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**The National Center for Sports Safety Partners  
With the Mississippi High School Activities Association**

**BIRMINGHAM, Alabama – January 15, 2013** – The National Center for Sports Safety (NCSS) and the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) have partnered to promote sports safety education to high school coaches in Mississippi. This partnership ensures thousands of Para-professional coaches will have access to the most common injury prevention topics including emergency recognition and planning, principles of first aid, pre-existing medical conditions, and heat/cold illnesses.

Since 2009, the two organizations have focused on reducing sports-related injuries by mandating the completion of a sports first aid course. The PREPARE course, developed in 2002 by medical experts and professionals, is designed to educate coaches in all levels of youth sports including high school, middle school, and youth leagues. PREPARE facilitates the recognition of the signs and symptoms of potentially dangerous situations, and how to respond until a medical professional arrives on scene. The NCSS PREPARE course is one of two sports safety education programs available but is offered at a much lower rate.

“We are pleased to have a partnership with the MHSAA,” said Kathryn Gwaltney, Executive Director of the National Center for Sports Safety. “The directors and coaches have been instrumental in creating a safer playing environment for athletes by implementing PREPARE. After completing the course, coaches will be more prepared and knowledgeable with how to reduce risks and prevent injuries.”

PREPARE, conveniently available online via the NCSS website for \$46, includes Level 1 and Level 2 modules. Para-professional coaches are encouraged to complete the course prior to coaching in the State of Mississippi, and can register for the online class at [www.sportssafety.org](http://www.sportssafety.org).

For more information about the National Center for Sports Safety and the PREPARE course please visit [www.SportsSafety.org](http://www.SportsSafety.org) or call 866.508.NCSS (6277).

**About the National Center for Sports Safety**

Dr. Lawrence Lemak founded the National Center for Sports Safety in 2001 to promote the importance of injury prevention and safety on all levels of youth sports through education and research. The NCSS focuses on decreasing the number and intensity of injuries through developing and teaching sports-safety courses. NCSS also collects, analyzes and researches injury data to improve safety practices.

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