

*The time you won your town the race  
We chaired you through the market-place;  
Man and boy stood cheering by,  
And home we brought you shoulder high.*

*To-day the road all runners come,  
Shoulder-high we bring you home,  
And set you at your threshold down,  
Townsmen of a stiller town.”*

*—To An Athlete Dying Young*

*Alfred Edward Housman, 1895*

## Player's Death Investigated

After comparing his death, Vachon left the practice area and returned to the football dormitory, less than an hour after the game. Some of the other players were given aid and asked him to join them, but he went to his room, set his alarm and went to sleep. When the players returned a few hours later, the alarm was ringing and Vachon was dead.

The medical examiner's office for the Blackburg area said that "the most probable" cause of death was sudden arrhythmia, a disturbance in the heart beat. It is unlikely that the cause of the arrhythmia can be determined. Dr. Chris Myers, a cardiologist at Marshall University, said that "there are significant numbers of people who die of arrhythmia for whom they can never find the cause."

### College wrestler dies

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — A University of California freshman wrestler collapsed and died of an apparent heart attack Thursday, the university announced.

The name of the student was withheld pending notification of relatives. The university's sports information department said the wrestler had completed stretching exercises and was in the weight room when he collapsed. He was pronounced dead on arrival at a campus hospital. The cause of death was tentatively diagnosed as heart failure, the university reported.

## Heart attack kills high school star

EAST POINT, Ga. (AP) — Star forward Kenny Moody of Russell High School had just turned to run up court in a basketball game against Crosswood when he collapsed on the court and died of a heart attack.

"It was a horrible sight ... I knew it wasn't just some everyday fall," Russell Coach David Burnett said after the Tuesday night game.

An autopsy listed heart attack as the cause of death, said Sgt. E.A. Lowery of the East Point Police Department.

"In my opinion, Kenny was dead when he hit the court," said Russell Principal Jesse Shaddix. "Coach Burnett took one look and called for an ambulance ... but he was dead when they put him on the stretcher."

Moody's teammates, who believed he was merely unconscious, continued the game and won, 58-52.

"We just thought he was passed out," said guard Greg Graham, a team captain. "We wanted to win the game for Kenny just because he had to go to the hospital. We didn't know he was dead."

### Youth dies after practice

ALBANY, Miss. (AP) — A 14-year-old Avon youth collapsed and died Wednesday following football practice, authorities said.

Pete George, the Albany High School football coach, said John Jones, 14, collapsed while walking off the playing field about 11:30 a.m.

Jones was dead when an ambulance arrived. George said the boy was not injured during practice.

An autopsy will be performed at St. Cloud Hospital to determine the cause of death.

### Iona College Student Dies in Karate Session From a Heart Ailment

By JAMES FERLIN

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y., Jan. 11 — A 25-year-old Iona College student, William J. Slavik Jr., died last night during a karate sparring session, but the Westchester County Medical Examiner's office said after an autopsy that he was the victim of a rare heart ailment rather than a blow to his chest that was originally assumed to have caused his death.

Detective Eugene McLeer of the New Rochelle Police Department said the student was sparring with Joseph Scappatura, 22, of Eastchester, "took a kick to the chest, walked back to his corner and collapsed." Two karate instructors were present at the session, together with a dozen members of the campus club that conducted it. The club has been in existence for about a decade, a college spokesman said.

Dr. Louis Koh, deputy medical examiner, said Mr. Slavik had "an anomalous left coronary artery originating from the pulmonary artery," a rare condition in which the right coronary artery "was doing much of the work of two" in carrying blood from the aorta to the heart. "Extreme exertion," Dr. Koh said, would trigger the condition.

## Death of an Amateur Fighter

### Undetected Heart Flaw Was Major Contributor

By MICHAEL M. BADEN, M.D.

FRANCISCO RODRIGUEZ died because he was presumed to be healthy when he should have been disqualified.

He had a bad heart that was enlarged to twice its normal size, a condition that should have been identified at the prefight medical examination. A microscope study made when he was in the hospital and a later autopsy showed that as his heart failed during his first boxing match, his normal, round oxygen-carrying red blood cells became curved or sickled in shape, unable to carry oxygen because of another unexplained condition, sickle-cell trait.

The inherited "carrier" condition, sickle-cell trait, is present in about 10 percent of the black population. Normally, it causes no medical impairment. On the other hand, the much rarer condition of sickle-cell anemia (or sickle-cell disease) can cause severe health impairment.

However, abnormal circumstances can develop in which the amount of oxygen in the blood is diminished for other reasons, such as high altitude, being under anesthesia or when the

was sufficiently abnormal in that might have died even if he had not sickle-cell trait. Certainly the sport did not help him. It only further diminished the amount of oxygen available to his failing heart and might have cumulative effects in causing death.

Would Rodriguez have died if he had not sickle-cell trait? Probably not, that is speculation. The facts he died when his heart failed, red blood cells sickled, each making the other worse in a vicious circle. The death certificate

what was found. Cardiac enlargement to the enlarged, deformed, and sickle-cell trait.

