

Therapist has rubdown lowdown on Blue Jays

BY JOHN CUDMORE
Staff Writer

Ryan Richardson can't wait to get his hands on those Toronto Blue Jays.

As the major league baseball club's massage therapist, you just know he will get that chance, likely sooner than later.

The York Region resident meets the American League club Tuesday for opening day against the Minnesota Twins at the Rogers Centre, when he embarks on his first full season since joining the team's medical staff late in the 2005 campaign.

Along with two athletic therapists, three chiropractors and a team of doctors, it will be Mr. Richardson's job to deal with those sore muscles and tissue that occur during a 162-game schedule. And hopefully beyond.

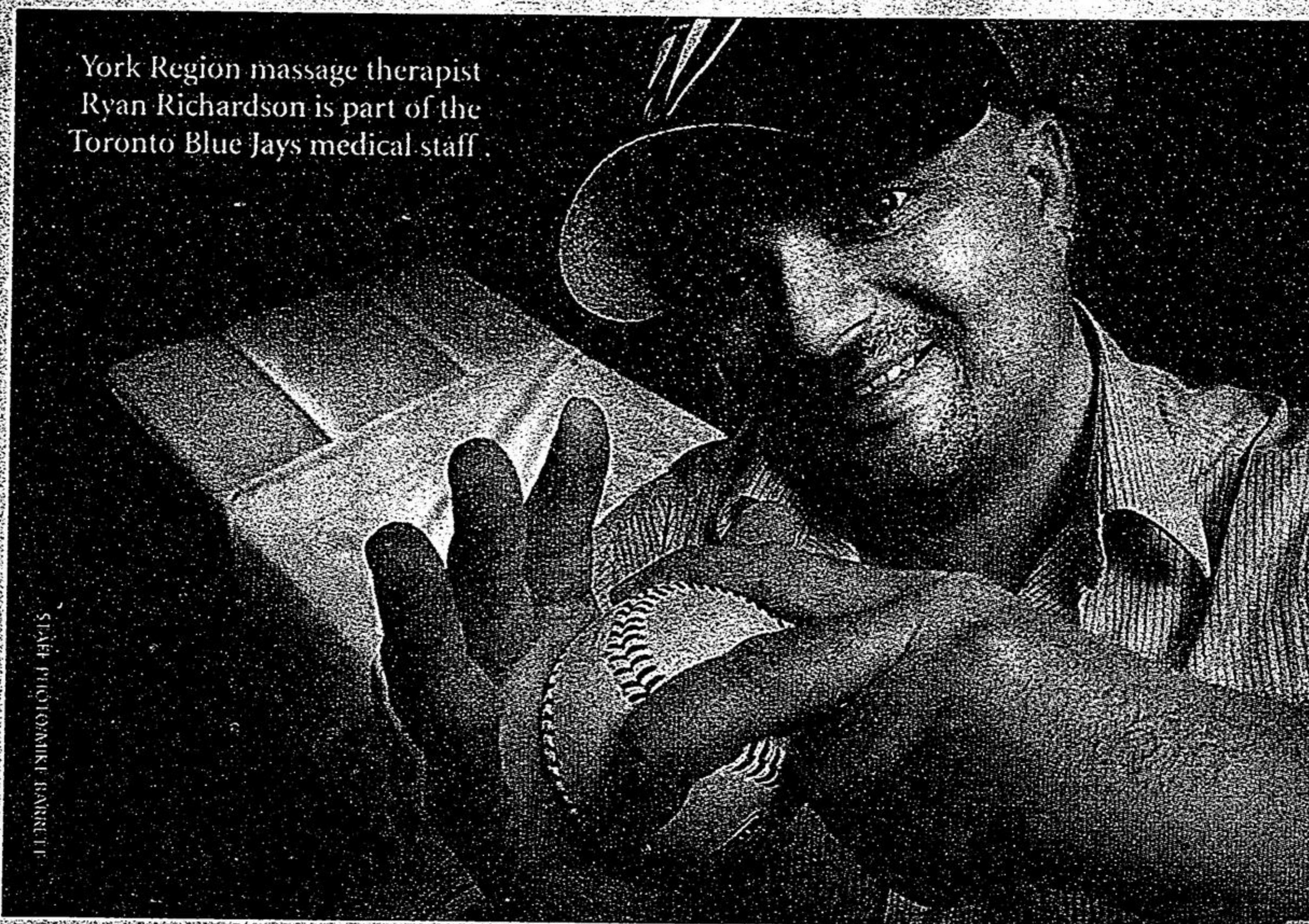
"It's something I've been striving for a long time," said Mr. Richardson, 29, in an interview at Upper Canada Sports Medicine in Newmarket.

"I'm definitely a baseball fan, but I love sports in general."

His six-week stint with the club late last season set the tone for this season.

Restricted to observing spring training from afar, Mr. Richardson is eager for Tuesday's opener, particularly with all the anticipation for a competitive season based on the team's off-season moves.

York Region massage therapist Ryan Richardson is part of the Toronto Blue Jays medical staff.



"The best part is knowing I'm helping athletes and an organization achieve their goals. They seem to be making moves to put a better product on the field for fans."

"I'm definitely excited. This is the first time in a long time there's been a positive buzz around the Blue Jays. I can't wait."

Mr. Richardson, who is working toward a doctorate in osteopathy, applied to the Blue Jays when the team's former massage therapist, a client, informed him a position was opening with the club.

"It's a great opportunity," said Mr. Richardson, who has worked the past nine seasons with the Stouffville Spirit and Newmarket Hurricanes junior hockey clubs.

