

Warm up

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step

P McCrory

In this issue we are initiating a new section that will hopefully be of interest to all readers. It is an educational series designed to cover the core curriculum of sports medicine, and will include both basic and clinical science. Clearly this will be a long term project for the journal and I suspect that we will

further refine the “style” of the articles as the series evolves. In the past, various short educational series have been published; however, I envisage that this new series will be far more comprehensive. The articles will be accessible on the journal website and future planned articles will be posted.

Readers will also be aware that our evidence based Sports Medicine Update series has been instigated. In addition to the print version, this archive of previously published topics will be on the website for future reference. I hope that individuals, clinics, and institutions will use these as either an ongoing self-directed education programme or as the basis for discussion in a “Journal Club” format.

When these two programmes are up and running we plan to approach the major sports medicine organisations around the world to allow these sections to be certified for educational purposes under the “maintenance of professional standards” or “continuing education” programmes.

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Men are from Mars... ..

P McCrory

There seems to be a vogue at the present time for functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) studies. As part of the problem, I feel qualified to comment on some interesting recent research.

Once you start to read the literature in this area, you realise that there are some pretty odd studies published out there in the ether. For example, an enterprising team from New Jersey have looked at fMRI changes in the brains of people

who have fallen in love. Early in relationships, planning and pursuit areas of the brain are activated whereas, in more ‘mature’ relationships, the ‘emotional’ areas of the brain—the insular cortex and anterior cingulate cortex—are lit up.

No prizes for guessing that there is a sex difference. Women in love show more brain emotional area activity early in a relationship. They also activate their memory areas at the same time,

suggesting perhaps that they pay more attention to past experience in this process. Men, by contrast, activate their visual areas early on and in the very diplomatic words of the study’s lead author they activate the “regions associated with penile turgidity”. Another way of describing the different gender responses would be ‘love’ versus ‘lust’. Isn’t science wonderful?

Perhaps the strangest fact of all to come from this line of research is that the dopamine rich areas of the brain such as the caudate nucleus and ventral tegmentum, which are activated by this early phase of romantic love, are also equally activated by eating chocolate. So if your romantic life is not happening at present, just slip down to the local supermarket and get a chocolate treat. For some this may be as good as it gets!

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Many of you will be aware that UK Sport and Sport England have withdrawn funding from the National Sports Medicine Institute of the UK (NSMI), and as a result has been forced to close. You received a brochure and registration form for the 2004 BASEM Congress in the April edition of *BJSM*. As NSMI is no longer in a position to provide administrative support, it is essential that you do not use this registration form for the congress. BASEM members will already have received a revised registration form with the BASEM newsletter, and this can be downloaded from the BASEM website (www.basem.co.uk).

If you have already returned your registration form to NSMI, please contact the BASEM office (email: basemoffice@compuserve.com) immediately. We apologise for any inconvenience this has caused.