The issue of concussions in sports has received a lot of attention in the press in the past year, and rightfully so. Concussions can have serious long-term affects on players and the sports world is fortunately moving away from its previous casual attitude toward them. While it unreasonable to think we can completely eliminate concussions from a contact sport such as soccer, we can be better at identifying concussions when they happen and getting proper treatment for them immediately. Toward that end, we've put together this primer on concussions for our players, coaches and parents. If you think we've missed something, let us know.

What is Idaho Rush doing?

- Concussion policy
- Concussion protocol
- Concussion notice
- Parent information
- Rush coach wallet card

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

From the Centers for Disease Control: "A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can occur in any sport or recreation activity.

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

- The STARS team at St. Alphonsus Medical Center is a virtual clearinghouse for concussion information for parents, coaches and players. They have links to the ImPACT testing, printable fact sheets for use on the sideline, return-to-play guidelines and lots more.
- The Centers for Disease Control concussion page has educational material, links to videos

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and podcasts, and ideas for preventing concussions.
- The "Heads Up" on-line training course educates coaches and parents about concussions and awards a printable certificate upon completion of the module.

POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

The board and staff at Idaho Rush recently finalized a comprehensive concussion plan that aims to provide parents and players with information about concussions, educate all of our coaches on how to recognize possible concussions, and provide on-field staff with the tools to be able to deal with concussions when the occur. We now have a written concussion policy for parents, players and coaches. The policy includes the we will keep our membership informed about concussions and their rights and responsibilities. We have als created a written protocol for coaches to follow when they suspect a player may have suffered a concussion

Concussion policy
On-field protocols

COACH AND PARENT EDUCATION

We have created an education seminar to educate all of our coaches and parents on how to recognize poss concussions and provide them with the tools to be able to deal with concussions when they occur. The orig seminar was held in January of 2013 at St. Alphonsus Medical Center with St. Al's staff. Subsequent trainin will be conducted using a recording of that seminar.

The next available training session will be in February.

The education is mandatory for all coaches in the competitive program and all coaches in the U14 and High School divisions of the Select program. The meeting is also open to parents, managers and anyone else wh wants to come. Please RSVP to info@idahorush.com so we can plan to have enough seating, handouts, et

BASELINE TESTING

Diagnosing concussions relies partially on recognizing changes in a player's cognitive ability (i.e. memory, etc.). But to notice the changes, we have to have an idea of the player's cognitive ability before the possible concussion happened. To establish this "baseline" we strong encourage players to have baseline testing do by experienced medical professionals:

To make an appointment with the STARS Sports Medicine Unit of St. Alphonsus Medical Ce call Dennis Phelps at 367-6761 or 484-1070 (cell). Teams can also make group arrangemen The cost is $15 per player.

Baseline testing is recommended for players 10 years of age and older. The tests are recommended yearly kids 10-14, then every other year for players once they get to high school.

ON-FIELD SERVICES AND FOLLOW-UP TESTING

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The new concussion policy requires that players who have sustained a concussion be evaluated and cleare a medical professional before returning to play. To facilitate that evaluation, sports trainers from St. Alphons are on-site at the Simplot Sports Complex and the Optimist Youth Sports Complex on Saturdays during the soccer season. These trainers are qualified and authorized to clear players for returning to the game. At Simplot, the trainers can be found in the north parking lot above Fields 5 and 6, where headquarters tents a normally set up for tournaments. At Optimist, the trainers can be found near the tennis courts. There is no c to be seen by these trainers. Trainers will also help with soccer-related injuries other than concussions, too.

- **Fall 2013:** Trainers are also available at Winstead Park 5-6:30 p.m. every Wednesday in Septembe and October.

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