

## Dynamic Chiropractic



*Dr. Ryan is flanked by Arnold Strongest Man  
Contest competitors Raymond Barmanis (l) and*

CHIROPRACTIC (GENERAL)

## The Arnold Fitness Weekend: A Perfect Time for Chiropractic!

David Ryan, BS, DC

The 15th annual Arnold Fitness Weekend in Columbus, Ohio, featured a record number of attendees, even in the shadow of the worst snowfall since 1902. More than 80,000 people and approximately 10,000 athletes attended the three-day event (Feb. 28 - March 2), making it again one of the top sporting competitions in the world.

I was at the helm of the Arnold Medical Team, which included more than 200 volunteers: chiropractors; medical doctors; osteopathic physicians; paramedics; EMTs; nurses; and support staff, including three troops from the Boy Scouts of America. Drs. Tom Deebel (from Pennsylvania), Heather Kight and Kris Keller (both from Columbus), were some of the new chiropractors on hand to help with the 300-plus injuries we attended to during the weekend.

Every year, I write an article on this event with the best intentions. Like you, my life is a daily battle with insurance companies, staffing difficulties and public scrutiny. I try to report on the success of chiropractic to embellish us all.

This year, my weekend began with an unexpected visitor: Parker College of Chiropractic President Dr. Fabrizio Mancini, who showed up to witness the first round of the "Arnold Strongest Man Contest." Dr. Mancini, Dr. Andy Mowry and myself discussed how we could use this event to further the public's knowledge of chiropractic.



***Dr. Ryan is flanked by Arnold Strongest Man Contest competitors Raimonds Bergmanis (!) and overall winner Zydrunas Savickas.***

"It is important for all the public to see how active chiropractic is with sports, and this is a great venue for them to see it," said Dr. Mancini.

I hope we can do even half of what we discussed. With the help of the International Chiropractors Association (which conducts a seminar in conjunction with this event) and other chiropractic organizations, I truly believe we can increase public awareness of the value of chiropractic.

After meeting with my new friends, I rushed to cover the finals of the female bodybuilding, fitness and figure competitions. Fortunately, all of this year's women's events went off without a hitch. Most of the athletes came to me earlier in the week with pretreatment concerns.



*Dr. Ryan is surrounded by female fitness competitors at this year's event.*

The next day found me again working with the Strongest Man athletes. I was talking with Tom Deters, DC, editor of *Muscle and Fitness* and several other well-known fitness magazines, when I was called to look at Lithuanian competitor Zydrunas Savickas' ankle; he had sprained it earlier in the day doing a medicine-ball toss. As one of the leaders of the competition, he needed help fast.

I assessed a grade-two ankle sprain and asked an old friend, orthopedic team physician Dr. Nick DiNubile, for a second opinion. He saw what I saw: a positive posterior drawer and Valgus test. "Level two for sure," Nick said. I asked the athlete what he wanted me to do. He said, "Tape it the best you can," so that's what I did. He got up, limped around a bit, then warmed up for the "Farmer's Walk" event. I watched him for a minute as he practiced, then limped away to allow the next competitor to practice. He was preparing to carry a 900-pound frame of railroad ties up a 15-degree ramp for 20 yards.

As the night wore on, I helped a bodybuilder with cramps, another with lockjaw and still another with an old hamstring injury. There are monitors backstage so you can see and hear the announcer and the audience, but for the most part, I never have much time to watch. I was attending to the bodybuilder with the hamstring problem when the room exploded with several well-wishers patting me on the back. "Good job, Doc," is all I heard for a while, and then Dr. DiNubile looked at me and smiled. "Savickas won!" he said. (Later, I learned he won the event in record time.) For that shining moment, Dr. DiNubile, the lead orthopedic consultant for an NBA basketball team, knew

chiropractic was for more than just back pain.

The rest of the weekend, attendees saw some amazing records set, including a world record lift by Kevin Goggins, who squatted 1,102 pounds. Was he deep? His chest was about one inch off his knees! The chiropractic volunteers worked the whole weekend to help triage the injuries, and were highly respected by the other specialists. I even saw a couple of ICA convention guests watching me being adjusted during the event. I always end up at a loss for words to describe how popular this event is - it brings 72 million dollars into the local economy in just four days.

I would like to mention several outstanding medical professionals who assisted the medical team this year; they helped bring this team together and kept things "under control" the entire weekend. Brian F. Griffin, MD, FACEP, DAAPM, and Joe Donovan, MD, helped set treatment protocols and were there to pick up the pieces whenever the world came crashing in on the athletes. At this event, my role is becoming more administrative than treatment oriented: I spend a considerable amount of time putting out emotional fires and keeping the medical team running in the right directions.

Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Lorimer, who direct the Arnold Fitness Weekend, have tough jobs: They try to improve this event each year. Currently, they plan on including competitive cheerleading as an international event next year, and other athletic endeavors also are under consideration. For my part, I am working with a group to allow certified athletic trainers to gain continuing education credits by working with our medical team. Imagine the possibility of hundreds of ATCs receiving an education under the guidance of a chiropractic-directed medical program!



***Dr. David Ryan (center) poses with Arnold Fitness Weekend event directors Jim Lorimer and Arnold Swarzenegger.***

I plan on recruiting additional chiropractic physicians for future events, both to help our profession and meet the increasing demand for chiropractic services. A lottery is going to be set up for DCs interested in assisting with next year's Arnold Medical Team. In return for a donation to the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research (FCER), you can win a chance to come to the event and work with our team.

For information on the 2004 Arnold Fitness Weekend, and to view complete competition results from the 2003 event, visit [www.arnoldclassic.com](http://www.arnoldclassic.com). I hope reading this article has made you feel better about being a chiropractor. Thank you for being my colleagues in these difficult times. May God bless us all.

*Editor's note:* Palmer graduate David Ryan, DC, practices in Columbus, Ohio, at the Columbus Chiropractic Centers. He is the medical chairman for the Arnold Fitness Weekend and is licensed as a USA Boxing ringside physician by the Ohio Athletic Association.

*David Ryan, DC*

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