

FIT TO MANAGE PROGRAMME

After attending a routine check up at Wellness International, Dave Bassett's ECG revealed a few abnormalities with his heart. Wellness and Dave each give their views on the value of the Fit to Manage Programme and how prevention is better than cure.



HOW LONG HAS DAVE BEEN COMING TO WELLNESS?

WI: Dave has been attending the Wellness Centre since 2001. He was one of the first managers to sign up for the programme and has attended on a regular basis since then.

DB: The LMA first offered this service to members in 2001 and I was one of the first managers to attend from the offset as I felt it was too good of an opportunity to turn down.

HAS HE EVER HAD ANY PREVIOUS PROBLEMS?

WI: Following his first exercise test he was noted to have a number of what we call premature ventricular contractions at maximum exercise and during recovery. This is a very common finding and usually does not imply any underlying problem with the heart. When there are many of these "extra beats" it is worth arranging some simple further tests to confirm there is no problem. This was done and Dave was reassured by our cardiologist.

DB: I had no previous health troubles and that is why it is so important to attend the tests as they help to prevent any future problems by identifying conditions at an early stage. I was actually wired up for one game when I was manager of Leicester when we played Bolton Wanderers and Sam Allardyce also agreed to the test. As a result of this, as well as doing the tests at the Wellness Centre, occasional ventricular extra systoles were noted. I then undertook further tests in 2002 and it was determined that no further action was required.

WERE ANY OTHER HEALTH ISSUES IDENTIFIED?

WI: His other investigations were all satisfactory. He was given advice about

his diet and exercise levels which he has found very useful.

DB: There was no other significant issues identified, however, Wellness did provide some very sound advice on general lifestyle.

WHAT HAPPENED RECENTLY?

WI: He has remained very well and attended in November for his regular check. On this occasion his exercise ECG showed significant changes when compared to previous traces. He had absolutely no symptoms, his fitness level was good. This was discussed with him and the trace was reviewed by a cardiologist. They agreed that he did need further investigation. Following a discussion with the cardiologist Dave had an angiogram which showed significant narrowing of one of his coronary arteries which was treated by the insertion of a stent.

He has made an excellent recovery from this procedure remaining fit and well.

DB: I have regular checks with Wellness so I was not expecting any significant change. However, on doing a routine Wellness exercise test it was noted that I had positive changes with 2-3mm of ST-depression at a maximum heart rate of 153bpm. I was then referred to consultant/ cardiologist Dr Dinos Missouri. On clinical examination, he felt with his findings that a coronary angiogram was needed to assess for obstructive coronary artery disease mainly in the left anterior descending coronary artery (LAD). This was carried out by Dr Jonathan R. Clague at the Royal Brompton hospital, London. As a result, there was a very important lesion in the LAD but the remainder of the coronary arteries were smooth. A stent was duly fitted to help expand one of my arteries.

This proved a success and after a period of R&R I have made a full recovery.

WHAT LESSONS CAN WE LEARN?

WI: I think this demonstrates very well the benefit of regular monitoring which gives a very good chance of identifying a problem before it causes any symptoms. It allows us to get the problem treated preventing potential significant consequences.

DB: I think my case certainly demonstrates the need for regular testing as I had no cardiac symptoms whatsoever and had it not been for the treadmill test showing the change, I would have been unaware of the problem I had. It has, therefore, left an indelible mark on how fortunate I was because at some stage, I could have had a heart attack. It is so important not just for managers to attend in the first instance, but to also attend thereafter on a regular basis.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO LMA MEMBERS WHO DO NOT COME FOR THEIR REGULAR WELLNESS REVIEWS?

WI: I would obviously say that it is very sensible for all members of the LMA to utilize the Wellness programme. With us opening a new centre in London it makes it easier for people to attend. I know all the managers are very busy people but setting aside a few hours once every year to assess their wellbeing does not seem very onerous. Managers have bought into the concept of trying to prevent injury in their players, attending the Wellness Centre is very much how they can help themselves remain fit to manage.

DB: In my case, prevention is certainly better than a cure. The role of the manager, as we know, is a highly pressured and stressful one and, therefore, it is vital to have health checks. With the LMA now organising the mobile units, tests are also more accessible and it is a great service for the members. I would also like to say how grateful I am to Mike at Wellness and Dr Jordan, who assists the Wellness Centre, and who referred me in the first instance. I should also acknowledge the excellent and professional service I received from Dr Missouri and Dr Clague.

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