

RETURN TO PLAY: "I'm Ready Coach!".....

Just Do It or Do It Right?....

This familiar proclamation has been made by athletes of all ages for centuries, even thousands of years I'm sure. "I'm ready." Interesting phrase. What makes an athlete "ready" is really the question isn't it? As an athlete who is injured or as the parent or coach that is really what it all comes down to. **Who KNOWS if the athlete is ready?**

"I can do it"

"You can do it"

"Just do it"

All encouragements we've heard...from inside our own head as an athlete, from the mouths of enthusiastic teammates or coaches or parents, and even from advertisements.

Should an injured athlete who is recovering and getting anxious to get back in or should the hopeful coach who misses their valuable contributor or the teammate who can't wait to get their friend back to playing together or the excited parent who empathizes with the loss their son or daughter feels in not doing what brings them such joy and leaves the parents feeling their own void from watched games that take on less meaning

SHOULD ALL THESE PEOPLE BE LEAVING THEIR ENCOURAGEMENT AT "JUST DO IT" OR "YOU CAN DO IT" ?

Do it "RIGHT" is arguably the best way that encouragement could be given. And how would you do it "right" ...how would a coach or athlete or a parent change their focus or approach to get an injured athlete back safely?

I always tell athletes that when they go back I want them to stay back! It's absolutely a worse feeling for all involved when the athlete goes back in prematurely and ends up reinjured. Usually that means longer time off. Oftentimes it would've only been a few more days or another week or two before they could've gone back "with my blessings" and stamp of approval. And for those few days or weeks they risked and lost what could become the rest of the season or months from a re-injury.

DOING IT RIGHT means a few things. It certainly means knowing the biomechanical demands of that sport and even of that particular position and devising tests for the injured athlete that can effectively stress those movements and activities as a minimal requirement to prove competency. You've got to earn your way back to the field or court or ice. Prove it. A smile, a pout, a tear, bartering...they just aren't enough. I want proof. You should too.

For me, that means test the planes of motion and unique movement combinations that the athlete will see in live action. Start first as broken down components that can be more easily assessed instead of just watching them play. It means having a really keen, sharp eye on (and

really, first KNOWING who and where the cheaters are in the body that might be working to hide the injured body part that isn't truly recovered enough yet).

That's not an easy task for the layperson. It's not an easy task even for those trained professionally. But ultimately the athletes we love and admire and wish only the best for are served and honored by taking the time and having the right person really put them to the test. If you need help from Peak Performance just call us at 585-218-0240.

Remember...Just Do It RIGHT! 'Cause when you go back I want you to stay back.
