

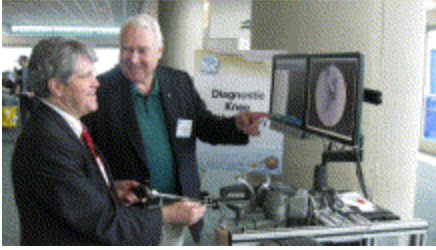
JACKSON, Robert William (Bob) [UNTD YORK '50 U-37010] (1932 - 2010) Age: 77 He spent the summers of '51 to '54 with the UNTD, at least one of them as a Surgeon Cadet. Bob Jackson was a leading Orthopaedic Surgeon and knee surgery pioneer. He was the Team Doctor for the Canadian Olympic Team in 1964 and the Team Physician for the Toronto Argonauts from 1976 - 1991. In 1967 he founded the Wheelchair Sports Association of Canada, a precursor to the Canadian Paralympic Team. He Rec'd the Olympic Order in 1997 and the Order of Canada (Officer) in 1998. The Health Care Facility at the Vancouver Olympics in 2010, was named for him. He has rec'd numerous other accolades both in Medicine and Sports. For a lengthy but very illuminating interview he gave in 2002, see link below; <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1276507/Regards>, Bill Clearihue. UNTD Archivist

Robert Jackson passed away peacefully at home in Toronto on January 6, 2010, surrounded by his devoted and loving wife, Marilyn, and his family, after battling cancer. To say that he had an extraordinary life and career would be a gross understatement. His modest and soft-spoken demeanor belied the magnitude of his accomplishments and contributions. His vision and contributions did nothing short of revolutionizing surgery as it is practiced across almost all fields.

Dr. Jackson graduated from the University of Toronto Medical School in 1956 and pursued a career in academic orthopaedic surgery. He completed postgraduate studies and research at the Toronto General Hospital, the Massachusetts General Hospital, the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, London, the Bristol Royal Infirmary, and the University of Tokyo.

In 1964 Dr. Jackson went to Tokyo on a traveling scholarship from the University of Toronto. His main purpose was to study tissue culture techniques at the University of Tokyo, but Bob also volunteered to help care for the Canadian Olympic Team at the games in Tokyo. His mentor in research from Toronto, Dr. Ian Macnab, had heard a paper on knee joint arthroscopy presented at the 1957 meeting of SICOT (International Society of Orthopaedic Surgery and Traumatology) in Barcelona, Spain, given by a Japanese surgeon whose name he could not remember. He suggested that Bob look him up. It took many enquiries before Dr. Jackson found Dr. Masaki Watanabe at the Tokyo Teishin Hospital because his work was virtually unknown even in his own country. The meeting turned out to be an epiphany for Dr. Jackson and changed the course of history, as East met West. Bob was so intrigued by the technique of arthroscopy and the possibilities it presented that he stayed in Tokyo after the Olympics to work with and learn from Dr. Watanabe. Dr. Watanabe may have been the only practitioner in the world performing arthroscopy at that time. Bob described Dr. Watanabe as a gracious host and teacher, showing him everything, in two operating sessions every week. Dr. Jackson was the first foreign doctor to visit Dr. Watanabe and was warmly received. Twice weekly, for several months, Dr. Jackson watched and learned the technique of arthroscopy and, in return, spent many hours teaching Dr. Watanabe English.¹

A series of arthroscopes had been developed as Dr. Watanabe continued the work of his professor, Dr. Kenji Takagi. These were numbered sequentially as they were developed. The current arthroscope at that time was the Number 21. This was the arthroscope that Dr. Jackson learned how to use and the one he brought with him to Toronto when he returned.



- - [View Large Image](#)
- Bob Jackson instructing Ron Selby at the 2009 AANA annual meeting.



- - [View Large Image](#)
- Bob Jackson with Ron Selby, Gary Poehling, and Jim Lubowitz at the 2009 AANA annual meeting.

