

# KEEPING ATHLETES SAFE



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK L. BUSSLER

Medford coach Nick Trapp watches as Dr. Timothy Van Gelder wraps junior running back Garron Hoffman's wrist after an injury in Medford's 44-6 homecoming loss against Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop. Van Gelder's experience and vast knowledge of sports medicine allows him to help injured athletes quickly and get them back on the field if he deems them fit.

## Local doctor stands ready to help

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS  
SPORTS EDITOR

Dr. Timothy Van Gelder is a family practitioner with the Mayo Clinic in Owatonna who spends his Friday nights practicing his passion for medicine in a place one might not expect: a football field.

For six years now, Van Gelder has pa-

trolled Medford's sidelines offering his services to injured Tigers football players by giving them treatments and advice on who to recover faster and get back in the game quicker.

"Medicine was really the field that I could meld that service to humanity and my love of science into one. So that was what really

drew me in," said Van Gelder.

Van Gelder, a native of Orange City, Iowa, grew up on a farm with his parents who took in infants as foster parents.

"That really instilled the service to your fellow human aspect in me pretty quickly. And I know that sounds cliché because you know, that's the classic,

'Why'd you go into medicine? Because I wanted to help people.' But that was really a big part of it."

As a doctor, Van Gelder has a vast range of experience.

At the clinic, his main practice is family medicine and pre-natal care, often assisting with childbirth.

On the field, Van Gelder is tasked with

evaluating athletic injuries, ranging from concussion testing to orthopedic injuries, such as bone breaks.

Van Gelder recalled a time where he treated an athlete who came off of the field with a cut on his face that was visibly bleeding.

According to the MSHSL officials' rulebook, an athlete who has an open wound

that is actively bleeding must be removed from competition until the bleeding is stopped.

Upon evaluating the cut, Van Gelder said he determined that he could stitch it closed, did so and deemed the athlete fit for competition. Thew athlete was back on the field in time for the second half.

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WASECA FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Waseca coach Brad Wendland returned to school and the football field last week after collapsing on Sept. 3 during his team's season opener against St. Peter. Wendland is now on a mission to educate people about the value of CPR training and the importance of having automated external defibrillators (AEDs) available.

## AEDs, trainers, ambulance crews play key role

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS  
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While fans cheer and athletes compete behind the scenes, there are a group of people at every game who may go unnoticed until something terrible happens.

Athletic trainers, ambulance crews, volunteer physicians and even equipment such as automated external defibrillators (AEDs) may not be called upon every night, but when they're needed, they have proven to be indispensable.

On Friday, Sept. 3, Waseca football coach Brad Wendland collapsed on the sidelines during his team's home opener against St. Peter.

Wendland suffered a cardiac arrest and required the use of an AED to be revived.

According to KARE 11, Wendland now feels that it is his responsibility to ensure that CPR training and proper knowledge of how to operate AEDs are commonplace at sporting events.

While AEDs are required at all high schools and by the MSHSL during all sanctioned athletic events, other medical staff and equipment

can vary from school to school.

Some schools, including Medford and Owatonna, have volunteer physicians at most games. Others rely on trainers and ambulance crews to provide initial medical care when health emergencies occur.

Dr. Timothy Van Gelder is a volunteer team physician who has patrolled Medford's sidelines for 10 years, helping injured athletes and providing medical knowledge in any way he can.

At Owatonna, the team has two volunteer medical professionals - Dr. Brian Bunkers and orthopedic surgeon Dr. Scott Perkinson - who work alongside team trainer Terry Carlyle in helping athletes who need special attention with injuries.

Owatonna activities director Marc Achterkirch said he remembers an injury in a state playoff game where an Owatonna athlete suffered a dislocation in their knee, requiring immediate medical attention.

He said that Bunkers, Perkinson and Carlyle were able to relocate the knee immediately and played a huge role in how the athlete recovered from his injury.

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