

The Olympic dentist

Please send any ideas for feature articles for consideration to:
Rowena Milan,
British Dental Journal,
The Macmillan Building,
4-6 Crinan Street,
London
N1 9XW
Email: r.milan@nature.com

FEATURE

As the immediate excitement of an amazing 2008 Olympics and Paralympics in Beijing for team GB subsides, some are already looking towards the 2012 games. Dentist and medical team consultant for the 2012 games Dr Tony Clough has recently returned from the Beijing Olympics, where he got involved prematurely with this year's athletes, as **Jonica Love** discovered.

As the person in charge of dental care of athletes at the London 2012 Olympics, Tony was in China as a guest of the International Olympic Committee Dental Director to Beijing with a view to his role in four years time with the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG). However, shortly into his trip he was asked to report to the Medical Director as the 2008 Games Dental Director has unfortunately ruptured his Achilles tendon five days prior to the games and was unable to fulfil his role.

Enthusied with the excitement of the event, Tony said that the highlight of his time spent in Beijing was realising what his role entailed in the unexpected capacity as Acting Dental Supervisor of the Beijing games for the IOC Medical Commission. The Medical Commission's duty is to care for, and ensure the health and welfare of all athletes, and under its aegis the LOCOG is responsible for preparing for this in the staging of the 2012 London Games.

Extra duties and a broken nose

Tony's unexpected additional post meant being responsible for several things beyond the usual tasks of a visiting member of the Medical Commission. In this capacity he had to liaise with the Chinese Medical and Dental Directors, supervise the provision of care in the polyclinic in the athletes village, provide daily updates and reports to



Tony Clough with the Beijing Dental Director (left) and the former Chief Dental Officer of China

the IOC Medical Commission and Medical Director, and present reports to all the Chief Medical Officers of the 204 National Olympic committees about the availability and provision of dental care during the games, including the extensive mouth guard programme.

Tony dealt with all disciplines and met some winning athletes. 'In my capacity of supervising the Doping Control tests,

I met many winners who arrived with medals around their necks,' said Tony. Based at the velodrome for three days, he met some of the cyclists who brought such prestige and a clutch of gold medals back to Britain. 'I had conversations with Chris Hoy, Brad Wiggins and Vicky Pendleton' explained Tony, who was clearly impressed with the unerring dedication of the athletes. 'The view of



Colourful Olympic mascots in Beijing



Let the games begin!

the young racer Jason Kenny, 20, was that he was just “doing his job”. They are such a professional outfit and nothing is left to chance, just like dentists!’

Although Tony’s role was supervisory his experience was put to the test as he was responsible for instructing the Chinese dentists in the techniques of making a nasal splint to protect an athlete with a broken nose to enable her to compete two days later.

A general dental practitioner at the Sharrow Dental Practice in Chelmsford,

Essex, Tony became a member of the Olympic medical team through a long association with the IOC Medical Director which led to an invitation to the Athens and Turin games which he attended in an observer role. With a keen interest in a range of sports himself, from rowing to athletics, he has previously undertaken regular work on national hockey team players and Alpine ski racers.

Looking ahead to the 2012 games Tony hopes that there will be many who wish to be involved either in the clinic work-

ing with athletes or at the venues carrying out emergency care, since there were a number of dental injuries at various venues during the Beijing games and occasional trauma is a risk at such high levels of competition. He advises other dentists interested in getting involved in emergency sports dental care to consider creating a relationship with local sports teams and/or enrolling on an appropriate course such as the Eastman Sports Dentistry course.

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ELECTIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE BODY OF THE BRITISH DENTAL ASSOCIATION 2009/12

The current term of office (Triennium) of the Representative Body of the British Dental Association is drawing to a close. Nominations are invited, not later than Friday 7 November, from BDA members who are interested in serving on the Representative Body in the new Triennium, which runs from January 2009 to 2012.

The Representative Body is the Association’s most important committee. At its three meetings each year, the Representative Body receives regular reports including those from the Executive Board and the autonomous committees of the BDA, representing all the constituent parts of the profession. There will

also be key issues for decision at each meeting, including reports and papers on policy issues. In June each year the Body decides the subscription fee for the next membership renewal.

The Representative Body elects the majority of members of the Executive Board, which in turn has closer scrutiny of the day to day activities of the Association. The reports from the Executive Board at each meeting of the Representative Body include issues in regard to the strategic direction of the Association, operational planning and topical matters affecting the profession.

Members of the Representative Body also have the opportunity if they wish

to work in other areas of the Association’s work. Representatives are elected to a range of other committees or working parties dealing with a diversity of issues.

If you would like further information and/or a nomination pack, please e mail Ian Morley at i.morley@bda.org or call him on 020 7535 5841.

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