



DAVID A. WATSON

PT, DPT, SCS, OCS, FAAOMPT, CPSS, CSCS

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SUMMARY

Dual board-certified sports and orthopaedic physical therapist (SCS, OCS), residency- and fellowship-trained manual therapist (FAAOMPT), and NSCA-certified sport scientist and strength and conditioning specialist (CPSS, CSCS) who bridges sports medicine and performance. Designs criteria-based, backward-planned return-to-play programs for NBA, Olympic, and professional athletes, from post-surgical rehabilitation through reconditioning and reintegration to sport. Evaluated on site by an NBA performance department in a final-stage process that included providing manual therapy interventions for the starting lineup. Collaborates daily with team physicians, athletic trainers, strength and conditioning coaches, and sport science staff.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Return to Play Planning
- ACL Reconstruction Rehabilitation
- Criteria-Based Clearance
- Backward-Planned Rehabilitation Timelines
- Force and Torque Testing
- Limb Symmetry Assessment
- Hop and Jump Testing
- Countermovement Jump Analysis
- Anti-Gravity Running Progressions
- Change of Direction Reconditioning
- Orthopaedic Manual Therapy
- Dry Needling
- Blood Flow Restriction
- Emergency Response for the Athlete
- Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Case Review
- EMR Documentation and Compliance
- Clinical Instruction and Mentoring

RETURN-TO-PLAY MODEL

- Plans backward from the target return date, such as the first game of the season or the start of camp, and builds the complete rehabilitation and reconditioning timeline to arrive on schedule.
- Introduces plyometrics at a quiet knee, 1.4 Nm/kg quadriceps torque, and 60% limb symmetry. Introduces running on the Alter-G at approximately 70% body weight with a structured walk-run progression, advancing about 10% per session by tolerance to 20 minutes of continuous running. Progresses to agility and change of direction at 80% limb symmetry.
- Clears for return at greater than 3 Nm/kg quadriceps torque and greater than 90% limb symmetry, with standard hop battery and 40 cm lateral hop above 90% symmetry and within height and sex norms, vertical jump at or above 90% symmetry, leg press 1RM within 90% symmetry, Y-Balance anterior reach within 4 cm of the contralateral side, hamstring-to-quadriceps strength ratio of 60 to 70%, 2-minute timed step-down test for motor control and endurance, and psychological readiness above 90% on the ACL-RSI, I-PRRS, IKDC, and Tampa Scale of Kinesiophobia. All criteria are repeated in rested and fatigued states.
- At the professional level, adds sprint speed, vertical jump, and countermovement jump force baselines to guide reintegration and season readiness.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

David Watson Performance, LLC

Founder & Performance Physical Therapist

Private NBA Athlete Practice

Boston, MA

June 2024 to present

- Provides offseason manual therapy, dry needling, and injury assessment for active NBA players who train in Boston during the offseason, including two NBA champions and one player across three consecutive offseasons.
- Coordinates with each player's private strength and conditioning coach to align treatment with training load and season readiness targets.
- Delivered pre-draft injury assessment and manual therapy for a 2024 NBA Draft prospect.
- Serves as a peer reviewer for the International Journal of Sports Physical Therapy (2024 to present).
- Invited to San Antonio by the Spurs for a final-stage, on-site evaluation for the Performance Manual Therapist role (2025): provided manual therapy interventions for the starting lineup and worked alongside the full performance and medical staff.

Assessment Technology:

Tindeq dynamometry and Force-IQ (force, torque, rate of torque development, sustained contraction, biofeedback) | M Trigger surface EMG biofeedback | Just Jump mat | Alter-G anti-gravity treadmill | Y-Balance Test | VALD systems (laboratory application) | Force plate, GPS, and IMU data interpretation (CPSS) | ACL-RSI, I-PRRS, IKDC, Tampa Scale of Kinesiophobia

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (CONT'D)

Pro Sports Therapy, Inc.

Sports Physical Therapist

Westford, MA

November 2024 to present

- Practices alongside former NBA and NHL head athletic trainers Ed Lacerte and Don Worden, managing post-surgical and sports injury caseloads through the criteria-based return-to-play model above.
- Applies Tindeq dynamometry, Force-IQ, M Trigger surface EMG biofeedback, Class 4 laser, and personalized blood flow restriction within rehabilitation and reconditioning programs.
- Mentors an AAOMPT Fellow-in-Training and newly graduated physical therapists, supervises a Northeastern University co-op student, and leads staff in-services and journal club.

Massachusetts General Hospital Sports Physical Therapy

Sports Physical Therapist

Waltham, MA

June 2021 to October 2024

- Managed a sports physical therapy caseload within Mass General Brigham and participated in twice-weekly sports medicine conferences with the full MGB sports medicine provider group.
- Provided more than 100 hours of athletic venue medical coverage and annual pre-participation examinations for Boston Public Schools through MGB Athletic Training Services.
- Original member of the PACU therapy team for the first same-day arthroplasty program at MGH West (February 2022); presented the physical therapy role in the PACU at the 2022 APTA of Massachusetts Annual Conference.
- Clinical instructor for Integrated Clinical Education students; contributed community outreach lectures and participated in the Waltham Walks program.

