

GERMANY

by Karl Lennartz

After the termination of the Greek/Turkish war plans to hold Olympic Games respectively sport events named Olympic Games were often published by the German sport press. The magazine *Spiel und Sport* (Game and Sport) reported on February 17th, 1900 that the stadium in Athens would be redecorated.

The *Turner*, a journal of the *Deutsche Turnerschaft* (German Gymnastics Association; DT) reported on the Games held by pupils in the stadium of Athens at Easter 1901. Physical exercises of pupils in the Olympic stadium of Athens were followed by "*Panhellenic Games*" which lasted four days. The king and his family were present every day and handed over the prizes.

The next Games should to be held in 1903 the same time of the 40-year celebrations of GEORGE I accession to the throne.

Invitation by the Hellenic OC

In spring 1905 the marble construction of the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens was completed. The Panhellenic Games took place as a final test. Now the IOC decision for 1906 wanted to be realised. Already prior to the IOC congress in Brussels invitations were sent to Olympic respectively sport associations in many countries. The Greek envoy Kleon RANGAVIS gave Germany "*the official invitation of the Comité des Jeux Olympiques à Athènes*" on May 5th, 1905. The Greek IOC member MERKATI declared at the Congress of Brussels that an organising committee for the Olympic Games 1906 was formed in Athens and that these would be repeated every four years.

In autumn 1905 the Greek organising committee sent the first information to foreign sport associations and scheduled the Games for spring 1906. That autumn the president of the *Association of Greek Gymnast Teachers*, Ioannis CHRYSSEAFIS travelled to Stockholm, Copenhagen, Paris and Berlin in order to inform himself on the competition rules of the most important sport disciplines.

CHRYSSEAFIS then negotiated in October with the *Deutscher Reichsausschuß für Olympische Spiele* (German Reichs Committee for Olympic Games, DRAfOS) in Berlin and asked for active participation in the Athens games. The Germans wanted to avoid the sensations of Paris in gymnastics and of St. Louis in swimming, and demanded an international panel of judges, which CHRYSSEAFIS also accepted. CHRYSSEAFIS' programme design was also discussed in Berlin. In December 1905, the Greeks sent out the official programme with dates, condi-

tions of amateur status, registration deadlines and information about prizes. The programme was published in four volumes.

Book 1: I. Athletic Competitions (Running, Jumping, Throwing, Pentathlon, Weightlifting, Wrestling, Tug-of-War, Walking), II. Gymnastics, III. Fencing, IV. Tennis;

Book 2: Swimming and Rowing,

Book 3: Cycling,

Book 4: Shooting.

The programme was printed in most German sport journals and was translated by GEBHARDT, by commission of the Greek committee.

German Participation

The DRAfOS had three tasks:

- Selection of a team,
- Financing of the journey to Athens and
- Organization of the Olympic trip.

The financing of the Olympic trip was more difficult than had been the case for Paris in 1900 and St. Louis in 1904. In Athens, there was no World Exhibition organised. Consequently, there was no basis for a subvention from the government of the Empire. Nevertheless the DRAfOS succeeded in obtaining support from the Chancellor of the German Empire. GEBHARDT wrote in the report of DRAfOS that this support enabled their participation. It was soon clear that the team could not be too big. For some sports, they did not intend to send any representatives - Tennis, Shooting, Football, and Rowing.

The gymnasts caused the familiar ideological difficulties. They had to endure fierce criticism in the press, particularly from the sport press, which had grown in numbers. The behaviour of the leadership of the DT did also no longer disturb DRAfOS particularly. There was Fritz HOFMANN after all "*The formation of a first-class gymnastic squad had its problems. They were solved in the best way, however, by Mr. Hoffmann.*" GEBHARDT was able to state calmly. In the *Berliner Zeitung* it was said, with reference to the behaviour of the DT in 1896 "*Nothing forgotten, and nothing learnt*"

Commissions from the DRAfOS and the sport associations selected 49 athletes - some of whom paid their own travelling costs.

