



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepatement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

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UCT professor appointed chief medical officer for Paralympic Games

Wayne Derman, professor of sports medicine with the UCT/Medical Research Council Research Unit for Exercise Science and Sport & Exercise Medicine, has been selected as the chief medical officer for the South African team heading to the London 2012 Paralympics in August.

The medical team, which will administer a squad of 63 athletes and 50 officials, is made up of two medical doctors and eight physiotherapists, including a "classifier" who makes sure that South Africa and other countries field the right athletes for the right events.

Having held similar positions for the national Olympic teams that went to Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004, as well for the Paralympic team of Beijing 2008, Professor Derman is well prepared for the task that awaits him.

"I'm actually looking forward to London possibly being one of the less challenging of the travel challenges," says Professor Derman.

He is confident that the group he describes as "arguably South Africa's most successful team" can return with a big medal haul.

Keeping a large squad of athletes with a range of medical conditions fighting fit will keep Professor Derman and the rest of his own team on their toes. But he revels in the sterling test of his clinical skills that leading a medical team for athletes with different needs demands. Now that he is a dedicated Paralympian fan, the event offers a unique attraction, he says.

"It allows me the opportunity for self-reflection. I think you come to terms with your own disabilities and limitations."

Olympics contacts at UCT:

- **Professor Wayne Derman** – ewderman@iafrica.com
- **Dr Ross Tucker** – ross.tucker@mweb.co.za - Dr Tucker has a PhD in Exercise Physiology at the University of Cape Town and a post-graduate diploma in sports

management. He works as a consultant scientist in the Sports Science Institute of South Africa and is an honorary senior lecturer with the UCT Human Biology department. He writes a twice-weekly column for Sunday Times and the Times on the Olympic Games, and will cover the Games for the Guardian newspaper in the UK. **Dr Tucker can address any subject related to sports science: high performance sport, doping, Oscar Pistorius, Caster Semenya and gender, role of technology in sport, limits to human performance, South Africa at the Olympic Games, sports management, South Africa's medal chances in London.**

- **Dr Jeroen Swart** – jeroen.swart@uct.ac.za - Dr Swart is one of the coaches for the Olympic cycling team. He is a sports physician and exercise physiologist at the Sports Science Institute of South Africa. He divides his time between clinical sports medicine practice, high performance physiology work and research activities. His research interests include the regulation of exercise by the brain, cycling biomechanics and high performance cycling. Dr Swart coaches many of the country's top cyclists and will be traveling to London as the national mountain biking coach. **Dr Swart can comment on: any aspect of sports medicine, high performance cycling and the preparation of athletes for the Games.**

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Kemantha Govender

Tel: (021) 650 5672

Fax (021) 650 5628

Cell: 084 737 6522

E-mail: kemantha.govender@uct.ac.za

University of Cape Town

Rondebosch

Website: www.uct.ac.za