Professional Physical Therapy (formerly ProEx Physical Therapy)

Clinic Director and Staff Physical Therapist

Multi-Site, MA

March 2018 to June 2021

- Rehabilitated figure skater Maxim Naumov (2018 to 2019) from injury through return to competition; he won the 2020 U.S. Junior National Championship in the season immediately following and was later named to the 2026 U.S. Olympic Team.
- Treated multiple athletes from The Skating Club of Boston and provided pro bono care for a local running club and YMCA members.
- Opened a de novo clinic in Allston as Clinic Director following Professional's acquisition of ProEx; later directed the Spencer clinic above first-quarter budget in 2020 and grew the Tyngsboro clinic from 90 to 115 visits per week.
- Built referral relationships with St. Elizabeth's, Children's, and New England Baptist orthopaedic surgeons; instructed a final-affiliation clinical student.

ProEx Physical Therapy

Assistant Clinical Director

Arlington, MA

September 2017 to March 2018

- Maintained individual and staff key performance indicators at or above goal while completing the Institute of Orthopaedic Manual Therapy residency; practice acquired by Professional Physical Therapy in March 2018.

Joint Ventures Physical Therapy and Fitness

Clinic Manager (2016 to 2017); Staff Physical Therapist (2014 to 2016)

Boston and Wellesley, MA

September 2014 to September 2017

- Team Physical Therapist for the Boston Whitecaps, 2015 Major League Ultimate Champions.
- Practiced in a multidisciplinary setting alongside strength and conditioning coaches, sports chiropractors, nutritionists, and massage therapists.
- Delivered injury screening and on-site care at road races and high school sporting events; treated marathoners with Teddy's Team leading up to and on Marathon Monday.
- As Clinic Manager, ran clinic operations, staffing, scheduling, budget, and staff development; built the referral network through physician lunch-and-learns and operating room observation with sports medicine surgeons.

Elite Physical Therapy

Staff Physical Therapist

Providence and Coventry, RI

July 2012 to September 2014

EDUCATION

Fellowship in Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapy, Boston University, Sargent College

2020

One-Year Residency in Orthopaedic Manual Therapy, Institute of Orthopaedic Manual Therapy, Woburn, MA

2018

Doctor of Physical Therapy, Northeastern University, Bouvé College of Health Sciences

2012

B.S. Rehabilitation Science, Northeastern University, Bouvé College of Health Sciences

2011

BOARD CERTIFICATIONS & CREDENTIALS

Board-Certified Sports Clinical Specialist (SCS), American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties	July 2024
Board-Certified Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist (OCS), American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties	July 2022
Fellow, American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists (FAAOMPT)	Feb. 2020
Certified Performance and Sport Scientist (CPSS), National Strength and Conditioning Association	May 2026
Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS), National Strength and Conditioning Association	June 2026

Additional Certifications

Personalized Blood Flow Restriction Rehabilitation, Owens Recovery Science	Aug. 2025
Emergency Response for the Athlete, Cogent Steps	Sept. 2022 - 2028
Basic Life Support (CPR/AED), American Heart Association	through Feb. 2028
Stop the Bleed	Aug. 2024
Credentialed Clinical Instructor, American Physical Therapy Association	Apr. 2022
Dry Needling Level 2, Myopain Seminars	Aug. 2026
Graston Technique Level 1	May 2016

LICENSURE

Licensed Physical Therapist, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, No. 20127 (2012 to present); clean licensure history; eligible for licensure by endorsement in all states. Previously licensed in New Hampshire (No. 4629, 2020 to 2022) and Rhode Island (No. PT02495, 2012 to 2016).

CONTINUING EDUCATION

2026	
Dry Needling 2: Foundations II, Myopain Seminars	July 31 to August 2
Summer League Sports Medicine Series	July 12 to 14
Elite Basketball Rehab Conference	July 10 to 11
2025	
Common Medications in Sports Medicine, Cogent Steps	September 14
Emergency Response for the Athlete Recertification, Cogent Steps	September 14
Personalized Blood Flow Restriction, Owens Recovery Science	August 9
Sports PT: Functional Anatomy and Clinical Decision-Making, Lower Extremity, Northeastern	July 26 to 27
Mass General Sports Medicine Conference: Lower Extremity Sports Medicine Summit	June 21
2024	
Emergency Response Training Summit, MGB Athletic Training	August 12
Evaluation and Treatment of Shoulder and Knee Injuries, Kevin Wilk, Northeast Seminars	August 2 to 3
Mass General Sports Medicine Conference: Comprehensive Management of the Shoulder and Elbow	June 22
Evaluation and Treatment of Tommy John Injuries in the Overhead Athlete, APTA CSM	February
Identifying and Treating Quadriceps Dysfunction After ACL Reconstruction, APTA CSM	February
A Framework for Returning to High-Level Activity Following Total Joint Arthroplasty, APTA CSM	February
2023	
ACL Reconstruction for the Adolescent Athlete, SRN Adolescent Sports Special Interest Group	October 4
Emergency Response Training Summit, MGB Athletic Training	August 13 to 14
Management of the Foot and Ankle Complex: Integrating Gait and Functional Rehab, MGH	June 24
Evidence-Based Management of Orthopedic Shoulder Dysfunction: Gross Anatomy Implications, Northeastern	April 29
2022	
APTA of Massachusetts Annual Conference (presenter)	November
Emergency Response for the Athlete, Cogent Steps	September 17 to 18
Mass General Sports Medicine Conference: Collaborative Management of the Female Athlete	June
Credentialed Clinical Instructor Program Level One, APTA	April 9