Team Leader: Graf von der ASSEBURG, Willibald

GEBHARDT, Julius von HÜNEFELD, Georg

DEMMLER, Georg HAX, Paul MARTIN, P.

Johannes MÜLLER, Alfons SCHOENE, Kurt

DOERRY, Carl DIEM, Dr. August SMITH



The German team with officials and their Olympic hosts in Athens, the German Society Philadelphia

Athletics: Martin BECKMANN, Martin BRUSTMANN, Willy DÖRR, Vincenz DUNCKER, Carl KALTENBACH, Hermann MÜLLER, Wilhelm RITZENHOFF, Johannes RUNGE, Robert SENNECKE, Arthur MALLWITZ, Paul Weinstein, and the gymnasts Fritz HOFMANN, Otto FRANKE, Josef KRÄMER, Julius WAGNER

Gymnastics: Bernhard ABRAHAM, Otto FRANKE, Cassius HERMES, Julius Keyl, Josef KRAEMER, Bruno MAHLER, Karl OHMS, Adolf SCHIRMER, Karl SCHWARZ, Julius WAGNER, Wilhelm WEBER, Otto WIEGAND; Team Leader: Fritz HOFMANN, Georg HAX, Flag Bearer

Cycling: Karl ARNOLD, Adolf BOEHM, Erich DANNENBERG, Bruno GÖTZE, Max GÖTZE, Martin KLÖB, Otto KÜPFERLING, Max KRICHELDORF

Fencing: Gustav CASMIR, Jakob ERCKRATH de BARY, Emil SCHÖN, August PETRI, Robert KÜNERT

Swimming: Ernst BAHNMEYER, Georg HOFFMANN, Fritz NICOLAI, Max PAPE, Heinrich PARIZOT, Emil RAUSCH, Oskar SCHIELE, Gottlieb WALZ, Albert ZÜRNER

Tug-of-War: Willy BORN, Willy DÖRR, Carl KALTENBACH, Josef KRAEMER, Wilhelm RITZENHOFF, Heinrich RONDI, Heinrich SCHNEIDERREIT, Julius WAGNER

Weightlifting: Heinrich RONDI, Heinrich SCHNEIDERREIT

Wrestling: Willy BORN, Heinrich RONDI

Artistic Cycling: G. von GÖSSELN, W. MEYER, REHER, H. SCHWARZE, E. SPOHLER, SPUTLER, A. ZENTEL

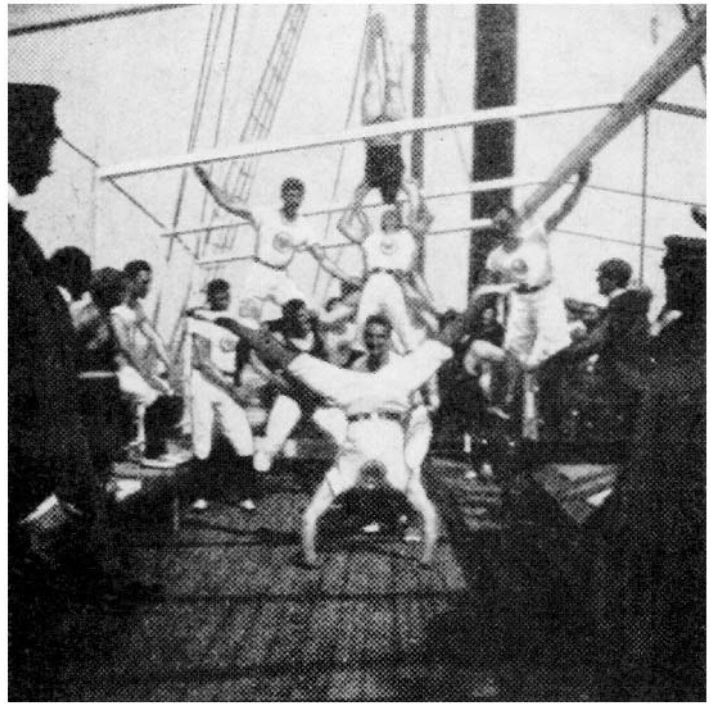
Sport Festival in the Kroll Opera

In 1906, German sport publications devoted themselves more intensively to the Athens Games. To reduce travelling costs, the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish Committee turned to the DRAfOS to organise a joint trip from Germany. GEBHARDT negotiated with the *Austrian Lloyd*, owing to a fifty per cent discount. When the Scandinavians arrived in Berlin, a joint Olympic Sport Festival was organised for the 14th of April (Easter Sunday) in the Kroll Opera House. The revenue from the festival was to help fund the journey. Since the Crown Prince was present, it also drew interest from non-sporting circles.

