



## Doctor offers right prescription for sports talk radio

By Paul LaTour, Special to the Tribune

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Dr. Robert Weil and Chris Fox sit across from each other in a small studio inside the offices of WDCB, the radio station operated out of College of DuPage. They are talking sports.

Judging from their on-air conversation, the two could just as easily be sitting in a bar, chatting about [the Bulls](#) or the [Olympics](#) or whatever else springs to mind when two admitted sports junkies get together. But more often than not, the topics quickly turn to areas of sports medicine and sports psychology.

This is, after all, "The Sports Doctor."

"I pride myself in the importance of the educational component of the show," said Weil, a sports podiatrist who lives in Naperville. "The culture of sports and the art of sports medicine, that's really what our show is about."

During a recent taping, topics ranged from [the Masters](#) golf tournament to the ongoing appearance by Olympic gold-medal figure skater and Naperville native [Evan Lysacek](#) on "Dancing with the Stars." Instead of lingering on the controversy surrounding [Tiger Woods](#), Weil shifted to an article in *BioMechanics* magazine that explored the torque Woods places on his knees during his powerful swing.

Talk of Lysacek centered on the skater's recent broken toes, suffered while rehearsing for the dance show. Then Weil cautioned listeners to take it easy getting back into the fitness routine if they have been sloughing off all winter. He finished the 30-minute show answering two e-mails from listeners concerned about specific sports injuries to their children.

"The real charm of Bob's work with this is he's addicted to sports — they are a huge part of his psyche," WDCB general manager Scott Wager said. "As such, he's very tuned in with so many different aspects. I continue to be amazed by the different avenues he goes into. The range of guests is unbelievable."

Weil said he does about half of his shows with a guest in the studio, while the remaining shows are handled with Fox. On this day, Weil opened the show talking by phone to George Hood, the Aurora man who was in the early stages of his Guinness World Record attempt for longest spin bike marathon. The show is recorded Monday mornings and airs Thursday night, so Weil attempts to keep the conversations from losing their timeliness by asking general questions.

But the health topics never seem to grow stale. Childhood [obesity](#), overuse issues resulting in injury, avoiding burnout and the pitfalls of specialization are just some of the recurring themes.

"It's topical as far as what's going on in the world of sports that I'm paying attention to," Weil said. "There's always something. I'm trying to mix a minimum of three topics. Rarely, if ever, do I spend all show on one thing."

Weil began the show nearly 15 years ago, and Fox has been with him almost from the start. They've developed a camaraderie that comes across on the air. They both contributed questions when talking to Hood. When the interview ended, they seamlessly transitioned into the health topics, though Weil always takes the lead.

The talkative Weil manages to avoid dead air, which is impressive considering he works with minimal notes. He has a yellow sheet of paper in front of him, but the bulk of it is made up with his handwritten transcriptions of the two e-mails he answers at the end of the show. Still, Weil and Fox always have a rough idea of what they will discuss.

"It's not very scientific," said Fox, the sports editor of the weekly Lombardian. "There's a lot to be said for just talking off the top of your head, but sometimes it's wise to have things prepared. Preparation is good."

Weil generally dislikes sports-talk radio, saying it's all about arguing and never offering solutions. By offering his expertise and that of his guests, Weil has created a unique enterprise.

"I'm the biggest secret in sports radio," Weil said. "Nobody does what we do."