



*Dynamic Chiropractic* – October 23, 1992, Vol. 10, Issue 22

## **Chiropractic in the Sports World**

By Jan M. Corwin, DC, CCSP, President of the ACA Council on Sports Injuries and Robin A. Hunter, DC, CCSP

Anyone who has observed the chiropractic profession over the last few years would have to agree that acceptance and utilization of chiropractic in the world of sports has increased dramatically. This has been made possible by the many doctors of chiropractic around the country who have applied their knowledge, skills, and expertise to the athletes in their community. Professional and Olympic athletes glean much attention from the media both for their accomplishments as well as their injuries. Treatment of the average, everyday athlete, however, is just as important. With the increased exposure at all levels of entry into the sports community, it requires that the sports chiropractors of the 90s be worthy of their responsibilities. One of our goals then should be to meet these increased demands of society.

Leisure time is on the increase in America and more people are enjoying recreational and organized activities. This phenomenon will invariably increase the amount of sports and recreational injuries that chiropractors will treat. Chiropractors are well-equipped to provide primary care to the athletes of all skill levels. This role is helping to thrust chiropractic to higher levels of acceptance, credibility, and stature with the public. This credibility has already begun to pay dividends, as chiropractic is now more visible at the professional, Olympic, and local levels in many arenas of competition. Many chiropractors and athletes internationally and here in the United States now enjoy the benefits of this mutual appreciation.

### **Our Sports Past**

There have been records of chiropractors treating athletes of all levels as far back as the early 1900s. Reports of chiropractors treating such professional stars as Babe Ruth and others have been published. It has taken many years for these accomplishments to gain the public's attention.

In the early 1970s, Leroy Perry, D.C., from Pasadena, California, gain much attention for treating some popular Olympic and professional athletes in the Southern California area. In 1980, increased credibility occurred as George Goodheart, D.C., of Detroit, Michigan, officially became the first doctor of chiropractic to join the Lake Placid Olympic Medical Staff. In 1984, Eileen Haworth, D.C., was the next chiropractic doctor chosen to be a member of the medical staff for the Los Angeles Olympics. In 1988, Jan Corwin, D.C., attended the Seoul Olympics, and most recently in 1992, Phil Santiago, D.C., attended the Games in Barcelona as a member of the Olympic Medical staff.

Since these events, dozens of chiropractors have served as part of professional teams, Pan American teams, Olympic teams, collegiate, and high school teams. Many sports chiropractors have also become officially recognized by teams and organizations, and some have become salaried members of their medical/health care staff.

Gaining this official status has not been easy. Throughout the history of chiropractic, there have been many roadblocks which unfortunately still have negative influence with many collegiate, Olympic, and professional teams.

### **Chiropractic Gaining Ground**

In 1988, the ACA Council on Sports Injuries and Physical Fitness first conceived and developed a concept to provide chiropractic care at athletic events around the country which is known today as the Chiropractic Sports Network.

The Chiropractic Sports Network is a community-based, outreach program which, on one hand, provides an avenue for sports chiropractors to gain practical, clinical experience while giving athletes the opportunity to consult with and be treated by qualified sports doctors. Since 1988, participation in the Network has included men's pro beach volleyball, women's pro beach volleyball, pro rodeo, powerlifting, bodybuilding, U.S. triathlon series, various bicycling competitions, pro waterskiing tour, mountain bike series, regional/national aerobic championships, women's racquetball, USA Olympic track and field trials, the Corporate Games, the Garden State Games, and the Sunshine Games. The Network schedule is published in each issue of Sports Talk, a quarterly publication for members of the ACA Sports Council.

Many athletes today credit chiropractic treatment as a strong reason for their success. Some of them are doctors themselves and recently competed at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. Dennis Koslowski, D.C., from

Minneapolis, Gary Sato, D.C., and Terry Schroeder, D.C., from Southern California, were interviewed because of their accomplishments in the 1988 and 1992 Olympics. Their accomplishments have heightened the awareness of chiropractic in the public eye.

These achievements will only enhance the demand for our presence at all levels. More and more athletes and coaches are realizing the benefits of having a sports chiropractor working with their team. This necessitates continuing and postgraduate education to ensure that the field chiropractor has the knowledge required to meet the demands.

### **Sports Chiropractic Education**

To meet the demand of continuing education in sports chiropractic, many of the chiropractic colleges offer a 100 hour postgraduate course in order to become a Certified Chiropractic Sports Physician (CCSP). Further advancement is also available with the additional 200 hour course providing diplomate status.

These courses and testing procedures are constantly re-evaluated by the American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians for the purpose of producing the most highly qualified and educated sports physicians. There have been over 1000 DCs who have taken the CCSP course to date.

Chiropractic Sports Medicine Journal, published by Williams and Wilkens, and guided through its growth by editor Bod Hazel, D.C., CCSP, provides an avenue for original articles to be published in a refereed journal. This journal has a worldwide audience and has yet to reach its full potential.

Everyone is encouraged to participate in continuing education for their own benefit, their patient's benefit, and for the benefit of the profession and the specialty of sports chiropractic.

### **The Atlanta Olympic Organizing Committee**

Recently, representatives from the various chiropractic organizations met in Atlanta to discuss and form plans for chiropractic involvement in the 1996 Olympics to be held in Atlanta, Georgia. (Editor's Note: See front-page article in Sept. 25, 1992 issue of "DC".) It is felt by all involved that this will be a landmark for multi-organizational involvement and cooperation toward a common goal.

Broadening one's scope to include the treatment of recreational or even elite athletes creates a new demand on one's expertise and level of skill. This necessitates preparation with continuing education as well as

experience. As more skilled doctors become available to the athlete/patient, the positive promotion of the profession will most likely benefit.

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