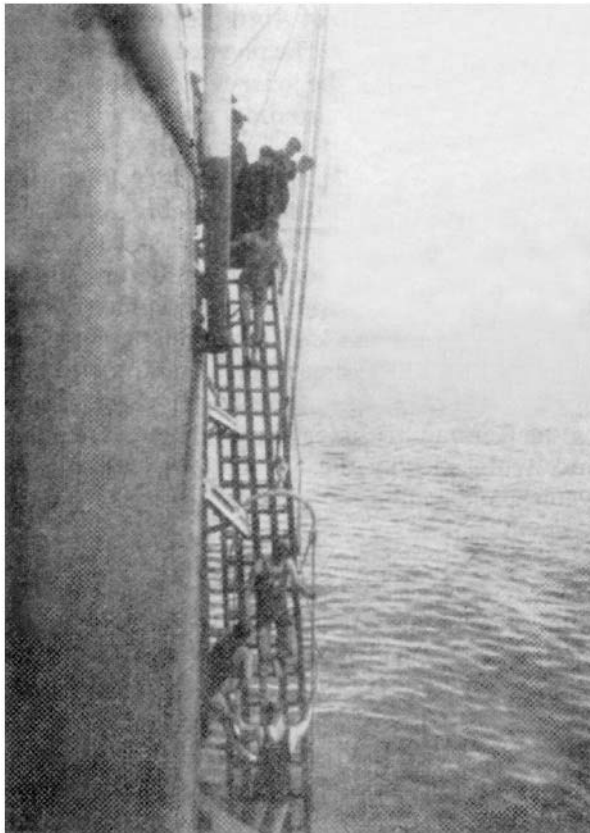
In the performance appeared: Bicycle squads from the *Bremer Bicycle Club*, foil-, sabre- and épée-fencing from Sweden, the Italian Fencing Club in Berlin and the Association of Berlin Turner Teachers, gymnastics from a Danish women's team, Combined Exercises and apparatus gymnastics from the Swedish gymnasts (40 people), wrestling by the Swedes, weightlifting by two Swedes and by the German SCHNEIDERREIT, Combined Exercises and gymnastics by the Norwegians (30) and the Danish, and combined exercises free style from the German team.

From Trieste to Piraeus

At midday on the next day (the fifteenth of April), the teams travelled in a special train from Berlin (Anhalter Railway Station) to Vienna, and from Vienna together with the Austrian team to Trieste. From Trieste on the 18th of April, they travelled in two steamships belonging to the *Austrian Lloyd's* via Patras to Piraeus. The Danish, Norwegian,



From "Allotria" to merry gymnastic exercises and swim training in the open sea: Impressions from the sea travel on the steam ship "Amphitrite"



Hungarian and German teams travelled in 'Amphitrite'. The Swedish and Austrian teams in 'Thalia'. DIEM wrote that even during the four day crossing, the athletes trained on deck. A small storm on the 19th of April and the resulting seasickness soon put an end to training, however.

In Patras, GEBHARDT left the ship with two other officials. They went ahead by train to prepare the accommodation with the Hellenic Committee.

On the Morning of April the 21st, the ships anchored in Piraeus, after circumnavigating, the Peloponnese. The German society *Philadelphia* welcomed the German team. By electric train, they all travelled to Athens, where accommodation for the 900 sportsmen was ready and waiting in Zappeion.

