



AOASM

AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ACADEMY OF SPORTS MEDICINE

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RUSSELL M. WRIGHT MEMORIAL

The story of Rusty Wright is that of many of us – an accidental DO. Born in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, Dr. Wright was educated in a one-room schoolhouse until the age of 14. Because there was no high school close to his family’s farm, Dr. Wright was accepted to Slippery Rock Normal School, later Slippery Rock University. Graduating at 18 with a degree in education, he was too young to be hired as a teacher. As a college athlete, playing both baseball and football, Dr. Wright suffered a knee injury successfully treated by a DO. While waiting to be able to secure a teaching position, he applied and was accepted at the Still College of Osteopathy and Surgery in Des Moines, Iowa. And a legendary sports medicine physician was born.

Dr. Wright ‘s practice over time became a “who’s who” of sports. He and his hospital team treated all four Detroit profession teams: Tigers, Pistons, Lions and Red Wings. He treated athletes and performers who traveled through the Detroit area. Dr. Wright became interested in injury prevention, and developed routines of strength and conditioning exercise for the athletes he treated. Dr. Wright became involved in the International Weight Lifting Federation, and began traveling the world with weight lifters. He served at five Olympic events from 1964 to 1984. When asked why Osteopathic Physicians became so involved in Sports Medicine, he would reply that DOs know and respect human anatomy and physiology.

Dr. Wright was a founding member of AOASM, and left a legacy of courage, commitment, inquisitiveness, caring, honor, and mentorship. The Rusty M. Wright Memorial Lecture is held annually to remind us of our osteopathic beginnings and challenge us to live up to the standards set by our Sports Medicine pioneers.