

Dr. Doug Sharp with USA 2 Bobsled Team Wins Olympic Bronze

An athlete who made it despite the odds



Doug Sharp, D.C. at the Olympic Training Center in Lake Placid, New York.

Chiropractor Doug Sharp of Louisville, Kentucky, the push athlete for the second U.S. Bobsled Team at the Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City is ecstatic — as he should be. A first time Olympian, he and his teammates won the bronze medal at the Olympic games in Salt Lake City.

The Chiropractic Choice tracked down Dr. Sharp in Salt Lake City just prior to the Olympic games where he was having the time of his life living the Olympic dream that all athletes have at one time or another. Sharp said it was not only an honor and a privilege to be among the chosen few for the 4-man sled but the Olympic trials was one of the most stressful things he's ever had to do. "After those two days of racing, they pulled us into a meeting and announced who was on the Olympic team. I was on cloud nine for about a week straight when they announced my name."

"Up to that point in my life, chiropractic school was the most difficult, yet greatest accomplishment," Sharp said. "After four years of that you have very much earned the right to walk

across the stage for your diploma. At one time I wondered how this would compare to graduation from Palmer — so far the feeling has just blown me away."

A member of the U.S. Army's World Class Athletes program, Dr. Sharp is also an assistant track and field coach at the University of Louisville where he coaches pole vault. A pole vaulter himself in college, Sharp competed in the event while at Purdue University and missed qualifying for the 1996 Olympic Track and Field Trials by just four inches.

But it's his thrill of bobsledding that brought him to Salt Lake City in 2002 and his love of sports that actually got him interested in pursuing a career in chiropractic at a young age. "I've been a chiropractic patient ever since seventh grade when I got my first adjustment. I had been badly injured playing football," explained Dr. Sharp, "and I literally had to crawl off the field. My mother took me to a medical doctor and he basically said, 'You'll never play football again.' To which my mother responded, 'You're telling a seventh grader who thinks he's gonna play with the Detroit Lions that he's never going to play football again?' Mom took me out of there immediately and over to the local chiropractor. And with one adjustment I was back on the field playing football. I decided at that point that I was going to become a chiropractor."

Doug was always very active in sports. While growing up in Michigan he played hockey, football, ran track and pole-vaulted. And chiropractic care was always there for him to help ease the stress and strain that sports can have on a young body. Doug's mother, Sherry Sharp, explained how their family has always believed in natural healing and helping the body to heal itself.

How did Sharp's bob sledding career get started? Once again, it was a sports injury that prompted his interest in the fast and exciting event that can exert as much as five G-forces on its athletes! "I was the Central Collegiate Champion in pole vault and was ranked ninth in the U.S. when I broke my foot at a track meet one week before national championships," explains Sharp. "Dave Juehring (who serves as a liaison between the athletes in the United States and the Olympic team) was helping to rehabilitate my broken foot. He kept telling me all through chiropractic school that I was the perfect size, perfect speed for bobsledding and just had to give it a try. But it wasn't until after graduation from Palmer, when I had plans to work for awhile and pay off my



Sharp (he is second push athlete) with the team ready to roll.

student debt, when the 1998 games came on and I saw the bobsled, that I decided I couldn't wait for this window of speed and strength. So I called Juehring and he got me a tryout with the team."

From that point on, Sharp spent an entire summer trying out for the team — doing what hundreds of others have attempted every summer for four years prior to the Olympics — mastering "dry land" in order to advance. Competitors must be all-around athletes — very strong, very powerful with plenty of speed.

"Once you make it through all those hurdles, then you advance to the training camp where they show you how to ride a bobsled," explained Sharp. "Out of 70 guys trying out that summer, they took only 12 for training camp. Only ten make it from training camp to the Olympics."

The final ten come from all over the United States and all walks of life. "There is a mix of professions—teachers, coaches, financial consultants, computer tech guys, amongst my Olympic teammates," says Sharp. "And I'm the doctor who takes care of our bobsled team. I also provide care for the chiropractor who works with the majority of the Canadian team...over the last four years, I've taken care of athletes from all over the world. It's been a wonderful experience."

