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SPORTS & BUSINESS



Behind the Scenes

For two years, Brian Williams' Senior Baseball League team was the Red Jacket Indians. There was enough interest to create a second team this year, so Williams' team became the Twin City Railroaders.

See Page 3B

QUESTIONS? Contact Paul Gangarossa, sports editor, at (585) 394-0770 or pgangarossa@messengerpostmedia.com

SIDELINE

ON TV At U.S. Cellular Field in Chicago, the host White Sox take on the Yankees for a third-straight night, 8 p.m. on ESPN

CONCUSSIONS | Second-Impact Syndrome

Newark athletes learn dangers of repeat concussions

By **DAN GOLDMAN**

dgoldman@messengerpostmedia.com

NEWARK — The Newark High School athletic department wanted its student athletes to learn about the dangers of concussions and second-impact syndrome. Instead of just telling kids the medical facts, they let them hear it from former boxer Ray Ciancaglini at the school's fall sports kickoff night Tuesday.

A quote from Ciancaglini on the projection screen greeted all of the attendees: "The game you sit out today could be the career you save tomorrow."

Ciancaglini, 60, was a skilled boxer and honor student at Geneva High School, before he suffered his first concussion in a boxing match at the age of 16.

He was never knocked down or knocked out, but Ciancaglini felt dazed and his vision became blurry. After the fight, Ciancaglini dealt with a headache, but continued training. A week later, the boxer suffered a second concussion in another fight. Of course, he didn't know it was a concussion at the time because there wasn't as much knowledge about

“The game you sit out today could be the career you save tomorrow.”

— Former boxer and Geneva H.S. grad Ray Ciancaglini

What's second-impact syndrome?

Second-impact syndrome (SIS) is a condition in which the brain swells rapidly and catastrophically after a person suffers a second concussion before symptoms from an earlier one have subsided. This deadly second blow may occur days, weeks or minutes after an initial concussion, and even the mildest grade of concussion can lead to SIS.

See **CONCUSSIONS, 3B**

CONCUSSIONS

From Page 1B

the condition as there is today.

Dr. Jason Feinberg said Ciancaglini suffered second impact syndrome. The Finger Lakes Health Chief Medical Officer explained that the brain is most vulnerable when it is recovering from a concussion.

After the second concussion, the boxer said things went bad. Ciancaglini performed poorly in school, the mild headache never went away, he became forgetful and later developed a Parkinson's disease-like tremor.

He quit boxing at 21, but Ciancaglini said the consequences of the concussions prevented him from completing college and limited his ability to work jobs.

Feinberg explained the symptoms of a concussion to students, such as headaches, memory difficulties, sleep disturbances, depression, anxiety, light and noise intolerance and an inability to concentrate.

Newark, like other high

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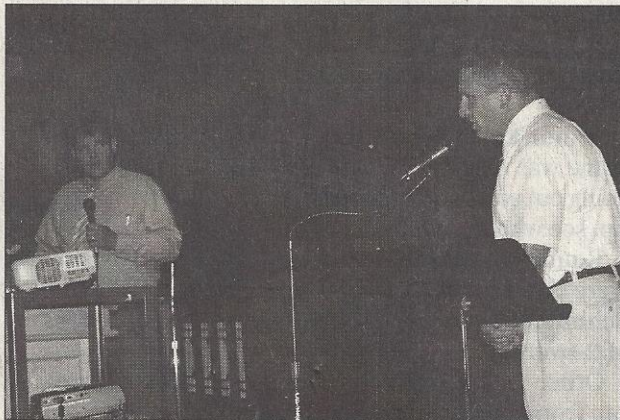
Please check out thesecondimpact.com for more information.

schools, has a detailed protocol athletes must follow before they can return to play.

Feinberg stressed that students need to be honest with coaches, trainers and parents if they have symptoms. Ciancaglini asked the older athletes to be role models for younger players, since peer pressure can prevent athletes from leaving the game and reporting symptoms.

"They have the very best coaching here in Newark," Ciancaglini said. "In order for (coaches and trainers) to do their jobs and give correct evaluations, they have to be honest with them. Also, (being honest) prevents them from being put into harm's way and that can happen by being fooled by adrenaline and peer pressure."

Parent Liz Card and her two children found the



DAN GOLDMAN/MESSENGER POST

Dr. Jason Feinberg, left, and former boxer Ray Ciancaglini told Newark High School student athletes and parents about the dangers of concussions. Ciancaglini said he suffered permanent brain damage from sustaining concussions in his boxing career.

presentation very informative. Card felt that hearing it from Ciancaglini made it hit home.

"I thought it was powerful because you could see him shaking, you could see him struggling a little bit," she said.

"From his personal experience it helped to know what could happen," added her son, Michael Gonzalez-Kelly.

For more information, visit www.thesecondimpact.com.

How serious is SIS?

The condition is often fatal, and almost everyone who is not killed is severely disabled. The cause of SIS is uncertain, but it is thought that the brain's arterioles lose their ability to regulate their diameter, and therefore lose control over cerebral blood flow, causing massive cerebral edema. Most cases of SIS have occurred in young people.