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# Chicago White Sox doctor also treats Prosser school athletes

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Whether it's treating White Sox baseball players or Prosser Career Academy athletes, Dr. Brian Cole, an orthopedic surgeon, treats his patients with the same level of passion.

The only difference is Cole, 41, treats his Prosser patients for free.

"It's enjoyable, and I like the kids. I feel like it's a good service," Cole said in a recent interview. "It's not a big deal for me."

Cole, an associate professor at the Department of Orthopedics and Sports Medicine at Rush University Medical Center as well as a doctor for the Chicago White

Sox, said he decided to dedicate his time and services to caring for Prosser's athletes after he learned from a former patient, Prosser football coach Jerry Reed, that many of the students didn't have health insurance and were lacking in medical care.

"He told me he was one of the coaches, and that the players had no coverage. I said I'd be happy to help out," Cole said. "They're playing at-risk sports, and they didn't have good medical care. I told him I'd be happy to help them."

Reed met Cole in 1997 after he ruptured his Achilles tendon playing basketball. Reed said that after meeting Cole, he got the

feeling Cole was a warm and generous person, so he decided to ask him a favor.

"I asked him if there was any time you have, we'd like to give physicals to the kids," Reed told the *Times*. "He said he'd love to give to the community. That's what he does. So the next year, he gave physicals to everybody. And then, the most amazing thing, he started sending residents to give physicals" to everyone in any sport at Prosser. "The residents started coming to games."

Reed said the service that Cole does for the athletes, about a third of whom lack medical coverage, Reed said, is invaluable.

"Even if there were an injury,

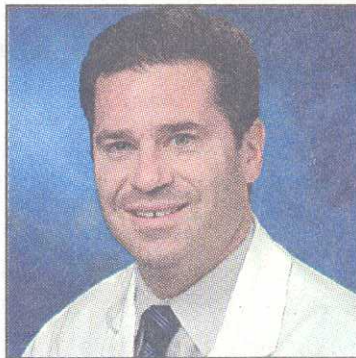
we'd have a licensed physician at the game, even before the ambulances arrived," Reed said.

He said that since he started helping out the school, the care has improved. He said he's working with an accelerated rehabilitation facility that will provide a trainer for the school.

Cole said that he believes sports can be an important inspiration for students to do well in school. He said that is a difference between professional athletes and high-school athletes.

"The fundamental difference is the kids are driven... There's a lot of distractions.... It keeps these kids on the straight tracks," he said. "It provides a distraction

from getting into trouble."



**DR. BRIAN COLE**

Prosser recently honored Cole with the Hall of Fame for community service award. Cole shrugs off the praise.