

# CHILD SAFETY BLOG

PATRICK MALONE & ASSOCIATES, P.C.  
From Tragedy To Justice - Attorneys For The Injured

Toll Free: **888.625.6635**  
(888.MaloneLaw)

Local: **202.742.1500**



Posted On: **November 10, 2010** by [Patrick A. Malone](#)

## **Tracking sports injuries to make athletics safer**

Fred Mueller is not your casual weekend sports fan. The retired 74-year-old former professor from the University of North Carolina continues to run – almost single-handedly – the National Center for Catastrophic Injury Research (NCCIR) at UNC, tracking, logging and analyzing catastrophic injuries in football and other sports.

Over a 30-year span, Mueller has analyzed more than 1,000 fatal, paralytic or otherwise severe injuries to young athletes, looking for and identifying patterns that result in rule or other changes that increase athlete safety.

Patrick A. Malone  
Patrick Malone & Associates, P.C.  
1331 H Street N.W.  
Suite 902  
Washington, DC 20005

[pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com](mailto:pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com)  
[www.patrickmalonelaw.com](http://www.patrickmalonelaw.com)  
202-742-1500  
202-742-1515 (fax)

The data compiled by the NCCIR has its genesis in the “football death log” begun in 1931 by the American Football Coaches Association. In the 1960s, UNC began to oversee the log. After Mueller became director of the NCCIR in 1980, he expanded it to include catastrophic injuries in all sports, among boys and girls.

Almost immediately, Mueller noted a previously hidden cluster of injuries among polevaulters and swimmers. As a result, polevaulting pits were expanded and surrounded with softer padding, while minimum depths were established for diving into swimming pools.

And after he noted the high number of injuries among cheerleaders, specifically those who are thrown up to 25 feet high and not caught, cheerleading safety guidelines and universal standards were established.

So far this year, Mueller has logged 24 catastrophic football injuries; typically, there are 36 such injuries every year. He’s also just finished a book on football injuries co-written with Robert Cantu, MD, the NCCIR's medical director. *Football Fatalities and Catastrophic Injuries, 1931-2008* details football’s decade-by-decade tragedies and rule changes — like the 1976 outlawing of spearing and more recent adjustments to kickoff wedges. A final chapter discusses injury prevention strategies and other ways to make football safer.

Source: [The New York Times](#)

To visit the National Center for Catastrophic Injury Research home page, click [here](#).

*Families interested in learning more about our firm's legal services, including legal representation for children who have suffered serious injuries in Washington, D.C.,*

Patrick A. Malone  
Patrick Malone & Associates, P.C.  
1331 H Street N.W.  
Suite 902  
Washington, DC 20005

[pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com](mailto:pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com)  
[www.patrickmalonelaw.com](http://www.patrickmalonelaw.com)  
202-742-1500  
202-742-1515 (fax)

*Maryland and Virginia due to medical malpractice, defective products, birth-related trauma or other injuries, may ask questions or send us information about a particular case by phone or email. There is no charge for contacting us regarding your inquiry. An attorney will respond within 24 hours.*

*All contents copyrighted 2010 [Patrick Malone & Associates](#) except where copyright held by others. Reproduction in any form prohibited except where expressly granted.*

Patrick A. Malone  
Patrick Malone & Associates, P.C.  
1331 H Street N.W.  
Suite 902  
Washington, DC 20005

[pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com](mailto:pmalone@patrickmalonelaw.com)  
[www.patrickmalonelaw.com](http://www.patrickmalonelaw.com)  
202-742-1500  
202-742-1515 (fax)

Copyright 2010 Patrick Malone