If there is to be another fighter's death, it is certain to occur because those with sickle-cell trait could be hard to detect. The trait could be hard to detect rarely occur. The

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Youth's Death Studied

The Nassau County Medical Examiner's office has performed an autopsy on the body of a 17-year-old Manhattan youth who collapsed and died on a high school track Friday, but the cause of death was still uncertain. A spokesman said results of the autopsy were being withheld pending a further examination.

KAREN KRANTZKE, a 30-year-old professional tennis player, collapsed and died in Florida.

### Golden Glover dies

NEW YORK (AP) — City chief medical examiner who performed the autopsy Wednesday. "The physical exertion contributed to it, though. He should have been excluded (from the tournament), in my opinion."

"He didn't die from a blow in the ring. It was not a traumatic death," said Dr. Yung myun Khe, a dep-

### Upstate boy dies in pool

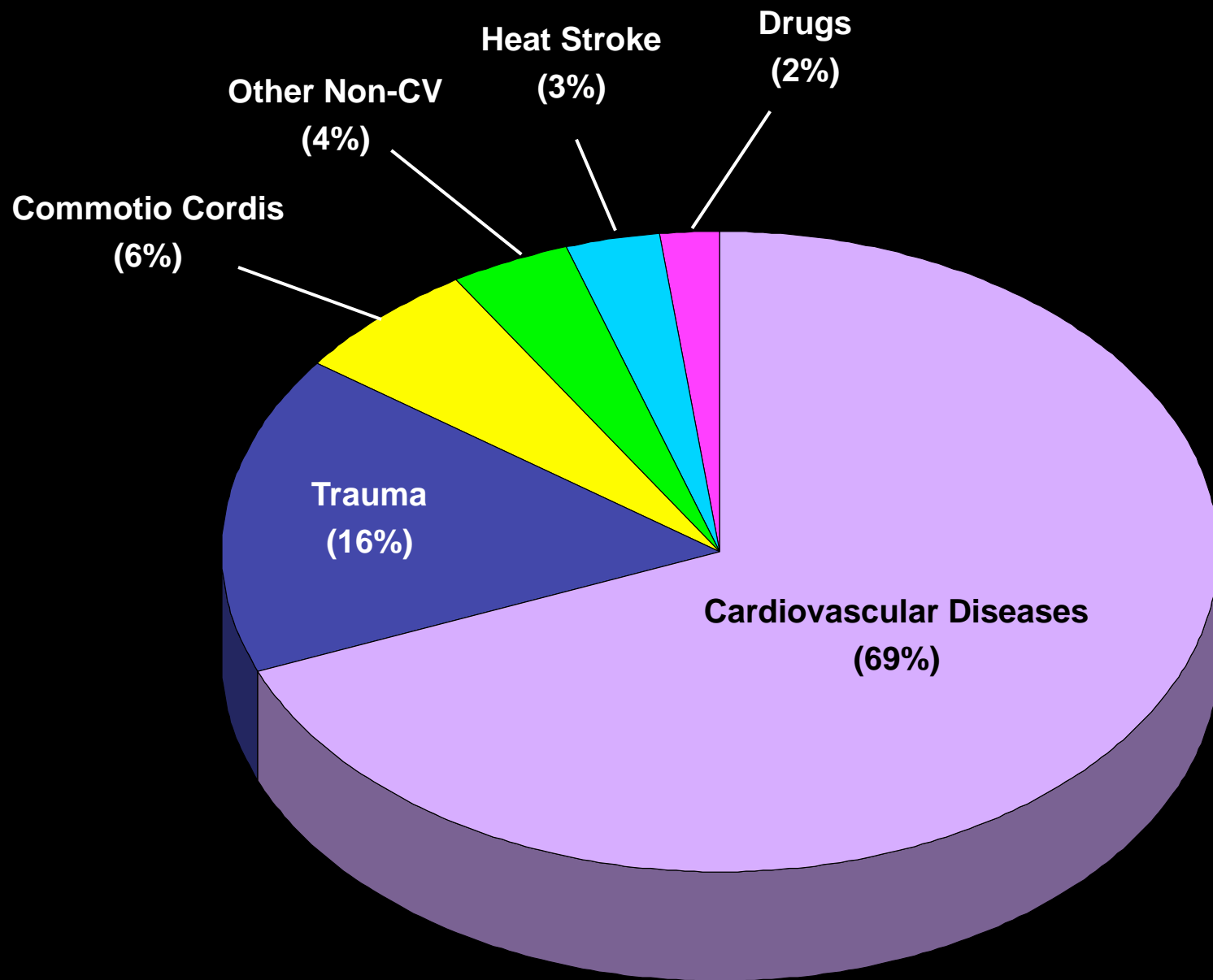
BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — A 12-year-old boy from suburban Tonawanda died Wednesday while swimming with classmates at Amherst Central Junior High School.

Amherst police said Jeffrey Dumas was dead on arrival at Millard Fillmore Memorial Hospital.

