

Champions' league of professional educational opportunities: Helsinki June 2017

Karim M Khan

I love Google images. Have you tried it? Put in 'Helsinki' and you see a wonderful mix of old and new; historical grandeur and contemporary elegance. I have to confess to having a soft spot for Finland and the Finns. My love affair began in 1995 with Professor Pekka Kannus, Sports physician, PhD, with prolific research publications including the classic bone mineral density studies in female adolescent tennis players. Up to 20% side-to-side differences in the forearms of those girls started playing before puberty;¹ half to a quarter the difference if they began playing at or after puberty. Not dependent on hours per week of tennis, the window of opportunity is quality research, innovative study design and impactful.

If Finland were a character in a movie, she/he would not be a scene stealer like Meryl Streep, Halle Berry, Robin Williams or Denzel Washington. Finland would be played by Anna Kendrick or William H Macy. It is likely you have not heard of them. Many folks could not put a pin on the map for Helsinki either. But Kendrick and Macy are massively successful quality performers. Apparently, they are wonderfully friendly people.

Last Finland's story illustrates two national characteristics. One day two friends, Jukka and Pekka, meet after a long time apart and they go to a sauna in the woods. They drink vodka in silence for a couple of hours. Then Jukka asks: "So Pekka, how have you been doing?" Pekka says nothing, and they continue drinking for another couple of hours. Eventually Jukka asks, "How's the family?" At that point, Pekka asks, "Did we come here to talk, or did we come here to drink?"

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Helsinki 9 and 10 June 2017. Third 'Mission Possible' international conference—groin and knee

After two successful international conferences (English language), this year's keynotes have big shoes to fill. Adam Weir and Hannu Paajanen dominate the literature on management of groin pain. Finland's own Teppo Jarvinen's FIDELITY video features in every one of my talks on knee pain and knee injuries. Great to have him speaking about his landmark paper in *New England of Medicine*.² The one that proves physiotherapy is the first-line treatment for meniscal injuries. Fair to say it sent some orthopaedic surgeons into a tizz. Also from Finland—Kati Pasanen shows that major knee injuries can be prevented. And complementing their data, *BJSM*'s Deputy Editor and return to play authority Clare Arden, from Linköping, Sweden, shares extensive experience (as a physiotherapist, PhD and patient). I know peripatetic Vancouver-based thoracic spine queen LJ Lee very well and look forward to seeing her in action on the international stage. Mo Gimpel from Premier League Southampton has squeezed out a weekend in Helsinki as well. The practical workshops are a feature of this Finnish meeting. Rave reviews last 2 years and a similar commitment this year.

In this issue—understated, all quality, practical—like Finland

Thanks to Peter Halen, Chairman of the Finnish Sports Physiotherapists Association (FSPA) for building this issue of *BJSM*. See the consensus statement on care of young athletes—focus on cardiovascular issues (see page 74). This is a hot topic, and the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM) has a complementary piece coming next month. Check that online too! The musculoskeletal side of sports physiotherapy is covered from hip to toe in this issue. Lateral hip pain is a big issue, and management is reviewed (see page 97) and discussed (see page 72). Three papers on the foot and ankle consider

orthoses, prevention and treatment of sprains and chronic instability (see pages 86, 105 and 113). A paper that I was particularly taken by during the review process—the fact that exercise treatment appears as effective in groups as it does individually (see page 126); something for clinicians to consider.

Who can speak about nutrition independently of industry influence?

This issue also highlights *BJSM*'s commitment to public health. We publish a narrative review arguing for deeper consideration of low-carbohydrate and high fat nutrition (see page 133). This will earn us flak. Professor Tim Noakes has shaken up the nutrition establishment with a call to revisit many sacred cows in the discipline. There is substantial industry influence in nutrition guideline development—that is clearly flagged by nutrition associations on their websites. A review such as this, written by an A1-rated scientist with a background in energy metabolism, independent of industry relationships, warrants careful consideration. The good thing about the advice is you can test it yourself. There are also fascinating side stories from patients featured on Professor Noakes' Twitter account @ProfTimNoakes. And as with many twitter accounts, you can find many citations if you want to follow the threads yourself, or if you want to follow the money.

Enjoy this Finnish-flavoured issue of *BJSM*. I hope to see you in Helsinki in June.

Competing interests None declared.

Provenance and peer review Commissioned; internally peer reviewed.



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To cite Khan KM. *Br J Sports Med* 2017;**51**:71.

Accepted 1 December 2016

Br J Sports Med 2017;**51**:71.

doi:10.1136/bjsports-2016-097339

Reference

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- 2 Sihvonen R, Paavola M, Malmivaara A, et al. Arthroscopic Partial Meniscectomy versus Sham Surgery for a Degenerative Meniscal Tear. *N Engl J Med* 2013;369:2515–24.

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Br J Sports Med: first published as 10.1136/bjsports-2016-097339 on 4 January 2017. Downloaded from <http://bjsm.bmj.com/> on May 14, 2025 at Department GEZ-LTA