

DCs Visit Chinese National Olympic Training Center

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We are seldom blessed with experiences for which no words are adequate to share with others just how rich those experiences were, or precisely how deeply we were moved. As so it was with my recent visit to China. We can relate what the eye sees, and repeat what the ear hears, but we cannot share what the heart feels. The memories of my China experience will be cherished for a lifetime.

I was amazed to discover how alive Beijing is at 4:30 on a Sunday morning. People were rushing about, either working, cycling to work, or just busy. Across the street from my luxury room in the Parkview Tien Ten Hotel, a man is shoveling dirt through a sifter to make concrete. Much of the labor that is mechanized in America is manual here. During my morning run I saw people giving haircuts and selling food in the middle of the street.

At the banquet officially welcoming our delegation to China, and opening this historic even of oriental and occidental exchange of chiropractic knowledge/technique, I stood before the delegation to express deep gratitude for the privilege of participating in this unique program. I suddenly realized, with deep humility, that I represented all the chiropractors in the United States, and the humility changed to pride. No host has ever made me feel more welcome than the Chinese delegation. How thankful I was to be there.

The first Chinese technique we learned was TUINA, a form of treatment consisting of massage, acupuncture, physical therapy and chiropractic. Sun, our lecturer, explained that during a study conducted from 1985 to 1987 of the 609 Olympic gymnastic injuries, 12.5 percent involved the wrist. This is far above the figure for the general population. API (American Press International) reported the incidence of American gymnastic injuries: #1) foot and ankle at 25.3 percent; #2) wrist and hand at 19.7 percent; #3) sacrum at 9.5 percent; and lastly, the knee with only a figure of .07 percent. Gymnasts have a dorsi flexion range of motion of 30 degrees which exceeds that of non-athletes. The male athlete suffers the most injuries on the parallel bar event. Second is the horse at 36.5 percent, and the horizontal bar 9.6 percent. The female gymnast experiences the most injuries on the uneven bars, 36.5 percent. The horse is second with 30.4 percent, the balance beam tallies 17.4 percent, and acrobatics produces 8.7 percent.

In acute injuries, wrist disorder is greater in males, with right side predominance; and approximately even right and left side for females. Separation in the radial ulnar joints was documented in 278 x-rays which revealed 57 to the wrist and 9 to the palm.

An impressive difference appears between the Chinese and the American treatment of epiphyseal fractures of the medial epicondyle, (grade 2). Using their approach heals the fracture in four months, while we Americans use a surgical pin, followed by one month in a cast. Our patients require 33 percent longer to heal. Their rehabilitation methods would appear to be more efficient.

They have discovered that TUINA heals faster than Electro Muscle Stimulation (EMS). They limit the use of ice to the first 24 hours, followed by lukewarm water. Acupuncture applied to LU-7 on the wrist is a good cure for the treatment of nicotine addiction.

Pericardium is another point, and the heart point helps to induce sleep. The points across the dorsum of the wrist, large intestine, triple energizer and small intestine. Relief from constipation is the dorsum of the forearm approximately two inches proximal to the wrist at the midline of the forearm.

The second lecture, "The Evolution of Tradition Chinese Medicine and Massage Therapy," delivered by Dr. Tian Yong Fu, and translated by Tsui Shuyi (the Chinese always introduce themselves last name first). The two types of therapy are: Daoyin and Anqiao, consisting of 12 applications of soft tissue work. This treatment, used when moving toward the heart, invigorates in post-trauma. Away-from-the-heart applications disperse stress of blood and reduce fatigue. The distinction between the Yin and the Yang is direction of massage. In treating ischemic symptoms, Yin is employed by massaging toward the heart or the channels in collateral. Yang is the opposite.

Dr. Xuneng Chong conducted the next class on Acute Lumbar Sprain. The five most frequent causes are: improper bending, as in weight training; rotation, as in javelin throwing; impact, as in football; over-extension or over-flexion, as in gymnastics; and improper standing posture.

