

Quarterly World Report

JANUARY 2018



**Making History: Chiropractor To Lead
First Ever African Olympic Bobsled Team**



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Making History: Chiropractor To Lead Nigerian Olympic Bobsled Team at Winter Games.

A veteran of the London 2012 Summer Olympic Games, Dr Seun Adigun knows a thing or two about competing at the highest level. In a first for any African nation, she will lead the Nigerian Bobsled Team in Pyeongchang at the 2018 Winter Olympics. QWR spoke to this trailblazer to find out more.

Taking Part 4 Board Exams is challenging under any circumstances, but for one recent graduate of Texas Chiropractic College, there was an added twist.

As the driver of the Nigerian Bobsled Team, Dr Seun Adigun MS, BS, DC was in the midst of securing a place in the 2018 Winter Olympics, to be held next month in Pyeongchang, Korea. This meant flying from competing in Whistler, British Columbia, to Dallas, taking the NBCE Boards, then jumping back on a plane to continue in the competition.

"It was a pretty crazy few days," laughs Seun, 31, who had undertaken a dual degree at Texas combining her Doctor of Chiropractic program with a Masters in Exercise Science and Sports Health. "I must admit, it took some courage to open my laptop to find out whether I'd passed."

Dr Seun Adigun (pictured right, center) is a remarkable woman. US born, of Nigerian parents, Adigun was already an accomplished athlete when she entered chiropractic college. Not only had she won gold medals in the 100 meter hurdles at the African Championships in Nairobi in 2010 and the All African Games in 2011, she had also represented Nigeria at the London 2012 Summer Olympic Games.

Stepping away from international competition shortly after London, but never formally retiring, Adigun became a professional track and field coach, specializing in hurdles, before hitting on the idea of bobsled. "Like many others, I'd seen *Cool Running*, but this was really not the motivation for taking up bobsled" says Adigun. "For me, it was about bringing pride to Nigeria and pride to Africa."

Adigun was part of the Team USA Bobsled Team, where she was a brakeman before forming the



Making History: Chiropractor To Lead Nigerian Olympic Bobsled Team at Winter Games (continued)

Nigerian team with colleagues Ngozi Onwumere and Akuoma Omeuga. Without any African nation ever having fielded a team at the Winter Olympics, Adigun and her colleagues trained with a wooden sled she had made in her garage - a far cry from the hi-tech 300lb (136kg) carbon-fiber equipment she will be driving at the Olympics.

Bobsled is not for the faint-hearted. Reaching speeds of up to 90mph (145kph), navigating the 60-second sled runs requires lightning reflexes and optimum aerodynamics, not to mention a crystal-clear memory of the course. Adigun has already worked her way through 3 helmets after some nasty crashes.

"Vertigo was a problem at first, but it disappeared quite quickly as my body adapted to the forces. However, getting into a bobsled was a bit like a 16 year old new driver going on to a Nascar track!"

Adigun heads to Korea via Nigeria ahead of the opening ceremony in Pyeongchang on February 9. The bobsled competition commences on February 20 and Adigun can't wait to get started.

The Nigerian Women's Bobsled Team has attracted international media attention, with interviews on US and African prime-time TV. "By doing this we're breaking barriers," says Adigun. "The fear of the unknown doesn't need to be something that limits your ability to thrive in life."

Adigun has had her own challenges in her career and it was through these challenges she was introduced to chiropractic. "At the 2012 Summer Games I received care in the polyclinic," she explains. "I was found to have a stress fracture of my left tibia, which led to a 10mm leg length difference. Sadly it affected my performance but I was exposed to the benefits that chiropractic can bring to elite sport and this strongly influenced my decision to go to chiropractic school."

Adigun explains that she has been positively influenced by many chiropractors in her career

but singles out two in particular. "Dr Tom Hyde has been a tremendous support, as has Dr Todd Riddle. They've both inspired me to succeed in sport and in chiropractic."

And after the Games in Korea? Adigun has set her sights on a career as a high-performance sports chiropractor, using her knowledge of anatomy and biomechanics to develop optimum rehabilitation strategies for injured athletes.

Adigun has learned to dream big. At age 14, despite standing at 5ft 5in (165cm), her ambition was to dunk a basketball and play in the NBA. While she achieved the dunk, she missed out on NBA fame, but became an Olympian. She now dreams of a podium finish in Korea and glory for Nigeria. The WFC wishes her every success, both as a Winter Olympian and a doctor of chiropractic.

Seun Adigun was speaking to Richard Brown.

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