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# Editorial

## History of Sports and Sports Medicine

Sports as commonly understood is a competitive performance activity that can bring honour and global reputation not only to the individual participants, but also to the country they represent. However, scientific intervention in sporting events, has become an inevitable tool not only to safeguard and promote genuine capabilities of sportsmen in the field, but also to deal with increasingly complex incidents of what may be regarded as highly innovative performance enhancing ruses. This edition of *Vidurava* shows how science and technology have been pushed back to the wall to devise innovative measures to help sportsmen to demonstrate their genuine and inherent talents in their respective fields of sport. On the other hand interventions through science and technology have also substantially increased to detect and to rectify physical and other abnormalities; to devise safety measures for sportsmen; to evolve measures to detect ruses; and to formulate counter measures for the prevention of ruses.

Historically, it has been claimed that the true spirit and recognition of sports at the international level began with the introduction of the Olympic Games in Greece in 776 BC by Hercules, the son of Zeus. Ancient Olympics are known to have concentrated on two major events, the Equestrian and the Pentathlon, followed later by events such as jumping, running, wrestling, javelin and discus throw. These traditional events may be conceived to reflect, what may appear to be activities that required extremes of endurance, endeavours and strenuous physical exertion, reflecting the survival and existential needs of pre-historic *Homo sapiens*. Although there is no physical or literary evidence to establish this link, it could be conceptualized that the spear used as a weapon by the pre-historic man could be the precursor of the javelin throw. Likewise the other ancient events such as jumping, running, wrestling, and discus throw may have evolved

around the survival and existential efforts of the hunter gatherers of pre-historic times.

Sports medicine as such was known to have been initially co-ordinated in ancient regions of Greece and Rome where many young athletes initially had not received supervised training. Subsequently striving to improve training and provide better overall supervision of young athletes, physical education had been designed to monitor the ‘gladiators’ of the second century AD. Despite these early efforts, it had not been many years later that sports medicine itself had actually been conceived.

During the Olympics held in 1928 in St. Moritz, a small committee had been formed with the task of organizing the International Congress of Sports Medicine, in realization of the need to have trained medical personnel to help prevent the occurrence of injuries. Consequently, commencing with the Summer Olympics held in Mexico City in 1968, Dr. J C Kennedy had been commissioned to organize a team of doctors that accompanied the Canadian athletes to ensure that they would be cared for. Dr Kennedy thus earned the distinction of being appointed to be the Chief Medical Officer for the first medical team to be officially associated with the Olympics in the 1972 Summer Olympics held in Munich, Germany. Sports medicine has since come a long way, with the involvement of a string of new disciplines, which include Physics, Technology, and Biomechanics. Traditionally sports meant physical exertion that is necessary to enhance the capability of sportsmen. Subsequently the nutrition factor came into existence. In the current day context, a third factor has entered the field, and that is, management of emotion, for which the discipline of psychology has made its appearance. Significantly, this latter component is believed to be as high as 20 % of sports training.

M. Asoka T. De Silva