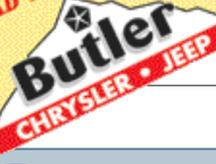


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**GAME**

# ACL injuries rising in girls

Female athletes more likely to injure their knees than boys

BY JANE HAVSY  
DAILY RECORD

Nearly every time Alex Kelly steps onto the soccer field to start a match, she thinks, "I can do this. I'm not getting hurt again." Once the Hanover Park senior begins to play, the long scar on her right knee barely crosses her mind.

Just two games into her junior season, Kelly was running up the field on a breakaway when a defender stepped in on her left side. Kelly's right foot was still planted on the ground, causing her to twist awkwardly.

"I was in shock," said Kelly, a Hornets' defensive midfielder who begins training for the indoor track season on Monday. "I wasn't crying. I just knew I couldn't move my knee. ... All I was thinking was, 'I don't want to go through this again.'"

Kelly had torn cartilage in her left knee during the previous outdoor track season, and believed she might have done the same on the soccer field.

It was much worse. Kelly had torn the anterior cruciate ligament and meniscus in her right knee.

Once a rare occurrence, more than 40,000 female high school athletes — or one in about 70 — now sustain ACL injuries each year. The rate among college women is one in 10.

Women are four to six times more likely to injure their ACLs than their male counterparts in the same sport.

Research has zeroed in on several differences between the genders as the source of the discrepancy, including anatomy — ACLs in females are smaller than in males — hormones and the way nerves and muscles function. Women are more likely to absorb impacts with their knees, rather than using their hamstrings and gluteal muscles. Their knees also tend to turn inward, rather than remaining straight, when landing.

SEE ACL / B2



Former Lenape Valley High School star Tricia DiPaolo, pictured on right while playing for Sky Blue Soccer, injured her knee during her first collegiate game as a freshman for Rutgers.

DAILY RECORD FILE PHOTO

# Mo. Hills team 10th at Nike Nationals

STAFF REPORT

The Morris Hills Recreational cross country team scored 273 points en route to a 10th-place finish at the Nike Team Nationals Northeast Championships at Bowdoin Park in Wappingers Falls, N.Y. on Saturday.

Roxbury's Lauren Penney and Mary Migton also competed in the Foot Locker Northeast Regional Qualifier at Van Cortlandt Park in Manhattan, N.Y. Penney, a senior, took 17th in 18:38.

Migton ran in the freshman race, clocking in at 19:42 for third.

The Morris Hills boys were led by junior Sean Pohorenc who finished 11th in 16:30.

Behind him were classmates Tyler Hendrickson (17:17) and Liam Tansey (17:38), respectively taking places 41 and 58.

Lucas Clyne (17:58) glided in at 79th. Joseph Barraro (18:02) took 84th and Vinny Chiusano (18:15) finished in 100th.

The Scarlet Knights needed a top-two finish to advance to Nationals. They would have been eligible for a wildcard bid with a third- or fourth-place finish.

"We wanted to come back and show that we were better than last week," senior-captain Javier Skwara (19:19, 130th) said, referring to his high school team's 12th-place finish at the Meet of Champions.

"I think we proved that. It was our last race of the year and we wanted to show something."

Penney needed a top-10 finish in order to advance.

It was her first time racing in the "nasty" hills of Van Cortlandt Park.

"It was okay," Penney said about her finish. "I was happy with it."

# Pierce eager for Vikings to run his his way

BY ERNIE PALLADINO  
GANNETT NEWSPAPERS

EAST RUTHERFORD — Antonio Pierce expects to move forward with his football life today. Really. Literally forward. As in, not like last Sunday.

"Last week, they faked us," the Giants' middle linebacker said of the Lions' pass-oriented attack in last Sunday's 16-10 Giants win. "They came out four straight running plays and I'm thinking, 'Oh my God.' But before you know it, I had to back up seven yards and play the middle of the field."

"(Today) isn't going to be like that. It's all going to be in the first five yards of play."

In other words, Pierce expects to be charging full-steam ahead in this 1 p.m. game against the Vikings. Minnesota, 4-6, doesn't just sport the No.1-rated rushing attack, but it does it consistently regardless of whether ailing rookie Adrian Peterson or productive veteran Chester Taylor is in there. Chances are, it will be Taylor, since Peterson is listed as questionable after taking only limited practice this week. But Pierce won't expect a change in an overall philosophy that relegates the passing of



Minnesota Vikings at New York Giants, 1 p.m. today, FOX 5

Tarvaris Jackson to an afterthought.

The Giants' defense needs, therefore, to act accordingly.

In other words, expect to see a crowd between the tackles and a lot of single coverage in the secondary.

"We gotta go with the odds," Pierce said. "With them going with a 70-30 run-pass ratio, it would be silly to sit back there in a two-deep safety look. They're going to have two tight ends and two backs in there and just pound us away."

"They'll put just one receiver on the field. If we can't cover one receiver, we've got problems."

With Detroit losing to Green Bay on Thanksgiving Day, the Giants have a great chance here to stretch their lead on the third postseason spot to two games. But the Vikings have been known to put crimps in the Giants' plans.

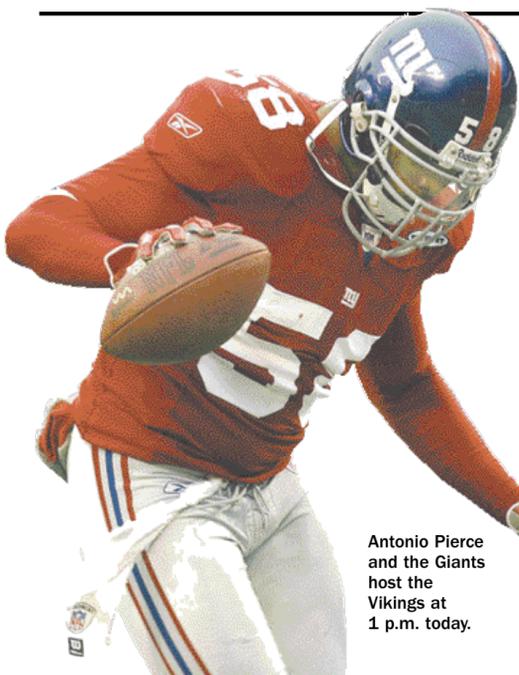
Pierce and those who wore Giants uniforms in 2005 remember well the offense the Vikings displayed on their trip to Giants Stadium that year.

It marked the Giants' ninth game of an 11-5 season. The Vikings were about as nondescript as they will be today if Peterson and his league-leading 1,081 yards and eight touchdowns remain on the sideline.

Those Vikings gained just six total yards in the first half, and didn't come alive until the final moments when they moved into position for Paul Edinger's game-winning field goal.

The rest of the points in that 24-21 win came off a 92-yard Darren Sharper return of an interception, an 86-yard kickoff return by Koren Robinson, and a Mewelde Moore's 71-yard punt return all for touchdowns. It was the first time in history a team ever returned an interception, kickoff and punt for scores in the same game.

SEE GIANTS / B7



Antonio Pierce and the Giants host the Vikings at 1 p.m. today.

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