

## "Jamaica Is Cool Runnings" with Chiropractic's Help

John Sandell, DC

Excuse me, I'm with CBS. Harry Smith just did a bobsled run and his neck is hurting. Could you please help him?

Even for the seasoned athlete, bobsledding is a brutal sport. Severe cold, 80 mile per hour speeds, high G turns, no suspension between ice, steel and the human frame -- all for a one minute ride down a mountain. No wonder CBS anchor Harry Smith was hurting.

Leaving my home town of Moscow, Idaho with a population of 20,000, and headed for Lillehammer, also with a population of 20,000, it was incomprehensible to me how they would be able to accommodate the thousands of participants, news media, and spectators. But accommodate they did. The hospitality food and sleeping quarters were excellent, and the Norwegian people were friendly and gracious hosts.

The weather and country reminded me of Minnesota, with rolling, wooded hills, sunny, and very cold. At Hunderfosen, the location of the bobsled run, the athletes, coaches, trainers, doctors, and delegation members worked out of a large, heated tent. The constant activity and excitement could have been overwhelming, if I hadn't been kept so busy.

Up at 6 a.m., breakfast with the team, and catch the bus or VIP car to the base of the mountain: a 30 minute drive. Once we arrive at the mountain, we were transported to the top of the track in a truck hauling the bobsleds up the mountain for the next series of runs. The \$60 million bobsled track is a thing of beauty winding through the mountainside of natural surroundings.

After spending the day on the mountain, we are taken back to the Olympic Village by 5 p.m. Having brought two portable tables and four modalities, this was my busiest time. With up to 2,000 athletes in the compound, a line would sometimes form outside my work area with athletes needing chiropractic services. Chiropractic was a well-received and much sought after form of health care.

The Invertabod was a big success with athletic injuries at the Olympics. With a bobsledder sustaining nearly 5 Gs in the turns down the bobsled run, decompression therapy is priceless. I used this therapy on each member of the Jamaican team before each run to balance and stretch out the spine and muscles. By the end of the third day, a line of athletes, coaches, and trainers would form waiting to use it. I even put Harry Smith on the machine on live TV after his bobsled run and he loved it.

I use decompression therapy in my practice to strengthen the back, stomach, internal abductors, and S-I articulations. It is also used for sports conditioning, postsurgical rehabilitation, decompression-traction, and facet syndromes. It is even possible to adjust the patient on the machine for certain conditions.

The spirit of competition, hard work, and a team approach paid off for the Jamaican bobsled team. At Calgary in 1988, they were a novelty, but after placing 14th, one position ahead of the U.S. team

in the four-man event, they have earned the respect they deserve.

The spirit of the Winter Olympics is going to flourish in the hot Jamaican sun as more Jamaican athletes seek to qualify for Nagano in 1998. "Ya mon, Jamaica is cool runnings."

*John Sandell, DC*  
*Moscow, Idaho*

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