In doing so, he reintroduced arthroscopy to the Western world. While it received little regard from the medical establishment of the time, the patients loved it. It had been used in Japan primarily for arthritic and tuberculous knees in the elderly. Dr. Jackson also saw the possibilities with younger and athletic patients. A torn knee cartilage in an athlete previously would require an arthrotomy and a year of rehab. In many cases, that meant the end of a career. With the smaller incisions and less downtime, athletes were back on the field with little or no interruption in their seasons. Dr. Jackson was the team physician for the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League from 1976 to 1991. In 1967 he performed the first arthroscopic surgery on an Argonaut football player. Acceptance of the procedure proved to be slow. Dr. Jackson noted that he could “only teach it one-on-one. There were no visual aids, no videos, nothing. It was, after all, a small hole to peer into.” But the results garnered attention. “Slowly it began to snowball. We'd start to get a few athletes, athletes with smart business managers, or athletes who'd already been cut and not gotten better.” As celebrity athletes, including Bobby Orr and Willis Reed, among others, underwent this comparatively minor procedure and then quickly returned to their sport, the word got out.²

The surgical part of arthroscopic surgery was an evolution itself. Although Dr. Masaki Watanabe had performed the first arthroscopic partial meniscectomy in 1963, he viewed arthroscopy as a diagnostic tool. There was no mention of that case or of arthroscopic surgery during the time Bob spent with him in Tokyo.

Also while in Tokyo, Dr. Jackson, always caring, had been disappointed after the 1964 Olympics to learn that Canada had no athletes in the Paralympics, which took place 3 weeks later. In 1967, Dr. Jackson founded and became the first President of the Wheelchair Sports Association of Canada and took a team to the third Paralympics a year later. In 1976, he organized the Toronto Olympiad for the Physically Disabled.

Dr. Jackson was one of the founding members of the International Arthroscopy Association. At a meeting in Philadelphia in 1974 to found the IAA, Bob was elected the first vice president and Dr. Watanabe was elected the first president. The IAA later merged with the International Knee Society to form ISAKOS (the International Society of Arthroscopy, Knee Surgery, and Orthopaedic Sports Medicine). Bob was named an honorary member of ISAKOS.

The accolades and honors were many. He participated in an ABC (American, British, Canadian) Traveling Fellowship. He received an Award of Merit from the City of Toronto, the Founders Medal by the

Canadian Orthopaedic Research Society, the J.C. Kennedy Award for Research in Sports Medicine, an Excellence in Research Award from the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Bay Area Knee Society, San Francisco, California. The Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association honored him by establishing the "Dr. Robert W. Jackson Award" presented annually to the individual whose years of dedication and contributions exemplified the passion and spirit of Robert W. Jackson, M.D., who committed a lifetime to promoting and developing wheelchair sports. He was recognized by *Sports Illustrated*² as one of 40 individuals who had a significant impact on sports in the last half-century, and he was the only physician named in that group. Bob was awarded the Jackson-Burrows Medal presented to a graduate of the Royal National Orthopaedic Institute, London, England, for meritorious academic achievement. When the Olympics were in Los Angeles, Dr. Jackson was named the Executive of the Year in Amateur Sports, an award given by Air Canada to the individual who has done the most for his sport in that year. He was also awarded the Donald King Memorial Trophy as Volunteer of the Year by the Sports Federation of Canada. He received the Olympic Order, the highest honor given by the International Olympic Committee. A representative from the IOC spoke at Bob's funeral and stated that the Presidents of both the IOC and the IPC (Paralympic Committee), along with the Chairman of the Vancouver Olympic Games Organizing Committee, have ordered the main health care facility in the Olympic Village at the Winter Olympics in British Columbia to be named after Robert W. Jackson. He was awarded the Mr. Sports Medicine Award by the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine and was elected to the AOSSM Hall of Fame. The Governor General of Canada awarded him the Order of Canada for his work in arthroscopy and sports for the disabled. He was particularly proud of this award and always wore the designating lapel pin (seen in his photograph here). Just recently, Bob received the Dr. Robert W. Jackson Medal of Distinction Celebrating Excellence, Leadership and Dedication 2009 from ParaSport Ontario. This award is to be given each year and perhaps because it is named after Bob, the committee voted to give the first award to Bob.

Bob remained interested and active in teaching and sharing the benefits of arthroscopy as evidenced by the picture here of him instructing one of us (R.M.S.) in arthroscopy with the use of a prototypical virtual-reality knee arthroscopy simulator device at the 2009 AANA Annual Meeting. Bob wanted everyone, everyone in the world, to be brought along with the advantages and benefits that modern medicine could bring. This included, not in the least, all of the benefits of arthroscopic surgery. For the entire arthroscopic and sports medicine community, and for the benefit of all the patients they encounter, a thought comes to mind. To paraphrase Sir Isaac Newton, "If I have seen further than other men it is because I stand on the shoulders of giants." For his insight, passion, courage, dedication, and willingness to share his time and expertise and to teach, no one provided this support better than Robert Wilson Jackson. A kinder, more modest, inspiring gift of a gentleman shall not pass our way again.