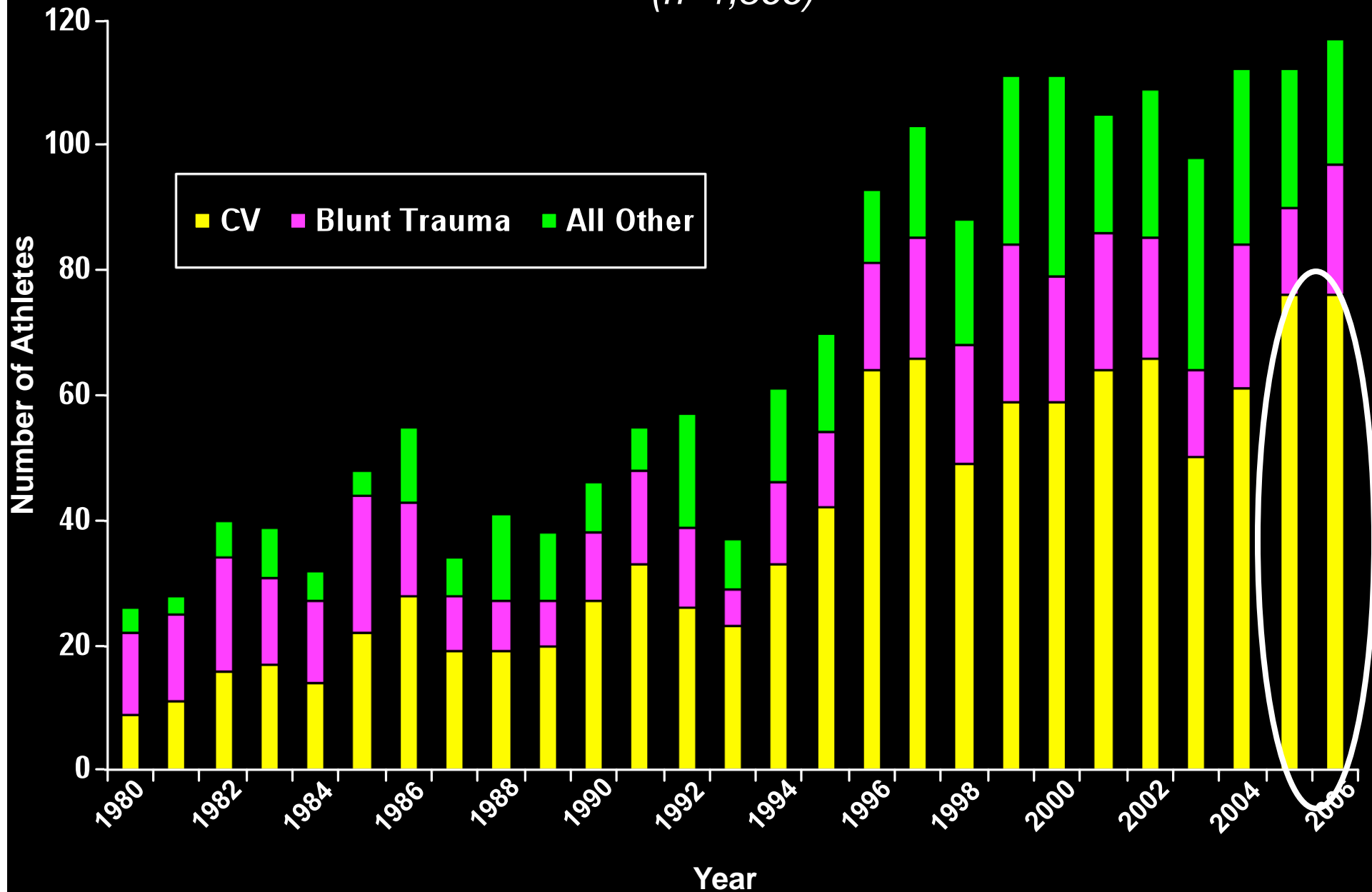
The youth was in class swimming (used lapp) in the 25 yard long pool when he was seen to stop swimming and

not respond, police said. A coach pulled young Dumas from the water, but artificial respiration failed to revive him.

# ***Sudden Death In Young Athletes***



*U.S. Sudden Death in Young Competitive Athletes Registry, 1980-2006*  
(n=1,866)



**Highest 2005/2006 = 76 / y**

*U.S. Sudden Death in Young Competitive Athletes Registry, 1980-2006*  
(n=1,866)



