

# Health & Fitness Journal of Canada

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## COMMENTARY

### Union Jack. How the collaborations convened by a role model of leadership have spawned countless successes

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#### Abstract

In a world where so many appointed leaders role model divisiveness and greed, Dr. Jack Taunton has been the driving force for selfless collaboration and collectivism that has seen success achieved against all odds, time and time again. **Health & Fitness Journal of Canada 2020;13(3):40-41.**

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#### Introduction

From the first time I met Jack, I knew I was in the presence of a unique man. Some people have an infectious energy and passion for what they do, which naturally percolates to those around them. Some people have a remarkable ability to make people feel truly appreciated and valuable. Some people have an invincible “can do” attitude, underpinned by an unshakeable optimism. Some people have a wonderful talent to reframe problems into challenges and then, as a buffalo walks into a storm, confront them head on to forge a resolution. Some people can mould groups of individuals into a daunting army that, together, can achieve incredible feats. Jack Taunton is every one of those “some people” all rolled into one and I was aware of this from our very first conversation.

On a personal level, Jack has changed my life. After initially offering me a clinical PhD post after the London Olympics in 2012, he didn't take my decision to pursue an

alternative opportunity, working in Asia, personally and when we met again in 2016, he posed the question, “maybe now is the right time?”. Very few people decline Jack's invitations once and I wasn't about to do it for the second time. Every day I wake up in beautiful British Columbia, I am grateful to Jack for asking that question and encouraging me to head north and west.

Since arriving back in Vancouver and embarking on the journey of personal development that navigating a PhD becomes, Jack has been a huge support. Jack has helped me organise my thoughts, connect the dots and provide the encouragement that I can change the world of sports, as I have set out to do. Additionally, Jack has introduced me to his network of other exceptional people - a couple have spoken at my conferences, some have joined for social occasions, others have helped organise events and several have become good friends. I have even brought one of the former athletes

with whom Jack worked into my business, as a partner. I see Jack maybe once a month; I talk to him, via some medium or other, every few days and yet I hear Jack's name mentioned and see traces of his brilliance practically every day.

Jack is a true leader, role modelling the behaviour to which we should all aspire. Through his inspiration, I have learnt to retain optimism in challenging times, to be relentless in the pursuit of bringing what you believe should happen to reality, to be kind, to fiercely support those in your community and to reach out of your community to help those that find themselves in less fortunate circumstances. In these times where so many high-profile leaders divide, politicise and self-serve, Jack is a wonderful example of the type of leader our society needs in abundance.

Thank you for all you do, Jack and for the positive impact you have contributed to my life as with so many others. Stay well and keep leading forward with your infectious enthusiasm and big heart.

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### **Author's Qualifications**

The author's qualifications are as follows: Oliver Finlay BSc (Hons) in Physiotherapy, MSc in Sports Physiotherapy, MSc in Exercise Physiology, Masters in Sports Directorship, PhD in Experimental Medicine, PROSCI Certificate in Change Management.