

Book Review

“Sports Acupuncture” The Meridian Test and its Applications
written by *Yoshio Mukaino, M.D. and translated by*
Stephen Brown, L.Ac.

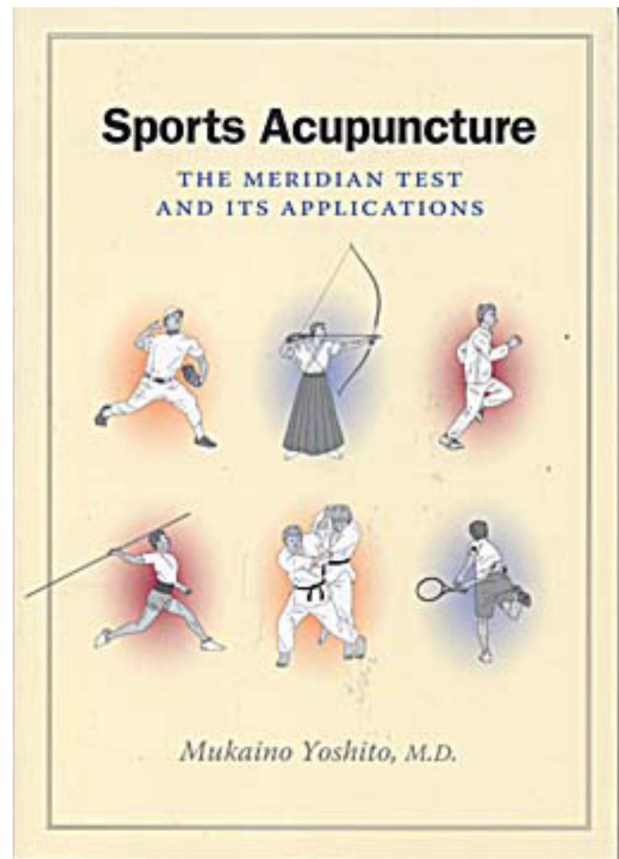
Reviewed by *Atsuki Maeda*
L.Ac., M.T.O.M.

“Sports Acupuncture” The Meridian Test and its Applications is the first book of Meridian Test (M-Test) translated in English language. This is the book acupuncturists who are in sports field must have and recommended to all who treat muscle-skeletal injuries and symptoms. Step-by-step, easy assessment method, points selection, and treatment protocols are well explained, very simple to understand, and can be used from tomorrow’s practice.

Dr. Yoshio Mukaino of Fukuoka University School of Medicine has found the method to quickly and easily determine the area of the body that needs to be treated based on each individual difference by observing and combining the meridian distribution and body movement.

In regular acupuncture treatment, affected meridians, at most cases the injured ones are considered as target of treatment. For example, if patient suffers with low back pain that is aggravated by extension of lumber, Foot Tai Yang Urinary Bladder Meridian is mainly focused. Local points such as UB-23, UB-24, UB-25, UB-52, and some distal points such as UB-40 and UB-60 are commonly used. In Meridian Test and its treatment, it is considered that stretching of meridians on the anterior aspect of the trunk is the cause of pain. This is the uniqueness of the Meridian Test and often treatment does not include stimulating injured local area. That is why it is so effective and gentle to the patient. Series of acupuncture points (example: ST-36, ST-41, SP-5, and SP-2) are set to test with very light touching pressure and ask patient to repeat same

movement to see if the pain has decreased. By finding the most effective points and apply either/or needling and moxibustion. This method does not use the local points; therefore you can test the body movements before the actual needling with light finger pressure to distal points and confirm its effectiveness, then treat. You usually see instant relief of symptoms.



The beauty of this method is that it is incorporated with traditional theories of Oriental medicine such as Five Elements and Yin & Yang relationship. Each elements and Yin & Yang control and restrict each other to create perfect harmony such as “health” in our body. Whenever this ultimate balance is destroyed, pain, discomfort, and functional disorders occur. Once again, there is a patient with low back pain. Foot Tai Yang Urinary Bladder Meridian is affected. Urinary Bladder belongs to the element of “Water” which is restricted (controlled) by the “Earth” where Stomach and Spleen belong. Meridians of

Stomach and Spleen run on the anterior side of the body and when extension of the Thoracic/Lumber is performed, these two meridians are both stretched simultaneously. If pain occurs with this movement, it is considered as the “Earth” overacting on the “Water” and symptoms appears in the theory of the Meridian Test.

There are four sections in this book and the first section talks about “Theoretical Background of Sports Acupuncture” and explains about analysis of physical movement, meridian and its category & distribution, relationship between human movements and meridians, acupuncture points & their characters, and five elements (phases) theory.

The second section explains The Meridian Test: Analysis of Movement by Meridians by how to incorporate meridian distribution and body’s mechanism of movement. It also covers and explains about muscles that are included in the Meridian Test.

The third section, “ The Practice of Sports Acupuncture” talks about actual assessment and protocol of the Meridian Test where step-by-step sequences of testing movements to the patient are explained in detail. Graphic inserts can be copied and use over again for each assessment of patient. This section leads you to how to apply set group of acupuncture points for treatment. In the actual treatment, Empi-Shin (Press Tack Needle) is commonly used. They are very thin and small needles and patient barely feels. It is also very effective and safe to use for children.

The forth section, “Case Studies” introduces various cases of clinical Meridian Test where you can peek hints of how it is used in actual clinical scenes. Also explains the various sports and its relationship with the Meridian Test.

In each sections, there are insert called “Coffee Break” where interesting stories and cases of acupuncture treatment including Meridian Test can be found. If you read them very carefully, you will find lots of hints and clues on how to apply this Meridian Test to your practice. It is like a treasure box and very fun to read.

In the Appendix “Points Frequently Used in Sports Acupuncture”, 60 most frequently used points in Meridian Test are given in the chart by section of body and the picture inserts show location of points. It also has a Meridian Test testing chart for you to use for the assessment of your patients.

As a conclusion, this book is one of the most useful and easy to understand textbook of acupuncture treatment theory and protocol and can be used by newly licensed to the expert with over 20 years of clinical experience. This book only covers very basic material and its application of the Meridian Test but there are more continuous theories and protocols as using “Yin & Yang Crossover method” and to be waited for the second series of the Meridian Test published soon. I personally appreciate Dr. Mukaino for the invention of this method and would encourage every acupuncturist to attend his seminars whenever and wherever available in your area and study further more for the benefit of your patients and success of treatment.