

Health & Fitness Journal of Canada

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Volume 13

September 30, 2020

Number 3

COMMENTARY

In Appreciation of Dr. Jack and Cheryl: Pioneers in the World of Sports Medicine

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Abstract

From the early days of the Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Clinic to the Olympic Games to Sunday brunch with family and friends, I have been privileged to know Dr. Jack and Cheryl Taunton for over 35 years. I humbly salute their accomplishments and inspiration far beyond the world of sport medicine and am forever grateful to be in their circle as athlete, colleague, and friend. **Health & Fitness Journal of Canada 2020;13(3):18-19.** <https://doi.org/10.14288/hfjc.v13i3.323>

Keywords: Sport Medicine, Olympics, Inspiration, Friendship

Introduction

I have been privileged to know Dr. Jack and Cheryl Taunton for over 35 years. We first met when I began training out at UBC in the 80's as a middle-distance runner. As a Sport Medicine Physician Dr. Jack saw me devastated with injuries and then successfully brought me back to health too many times to count over my entire Olympic career. Doctor, mentor, and friend - it was fitting that coincidentally it was Dr. Jack who decided we both needed a "Vidal Sassoon haircut" in the Olympic Village together in LA 1984, and coincidentally again it was Dr. Jack who was the first person to congratulate me as I crossed the Finish Line to claim 3000m Olympic Bronze the next day. Together with Cheryl they are an extraordinary team in the world of exercise science and athletics. They have worn every hat pertaining to sport, locally and globally, from medicine

and rehab to event organization and support, and above all they have been leaders, mentors, and are known as personal friends beyond words.

Dr. Jack's accomplishments as a pioneer around the world in Sport Medicine speak for themselves and include the development of clinics overseas as far away as Uganda. The World Class events he has co-founded are internationally acclaimed, and personally I've been inspired in my own work at SportMedBC with his continued efforts establishing sport medicine support for health and wellness within Indigenous communities in our province. With Cheryl's constant coordination and management Dr. Jack has continued his zest for current research on the latest sport medicine practices and recent advice to support us all during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic.

These are people who have always had incredibly full personal and business lives, raising their children and now proud grandparents, but who always “make time” to support people and athletes in every way possible. I remember when I stood on the line for the inaugural Vancouver Sun Run it was Dr. Jack there with the orange traffic pylon using it as a megaphone to try to settle people on the Starting Line. Meantime it was his responsibility medically to ensure the safety of the hundreds and thousands of runners in this event and many others over the years, eventually including the 2010 Olympic Games as Chief Medical Officer. From the Sunday Vancouver Sun Run the third weekend every April to ensuring sport medicine support on a global level they would open their home for “Sunday runs and brunch” at the Taunton household back in the day for family and friends... there was somehow time for everything. Dr. Jack would be fully booked for months at the Allen McGavin clinic at UBC but as an athlete if I needed to see him for the smallest discomfort or potential injury he would figure out a way to see me even if it were at 6am before his own day began. Some 20 years later when I was now a “Coach” Dr. Jack was now willing to see my own athletes in the same way. And to this day I can call or email for support or advice and I can count on a Dr. Jack pep talk with Cheryl’s calming practical wisdom... together they always have the right plan for next steps forward on any project.

I humbly salute Dr. Jack and Cheryl in their accomplishments and the differences they have made far beyond the world of sport medicine, and I have been privileged to be in their circle as athlete, colleague, and friend.

The author’s qualifications are as follows: Lynn Kanuka BPE, Olympic Medalist.

Author’s Qualifications