

DR. PHIL GOES TO BEIJING

My experience at the Summer Olympics as a sports chiropractor

I had applied to be a volunteer sports chiropractor and thought I was lucky to be picked for the task. However, upon arrival in Beijing I had no idea how to get to the Olympians Reunion Center, where I was to report for duty.

I eventually made it to my hotel after explaining to the cab driver in Konglinese (A combination of Korean, English and almost non-existent Chinese).

The organization that invited me is the WOA (World Olympians Association) which is an organization made up of retired Olympic athletes.

At the opening reception (not the opening ceremony in the stadium mind you) I had expectations of meeting legendary athletes such as Michael Jordan, Florence Griffith-Joyner, Carl Lewis, etc.

However, the closest I got was to meet Carol Lewis (Carl's sister) who was one of the U.S.'s best long jumpers in the early 1980s. She made the first of her three Olympic teams as a high school student in 1980.

I also got to meet legendary American high jumper Dick Fosbury. After the reception I had unknowingly left my brand new summer sports jacket in the cab along with my passport in the inside pocket! With all the horror stories of Chinese pickpockets and cab drivers taking you for a ride, I pretty much kissed it goodbye. However, to my complete surprise, the cab driver brought my jacket and passport back to the hotel and refused to even accept the tip which I forced



him to take! This gave me an entirely new pleasant perspective on China and it's people.

The next day I expected to get my hands on some athletes to put my skills to the test, and learn from the other sports doctors, but the WOA was very unorganized, so we had to initially treat athletes outside in the heat and humidity on an ancient Chinese Pagoda, which we were eventually chased off of by the Chinese due to that spot being some sacred entertainment stage for some "Prince Jun" or someone. I met one of the Mexican swim coaches there and got to practice my Espanol.

After breaking down doors, we finally were given space in one of the Palace Hotel rooms where they had air conditioning (whew!). Again, I didn't get to treat the likes of Michael Phelps, or any of the Korean athletes, but I did get to help a lot of grateful Olympians.

As far as getting into any venues, I had assumed our so-called hosts would be able to hook us up with some tickets and a tour of the Olympic Village. Turned out that by the time I figured out how to order tickets, everything worth seeing was pretty much sold out, and my pass to the village came out too late. In fact, the closest I came to the "Bird's Nest" National Stadium was the well guarded main gate.

Although I didn't get to see any of the Games, I got to see the opening ceremony live and could watch numerous events at once courtesy of Novotel Hotel's multi-screen setup.

After my week long shift was over, my wife got to join me for a couple of days and we did see the Great Wall and The Forbidden City.

Although I didn't get to treat any celebrity athletes, see any venues, and did not get to see a lot of the historic sites, overall I guess my sports chiropractic mission was an overall success. The athletes I did see were grateful. The food was unique, the people humble, and the weather had cooled down with the rain and we even got a day or two of blue skies which was beautiful at the Great Wall.

If you ever go to Beijing, I would recommend you do a tour package if you're not one to expect the unexpected!

Yours in healing hands,

Dr. Phillip Yoo,

International Chiropractic Sports Physician



Here I am working on a Chilean Olympic decathlete who had shoulder pain. It took over an hour to treat him and to my amazement, he felt 70% improvement in his shoulder after only one treatment.



Picture of me and Carol Lewis — Olympic track and field athlete, bobsledder, television sports commentator, and younger sister of track legend Carl Lewis.



Picture with WOA president, legendary American high jumper Dick Fosbury (second from right). Developer of the "Fosbury flop" high jump technique and gold medal winner at the 1968 Mexico City Games.



Watching the events on multiple televisions at the Novotel Hotel with the other sports chiropractors.