Opening Ceremony

The course of the opening ceremony is actually not my area. It should, however, be pointed out that this was the first time that the nations marched in together. Unfortunately, there are few photos and none of the German team. One question should however be raised - that of the order, in which the teams came into the stadium. There is no exhaustive account in German literature. According to Carl DIEM, the German team were first into the stadium. *"They were followed by the Americans, English, Swedes, French, Italians, Belgians, Danes, Norwegians, Austrians, Hungarians, Finns, Swiss, Egyptians and finally the Greeks."* As hosts, the Greeks entered last, a custom that has been adhered to by the organizers until today. Why Germany was at the front or how the order of the nations was decided is not men-



tioned. DIEM gives the names of 15 countries. The Official Report lists 20 countries. Those not named by DIEM were Australia, Bohemia, the Netherlands, Canada and Smyrna. Had DIEM counted Bohemia with Austria, the Australians and Canadians with Great Britain? Had DIEM forgotten the Dutch? What flag did the Bohemians and Finns come in with?

German Journalists from Athens

In Germany, gymnasts and sportsmen were quickly and comprehensively informed of the events at the Games and of the performance of the German team.

The secretary of the German Sports Authority for Track and Field (*Deutsche Sportbehörde für Athletik*), Carl DIEM, was present. He was reporting for three German papers and later wrote the articles "Die olympischen Spiele 1906", in: *Athletik-Jahrbuch* 3(1907), pp. 5-55 and "Die olympischen Spiele 1906 in Athen" in: *Kraft und Schönheit* 6(1906)6, pp. 174-187.

The later sports doctor Martin Brustmann, who competed in Athens in the athletics section, wrote „Von Sport und Körperkultur. Olympische Reiseeindrücke" [On Sport and Body Culture. Impressions from an Olympic journey] in the journal *Kraft und Schönheit* 6(1906)6, pp. 161-173.

German gymnastics teacher and Athens resident Edward GIET published the essay "Einiges von den Olympischen Spielen in Athen" [Some Information from the Olympic Games in Athens] in *Der Turner* 21(1906, 13, p. 241-246, 14, p. 261-266, 15, p. 281-286, 16, p. 301-307, 17, p. 321-326, 18, p. 341-345, 19, p. 362-366, 20, p. 381-384.

Gymnastics Teacher Friedrich AUERBACH travelled to Athens for the *Deutsche Turn-Zeitung*

Reporting from Athens: Carl Diem (left with hat) before the start to the walk race. On the right Prince George

[German Turners Newspaper] and wrote "Die Olympischen Spiele in Athen" in: *Deutsche Turn-Zeitung* 51(1906)22, pp. 401-404, 23, pp. 421-423, 24, pp. 448-450.

Kurt DOERRY, the editor of *Sport im Bild*, who also competed in 1896 and 1900 as a sprinter in the Games, was in Athens for his paper and reported in several issues with particularly good photographs of the games.

On coming back from Athens, the DRAfOS published a detailed report on the Olympic Games.

