

The US Olympic Training Center, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

OLYMPIC DREAMS DO COME TRUE

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America's Olympic Dreams Start Here -- sign outside the US Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

My Olympic dreams started at the Olympic Training Center and are now about to come true. The letter from James Montgomery, MD, medical services chairman of the U.S. Olympic Committee informed me: "Dear Dr. Horwitz: On behalf of the United States Olympic Committee's Sports Medicine Committee, I am pleased to inform you that you have been selected as a member of the medical staff for the Games of the XXVth Olympiad in Atlanta, Georgia..."

My start with sports chiropractic began soon after I graduated from National College of Chiropractic, when I provided care at powerlifting competitions, a sport in which I had competed while at NCC. After completing the CCSP program directed by Dr. Phil Santiago (the only DC on the 1992 US Olympic medical team), Dr. Stephen Perle asked me if I would help him at the National High School Indoor Track and Field Championships. That same year, Coach John Cook gave me the opportunity to work with the George Mason University track and field program. My involvement with GMU, which has one of the best track and field programs in the country, allowed me to become the chiropractor for the Mobil I Invitational Track and Field Championships.

In 1990, I met Dr. Jack Kahn at the ACA Sports Council symposium in Orlando, Florida. Dr. Kahn was instrumental in my development in sports chiropractic. In 1992, my friend Frank Novakoski, MA, ATC (who will be the trainer for track and field at the 1996 Olympics) returned from working two weeks at the USOTC and suggested I submit an application to their sports medicine volunteer program.

In 1993, I sent an updated application to the USOC, after my book, *You Can Be Fit!*, was published by the FCER. The following April, I received a call from Dr. John Danchik telling me I was being considered for the program at the USOTC. A few weeks later, I received my first letter from the US Olympic Committee inviting me to spend 15 days at the training center.

The key to my stay at the USOTC was quickly developing a rapport with the volunteer sports medicine staff, the trainers, the GP and the orthopaedic surgeon. This was vital because all athletes saw the trainers first and they decided who would treat the athletes. It was fortunate that the five volunteer trainers were open minded, as none of them had experience working with chiropractors. I was able to introduce them to chiropractic. They carefully observed my examination and treatment of the athletes, and within the first few days were sending me the spinal related problems. I then introduced them to chiropractic extremity and myofascial techniques.

At the USOTC I treated athletes in just about every sport. Most of the athletes were familiar with

chiropractic and enthusiastically pursued care.

In October, 1994 I accepted an invitation to work at the US Olympic Festival in Boulder, where approximately 1600 athletes were competing. The athletes' demand for chiropractic care was so great that before I even put my luggage in my room there were athletes asking, "Where's the chiropractor?"

The training room was in a dormitory of the University of Colorado, where I spent the next eight days. We were open from 7 a.m. to at least 9 p.m. every day. I received the ultimate compliment from one of the medical staff when, by the third or fourth day, he said, "You're the busiest guy here."

Chiropractic and the USOC

The USOC medical volunteer program in its present form began in 1978, thanks to the efforts of Bob Beeten, ATC and Jenny Stone, ATC, MS. At that time only MDs and ATCs were selected, based on their skills in sports medicine. The foundation for chiropractic's involvement with the USOC was laid by Dr. Leroy Perry. In 1976, a petition was sent to the USOC by American athletes requesting that Dr. Perry be appointed to the USOC medical staff. When he was not placed on the medical staff, these same athletes arranged for him to go with the country of Antigua so they would be able to receive chiropractic care. Dr. Perry treated athletes from 21 different countries.

In 1980, George Goodhart Jr., DC was appointed to the Commission on Sports Medicine Modalities by Dr. Irving Dardik, chairman of the US Olympic Council on Sports Medicine. Dr. Goodhart went to the 1980 Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid, NY with the USOC. The Olympic medical trailer did not have space for a chiropractic table, so Dr. Dardik arranged for Dr. Goodhart to use half of another trailer being used by the athletes for TV viewing. The athletes were allowed chiropractic care if they requested it.

In 1984, Dr. Eileen Haworth was selected as the first DC to officially go with the USOC's sports medicine staff to a Summer Olympic Games. Dr. Haworth had worked with many track athletes and was recommended to the USOC for her efforts. She was asked to work at the National Sports Festival (precursor to the US Olympic Festival) in both 1982 and 1983. After the 1984 Olympics, Dr. Haworth was asked by the USOC to form a selection committee for chiropractors with Dr. John Danchik.

The formation of this selection committee launched the existing volunteer program for chiropractors at the USOTC in Colorado Springs. The first chiropractor to work at the USOTC as part of this program was Dr. Tom Hyde. Dr. Hyde was chosen to go the Pan Am Games in 1987. Dr. Jan Corwin followed and was selected to go to the USOF in 1987, and the Summer Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea in 1992. Dr. Dan McClure provided chiropractic care at the Pan Am Games in Cuba in 1991. Dr. Phil Santiago worked at the Summer Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain in 1992; and Dr. Margaret Karg traveled to Mar Del Plata, Argentina for the Pan Am Games in 1995.

To become part of the USOC volunteer program, a DC must submit an application to the USOC, which are then forwarded to the chiropractic selection committee. If selected, the DC spends 15 days working with the athletes at the sports medicine training facility of the USOTC in Colorado Springs. The DC is evaluated by the USOTC sports medicine staff for clinical skills and the ability to work with the medical staff. The volunteer MDs and ATCs are evaluated the same way. Over 30 DCs have worked at the USOTC.

From there, the DC may be selected for the medical staff at the US Olympic Festival (USOF). Since

1978, the Olympic Festival has taken place during non-Olympic years, with as many as 3500 athletes competing in 37 different sports. DCs that have provided care at the USOF include: Jan Corwin; Cheri Fisher; Dan McClure; Phil Santiago; Paul Davis; Margaret Karg; John Hannon; Don Aspergen; and Robert Monokian.

Unfortunately, the Olympic Festival will not be held in 1997 and probably will no longer occur in its present format. At the USOF, the DC is similarly observed by a group of evaluators who recommend which DCs will advance to the next level: the Pan Am Games or the Summer Olympic Games. The DC chosen for the Summer Olympic Games must be approved by the USOC's sports medicine committee, the Games preparation committee and the USOC Board of Directors.

To all the DCs who preceded me at the USOTC and USOF programs, I say, "Thank you." You have paved the way for acceptance of chiropractic by both the USOC medical staff and the athletes. To the DCs who have applied to the program or just started it, I say, "Give it your all and work together with the medical staff." To the DCs who are currently working with Olympians and future Olympians, your efforts are much appreciated, as I've been told many times at both the USOTC and USOF.

It is an honor to be chosen to represent the Chiropractic profession at the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta. I will return with many pictures and a full report of my experiences. As always, a special thanks to Dr. Phil Santiago and Dr. Jack Kahn.

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