Life Cycle of the Athlete: Your Body's Changing Frame
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For Immediate Release:

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS (AAOS) AND NATIONAL ATHLETIC TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION (NATA) HOST "LIFE CYCLE OF THE ATHLETE" NEWS CONFERENCE

Top Health Care Experts Address Key Topics Relating to Physical Challenges Facing Athletes and Active People throughout Various Life Stages

Champion Swimmer and Sports Journalist Diana Nyad Provides Introductory Comments

NY Giants Rich Seubert and Shaun O'Hara, Former NY Knicks Player Mel Davis and Olympic Luge Competitor Cameron A. Myler Discuss Sports Injuries and Their Recoveries

NEW YORK, Oct. 18 – Millions of Americans are getting the physical fitness message. There's currently a boom in athletic activity among Americans of all ages. Elementary school students and teens are participating in more organized group sports than ever before. Generation X women have increased their weekly physical activities and ramped up the intensity of their workouts. Baby boomers are joining health clubs at a stupendous rate – up 135 percent between 1987 and 2001, reports America Sports Data, Inc. And indoor fitness activities among seniors, according to *Fitness Management* magazine, have jumped by 75 percent since 1987.

The good news is that the increased exercise helps prevent obesity and disease, build strength, relieve stress and promote overall well-being. The bad news is that active people are experiencing more injuries than ever before.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), more than 3.5 million sports-related injuries in children under age 15 were treated in the U.S. in 2003. Among baby boomers, sports-related emergency room injuries escalated by 33 percent from 1991-1998. And from 1990-1996, the CPSC recorded a 54 percent increase in all sports injuries among people 65+ years of age.

To address this serious problem and offer the latest research on how athletes can stay healthy, fit and injury-free, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) and the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) teamed up to host "Life Cycle of the Athlete" – an educational forum, held today at the Club Restaurant in Madison Square Garden in New York, from 9:00-11:30 a.m.

"Both the AAOS and NATA believe the topics covered in this news conference are essential, given the dramatic rise of injuries among professional and amateur athletes alike," said Stuart A. Hirsch, MD, orthopaedic surgeon and chair of AAOS' Council on Communications. "As health care professionals who work daily with active people, we believe it's our responsibility to continuously educate and update the media and general public on good bone and joint health," said NATA President Chuck Kimmel, ATC.

Throughout the morning, presenters addressed the specific physical challenges of: youth and high school athletes, Generation X women, baby boomers and active seniors. World-champion swimmer Diana Nyad provided introductory comments. In addition, offensive lineman Shaun O'Hara and starting left guard Rich Seubert of the New York Giants; former New York Knick Mel Davis; and four-time Olympic luge competitor Cameron A. Myler described personal sports injuries they sustained and their roads to recovery. The formal presentations in Power Point and audio form, will be posted at NATA.org/lifecycle and orthoinfo.org/lifecycle.

Moderated by Al Green, MEd, ATC, chair of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) Public Relations Committee, and Stuart A. Hirsch, MD, chair of the Council on Communications of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), the "Life Cycle of the Athlete" event was divided into four topics:

- Y*outh & High School Sport Injuries: Can The Epidemic Be Stopped?*, presented by Alvin H. Crawford, MD, director of pediatric orthopaedics at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, and Jon Almquist, ATC, director of athletic training services, Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia.

  Crawford discussed overuse injuries once considered rare among young athletes, which have increased four-fold since 2000. Almquist focused on the benefits of youth being physically active, the staggering number of injuries young athletes receive, and the impact of lost time from sports and educational opportunities.

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- *The Gen X Woman: Strength, Stress & Self*, presented by Letha Y. "Etty" Griffin, MD, PhD, Peachtree Orthopaedic Clinic in Atlanta, team physician for Georgia State University and orthopaedic consultant for the Atlanta Ballet, and Elaine Winslow-Redmond, MS, ATC, head athletic trainer for the Radio City Rockettes and athletic training consultant for Blue Man Group, New York Knicks City Dancers, Tap Kids and New York City Dance Alliance.

