Removal of Football Equipment Following Cervical Spine X-ray

1. Initial baseline cervical spine radiographs with equipment in place, this will rule out gross pathologies of the C4, C5, & C6 vertebrae. Equipment should then be removed so further radiographs can be performed to rule out further pathologies.

** Stabilization should be maintained at this time by "the stabilizer" chosen by the team leader

2. If the facemask is not removed the plastic clips should be cut or unscrewed.

3. Cut exterior jersey – (1) up the middle and (2) an axillary cut along the sleeve seams

4. Cut shoulder pad laces in the front

5. Cut shoulder pad straps – either 2 or 4 strap

6. Cut the shirt under pads in the same manner as the exterior jersey

7. Cut & remove chin straps – DO NOT UNSNAP!

8. Remove cheek pads by using a tongue depressor. Slide tongue depressor between cheek pad and helmet, gentle twist to unsnap pads – usually 3 snaps to each pad.

9. Team leader approaches athlete from chest region, places thumbs on the maxilla and wraps fingers around back of head to support the occiput.

10. Two people on each side of the athlete place their hands between the athlete and shoulder pads, grasping the athlete by their scapula.

11. Other members of the equipment removal team place themselves on each side of the athlete placing their hands under the pelvis, knees, and ankles.

12. The team leader uses a count of three to lift the athlete. The athlete is lifted as a unit to a 6" vertical lift.
   a. The helmet is removed by the person designated as the "stabilizer", slightly tilting it forward – do not spread the helmet
   b. The stabilizer will then grasp and remove the shoulder pads

13. The team leader uses a count to lower the athlete.


*Courtesy of the Northern Virginia Spine Institute, Reston, Va*