

## The 2010 Winter Olympic Games are inspirational

**B**y the time this issue of the *BCMJ* crosses your desk, the BCMA's Olympic Torch Relay Team will have run its 1 kilometre trek around Olympic Park in Whistler and be forever ensconced in Olympic history. I'm sure we had a great time! However, as of this writing, that big event still looms ahead—as do the XXI Winter Olympic Games.

There are controversies, to be sure—the plight of the women's ski jumping team, the shuffling under the rug of Vancouver's homeless people, the tremendous cost of hosting the Olympic Games at the expense of other programs, the inconvenience for those of us along any Olympic route or within range of any Olympic venue—but there are also rewards.

The announcement that Vancouver had been selected to host the XXI Winter Games came in July 2003, and the momentum has been building ever since. It began with Premier Campbell announcing that British Columbia would be the “healthiest jurisdiction to ever host an Olympic Games.” I'm not sure how you measure something like that, but more than anything it's a call to action to inspire people to be active, be healthy, and eat right. A number of government programs have been created to achieve this lofty goal: IMPACT BC, 2010 Legacies Now, and ActNow BC. The BCMA's Athletic and Recreation Committee has been working with ActNow BC providing pedometers to school children, to physicians and their sedentary patients, and to community centres. In fact, if you're looking for pedometers to give to your patients, please contact the BCMA and ask for the Council on Health Promotion.

One of the most powerful messages the Olympic and Paralympic Games gets out is the concept that if you try hard enough you can succeed. That's a great message to inspire our young people today to pursue their dreams. Many athletes are interviewed in anticipation of the Games and most certainly during the Games, and the message is always the same: they worked hard, they overcame obstacles, they were dedicated, they persevered, and here they are competing in the Olympic Games. Their dream has come true.

As the Olympic Games creep closer, the camaraderie increases. The athletes are arriving to practise their sport and check out the Olympic venues, Olympic merchandise is flying off the store shelves, and there are daily reports of the Olympic torch's trek

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across the nation. During the Games the buzz will be palpable in Vancouver and Whistler. For this little corner of the world, where for 17 days during the Olympic Games and 10 days during the Paralympic Games we will collectively feel euphoria at Canadian wins and anguish at our losses, the hustle and bustle of a myriad of cultures and ethnicities assembled for one reason only will unite us, and the excitement of watching people strive to do their absolute best will be inspiring.

As for the BCMA's Olympic Torch Relay Team, the BCMA Pacemakers, we couldn't be more pleased. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for each of us. It's an honor to be included among Canada's 12 000 torch bearers carrying high the symbol of harmony and goodwill, peace and friendship, and hope and understanding. You can see photos and read the stories of the BCMA's Olympic Torch Relay Team at [www.bcma.org](http://www.bcma.org). Live Olympic!

—**Brian Brodie, MD**  
BCMA President

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