Sideline Assessment Checklist
For
Head and Neck Injuries

1. History

☐ Previous head injuries
☐ Mechanism of injury and activity at time of injury
☐ Chief complaint
☐ Unusual sensations (tinnitus, dizziness, blurred vision, headache, unsteadiness)
☐ Location, type, and quality of pain (including headache symptoms)
☐ Loss of consciousness
☐ Orientation to place, person, self, and time

☐ Throughout history, assess memory, appropriateness, and quality of verbal response

2. Observation

☐ Otorrhea, rhinorrhea, Battle's sign, raccoon eyes (skull fracture)
☐ Halo effect for cerebral spinal fluid
☐ Swelling, deformity, discoloration, or bleeding of skull, scalp, or face
☐ Bilateral symmetry of facial structures
☐ Unusual body posturing (decerebrate, decorticate)
☐ Unusual movement (vomiting, seizures, yawning, unilateral weakness)
☐ Unusual behavior (violent, combative, argumentative, repeating questions, confused)
☐ Unusual facial expressions (drooping of eyelid or corner of mouth)
☐ Level of consciousness (alertness, restlessness, lethargy)
☐ Pupil appearance (size, shape, equality)
☐ Pupil reaction to light (consensual and direct light reflex)
☐ Unusual eye movement (nystagmus, tracking difficulty, deviation from midline)
☐ Continued observation of vital signs (respiration depth, rate and rhythm)

3. Palpation

☐ Skull and face for point tenderness, swelling, deformity, depression:
☐ Compare bilaterally
☐ Continued monitoring of pulse rate
4. Neurological Tests

- Cranial nerve check
- Bilateral grip strength
- Special Tests

5. Cognitive tests

- Memory
- Retrograde assessment (memory of events prior to injury)
- Anterograde assessment (five-object immediate and delayed recall)
- Concentration (Serial 7)

6. Balance and coordination

- Romberg test
- Finger-to-nose test
- Heel-to-toe walking
- Repeat testing every 15 to 30 min if stable, every 5 min if unstable, until serious head injury is ruled out, for the following:
  - Vital signs
  - Pupils
  - Level of consciousness

7. Functional Tests

- Performed only in cases in which athlete is otherwise symptom free under resting conditions