



Sports feature

## Burley physical therapist brings cutting edge sports therapy to anyone

By Ryan Howe Times-News writer | Posted: Monday, April 18, 2011 12:00 am

When James Anderson watches a sporting event, he doesn't simply follow the ball. He sees things differently than the average fan.

"I'm very interested in the athlete's ability to breathe in a balanced way, with their rib cage held down on both sides to support their core," Anderson said. "I'm looking at the ability of their thorax to expand and rotate both ways symmetrically, so that they don't have to cheat with their back or neck to breathe or coordinate movement. I'm always analyzing which muscles are on that I need to turn off so the athlete can swing a golf club or run faster."

Anderson's unique perspective comes from years of helping athletes - and non-athletes - obtain optimum levels of performance, whether it's hitting a golf ball on the PGA tour or day-to-day tasks like picking up the groceries.

Anderson, of ProActive Physical Therapy, has provided biomechanical consultation and therapy for pro athletes and their trainers in the PGA, MLB, NFL, MLS, WNBA and UFC. He's also worked with several NCAA Division I men's and women's programs, mostly in the Big 12, SEC and ACC.

A typical week may find Anderson working one-on-one with NFL hopefuls preparing for the pre-draft combine or consulting with trainers from professional teams. But the next week, he's back in his Burley office, serving Magic Valley patients with the same specialized expertise he uses with some of the nation's most elite athletes.

As impressive as his work with big-name athletes may seem, Anderson receives his greatest satisfaction working with local patients here in Magic Valley - from the injured weekend warrior, to the mother of four who has chronic back pain.

Anderson practices with his long time friend and clinic owner Raulan Young, whom he met in college at UNLV. Young founded ProActive Physical Therapy in 1999 and currently has offices in Burley and Twin Falls, the latter being a joint affiliation with St. Luke's Neurology and Physiatry.

"Besides having success with a wide variety of challenging chronic pain cases in the Magic Valley, we have a unique skill set that puts us in demand in collegiate and professional settings," said Anderson.

This skill set came from Anderson and Young's post-graduate certification through the Postural Restoration Institute (PRI). Both are now faculty members for that institute, and ProActive is one of only 28 PRI certified clinics in the United States.

This specialized training allows Anderson and Young to garner an edge with challenging therapy cases and athletic performance issues. They have advanced training in biomechanics, respiration and neurology.

Anderson never set out to work so extensively with high-level athletes.

"The focus of my career was not initially on sports performance, but started with a passion for the challenging chronic back and neck pain patient," Anderson said. "Because of our specialization in biomechanical correction, we have been invited into these other arenas."

One of Anderson's clients is Jason Day, who had a great showing at the Masters golf tournament last week. He set the Masters record for the lowest score by a first-time participant at 12-under par. At one point, Day was tied for the lead in the final round, but wound up finishing in a tie for second behind green jacket winner Charl Schwartzel.

As a biomechanical consultant, Anderson helps Day balance the rotation across his pelvis, hips and rib cage. He also put the golfer through a PRI foot and ankle analysis and manufactured custom orthotics that Day wears inside his golf shoes.

In the same way Anderson helps Day rotate his body to hit a golf ball 300 yards, he helps a grandmother from Burley move pain-free so she can play with her grandchildren.

"That excites me as much or more than helping Jason alleviate back pain and shift into his left hip so he can finish second in the Masters tournament. We have the tools to restore balanced body position and pain-free function," Anderson said. "This allows us to provide the same analysis and correction, whether the client is a professional athlete or an average everyday person like you and me."