"It's fantastic because it's something I've wanted to do. It still seems surreal sometimes, but I'll be interested to see what doors this might open."

"I was just in awe. What a great organization. There are no egos or attitude between players and staff. I was surprised, but some junior hockey teams I've been around have more egos."

Because much of Mr. Richardson's work involves maintenance, the hours prior to game time are usually his busiest.

During games, he occasionally tends to a player requiring attention, but otherwise spends his time between the press box and dugout.

Some players, he notes, are sticklers for detail. Others will seek his services in rare instances.

"I think now athletes are a lot more aware in general about their bodies," he said.

"The level of competition is raised so high these days they have to keep aware."

"We're all there trying to do the best we can to strive for that one goal. For my part, I'm looking forward to contributing and keeping guys healthy."

Hey runners, keep a well-balanced diet in mind

Winnie the Pooh said it best: "I improve my appetite when I exercise." And those of us who run know what Pooh Bear is talking about.

Running allows us to eat more. As a chef and runner, I have come to appreciate both activities.

Choosing the right foods before and after a run can affect recovery and performance.

The three nutrients to always keep in mind at meal times are:

- **Carbohydrates:** Nearly all carbohydrates are broken down into glucose (the simplest of all sugars). This supplies pure energy. As runners, our bodies need about five grams per pound of body weight to meet our daily energy needs.

- **Fats:** There are three major types, saturated (found in meats and dairy), monounsaturated (olive oil) and polyunsaturated (tuna and salmon). Inadequate fat intake lowers production of fat-burning enzymes, decreasing fat-burning efficiency during running and, therefore, lessening endurance.

- **Proteins:** They are the basic structural material of all organ and tissue cells. A deficiency in protein will result in poor recovery and fre-

quent injuries. Aim for about 25 per cent of daily calories from protein.

Here are a couple of recipes I like to make and believe are beneficial prior to and after a run.

Chicken casserole with almond crunch topping

Substitute chicken for canned turkey, shrimp, tuna or even diced tofu for a vegetarian option.

1 tbsp vegetable oil, 250 ml sliced onion

10 ml each grated lemon zest and dried basil leaves, 1 clove garlic, minced

2 ml each salt and pepper

1 L cooked whole wheat penne

50 ml finely chopped jarred sundried tomatoes, 10 ml Dijon mustard

750 ml packed baby spinach leaves

156 g cans cooked chicken, drained and flaked or two cups chopped cooked chicken

250 ml fresh whole wheat bread crumbs

125 ml sliced natural almonds

Pre-heat oven to 350 F (180 C). Heat oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring for about five to seven minutes or until lightly browned. Stir in lemon zest, dried basil leaves, salt, pepper and garlic. Cook, stirring for one minute.

Toss onion mixture with pasta, mayonnaise, mustard, sundried tomatoes, spinach and chicken until evenly combined. Place mixture in a well greased nine x 13-inch casserole dish. Mix bread crumbs with almonds and melted butter.



Fitness Files

Charmaine Broughton

15 ml melted butter, 125 ml mayonnaise

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Heat oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring for about five to seven minutes or until lightly browned. Stir in lemon zest, dried basil leaves, salt, pepper and garlic. Cook, stirring for one minute.

Toss onion mixture with pasta, mayonnaise, mustard, sundried tomatoes, spinach and chicken until evenly combined. Place mixture in a well greased nine x 13-inch casserole dish. Mix bread crumbs with almonds and melted butter.

Sprinkle evenly over pasta. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until the top is slightly golden and pasta is hot. Makes six servings.

Trail mix cookies

These cookies are a healthier alternative to the classic chocolate chip.

250 ml softened butter

125 ml packed brown sugar

50 ml granulated sugar, 1 ml of salt

2 eggs, 10 ml of vanilla

725 ml whole wheat flour

2 ml each cinnamon and ground cardamom, 5 ml baking soda

125 ml each finely chopped pitted honey dates, chopped walnut halves and dried cranberries

50 ml each mini white chocolate chips and green pumpkin seeds

Beat butter, brown sugar and granulated sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs and vanilla until combined. Add flour, baking soda, cinnamon,

cardamom and salt. Beat until just combined. Add dates, walnuts, cranberries, chocolate chips and pumpkin seeds and beat until evenly combined.

Divide dough in half and roll into two 10-inch (25 cm) logs, using a piece of wax or parchment paper as a guide. Place logs in freezer for about 20 minutes (this makes for easier slicing).

Slice each log into 16 slices. Spread cookies out on a lightly greased baking sheet about two inches (five cm) apart.

Bake cookies in batches, in a pre-heated 350 F (180 C) oven for 12 to 14 minutes or until edges are crisp and bottoms are golden. Cool on wire rack and store in an air tight container for up to one week or freeze for up to six months.

Makes about 32 cookies.

Keswick resident Charmaine Broughton is the chef and owner of Gourmet on the Lake, a seasonal catering business in Muskoka. She can be seen regularly on Rogers Daytime TV cooking her favourite recipes. Ms. Broughton has completed 10 half marathons, two marathons and is training for her third marathon in May.

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I'm not responsible for your children.

We've sunk so far into the nanny state syndrome that we've even got Conservatives dumping billions of dollars into child care. With the Tory plan that's \$1,200 for each kid per year, while the loopy Liberals and out-

lunch NDP are screaming for a national subsidized daycare plan. More billions.

The Grits and N-Dippers are even threatening to topple Harper's minority government if they don't get their way. (Sound like spoiled brats throwing a temper tantrum to me)

What has the lefties in a lather.



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