from the very efficient and comprehensive medical coverage of sport in East Germany to Belgium whose representative accepted that it was a hobby in his country. The UK was not represented, and your correspondent seemed to be the only UK participant present, despite the current interest in this country in training doctors in sports medicine, and in the setting up a National Sports Medicine Institute.

One of the delegates suggested that training in sports medicine should take four years in order to give it credibility, while others suggested a year. The usual and unoriginal comment that it should be included in the training of medical students was duly made but roused no response at all. Could it be that more people are realizing that the curriculum is already overcrowded?

To the uninitiated it could seem that training in sports medicine can be no more specialized than training in general practice. Sports medicine makes demands on many aspects of specialized medicine with perhaps orthopaedic surgery and soft tissue medicine occupying pride of place. But as the programme of the Congress showed, cardiology, behavioural medicine, nutrition, etc. all have aspects which are of particular relevance to the sportsperson.

Do the experts really consider that in four years a medical graduate can be all these things, or are they saying that all this time is needed to train someone in the ‘general practitioner’ mode of sports medicine. Surely there is no evidence that those with an interest in sports medicine need such a long time to be educated?

One aspect not touched on in this discussion on hobby or profession was the market forces in this area. How many doctors can make the kind of living they expect from being a sports medicine GP full-time, or indeed an orthopaedic surgeon, or physician, whose sole duties are concerned with sports injuries especially with the kind of NHS cuts currently taking place?

It seems that sports medicine may well have to be a hobby for medical professionals – a hobby that certainly should have material rewards, but a hobby in the sense that the surgeon, physician, etc. has a special interest in that he/she may well have had personal experience and therefore has an understanding of and an interest in sport.

Observateur Médecine Sportive

News

Congratulations to our member since 1975, Dr A.L. Whiteson, on being awarded an OBE in the Birthday Honours, 1990.

The organizers of the World Student Games in Sheffield, July 14–25, 1991, invite the services of sports medicine doctors to share duties at the Games.

Contact: Mr. Jenkinson-Graham, World Student Games, 4 Claremont Place, Sheffield S10 2TB, UK.

BASM member, George Borden, remembered from our Loughborough course day has established a regular teaching connection with the USSR sports medicine authorities. He has completed ten Russian trips since 1981 and is developing programmes in USSR and other east European states. Contact him at Virginia Commonwealth University, VCU Box 2003, Richmond, VA 23284-2003, USA.

The Sports Council’s Sports Scholarship Scheme, now in its tenth year, continues to fund PhD research in line with its policy of encouraging the development of expertise in sports research and improving the quality of research information available to athletes and coaches. The latest grants are to Southampton University, for study of the effect of the Education Reform Act on PE teaching and to the School of Sport and Exercise Studies at Birmingham University to study the effects of viral illness on sports performance.

Newspip 1

Our member, Dr. Simon Petrides, of Milton Keynes, reports the following sad tale.

I was attending the ultra-distance world championship in Milton Keynes, where runners aim for the greatest distance covered in 24 hours. My attention was drawn to a Hungarian runner whose shorts had, unknown to himself, gradually metamorphosed from an Eastern bloc grey to a lurid red colour. I invited him to step out while I investigated.

He was wearing very loose fitting nylon running shorts with an even looser fitting inner which had produced abrasions around his foreskin. These were bleeding profusely but were abated by a few smears of Vaseline. While I was considering further preventive measure, another runner dropped out of the race and, moved by compassion, offered my patient his own more supportive cotton underwear. This achieved the required result – the Magyar went on to complete over 130 miles (208km.).

I am sorry I couldn’t take photos, but hope this brief account will draw attention to this distressing, but remarkably painless condition.”

Newspip 2

Forget joggers! The Independent informs us that after the deaths of no less than seven Dutch cyclists of ‘heart failure’ in two years, new dope tests are to be imposed, especially in connection with new stimulants.