

CANADA- MALAYSIA SPORTING LINKS

In recent years, it seems as if sports records are shattered almost routinely. And Canadians are participating actively — Ben Johnson, swimmer Alex Baumann, high jumper Milt Ottey, figure skater Brian Orser, and skier Steve Podborski are but a few examples. What is the secret of their success?

University professor Saul Ross and coaching consultant Michel Gagne — both recent visitors to Malaysia — believe that the strengthening of national sports programs and the development of coaching education to include the wider use of sports science makes the difference in national sporting performance.

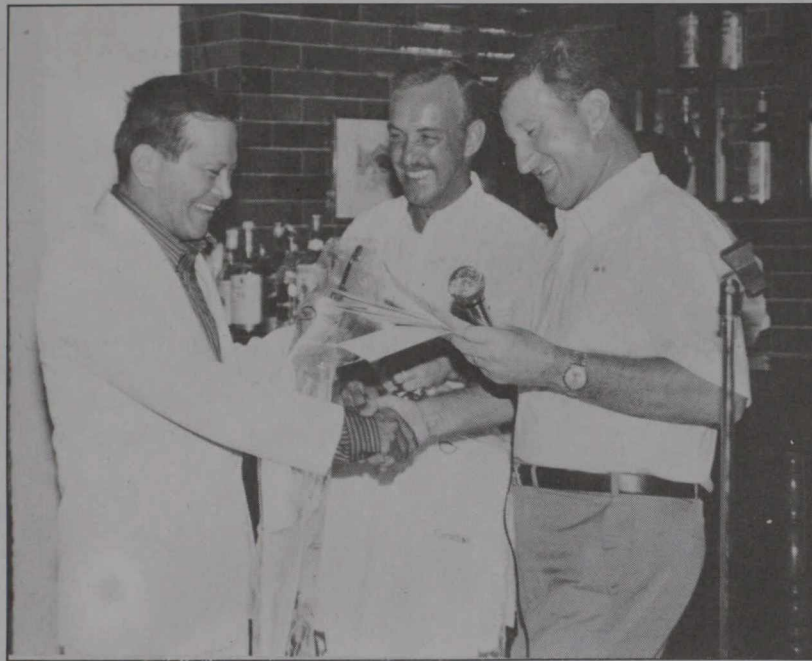
Dr Ross, who was in Malaysia to meet with the Minister of Youth and Sports, Datuk Seri Haji Mohd Najib, and sports officials, suggested that greater attention be given not only to the technical end of physical education, but to the psychological aspects as well. Schools provide an environment in which children will not just learn, but also develop. In order to establish personal development as an integral part of the school curriculum, Dr Ross recommends that schools target quality and daily physical education, especially in primary schools, with an emphasis on both "quality" and "daily".

Michel Gagne, a sports psychologist and consultant with the Coaching Association of Canada, spent three months in Malaysia at the invitation of the National Sports Council. During his stay he met with local coaching organizations to advise on effective coaching methods. In his experience, increased attention to sports science, and greater emphasis on the education of coaches produce positive results in sports competition.

Mr Gagne's work has shown that sports planning and coach training can achieve results in a number of specific ways:

- Programming — the training that athletes undergo can be varied from session to session, and period to period to ensure that they "peak" at the right moment.

Canada-Philippines Cup



Vice-President Salvador P. Laurel of the Philippines was among the recipients of Canadian Airlines golf shirts distributed by Canadian Ambassador R.H. Davidson (right) during ceremonies ending the Canada-Philippines Cup golf tournament. Looking on is Fred White of the Canadian Business Group (CBS) who assisted the Ambassador during the award ceremony.

The tournament, held on 1 and 2 April, was organized by the Canadian Embassy with the CBG and the Second Asian Development Bank Golf Team.

- Monitoring — gauging the effectiveness of training can be accomplished by regular laboratory tests to determine physical condition.

- Strategy — establishing goals and planning strategies to achieve them develops a sense of purpose for individual training sessions.

- Mental Training — helping athletes deal with the stress which accompanies the gruelling pressures of training and competition is an important factor in enhancing performance.

Canadians have become more conscious of sports and fitness in recent years, in part because of Canada's role as host of a number of international sporting events, including the Summer Olympics (1976), the Commonwealth Games (1978), the World University Games (1983), and the Winter Olympics (1988). Victoria, British Columbia,

is making a bid for the 1984 Commonwealth Games.

To develop this growing interest in sports, the Canadian Government has funded the establishment of a network of specialist sports centres to tap the expertise of specialists such as Michel Gagne. The visits by Dr Ross and Mr Gagne demonstrate that this Canadian sports expertise is valued in Malaysia and offers unique possibilities for bilateral cooperation.