Quick Reference Guide
For
Football Player Spinal Immobilization and Airway Management

Michael Bilkasley, EMT-P, LO.O.
Blue Ash Fire Department
Paul Sparling MED, ATC
Head Athletic Trainer, Cincinnati Bengals

Common Types of Face Mask Clamps

Standard Phillips Screw Clamp
Quarter Turn Flat Head Clamp (use flathead screw driver or quarter to open)

Speed Release Clamp (Use special tool or ball point pen to release) *Do NOT use spring loaded window punch
Face Mask Removal

1.) Remove side clamps first (see photos above for types)

2.) Remove the top clamps, these will typically be the Philips screw clamps

The Face Mask will swivel upward before the screws are removed, if rapid access is needed to open/secure an airway and BVM respirations.

*Note, the face mask will need to be removed if intubation is needed.

When removing the standard (Philips head screws), you may need to place a finger on the inside base to keep it from turning with the screw. In addition, these clamps sometimes rust due to moisture which can make it difficult to remove the screw. If this happens, you may need to cut the plastic clamps using a Trainer’s Angel (or similar) tool.
Stabilizing the Patient with Football Equipment On

1.) Stabilize the head and remove the facemask.

2.) Secure the patient to the board with straps, Secure the Head with rolled towels or head blocks using tape/straps to secure.

The patient is ready for Transport
Removal of Helmet and Shoulder Pads

1.) Stabilize the Head and Remove Face Mask

2.) Cut the center straps/strings

3.) Slide Hands Under the Front of the Shoulder Pads and manually take control of the C-Spine

4.) Un Snap/Remove Cheek Pad

5.) Remove the Second Cheek Pad

6.) Remove the Chin Strap
7.) Begin to remove the helmet

8.) Note, the Second Person Stabilizing the Back of the Head

9.) Helmet Removed, Next

10.) Begin Removing the Shoulder Pads, 1 Member Stabilizes each Shoulder

11.) Lower Patient and apply C Collar

12.) Continue Manual C Spine while Placing the Pt on the Back Board

Patient is Now Immobilized and Ready for Transport
Intubation

When stabilizing the head, it may be more advantageous to stabilize the head under the shoulder pad assembly as noted in steps 3 through 10 above vs. at the head as noted in the photos below. The stabilization method is at the discretion of the airway team. It recommended to practice these procedures in a controlled setting with the School or Programs Athletic Trainers and Medical Staff.

Intubation with a Standard Laryngoscope

Intubation with a Video Laryngoscope (We do not endorse any particular model/brand of video laryngoscope).

Adopted 09/06/2018