Today, I’ve the great pleasure to meet with Professor Daniel Fritschy former president of ESSKA from 2006 to 2008. Professor Fritschy has been the Head of the Swiss Olympic Medical Centre in Geneva Switzerland during the last ten years. He has been one of the pioneer Orthopaedic sports medicine doctor in this country, and a committed on-field sports doctor who worked in professional alpine skiing, soccer, ice hockey and many other different sports disciplines and events.

INTERVIEWING PROFESSOR DANIEL FRITSCHY
by DR JACQUES MENETREY

Q: Professor Fritschy by the time you started your career, sports medicine was not even born in Switzerland. How have you come to be interested in sports medicine in this context?

R: When I was 13-14 years old, active in various sports, I was sometimes asked to take care of some injuries which affected my teammates. Progressively, my interest in sports medicine woke up.

During my period of high school in Bienne, I had the opportunity to meet Prof. Schönholzer, Head of the Sports Medicine office of the Federal School of Sports in Macolin. I asked him if he would have a research subject for me. His answer was: ‘My dear, it is not so simple...’ Later, during my residency in orthopaedics at the HUG, I realised that developing sports medicine was not really simple.

Q: Professor Fritschy, you have taught us that sports medicine has highly participated to progresses and improvements we noticed over these two decades in orthopaedic surgery and in general medicine. Could you share with us a little bit of your thoughts about the influence of sports medicine in medicine?

R: Orthopaedic sports medicine has allowed a fantastic development in various fields which are now recognised in the world of classical medicine:
- Ligament injuries, especially around the knee but also in shoulder and ankle traumatology;
- Muscle and tendon lesions. Overuse injuries are better recognized and treated;
- Prevention programs have been developed and are working well;
- Multicentric prospective studies are conducted and ESSKA’s influence is prevailing in multiple fields.

Q: Professor Fritschy, you know very well the world of sports medicine in Europe and worldwide. What is your opinion upon the place and role of ESSKA in this vast field?

R: When ESKA was launched in 1984, I had the privilege to participate to its first congress in Berlin. This was for me the discovery of the sports medicine world which covered all my interests. Becoming a member of the Swiss group OAK, I was involved in various studies dealing with knee problems.

When ESKA changed its name for ESSKA, with more sports medicine, the society became immediately the European leader with strong relations with AOSSM. In 1897, I had the privilege to visit 17 American sports medicine centres with the Travelling Fellowship (with Karl Peter Benedetto, Karin Büttner-Janzen and Einar Eriksson as Godfather) developed by AOSSM and ESSKA. This trip was another highlight of my career. A stay with Dale Daniel in San Diego was another great experience and opportunity to improve my knowledge in sports medicine.

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