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COMMENTARY

Tribute to Jack Taunton's Contribution to Sport Medicine

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Abstract

Jack Taunton is one of the foremost Sport Medicine Practitioners in Canada. His years of service to the profession influenced Sport Medicine training programs, Sport Medicine research, and Elite athlete treatment in Canada and arguably around the world. **Health & Fitness Journal of Canada 2020;13(3):14-15.** <https://doi.org/10.14288/hfjc.v13i3.321>

Keywords: Sport Medicine, Medical Learners, Jack E. Taunton

Introduction

I had just graduated from my Master's degree at UBC. There was an advertisement for a research assistant at the new Sport Medicine Centre on campus. My interview was with Jack Taunton and Doug Clement. Two more engaging and energetic people you could not meet. I was lucky to get the job. The whole group was wonderful to work with. The energy was spectacular, but no one had the energy that Jack did. Where did he get it, I'm not sure but he was always working, volunteering, learning, running, or keeping busy with his family.

He was a voracious learner. Always reading journal articles. During his ride to work, he listened to medical lectures on a cassette (basically the 1980's version of medical blogs!). He attended all the major Sport Medicine Conferences and was constantly one of the invited clinical speakers.

Of course, this learning also involved the development of new knowledge in the form

of research. In addition to his own directed research, he supervised numerous graduate students and contributed to many graduate student committees. He had time to talk to students of all levels either about clinical or research topics. He was always approachable.

Jack was available to students of all levels, to the press, to organization of his running club/running races. His curriculum vitae has long lists of people and groups that he engaged with, gave interviews, and of course volunteered with. In addition to these commitments, he always got his run in. Many years ago, he claimed to have run more miles than it took to run around the moon and back! This is no doubt true as he trained for numerous marathons, an event at which he was world class.

Perhaps his greatest contribution to the area of Sport Medicine was to the Sport Medicine physician learners that he engaged with. A pioneer who led by

example, in the areas noted above, and in clinical care, this was where Jack seemed to be most at home. He spearheaded the leading primary care Sport Medicine program at UBC, where it was believed that not only did you need to be a great clinician, you also needed to move the knowledge of Sport Medicine forward, thus requiring all Fellows to complete graduate degrees. He also taught these learners in elite athlete care. He delivered care to many sports and volunteered on many National Team and Olympic events. He was recognized as a leader in the field, which of course culminated in his appointment as CMO of the Vancouver Olympics.

His time commitment to his work and his passions were always supported by his wife Cheryl. She was a constant companion at the many conferences he attended and supported many of his volunteer activities. Cheryl was never a bystander, and like Jack was always contributing. They were always a great team.

On behalf of the many learners that you influenced over four decades, thank you Jack! With a personal thank you to you and Cheryl from me, who benefited greatly from your guidance and time. I attempted to emulate your passion for Sport Medicine and drive for knowledge, which allowed me to have a very rewarding career in Sport and Exercise Medicine. You are a great role model, setting the example for Sport Medicine physicians across Canada.

Author's Qualifications

The author's qualifications are as follows: Preston Wiley MPE, MD, CCFP (SEM), FCFP, Dip Sport Med (CASEM).