Olympic Tectonics and Sports Neurosurgeons

Introduction:

The evolving recognition of sports brain injury is creating a need for neurosurgeons, certainly most obviously in Olympic competition, where serous brain injury may occur on-screen, in real time. Optimal management of High G-Force injury will now be expected.

Methods:

The traditional mainstays of care (sports orthopedists), heretofore were concerned with lower G-Force impact. We are now confronted by new challenges: higher G-force head injuries that are exceeding their customary, conventional medical support with TBI consequences. Omalu’s cytopathology discoveries dramatically altered the algorithm of care.

Results:

Neurosurgery’s involvement in sports brain injury, initially obscure, gained early prominence with Schneider (football), and Norrell. Our own study of Olympic injury started in the 1960 Winter Olympics, culminating in a 40+ year personal experience evaluating Olympic Winter Sports Brain Injury. Our Tahoe Neurosurgery vantage enabled us to recognize the evolving need in numerous Olympic disciplines, now being perceived (post TBI and CTE) as benefiting from neurosurgical involvement.

Conclusion:

At the Olympic level, we have raised the question of professional liability created by neurosurgeons accompanying Olympic teams to foreign areas. This areas now being addressed for sports physicians in Congress. Neurosurgery’s broad participation will inevitably contribute to modification of certain sports, where chance of serious head injury can exist, as well to others, where head injury IS the GOAL (Boxing?), hopefully contributing its slide toward obscurity.