician, I'm accessible to trainers or questions about student ath-

letes, available to the student athletes for office appointments, in attendance at most of the varsity football games and arrange the pre-screening physicals."

Fogarty said although most of the sports injuries occur during varsity football games, Thursday nights are often busier than Friday nights.

"Most people don't think about it, but all the sub-varsity games are on Thursdays," he said. "So there's four or five games every Thursday to every one game on Friday. We can't physically be at all of those, but injuries still happen there."

With 25 years experience, one would expect Fogarty has seen it all.

"Our job is to watch the players as they come off the field to see if they may be more injured than they're letting on," he said. "We've taken kids that have walked off the field and sent them away in an ambulance because we've watched them

get hurt or bang their head — things that not everybody notices. We have a different perspective."

If you see a player going back in after they've come out with a bump or a bruise, you always watch them and make sure they're okay going back in, Fogarty said.

Sometimes, Fogarty has to make better judgment calls or decisions the kids disagree with.

"Kids always want to continue playing and they'll say 'No, I gotta go back in,'" Fogarty said. "Sometimes you just have to take their helmet and hide it so they can't get back on the field. That's how you keep somebody from going back in — you take their helmet and put it where they can't get it."

Fogarty said the physicians work closely with the trainers to make sure the athletes get proper care.

"It's a job that needs to be done and it's part of community involvement," he said.

Fogarty helped form the group called Advanced Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, which is made up of orthopedic surgeons who volunteer their time as team physicians.

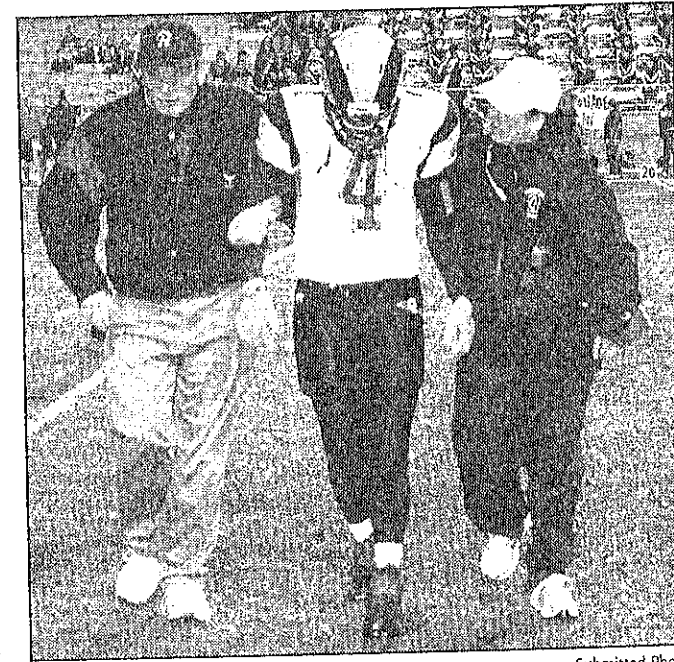
"We've served Cy-Fair school district for many years," he said. "We probably take care of over half the athletic injuries in this school district."

Pre-screening physicals are coming up in May, and Fogarty said they arrange for eight to ten doctors to be there to help.

"We want to give the kids good, quality physicals," he said. "For some kids, it's the only physical they have."

Fogarty said he likes watching the kids from the sidelines of the field.

"Most orthopedic surgeons have been involved in sports in their lifetime," he said. "The main reason I volunteer is the involvement in being able to help the kids move on and continue playing."



Dr. Fogarty walks an injured player off the field.

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