**Last 6 years = avg. 66 / y**

**Diseases *not* reliably  
detectable by  
history / physical / ECG = 30% (of ~ 75/y)**

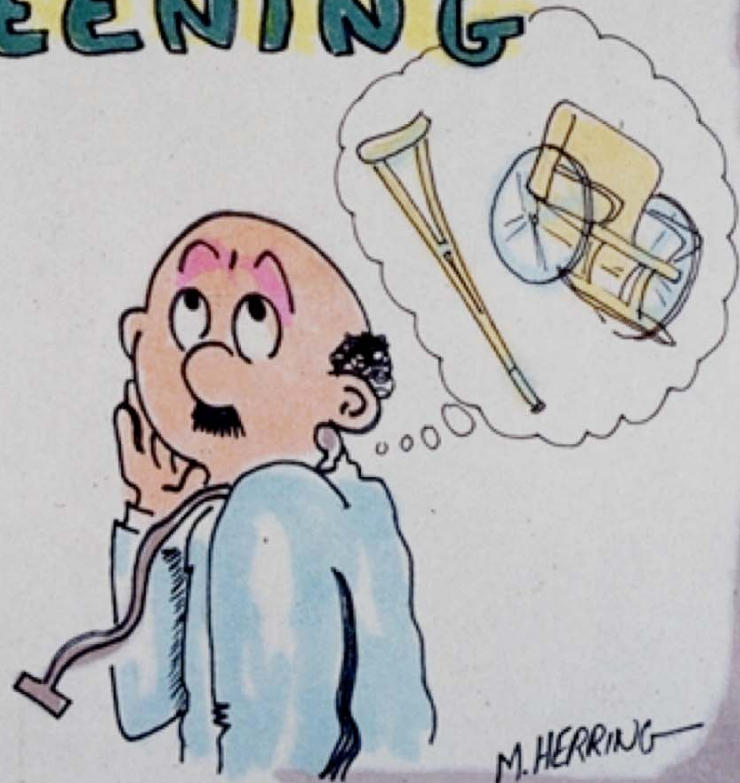
***Therefore, ECG preparticipation  
screening would identify = 50 athletes/y***

# Frequency Estimates for Sudden Cardiac Death In Athletes

**Young (high school / college) :** ~1 : 200,000 / y

**Older (runners, including marathon) :** ~1 : 15,000 / y  
~1 : 50,000

# PRE-PARTICIPATION SCREENING



M. HERRING

# Preparticipation Athletic Screening USA vs. Italy

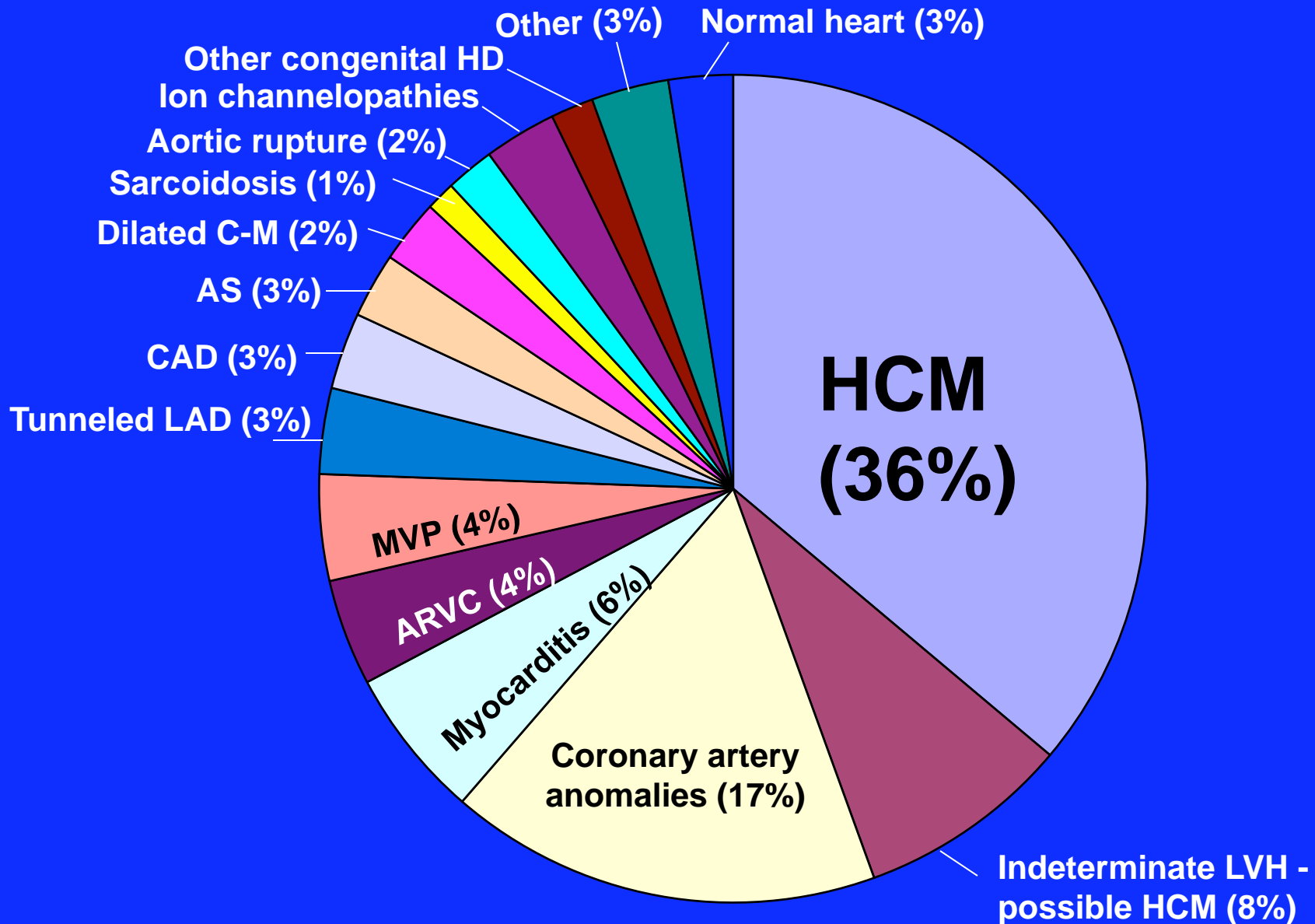
<u>Criteria</u>	<u>USA</u>	<u>Italy</u>
<b>Basis</b>	<b>customary practice</b>	<b>law</b>
<b>Design</b>	<b>history/P.E.</b>	<b>also, testing (ECG)</b>
<b>Population size</b>	<b>too large</b>	<b>small enough</b>
<b>Examiners</b>	<b>M.D. + non-M.D.</b>	<b>accredited Sports Med.</b>
<b>Legal consequences</b>	<b>no precedent</b>	<b>civil / criminal</b>

