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Tests get to core of how heat affects players

By Scott Boeck
USA TODAY

The Space Age has landed on the football field.

College players at Connecticut, Oklahoma and West Chester (Pa.) have been subject to high-tech testing.

Following up

At Connecticut, players wrap up their eighth and final day today. Fifteen players with different body types were examined. Each swallowed vitamin-sized "radio pills" that allowed researchers to monitor the core body temperatures. The pills last 24-36 hours before passing out of the system.

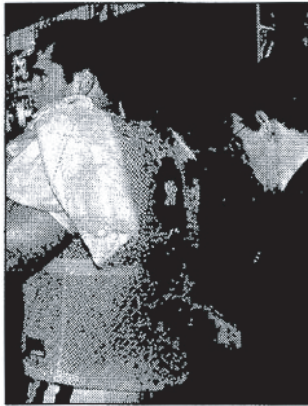
The study, commissioned by the NCAA, seeks to understand how heat and hydration affect players.

It comes at a time when more attention is being given to players collapsing from heat-related ailments. The issue has been especially prevalent in the NFL, which had three players for the Jacksonville Jaguars go down in a 12-day span this month.

"We're tracking the athlete's body temperature all through the course of the day and looking how they ebb and flow during an actual practice session," said Dr. Douglas Casa, Connecticut's director of athletic training education.

West Chester, a Division II program, is doing the same procedure.

In Oklahoma, a similar but different program was conducted. Re-



By Jerry Laizure, GSSI, via AP

Careful tracking: Craig Horswill of the Gatorade Sports Science Institute monitors the body temperature of Oklahoma's Kory Klein.

searchers tested to better understand and prevent heat cramping.

Eight Sooners players, who also swallowed temperature pills, finished two days of testing Tuesday. Only those more likely to experience cramping were tested.

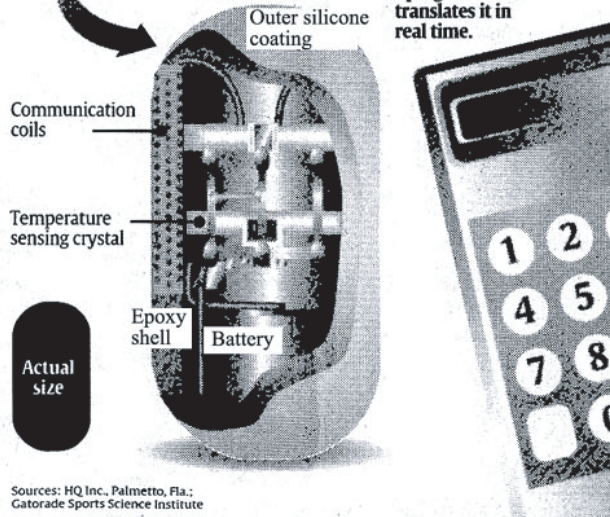
The temperature pill technology used at Connecticut and West Chester was developed in 1988 by the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in collaboration with NASA. It was used to monitor astronauts for hyperthermic and hypothermic body temperatures during spaceflight.

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Pills track players' temperature

Connecticut, Oklahoma and West Chester (Pa.) football players entered Space Age testing. Players swallowed "radio pills" that allowed researchers to monitor their core body temperatures during practice. How the procedure works:

- 1 Player swallows pill the night before.
- 2 Pill emits a continuous low-frequency radio wave.
- 3 Receiver (size of a deck of cards) is held near the athlete's abdomen.
- 4 Receiver picks up signal and translates it in real time.



Sources: HQ Inc., Palmetto, Fla.; Gatorade Sports Science Institute

By Julie Snider, USA TODAY

HQ Inc.

Wireless Core Body Temperature Monitoring Systems

HQ, Inc.

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