

April 21, 2020

Dear CSCCa Member Coach,

I sincerely hope that you and your family are staying healthy and safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. The effects of this pandemic are unprecedented, including the closure of college and university campuses throughout the country. As you know first-hand, this has resulted in collegiate athletes being away from supervised training sessions conducted by their strength and conditioning staffs. I know many of you are maintaining contact and checking on your athletes through regular phone calls and text messages. No one knows how long these conditions will last or when athletes will be able to return to campuses. Regardless of when this takes place, however, these athletes have already been away well past the two-weeks which will mark their ultimate return to supervised training as a transition period—a time during which the athlete is at greatest risk for exertion-related issues.

Consequently, I am reminding you of the importance of the [CSCCa/NSCA Joint Consensus Return to Training document](#) which was published in the June 2019 issue of the *NSCA Strength and Conditioning Journal*. This article can be accessed from the [home page](#) of the CSCCa website (scroll down to just below the banner of CSCCa sponsors). Our goal as an organization is that we do not have a single athlete death or serious illness/injury during the coming year. But as I mentioned previously, our collegiate athletes will ultimately be returning to college campuses after an extremely long break due to COVID-19. We are confident that if the protocols explained in this consensus document are followed, the health and safety of collegiate athletes will be protected. Master Strength and Conditioning Coaches Don Decker, Scott Bennett, Rob Glass, Jennifer Jones, Ken Mannie, and Scott Bennett served on the Committee which developed these protocols. They, along with the CSCCa Board of Directors, a team of researchers, and 150-peer-reviewed documents stand behind these protocols. Both the CSCCa and the NSCA endorse them as best practices. I know that many of you have been implementing the protocols, and I am not aware of any exertion-related deaths or serious injuries during strength and conditioning training sessions since the release of the document last June.

These important protocols can be successfully adapted and implemented into your program, and they complement the NCAA's *Interassociation Recommendations: Preventing Catastrophic Injury and Death in College Student-Athletes*, which was also released in 2019. While the Interassociation Recommendations provide important general guidelines, the CSCCa/NSCA Joint Consensus document goes further by providing specific formulas you can apply to your program to safely reduce volume and intensity while providing appropriate recovery. There is no guess work. The recommended percentages to be utilized during the first weeks of the transition period are provided, along with various ways in which the reduced percentages can be applied to your conditioning program (testing and training). A similar approach is provided for strength training programs. These protocols provide a safe transition to maximal training

outputs in as few as two weeks for returning athletes and 4 weeks for new athletes. For those who are registered for the *2020 CSCCa Virtual National Conference*, MSCC and CSCCa Board Member Don Decker will be making a presentation on these protocols. In addition, participants will receive a reference book by mail that will include examples of how to apply these protocols.

We realize that some athletic conferences are creating committees with representation from various groups within the athletic department to determine the best way to safely and effectively re-introduce the athletes to training. Regardless of the circumstances, **these protocols should be the basis upon which all programs are developed and implemented.** In the spirit of unity, we look forward to working together as a profession to ensure the health and safety of all collegiate athletes through safe and appropriate exercise prescription as they return to campuses following this extended time away from supervised training. In order for these protocols to protect athlete health and safety, however, they must be implemented. We need your full support.

During this unprecedented time, many have made sacrifices for the greater good. We implore the strength and conditioning community to sacrifice the risk of overly aggressive training for the safety of the athlete. Let us stand united as we successfully navigate the many unknowns as we return to our programs. Please remember that these protocols provide safe parameters for you to follow while allowing you flexibility and latitude in determining how best to implement them into your program. **Following these evidence-based protocols gives each athlete the best chance to transition safely back into the stresses of his/her sport, and is our best defense against exertion-related issues.**

If you have any questions or concerns about these protocols, please contact the CSCCa National Office at info@csc.ca.org or 801-375-9400.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dr. Chuck Stiggins".

Dr. Chuck Stiggins
CSCCa Executive Director