

SPORTS MEDICINE: MULTIDISCIPLINARY YET A SPECIALISATION

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Sports medicine is not mentioned after Galen and Herodicus until the late 19th C and it develops on the Continent through early 20th C. but only in 1953 does BASM start in the UK. The driving force for its development are war, national level sport and the Government. War requires fit normal recruits, whilst international sport requires the supernormal, and governmental kudos is built on medals and world cups; the athletes gaining knighthoods.

Cheating, drug and child abuse, sometimes state sponsored, have followed, stressing the ethical balance between the rewards of winning and the individual's health. However the parallel benefits of exercise for many diseases have been proved. The skills required to treat a sportsperson can be employed for the musculoskeletal and mental systems of the general public and amongst the supernormal may hide the abnormal until it is too late. However to persuade a government devoted to the overstretched impecunious NHS, and specialist Royal Colleges who thought they covered the subject was another matter.

Several institutions sprang up to teach and examine on the subject; from exercise and diabetes, coronary rehabilitation, children in sport, to stress fractures, joint injections and rehabilitation. Then in 1996, apocryphally stirred on by the Duke of Edinburgh, Government and the Royal Colleges acceded to a Faculty under the RCS Edinburgh. The disparate groups gathered under this umbrella and the Faculty was approved in 2005. Unfortunately most of the work for its members and fellows is in the private sector even though their wide skills would relieve many overstretched clinics not designed to handle these particular problems.

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