



jogging  
**Dr. Charles R. Young**

## Athletic nerve conditions may cause foot injuries

Foot injuries incurred during athletic activity often involve the various nerves contained in the area. This involvement may range from a mild, temporary tingling or pins-and-needles sensation to a full-blown numbness. I feel that the role of nerve involvement in athletic injuries is far underplayed and often ignored.

In actuality, perhaps one of the more common problems encountered by our athletes is some form of nerve injury. When you consider the various anatomical locations as well as the relative lack of protective padding to the foot and ankle, it is no wonder that with injury to the soft tissue, nerves will often be involved.

There are four basic groups of nerve conditions. (Please keep in mind that this is a generalization of a complex subject).

**NEUROMAS ARE** irritations to either the body or sheath (covering) of the nerve. Although they can occur in any location, characteristically they affect the forefoot and heel areas of the foot.

The athlete will usually complain of numbness, burning and/or sharp radiating-type pains into the toes. In most cases, the athlete can recall a recent injury to the involved part that precipitated the nerve damage.

Although swelling and discoloration are usually absent, the athlete can most often isolate the involvement fairly accurately. The treatment approach for this problem is an initial bout of conservative care consisting of injections, physical therapy and various types of padding to relieve pressure.

For unresponsive cases, a surgery may have to be utilized. Neuromas can, by their very nature, be most annoying and quite debilitating to the trained athlete.

Prompt professional care should be sought if this problem is suspected since its early recognition and treatment are helpful in attaining success.

**NERVE ENTRAPMENT** problems are another group of cases which most often follow injury. Interestingly enough, we also often encounter this phenomenon following surgery.

The term entrapment implies compression on and around a nerve segment by surrounding soft tissue. During an injury, the involved body tissues expand by swelling. Since the contained nerves are like enclosed tubes, a pressure situation often occurs. The bands which help to hold down the nerves may themselves become constrictive and cause pressure, or the culprit may be the swollen tissue around the involved segment itself.

Nerve entrapments are quite common in the ankle area as well as in the wrist. The involved sensations range as in neuromas — from numbness and tingling to various levels of pain and intractability. Treatments for nerve entrapment problems consist of conservative management and, in certain cases, surgery.

A **THIRD CATEGORY** involving nerves is unrelated to injury, but concerns pre-existing physical conditions.

There are conditions such as diabetes, alcoholism, various abnormalities of the blood and certain neuromuscular diseases where nerve involvement — particularly in the feet — is quite common.

The condition as we encounter it in the office involves what we term a peripheral neuritis. This fancy-sounding label merely implies nerve symptoms such as burning, tingling and numbness in areas like the fingers and toes.

Neuritic complaints in athletes are frequent enough so as to not be ignored. Although the presence of these symptoms without a recollection of injury does not necessarily imply a general medical-disease state, a thorough investigation is often warranted.

Dr. Charles Young, a Livonia podiatrist, writes a jogging column for the Observer & Eccentric newspapers.

# Top teams lose but don't move in poll

Birmingham Brother Rice, Orchard Lake St. Mary's and Southfield-Lathrup all lost last week, but they maintain strong holds on the top three spots in this week's Oakland County Observer & Eccentric basketball rankings.

Brother Rice fell at Detroit DeLaSalle Tuesday. St. Mary's lost at Saginaw St. Stephens Friday, and Lathrup bowed in its Metro Suburban Activities Association (MSAA) first-place showdown at Royal Oak Dondoro.

St. Mary's and Lathrup both lost to St. Stephens and Dondoro, respectively, earlier this season.

Meanwhile, Farmington Harrison still holds the No. 4 spot after victories

## basketball rankings

over Farmington High School and Livonia Churchill. The Hawks' triumph over Churchill vaulted them back into a first-place tie with Northville in the Western Six League.

**SOUTHFIELD HIGH** School stays No. 5 in the rankings after easy wins over Hazel Park and Royal Oak Kimball.

Detroit Country Day moves up from a seventh-place tie with Troy High

Farmington, Troy and Rochester communities.

Sports editors Tom Baer, Marty Budner and Dennis O'Connor participate in the voting.

First-place votes are worth seven points, second-place votes get six points, third-place gets five, and so on.

**BASKETBALL RANKINGS**  
(Not including Tuesday action)

1. Brother Rice (21) . . . . . 15-2
2. St. Mary's (18) . . . . . 15-2
3. Lathrup (15) . . . . . 12-5
4. Harrison (10) . . . . . 10-5
5. Southfield (9) . . . . . 10-6
6. Country Day (6) . . . . . 11-4
7. Troy (5) . . . . . 9-7

# Rochester crews still dominate ratings

There was no change in this week's wrestling rankings.

Adams, which won its fourth straight Metro Suburban Activities Association (MSAA) championship recently, is still the No. 1 ranked team. The Highlanders lost only one of 19 dual meets and finished fifth in the 14-team Davison district over the weekend.

## Wrestling rankings

There were 23 wrestlers who qualified for the regionals from the Observer & Eccentric's top seven squads.

The Highlanders qualified two wrestlers for this weekend's regional action at Davison High School. No. 2 ranked Rochester had three qualifiers.

Troy Athens and West Bloomfield — the third through sixth ranked teams — each qualified four wrestlers. And, No. 7 ranked North Farmington had two qualifying wrestlers.

Birmingham Brother Rice, which finished second at the Trenton District, and Southfield also received votes by the O&E sports editors.

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