**USA**



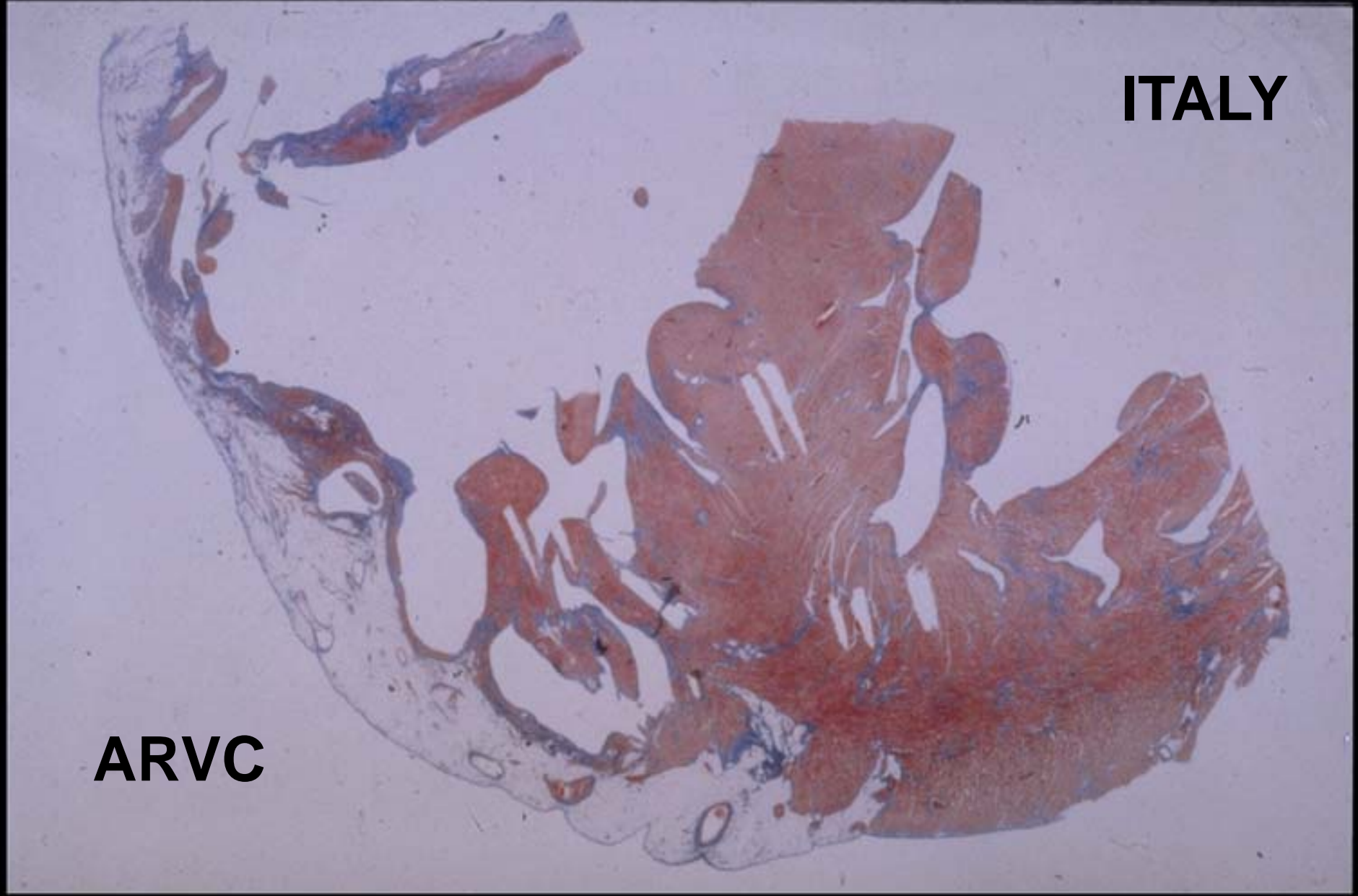
**HCM**

# Sudden Death in Young Athletes

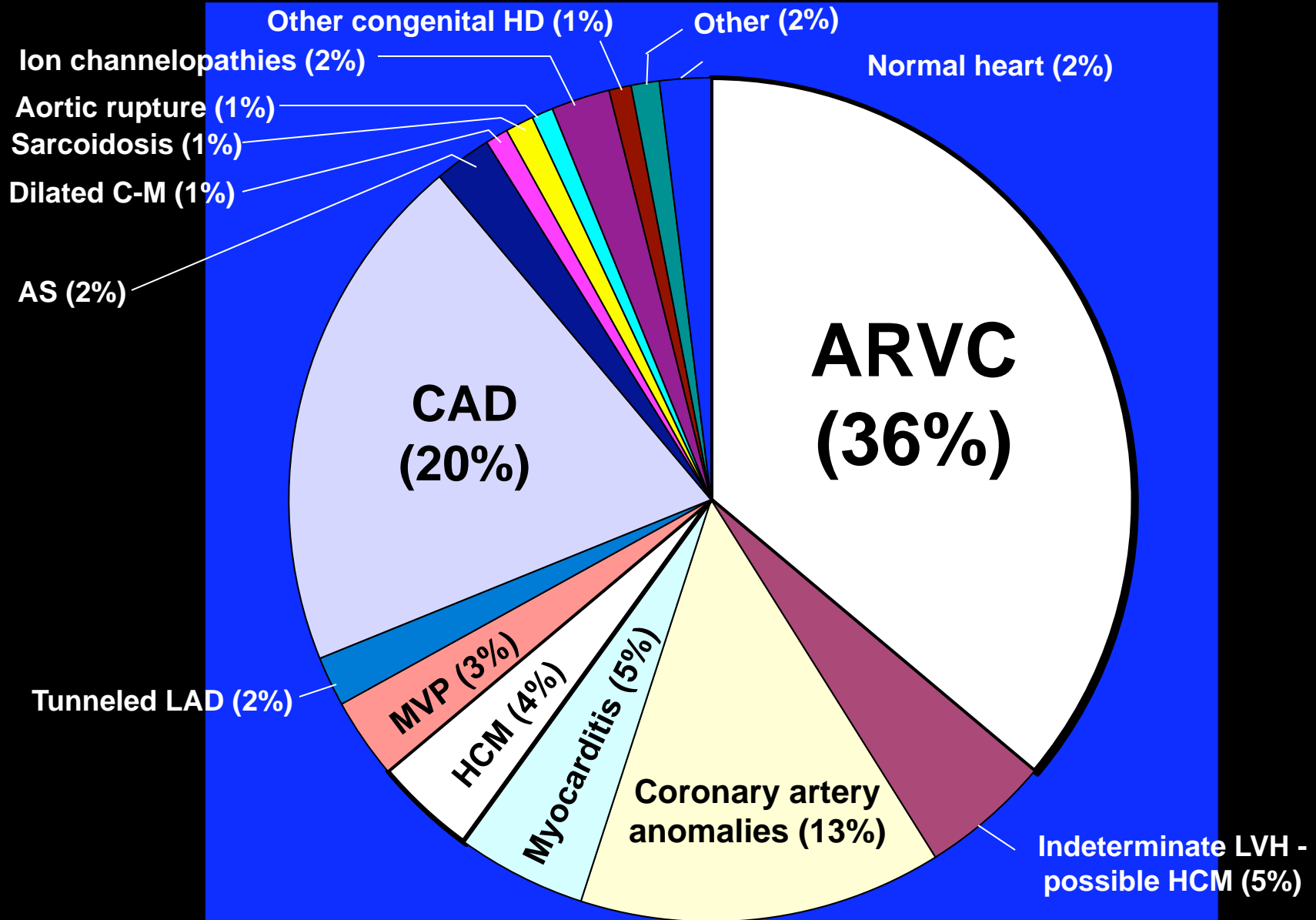


