

THE OLYMPIC BOOK OF SPORTS MEDICINE

SPORTS MEDICINE TODAY

During the 93rd Session, Prince Alexandre de Merode, President of the IOC Medical Commission, announced the publication next September of the first volume of an Olympic Encyclopaedia of Sports Medicine. This work, produced jointly with the Scientific Commission of the international Federation of Sports Medicine, has already received enthusiastic support from numerous NOCs proving that this encyclopaedia was long-awaited. But what exactly is its subject? This is how Blackwell Scientific Publications describes it.

For a number of reasons, both social and economic, the leisure time available to a large proportion of the population is growing. This, coupled with an increasing awareness of the benefits of regular exercise, and the glamorous portrayal of sport in its various forms in the mass media, has resulted in a vast increase in the practice of sport. As a consequence of this, the number of sport-related injuries has risen dramatically, and so has the demand for specialist treatment and advice.

The traditional reassurance that an injury will heal if it is rested for a few weeks or months is no longer acceptable to the sportsman or woman.

Furthermore, at the elite end of the spectrum, sport has become an economic giant. With an ever increasing number of sportsmen earning their living from sport, there is now, quite rightly, a demand for specialist services, preferably at specialist centres which understand the individual

nature of the therapy required. The increased demands of training at this level inevitably result in unique injury patterns.

INJURIES

Varying from acute trauma to chronic overuse injuries, specialist knowledge and an understanding of training methods is essential, especially after treatment to achieve a rapid recovery and rehabilitation. Sports injuries are often best managed by a multi-disciplinary team; acute trauma receiving first the attention of the orthopaedic surgeon and later the physiotherapist, who now has a varied array of appliances (from ultrasound to computer controlled exercise machines) to assist the recovery. The growing interest in the "post viral syndrome" has brought together specialists from fields as diverse as virology and psychiatry, with sports medicine as the common theme.

The Medical Commission of the International Olympic Committee and the Scientific Commission of the International Federation of Sports Medicine have jointly commenced a project for the creation of an Encyclopaedia of sports medicine, which will comprise approximately 12 volumes.

"The Olympic Book of Sports Medicine", the first volume of the Encyclopaedia, will provide its readers with a general survey of sports medicine and its problems and will serve as an authoritative reference for both Olympic team physicians, who are confronted with the many specific problems of sports care during their routine practice. We also hope that this volume will constitute a good basic introduction to sports medicine for physicians in developing areas of the world.

Around 50 authors from the world's most renowned physicians have been carefully selected to participate in this first volume and our subsequent volumes, which will deal with each of the basic chapters of Volume I in more detail, will undoubtedly involve an even greater number of specialists in each domain.

We have been extremely pleased to note the support already manifested by the various National Olympic Committees throughout our five continental areas which indicates not only the success which will greet this important work upon its launching but also the necessity of creating such an authoritative reference book.

May I take this opportunity to thank Blackwell Scientific Publications for having accepted to support this important venture and for their constant collaboration, cooperation and advice.

*Prince Alexandre de Merode,
IOC Vice-President,
Chairman, IOC Medical Commission*



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AN INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE PUBLICATION
BLACKWELL SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY

An understanding of exercise physiology has provided athletes with a variety of important resources. First, they can monitor and record their fitness, thus maximising their training efforts. Second, their performance can be enhanced and their limits approached as all possible means of improvement are sought. These might include carefully controlled nutritional regimes; preparation for particular environmental conditions, or even the use of a certain type of sportswear. Psychological preparation and attitude are increasingly recognised as important during both training and competition as well as aiding recovery from injury.

SPORTS MEDICINE AND HEALTH

The benefits of exercise for good health are now widely accepted. The physician however must be

able to offer advice as to the suitability of a particular programme, warning of the dangers of inactive people suddenly overstretching ; of the stress put on children by intensive training programmes, and the effects of intense physical activity on the physiology of women. The direction of exercise programmes for recovering patients is increasingly required, and opportunities for disabled people wishing to participate in sports activities have grown rapidly.

THE FUTURE

The prospects for sports medicine are exciting : many new diagnostic techniques and treatment methods are available ; the time taken for healing is shorter, and far fewer long term ill effects are resulting from sports injuries and overuse. As both athletes and physicians wake up to the realities of medicine in sport, an increasing number of health professionals are taking up the challenge and developing their careers in the speciality.