

CLOSING COMMENTS

**By Dr Frank Pyke
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From listening in the discussion sessions and speaking to most of you personally, I have gained the clear impression that you have all enjoyed the last two days immensely.

One thing that has been most pleasing is the frank and open discussion that has taken place both in the forum sessions and at social events. It has been a sharing experience and I am confident that we have all come away much richer for having participated. I hope that we can maintain our links and that a second forum can be conducted in another country within the next couple of years.

I am confident that many of the less developed countries will have learned a great deal from those who already have well established national systems and that this knowledge will enable them to plan the best approach for their particular situation. We have also heard about the future plans of countries which are re-vamping their national systems. The Australians among us were particularly interested in the experiences of those who had just hosted an Olympic Games (Korea, Spain and the USA). Clearly, good performance in international sport is a high priority in many countries and there is no room for complacency among competing nations.

Interestingly, many presenters at the Forum emphasised the need for a cooperative approach in their respective countries. This applied equally to the delivery of coaching, sports science and sports medicine services, the conduct of national programs or the operation of a national system. It has become very obvious to me that, irrespective of where we live on this planet, cooperation, coordination and communication are essential ingredients in sport. They are the essence of what cohesive teams and partnerships are all about. Good relationships are the glue that binds the community together. In short, we have to learn to get on with each other and work together. As an international community I hope that this applies equally to us and that we can continue to meet regularly in the future. We have a lot to learn from each other.

In conclusion, may I thank you all for attending the Forum and contributing so willingly to the program. I hope that you have a safe trip home and that we see you back in Sydney at the Olympic Games next year.