Although Sharp provides care for others on his team as well as athletes from various countries including France and Latvia, he himself never goes without chiropractic care. "While I'm on the road one of my best friends will do some of the traveling and help me out with the resulting stress the sport has on the body," explains Sharp, "and back home I go to a couple of doctors for adjustments."

WELCOME *continued from page 1*

practitioners Association since its founding in 1926 by Dr. B.J. Palmer, who is acknowledged to be the principal developer of chiropractic as a legitimate profession.

Whether you belong to any other organization or not, you owe it to yourself to be an active member of ICA. Ours is not only the oldest international chiropractic organization in the world, but it is also the most democratic. Both our president and vice-president are elected by a direct vote of the general membership. Our assembly representatives from each state also are elected by their respective members and our regional directors are elected by members in their respective regions. Once you become a member of ICA, you are eligible to run for office yourself and help shape and promote the programs and policies that serve to shape the future of chiropractic.

The ICA has never tried nor is it trying to replace any other organization. We support everyone who is working to enhance the professionalism, the effectiveness, the public acceptance, and the prosperity of chiropractic, and encourage your participation in local, regional and national organizations that further the cause of our profession. Nevertheless, you can still work with

those of us in ICA who have been diligently and loyally working for you for the past 76 years. The bigger we are, the stronger is our voice — **your** voice. Notice that ICA is a **chiropractors** association, not a **chiropractic** association. We always put **you**, the doctor of chiropractic, first. Your interests and needs are our primary concern.

Throughout the history of chiropractic, the leadership of ICA has been the pivotal force behind many of the major achievements of our great profession. From the first state action to legalize chiropractic to the last, ICA led the way — pushing, marching, writing letters, enduring imprisonment, lobbying, and doing whatever it took to win our profession the legitimacy it required to exist and to be competitive. At every step in the long battle to win third-party payment by insurance companies and government agencies, ICA was the leader. We were the first national organization to support the Wilk suit and helped to win the historic court decision that slowed down the AMA propaganda mill that served to mar our reputation over the years. Even today, like our allied troops in the Middle East, we continue to be alert and respond to every attack by our enemies. We have won many battles, but we know the war will never be over as long as chiropractic continues to be a threat to the status quo of

organized medicine.

On the center pages of this issue you'll find a description of ICA, along with a list of our officers and an introduction to the dedicated staff working at our headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. When you call them you will find they are professionals and eager to help you in any way they can.

Give us a try. Call. Write. Come to our meetings. Let us know of anything that causes you concern. Like marbles in a jar, we're all in this together. What affects one of us affects all of us. That's why we should — that's why we *must* stand together on crucial issues that determine our future as chiropractors. No matter what else we believe, it behooves all of us to work to preserve the integrity of chiropractic as one worldwide separate and distinct profession.

Whether you are a member or not, I invite you to be a part of *THE CHIROPRACTIC CHOICE*. Write us, telling us what you think. Though we cannot guarantee we will publish all your letters, and in their entirety, we will certainly publish as many as space permits.

We recognize and appreciate that chiropractic is a vital, dynamic, ever-improving art and science. We're always ready and eager to learn new things that will serve to promote the acceptance and expansion of the chiropractic profession and help assure that patients

will always have the *chiropractic choice* available to them.

Although we have already made significant inroads in dozens of countries, hundreds of other communities continue to needlessly suffer in the absence of the healing hands of chiropractic. The only way to achieve that goal is to first join hands with one another and stand as one against all who would resist our common humanitarian mission.

The world needs chiropractic; as a step toward fulfilling that mission, I have asked Dr. Sid Williams to serve as chairman of the ICA International Affairs Committee, and I am pleased to report that he has accepted. Dr. Williams is one of chiropractic's strongest advocates in the international arena, recognized by the World Health Organization and other influential international agencies.

To fulfill that greater humanitarian mission of chiropractic, we need your help. I strongly urge you to join with us as a member of ICA and stand with us to promote the issues and defend the principles that make it possible for you, as well as all future chiropractors, to be successful in your practice. You'll find an application on page 14. Fill it out and send it in today. Help give us the unity, the strength, and the encouragement we need to do the best possible job for you and for the rest of the world.