



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Contact:**

Logan Stewart

704.323.2486

[logan.stewart@orthocarolina.com](mailto:logan.stewart@orthocarolina.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **OrthoCarolina Releases NASCAR Surgery Numbers and Injury Trends for 2018 Season**

**CONCORD, N.C. (February 14, 2019)** – As the 2019 NASCAR season begins, OrthoCarolina has announced its surgery numbers for the 2018 season as well as recent pit crew and mechanic injury trends in the sport. OrthoCarolina performed 110 total NASCAR-affiliated surgeries as part of the 2018 season, with 55 surgeries taking place mid-season and 45 surgeries taking place offseason.

There was an overall two percent increase in pit stop-related injuries from the 2017 to 2018 season, less than had been anticipated with the change of six to five crewmen over the wall during stops, according to Bill Heisel, PA-C, Director of OrthoCarolina Motorsports.

“Fewer pit crew over the wall meant athletes taking on new roles and performing quick movements during extremely high-pressure events,” said Heisel, one of NASCAR’s top orthopedic providers. “We had fully expected to see different biomechanical patterns evolve among these athletes with the changes last year, though they were not as drastic as predicted.”

Orthopedic injuries in NASCAR vary between positions and can be linked to the demands of each role. Other observations noted in the Motorsports Injury Database, which tracks injuries specific to pit crews and mechanics, included:

- A surge in elbow and forearm injuries noted in tire changers;
- A slight increase in the number of total joint replacements compared to previous years, taking into account participant longevity in the sport and aging athletes and mechanics;
- The number of foot and ankle surgeries remained consistent with those of previous years;
- An increased number of spine injuries across all series of racing.

Over several years Heisel and a team of doctors have been collecting data and developing the Motorsports Injury Database as a way to track injuries specific to pit crews and mechanics. The database, which initially began as an upper extremity-only database developed by OrthoCarolina Chief Hand Surgeon Dr. Glenn Gaston, has now been expanded to include all body parts. While NASCAR has a driver injury database, the Motorsports Injury Database is the only existing resource that tracks epidemiological trends in pit crew injuries. In recent years it has shown a sharp increase in upper extremity injuries overall in pit crew members as well as hip injuries in tire changers.

“Core strength, flexibility and a strong fitness program are critical for these teams to stay healthy and competitive during the course of a 38-week season,” says Heisel. “It’s important to be aware of possible unanticipated physical demands that can place extra stress on the body.”

OrthoCarolina Motorsports provides care in team race shops during the week and trackside at races during the NASCAR season, including management of chronic, acute and major injuries, athletic training and physical therapy services, and specialist and primary care referrals. In its entirety the service line oversees medical care for NASCAR pit crews, drivers, team employees and officials as well as many of their family members. OrthoCarolina Motorsports has formal relationships with Hendrick Motorsports, Stewart-Haas Racing, Roush Fenway Racing, JTG Racing and XCalibur Pit School.

OrthoCarolina also partners with Atrium Health and Carolina Neurosurgery and Spine to help manage primary care and spine for NASCAR athletes.

### **About OrthoCarolina**

With expert physicians and care providers in locations throughout our region, OrthoCarolina is one of the nation’s leading orthopedic practices and your destination for comprehensive orthopedic care. Our expertise in the areas of foot and ankle, hand, hip and knee, shoulder and elbow, spine, sports medicine and pediatrics to offer a continuum of care unmatched in our region — and throughout the country.

OrthoCarolina. You. Improved.

Connect with OrthoCarolina at [orthocarolina.com](http://orthocarolina.com) or on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

###