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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—May 19, 2007

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Study Finds Treating Sports Surfaces with Leading Antimicrobial Can Significantly Reduce the Spread of Skin Infections

Wyomissing, Pennsylvania...The Comprehensive Athletic Treatment Center (CATC) today announced a major step forward in the prevention of skin infections and their spread among wrestlers. A six-month study conducted by Thomas D. Kohl, MD, found that wrestling teams that treated their mats and washable fabrics with a leading-edge antimicrobial treatment experienced significantly fewer skin ailments than teams that did not. Furthermore, preliminary results of the study found that when used in concert with a total hygiene program, the antimicrobial treatments play a key role in reducing problematic microorganisms in the wrestling environment and incidence rates of skin infections.

- Use of antimicrobial coatings was studied this past year using *CSG/SportsCoatings SportsAide®1000* on wrestling mats in which the control mats (untreated mats) were cleaned on a daily basis as part of the routine at the particular schools. Preliminary results have shown **SportsAide® 1000** seemed to have provided a layer of protection above and beyond the cleaning of the mats alone. Sampling results revealed MRSA was isolated from two control mats that had not been treated with **SportsAide®1000**, as well as the only ringworm fungus found in the study. The antimicrobial coating does not preclude cleaning, but augments it as a prevention tactic.

“The data we have garnered from this study so far really speaks to the importance of utilizing the most proactive measures available,” said Dr. Kohl. “We put a program into place to reduce the potential for infectious skin disease control using two industry-leading antimicrobial treatments from **CSG/SportsCoatings** as part of a total hygiene program. Thus far, data from the study has shown the antimicrobial treatments play a key role in reducing the presence of problematic organisms.”

Results from the study were monitored with microbial retrievals and tracking of wrestlers skin infections. After reviewing all the data from the study the following recommendations and observations were made:

Equipment

- Wrestlers should not share clothing, towels, or headgear. Towels should be laundered as recommended above for clothing. Other preventative measures are recommended. In a study performed this past year with **FabricAide™**, a product manufactured by *CSG/SportsCoatings*, data showed that there were significantly fewer skin ailments during the wrestling season in the schools that **FabricAide™** was used to launder the wrestlers practice gear and competition singlets.
- Mats should be cleaned daily using a quaternary amine based solution. Ideally, the mats should be cleaned prior to practice and immediately after practice or matches. School janitorial personnel ideally should be responsible for the cleaning. Mat cleaning by wrestlers should be discouraged. It is imperative that proper technique issued to achieve the best results. The use of a bucketless mop with washable replaceable pads provides an effective cleaning application, and minimizes cross contamination across the mat surface.
- Storage of mats is a matter that has not been studied. I cannot make a clear recommendation whether storing mats in rolled position increases, decreases, or has no effect upon infection rates.

- It is important to note that the recommendations and observations garnered from one season of measurements demonstrates the following: The use of good monitoring practices and prophylaxis with **SportsCoatings** products and programs for wrestlers, staff, gear, equipment, and the facility are showing value in reducing problematic microorganisms in the wrestling environment and incidence rates of skin infections.

General

- ALL wrestlers should be screened on a weekly basis by a certified athletic trainer or team physician for any sign of skin infection
- ALL wrestlers found to have a skin infection should be promptly evaluated by a PHYSICIAN for appropriate treatment and guidance on return to competition.
- ALL wrestlers should shower immediately after practice using the school's facilities.
- ALL wrestlers should have their practice clothes and school singlets laundered on a regular basis, ideally on campus if possible to assure that it is being done.

Prophylaxis

- Data exists to support the use of anti-viral medication for prophylaxis during herpes outbreak or in a wrestler that is "prone" to herpes skin infections.
- Data in our study from 2000 supports the use of fluconazole weekly for prevention of ringworm if there is an outbreak.
- Data from our study in 2001 showed that scalp ringworm carriers are prevalent in wrestling. Common sense would support the use of antifungal shampoo to help eradicate the carrier states. To my knowledge there has not been research showing this to be effective, but theoretically it should help.
- We are well aware of the carrier situation becoming more prevalent with MRSA. The use of regular body soap should eradicate this bacterium if present. Data does exist to support the use of Hibiclens® as a body wash since it has longer killing power.

We hope to continue the study further in an effort to gain more data on the use of antimicrobial coatings. For further information on this study or *CSG/SportsCoatings*, we can be contacted at (516-729-8241) or visit our web site at www.csggrp.com.