

A Dream Come True

(Part 2)

By: Peirre Meslet



THE OSTEOPATHIC CENTRE'S PIERRE MESLET, REGISTERED OSTEOPATH AND SPORTS MASSAGE THERAPIST, IS A PROUD MEMBER OF THE LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC GAMES' MEDICAL TEAM. BELOW ARE HIS FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE DAZZLING INTERNATIONAL SPORTING EVENT:

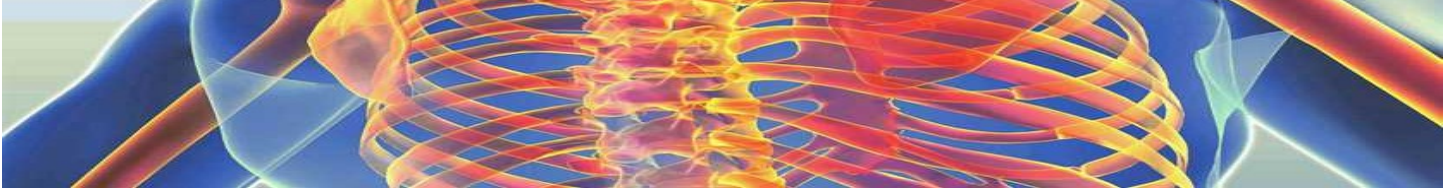
Every day I took the tube from central London to Stratford City, where the Olympic Park and the Athletes' Village are located. Before the Games, I would often hear my patients voice their concerns about how the London transport system would struggle to cope at peak times. However, throughout my 10-day shift, I did not experience a single issue with the London buses and tubes. It was actually a real pleasure to jump on the Jubilee train alongside so many sports fans, tourists, commuters and other volunteers. The excitement and pure joy of experiencing the "Olympics Games" action in the sunny streets of London were easily noticeable in everyone's faces.

On the day of the opening ceremony, the Athletes' Village was at full capacity and competitions were starting for many athletes. They had been training for over four years and most of them have dedicated their lives to becoming Olympians one day.

The majority of the treatments I provided at the polyclinic were centred around recovery, either post training or post competition. As a manual therapist I did not witness any severe injuries such as fractures or open wounds. I therefore mainly provided athletes with articulations, stretches and deep tissue sports massage techniques.

In addition to my manual therapist role, I was called up a few times by sports medicine doctors to assist with the translation of serious patient cases, being the only French speaker on site. I specifically remember the case of a taekwondo athlete who had just been diagnosed with an abnormal bony growth in her ankle. I have to admit that I was not prepared to deliver the awful news to her that, her dream of competing in the Olympic Games was over. The injury was serious and she would require surgery in order to compete in the future.

"This is the flag of my country, thank you"



A final anecdote about the Olympic Games is around "pins - badges". After a couple of days in the village I started to notice that some athletes and staff were wearing colourful "pins" attached to their accreditation card, around their neck. I wondered where they were from and what they meant. One day, after finishing treating a sprinter from Uruguay, he handed me a small plastic bag containing a pin from his country and said: "this is the flag of my country, thank you". I then understood that not only do athletes exchange pins at the beginning of a game or a fight, but they also use the pins to thank people who have helped them in their journey of becoming Olympians.

Thank you to all my friends and family who encouraged me in this project of achieving a kid's dream, and a special thank you to my amazing wife for her help and support

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