

## **PITFALLS & PEARLS of FRACTURE MANAGEMENT in PEDIATRIC ATHLETES**

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“Athletic kids with fractures—a whole different ball game than adults!” This was one of the take home messages provided by Dr. Paul Stricker during his presentation at the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine’s (AMSSM) annual Meeting in April 2003. Dr. Stricker reviewed the differences between taking care of fractures in the pediatric athlete, and their adult counterparts. He underscored the importance for considering growth plates, location of injury, and other developmental issues when caring for the young athlete, including their maturity and ability to handle tasks requiring coordination or discipline. He also spoke about the importance of proper casting and warned parents about the problem of “UFO’s” such as ink pens and other foreign bodies that kids will use to scratch inside their casts. Finally, Dr. Stricker reviewed some of the challenging “return to play” decisions confronting the physician in the 21st century caring for the young athlete, and again, how these differ than those same decisions in the college or professional athlete. Dr. Stricker reminded physicians to “think beyond the box” when taking care of the pediatric aged athlete. Dr. Stricker is a physician at the Scripps Clinic Sports Medicine center in LaJolla CA, and a board member for the AMSSM.