Griffin provided an overview of the unique challenges Generation X women contend with – from work, motherhood and caring for aging parents. Winslow-Redmond examined the dilemma female athletes, ages 25-40, face when they consider starting a family while maintaining a career, and how CDC statistics show birth rates for women, ages 35-44, have soared.

- *Boomeritis and Beyond*, presented by Nicholas A. DiNubile, MD, clinical assistant professor of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and orthopaedic consultant for the Philadelphia 76ers and Pennsylvania Ballet, and Marjorie J. Albohm, MS, ATC, director, orthopaedic research & business development, OrthoIndy, in Indianapolis and vice president of the National Athletic Trainers' Association.

  DiNubile examined the impact of musculoskeletal disorders, old injuries, genetics and other factors; and offered prevention and treatment solutions for "boomeritis." Albohm focused on improving fitness levels throughout the boomer years and explained why fitness programs should be customized and emphasize core body conditioning.

- *The Independence of the Active Senior*, presented by Vonda J. Wright, MD, MS, sports fellow at the Hospital for Special Surgery, New York, clinical instructor in the department of orthopaedic surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (UPMC) and research coordinator for the 2005 Senior Olympics, and Kent Biggerstaff, ATC, athletic trainer and director of competition and venues with the Pittsburgh Local Organizing Committee, 2005 Senior Olympics, former athletic trainer with the Pittsburgh Pirates and past president of the Professional Baseball Athletic Trainers Society.

  Wright examined aging in America; discussed the problem of a sedentary lifestyle and lost independence in the seniors; and offered the Senior Olympian as a model for active aging. Biggerstaff described various exercises appropriate for seniors; gave tips on how to begin a daily regimen; provided safety precautions; and suggested an exercise schedule.

  Guest speakers Rich Seubert and Shaun O'Hara of the New York Giants, Mel Davis, former New York Knick and Cameron A. Myler, Olympic luge athlete, discussed how they all had experienced injuries and "got back into the game."

Nyad, a former world-champion swimmer, has had knee and shoulder surgeries due to overuse injuries. Seubert, a Giants starting left guard, shattered his lower leg during a game in October 2003. O'Hara, a Giants center, developed a staph infection in his lower leg in October 2004, and later suffered a high ankle sprain. Davis tore his meniscus and ligaments in his right knee while playing basketball at St. John's University, and later injured his left knee in a Special Olympics game. Myler damaged one of her knees while skiing and later subluxed both her shoulders while participating in biomechanical testing for the luge.

Both NATA and AAOS hope the physical fitness trend continues to flourish across the generations. By the same token, they urge active people of all ages to take special precautions so that the "Life Cycle of the Athlete" is as injury-free as possible.

About the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS):
With more than 28,000 members, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (www.aaos.org) or (www.orthoinfo.org), is a not-for-profit organization that advocates improved patient care, provides education programs for orthopaedic surgeons, allied health professionals and the public. The AAOS will celebrate its 75th Anniversary at our 2008 Annual Meeting in San Francisco. Visit www.aaos.org/75years and be a part of our history!

About the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA):
Athletic trainers are unique health care providers who specialize in the prevention, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries and illnesses. The National Athletic Trainers' Association represents and supports 30,000 members of the athletic training profession through education and research. www.NATA.org/lifecycle. NATA, 2952 Stemmons Freeway, Ste. 200, Dallas, TX 75247, 214.637.6282; 214.637.2206 (fax).

NATA and AAOS are participating in the Bone and Joint Decade (www.usbjd.org), the global initiative in the years 2002-2011 to raise awareness of musculoskeletal health to stimulate research and improve people's quality of life. President Bush has declared the years 2002-2011 National Bone and Joint Decade in support of these objectives.

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