Lumbago can be characterized by five distinctly differing presentations: 1) local ache as in pin point with audible; 2) a well circumscribed tender point; 3) palpable abnormalities; 4) protective spasm; and 5) intense pain that may radiate.

Treatment technique is finger pressure on acupoints with 30 seconds of thumb pressure applied to both sides, regardless of the side of presentation. The six points treated are: Shensu B-20, B-23, Huan Tiao G-30, Wei Zhong B-54, Cheng Shan S-1, Taixi K-9, and Kun Lun B-60.

The protocol is: Patient stands against the wall (assisted if required) with arms raised. Compress the abdomen and low back. Then have patient flex forward and back. Next relax muscles from shoulders down. Have patient lie prone, lift leg, and press low back (an audible may be heard). Next have patient twist, rotating as far as possible (an audible may be heard). With patient in the prone position, have an assistant pull on both legs while the doctor presses on the low back. Finally, prescribe rest for two days. This procedure may be employed in treating sacroiliac joints and spinal inflammation.

The afternoon session dealt with the application of acupressure in sports injuries. There are four techniques favored: touching, pressing, pinching (using the fingernail as a sharp object), and tapping or knocking.

Headache is treated at: G-20, CV-17, X-2 at the region of the temple, and X-1 at the medial region of the superior orbital ridge.

Calf spasm is treated at three main points: UB-57, ST-36, and GB-34. Medium pressure is applied to these points for 30 to 60 seconds. Ankle sprains require application of ice for the first 24 hours followed by acupressure at points K-3, ST-41, and ST-36. Treatment is every other day and the ankle taped. Shin splints protocol: acupressure at SP-36 and SP-9. Medial knee sprains offer five points for treatment: ST-36, UB-40, SP-12, ST-34, and K-10.

Hamstring strain is treated at GB-31 (this point is located have the patient place the palm against the

TFL. The exact point is at the tip of the third digit). SP-12, UB-36 (at the ischial tuberosity), and UB-37. Lumbar strain/sprain: UB-40, GE-30, and UB-32 (which is about 3.5 centimeters lateral to L-4).

Much of our free time was spent in exploring China and observing many of the customs. We stopped to watch a man, in his 60s or 70s, doing his early morning Kata with a stick, which he used as a simulated sword. His concentration was so intense, movement was almost trance-like. His movements were simple and graceful -- in this poetry of motion he was a lithe, young man.

We toured the sports facility. The women volleyball players displayed incredible muscularity in the lower extremities. They moved with dexterity and power. We became aware of how dilapidated and antiquated everything was throughout the facility. I wondered what made them such outstanding athletes, and decided that they discovered within themselves the capacity for success in competition. Individual spirit and team spirit is the key.

The next building was, by far, the most exhilarating for me -- gymnastics. On the women's side were a dozen or so young girls. It was fascinating to watch these little girls, as proportionately muscled as their older counterparts. They moved gracefully, and with amazing agility; floating between the parallel bars, flying between the uneven bars, traversing the balance beam, and whirling above the horse. We applauded their magnificent performances and individual talents.

The men's gymnastic area was separate. There we watched in awe as the men displayed feats of strength and agility while muscles rippled. Intense concentration was apparent as they defied gravity, suspending themselves, working the rings.

Lastly, we visited the swimming pool, where several athletes trained, slicing the water like human knives. Andre arranged with the coach for us to meet the female gold medalist at Barcelona.

Our next lecture was presented by Dr. Jiang Sihui: "The Role of Chinese Medicine in Sports Injuries." Since ancient times Chinese medicine has had three sources: animal, mineral, and plants, many of which are imported from other countries. Chinese medicine is characterized by four properties: cold, hot, warm, and cool. They are determined by their particular actions as floating, sinking, lifting, and lowering. Floating and lifting are used to induce sweating and dispelling colds. Sinking and lowering are used for tranquilizing.