**ITALY**

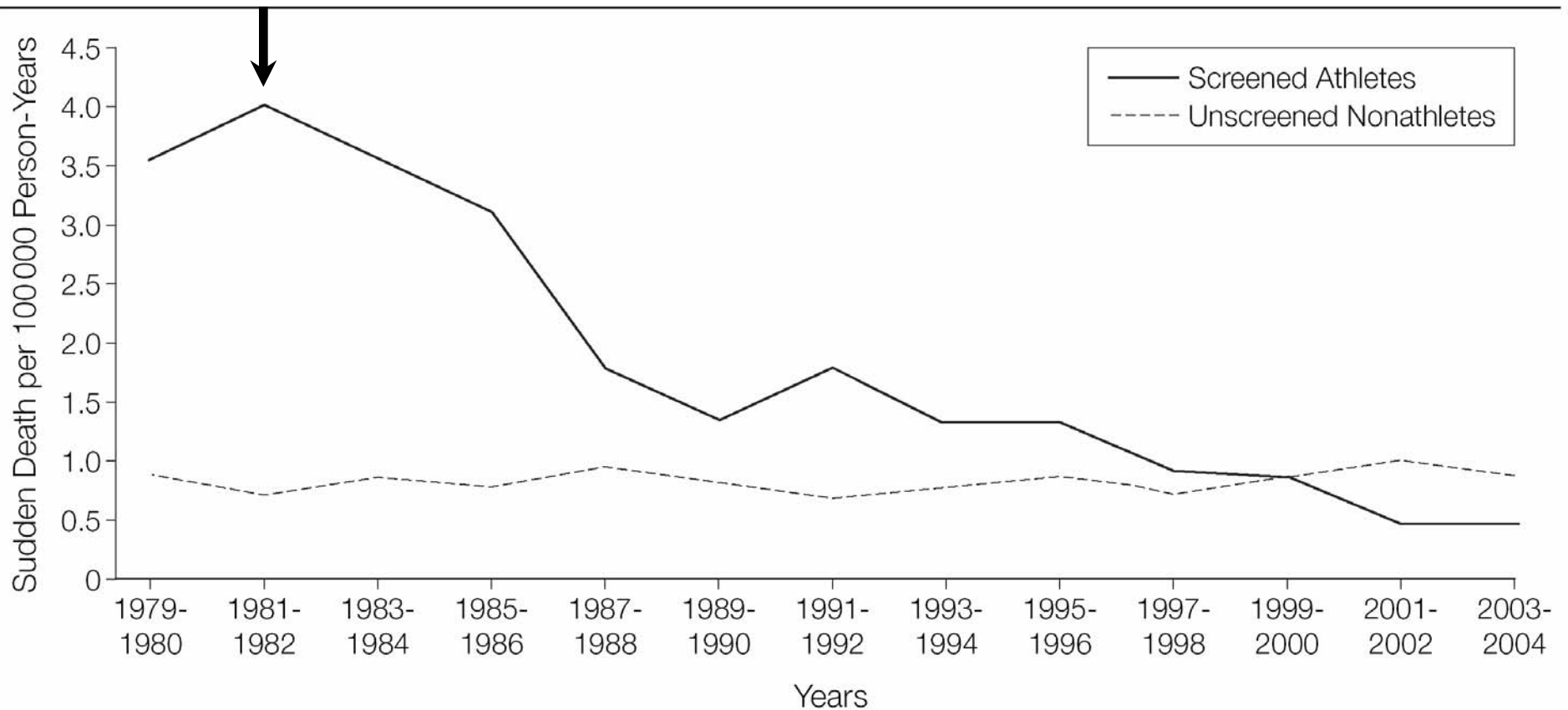
**ARVC**



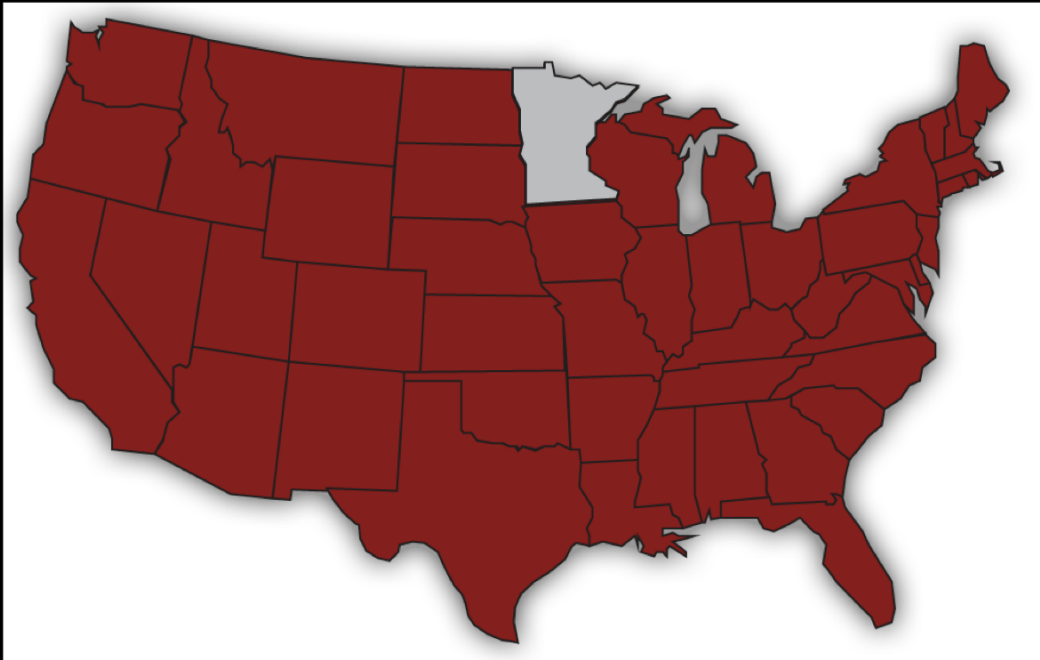
# Sudden Death in Young Athletes-Veneto



**Figure.** Annual Incidence Rates of Sudden Cardiovascular Death in Screened Competitive Athletes and Unscreened Nonathletes Aged 12 to 35 Years in the Veneto Region of Italy (1979-2004)