CONTINUING EDUCATION

2017 to 2021

Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist Exam Preparation, MedBridge	July 2021 to March 2022
Fellowship in Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapy, Boston University (coursework and mentored practice)	2018 to 2020
Explaining Pain, Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapy, Lorimer Moseley	September 2019
One-Year Residency in Orthopaedic Manual Therapy, Institute of Orthopaedic Manual Therapy	2017 to 2018

2012 to 2017

Explaining Pain: From Biology to Behavioral Change, Lorimer Moseley	October 2017
Trigger Point Dry Needling: An Evidence and Clinical-Based Approach, Myopain Seminars	March 31 to April 2, 2017
Biomechanical Assessment of the Hip and Pelvis: Myofascial Sling System, Herman and Wallace	August 27 to 28, 2016
M1 Basic Training, Graston Technique	May 12 to 13, 2016
If We Evolved to Run, Why Do We Get So Injured? MGH Orthopedic Seminar Series	April 29, 2015
ACL Injury Prevention, The Micheli Center for Sports Injury Prevention	April 11, 2015
Active Myofascial Release in Clinical Practice, MGH Orthopedic Seminar Series	March 25, 2015
SMT-1: HVLA Thrust Manipulation of the Spine and SI Joint, Spinal Manipulation Institute	April 25 to 26, 2014
Cervical and Upper Thoracic Spine Disorders, North American Seminars	October 19 to 20, 2013
The Runners Rehab Program, North American Seminars	November 17 to 18, 2012
The SI Joint and Pelvic Girdle, North American Seminars	October 6 to 7, 2012

TEACHING & CLINICAL INSTRUCTION

Guest Speaker, Symptom Regionalization, Northeastern University AAOMPT Student SIG	June 2025
Guest Speaker, The Importance of Relationships, Northeastern University PT Club	February 2025
Mentor, AAOMPT Fellow-in-Training, Pro Sports Therapy	2026 to present
Clinical Instructor, two Integrated Clinical Experience students, MGH Waltham	February to April 2023
Clinical Instructor, Clinical Education 3 student, Professional Physical Therapy	February to April 2021
Clinical Instructor, Clinical Education 1 student, Elite Physical Therapy	May to June 2014

RESEARCH & PRESENTATIONS

Poster: PT Role in Facilitating Home Discharge After Total Joint Arthroplasty, APTA of Massachusetts Annual Conference	2022
Poster: Cervicogenic Management of Post-Concussion Syndrome, APTA of Massachusetts Annual Conference	2019
Poster: Predicting Division I Women's 2K Rowing Performance via Incremental Ergometry, Northeastern Research Expo	2011
Research assistant: effects of inspiratory muscle training on performance in Division I women's rowing	2010 to 2011
Peer Reviewer, International Journal of Sports Physical Therapy	July 2024 to present

CLINICAL EDUCATION

Northeastern University Sports Medicine: Division I athletes, future Olympic medalists and NHL champion	Sept. to Nov. 2011
Physiotherapy Associates, Peabody, MA: outpatient orthopaedics and post-surgical rehabilitation	Jan. to March 2012
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA: inpatient acute care orthopaedic trauma	May to June 2011

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE & VOLUNTEER WORK

Item Writer, Sports Specialty Examination, ABPTS Specialization Academy of Content Experts (appointed)	2027 to 2028
United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee, Sports Medicine Volunteer (approved, awaiting assignment)	2025 to present
Head of the Charles Regatta, Emergency Services and First Aid	October 2025 to present
Boston Athletic Association, Medical Volunteer, Half and Full Marathons	November 2023 to present
Boston Public Schools, pre-participation exams and 100+ hours of athletic venue medical coverage	2022 to 2024
Northeastern Young Alumni Advisory Board: Chair, Vice Chair; Alumni Commencement Speaker, Fenway Park (2022)	2019 to 2022
Assistant Wrestling Coach, Wilmington High School	December 2025 to present

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

National Strength and Conditioning Association (2026 to present) | American Academy of Sports Physical Therapy (2025 to present) | American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists, Member and Fellow (2020 to present) | American Physical Therapy Association (2013 to present) | APTA Massachusetts (2015 to present)