A brief comment about drugs used at the Training Center. For new trauma, closed injury: yellow cork tree bark, corydalis tuber and caulis. Mix a powder with water or honey and apply to the affected part. For the relaxation of muscles and to improve circulation: notoginseng, cow bezoar, musk, Chinese angelica root. Rub the powder on the injury for about 30 seconds. This is also useful for old soft tissue injuries.

A few blocks from our hotel we came into Tiananmen Square, where four years ago 500,000 Chinese citizens, weary of suppression under communism staged an enormous protest and raised an outcry for democracy.

We toured the TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) hospital. It is an eight-story, old, dilapidated, and unsanitary facility that would cause Joseph Lister to shudder. One could almost feel toxicity in the air.

The "pharmacy" was a sensational olfactory experience. The overwhelming aroma of hundreds of herbs made me wonder if the smell alone might not produce a high. Several nurses were busy selecting the

proper herbs from boxes and drawers, crudely measuring, or judging by sight the proportions which they put in a brown bag, to which they stapled the prescription. The patient was instructed to boil the herbs and drink the extract.

Next we went to the treatment area, where we saw acupuncture, soft tissue, and spinal manipulation. Many of the procedures are very similar to chiropractic manipulation. Many of the procedures are very similar to chiropractic manipulation. One important distinction impressed me: their adjustments could almost qualify as "passive" compared with ours. They use only a fraction of the force we apply. To them, our technique would be regarded as aggressive.

Regardless of the lack of sanitary conditions, and despite the crude manner of their entire health care approach, they still have a longevity greater than the U.S. The average female life expectancy in China is 76; 72 for males.

We posed several questions about charges for various procedures, and how the insurance claims were handled, and the treatment of the uninsured patient. It was as if the questions gave them the impression that we are mercenaries. Zhao, our tour guide, asked why we had so many questions about money, and so few about treatment technique. I became aware that she had noticed the emphasis of our interest in money, and I attempted an explanation designed to make us look better to this dedicated woman. In an almost puzzled tone she replied, "Very interesting." It gave me cause to re-evaluate my position as a health care practitioner.

I learned that at TCM, acupuncture is used as anesthesia only when working on the thyroid gland. No explanation was given for this limitation. Other area hospitals use acupuncture as an adjunct to anesthesia during brain surgery and internal organ surgery.

Our tour of the Sports School in Beijing revealed how it differs from the Olympic Training Center. There are 305 students enrolled in the Sports School who are chosen because of superior academic standing and physical capabilities. Only the most outstanding students from this school go to the Olympic Training Center. The others return to their regular schools. The school is subsidized by the government, and a small allowance is given to the parents. The students attend classes and then train for three hours daily for six days a week.

One of the highlights of our visit was the opportunity to photograph some of the power lifters and Olympic lifters. We met the Women's Barcelona gold medalist. She also holds the world record for the 50 meter breast stroke.

We were escorted to another TCM hospital which specializes in acupuncture research. We saw an exhibition of Chigong, a Chinese healing art similar to acupuncture. Here a young doctor in training took an electrical cord and plugged it into a wall socket. Holding exposed ends of the cord in each hand, assuming a fighting stance, the doctor performed a few motions designed to elevate him to a state of complete concentration, whereupon the lights in the room were turned off. He took an exposed wire in each hand. An assistant placed the leads of a meter to this doctor's forehead, and the light came on indicating that his body completed the electrical circuit. Our delegation formed a circle joining hands, and touched the doctor with the electricity coursing through his body, and on around the circle as we each experienced the charge.

When the doctor asked for a volunteer to assist in his demonstration, I stepped forward, as I had experienced low back pain for a few days. There was an almost mystical quality in his touch that I

would pay any price to acquire. The flow of energy and vitality was astonishing. His focus was so intense, and the technique so gentle I felt that the point of contact of his healing hands was the only thing in all the universe that had any significance for those several seconds. His innate awakened my innate, attracted it to a single point for the express purpose of creating supreme relaxation of muscles in spasm, alleviating pain and restoring the natural state of perfection. I had experienced the miracle of chiropractic in China.

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