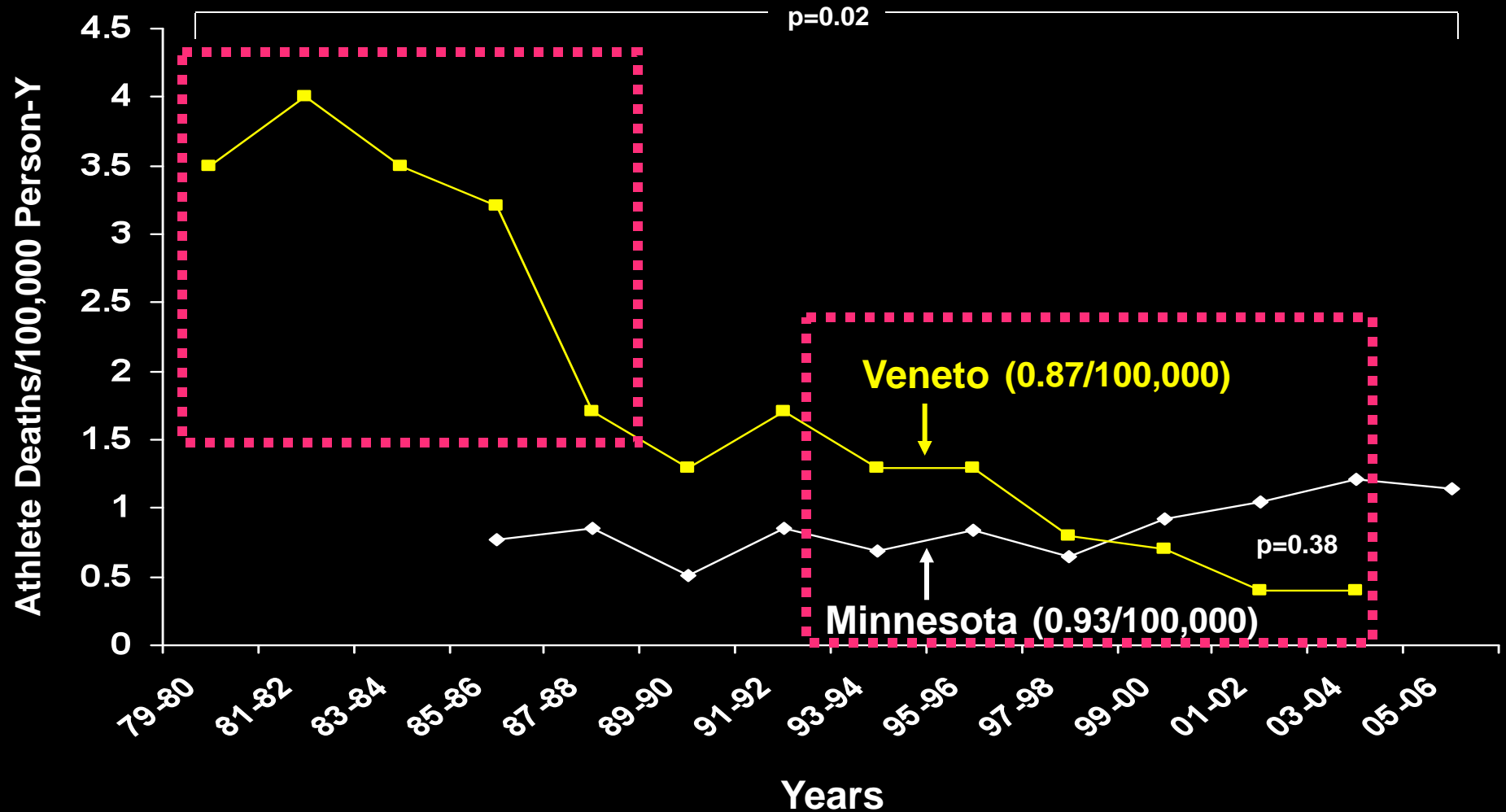
## U.S. (Minnesota)



## Italy (Veneto)



# Comparison of Cardiovascular Disease Mortality in Young U.S. (Minnesota) & Italian (Veneto) Competitive Athletes



# ***Obstacles to the National Mandatory Italian Screening Initiative in the U.S.***

- Too many athletes; could screening really be limited to athletes?
- Very uncommon events
- Too many false positives; also false negatives
- Cost / efficacy considerations
- Infringement on individual prerogative
- Too many lawyers: liability considerations
- Would require mandatory system, based in law, in which physicians would be deciders and enforcers
- ***No one to perform examinations / interpret ECGs***

**Pediatric cardiologists in the U.S. = 1,521**

**# of athletes to be screened = 12 million**

**# of exams/ECGs to be performed = 7,890 / year**  
**= 658 / month**  
**= 150 / week**

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