

## **FICS DCs Treat Olympic Athletes as They Prepare for Games**

A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK AT FOUR YEARS OF EFFORT

Christopher L. Topel; Earl Malone, chiropractic intern at Cleveland Kansas City

In 1992, at LaGrange College, Georgia, the International Training Center for Athletes began under the direction of noted coach Ron Davis, a former U.S. Olympian and friend of the chiropractic profession for many years. Through his association with David Pierson, DC, former president of the Federation International de Chiropratique Sportive (FICS), a long lasting rapport was established.

Shortly after Mr. Davis was appointed to head the "I Train in LaGrange" project, he contacted Dr. Pierson and FICS to provide chiropractic care for the athletes training in LaGrange. Over the past four years this program at LaGrange College has become a model training facility, with athletes coming from all over the world to train with Mr. Davis.

The first athletes to come to LaGrange were from Cameroon, Uganda, and Qatar, and were training for the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. Since then, athletes from over 25 countries have made the pilgrimage to LaGrange.

Shortly after the program began, Allen James, the top U.S. male racewalker, moved to LaGrange to begin training for the 1996 Olympics. Over the last few years the entire U.S. racewalking team were training in LaGrange, and all received regular chiropractic care from FICS doctors.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) heard about the training facility and sent a representative from the IOC solidarity scholarship program to tour the facility in September of 1993. The IOC was quite impressed with the program in LaGrange and awarded scholarships for the athletes from developing nations to study and train at the college. Also touring the facilities were Mr. Billy Payne, president of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, and Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young.

Chiropractic care was offered and utilized by the athletes from the inception of the program. Ron Davis stated he has never been involved with a training program that experienced so few injuries. He attributes that closely with the regular chiropractic care that the athletes received, organized through FICS and Dr. David Pierson. Dr. Pierson contacted the local chiropractors of Drs. Suzanne Bissett and Daniel Fortin to coordinate this care. They organized the following DCs to volunteer their services to the athletes training in LaGrange:

Richard Rosenkoetter; Christopher Topel; Nancy Bishop; Pam Putnam; Wayne Gaby; Joe Sennobogen; Charles Wiess; Brooks Coville; Paul Garnsey; Ron Herring; Rob Herring; Mike Murry, and Mark Ugell. The LaGrange chiropractors of the Aspinwall Chiropractic Clinic allowed the doctors to use their clinic to treat the athletes every week.

In June of 1996, the first of over 600 athletes from 25 different countries began to arrive in LaGrange to train and acclimate for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta. Once again, Mr. Ron Davis asked for assistance in supplying chiropractic care from the FICS. Drs. Brian Nook, FICS first vice president, and Suzanne Bissett, FICS registrar, selected 17 doctors from five countries to

travel to LaGrange for a week at a time to volunteer to treat these athletes.

We, Drs. Daniel Fortin and Christopher Topel, headed the mission for the FICS contingency. The LaGrange chiropractors were provided room and board for their entire stays. Over the four weeks leading up to the Olympics, the doctors provided over 650 treatments to the athletes. Data was collected on the care received by the athletes, including a detailed demographic study, and a patient satisfaction survey completed by each athlete following each treatment. This information is essential in establishing the necessity and satisfaction of chiropractic care to international athletics. This research was partially funded by the assistance of computers by the National Chiropractic Mutual Insurance company, and will be published and delivered to ACOG, IOC and the General Assembly of International Sports Federations (GAISF).

The chiropractic profession was well represented and the need for chiropractic care was proven for athletes, coaches and dignitaries. The response was overwhelming by everyone involved. All of the doctors involved stated this was a great experience to work in this environment and to treat athletes at this level. This event opened many doors with countries that had no idea what chiropractic care could do for their athletes. The doctors who participated in LaGrange during the pre-Olympic training, June 24 to July 18, were:

From the U.S.

*Susan Bercuk*

*William Bonsall*

*John Hannon*

*Clayton Heatley*

*Mark Hemcinovich*

*Jim Lawrance*

*Bob Percell*

*Tim Ray*

*Jim Reidt*

*Rick Renzler*

*Robert Romanelli*

*Other Countries:*

*Nick Gondzioulis, Australia*

*Nigal Hudson, Canada*

*Rick Mozell, Canada*

*Mark Poray, Canada*

*Pia Hanson, Denmark*

*Tom Greenway, England*

A special thanks goes to Ron Davis for his continued support, and to the Aspinwall Clinic for allowing us to use their facilities over the years. If you would like to become involved in international sports chiropractic and the FICS, contact Dr. Suzanne Bissett, FICS registrar at: 535-H Indian Trail Rd., Lilburn, Georgia 30247. Tele: (404) 564-3334 for an application for the FICS.

OCTOBER 1996