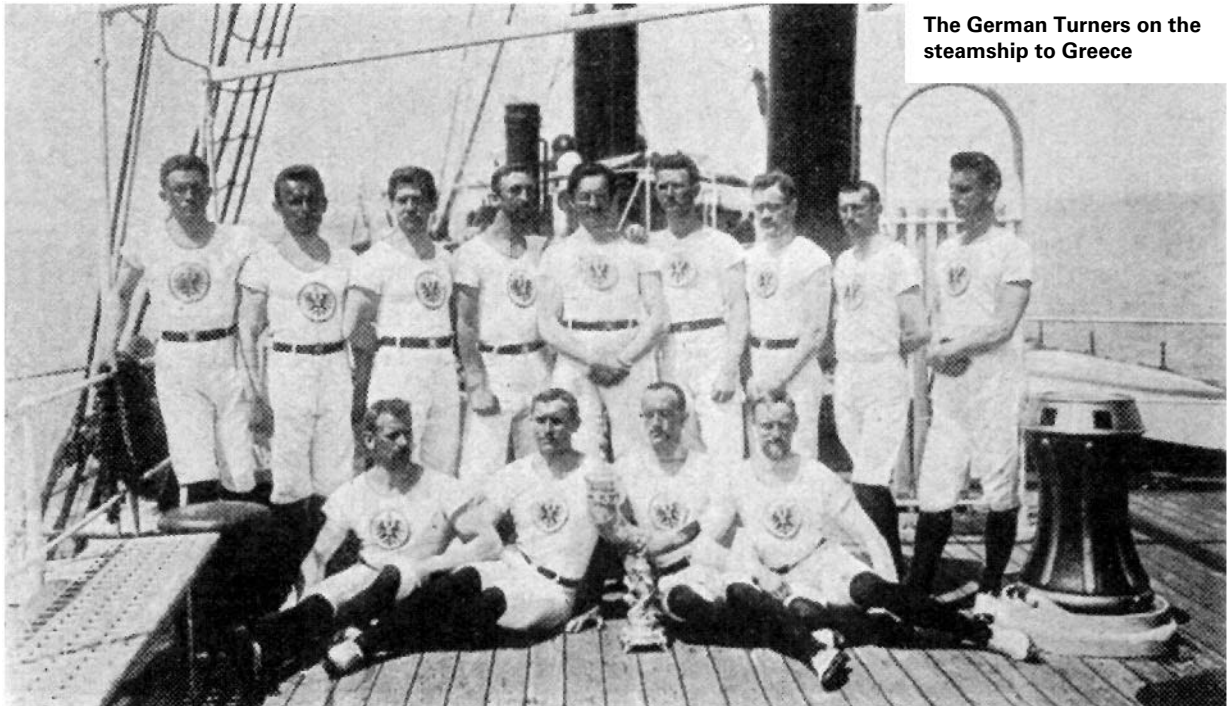
Turnen - Competitions and Demonstration Events

The sporting competitions began with team gymnastics.

According to the rules for team gymnastics, every group could perform "free exercises or apparatus exercises or even a combination of both, 25 minutes for each team."

21 Greeks began with Swedish gymnastics. Then came the Danish women's team, who also demonstrated Swedish gymnastics. 32 Swedes under the leadership of Colonel BALCK stepped up and performed, too. The order of the demonstration was: Swedish gymnastics, Swedish apparatus, Swedish horse, high table, and exercises with a partner. GIET passed judgement on the Swedish demonstration: they had "achieved what they wanted - to make an impression and make propaganda for their system."

After the Swedes 19 Danes performed first in the competition. They, too, began with exercises in



The German Turners on the steamship to Greece

Swedish gymnastic system. Lastly they displayed floor exercises with handstands, somersaults and many leaps. From the astounded commentaries of the present German gymnastics experts, one can tell, that this was still totally unknown in Germany

AUERBACH: "[...] *A kind of parterre gymnastics [...] to the delight of the audience.*" GIET: "*Somersaults of all kinds, somewhat similar to those found in a circus.*" Even DIEM, who was certainly no gymnast, was amazed "[...] *Parterre acrobatics, that would have done credit to a circus group.*"

Overall, the exercises of the Danish group were considered the best up to this point.

The Germans, under Fritz HOFMANN, stepped up as fifth team. They were welcomed by loud applause. The spectators still remembered the successes of 1896 and the Germans were considered the favourites by the Greeks. The German team

began with wooden staff exercises; free exercises followed, then vaulting on the pommel and long horse, team gymnastics on six parallel bars and six horizontal bars. The performance of the German team was, however, disappointing. They did not meet the high expectations. The criticism of the German observers showed this. The gymnast AUERBACH put it very clearly. He found it lacking in "*Strength and freshness. The team gymnastics on 6 bars failed miserably. The order of the exercise was forgotten, everyone doing a different exercise. It created an embarrassing impression.*" The outstanding free style section partly atoned for it.

The next day, two Italian teams performed last. Their gymnastics were simple but extremely precise. The judgement from the panel was the following:

1. Norway 19,00 points
2. Denmark 18,00



Synchronized gymnastic exercises at the pommel horse: Germany

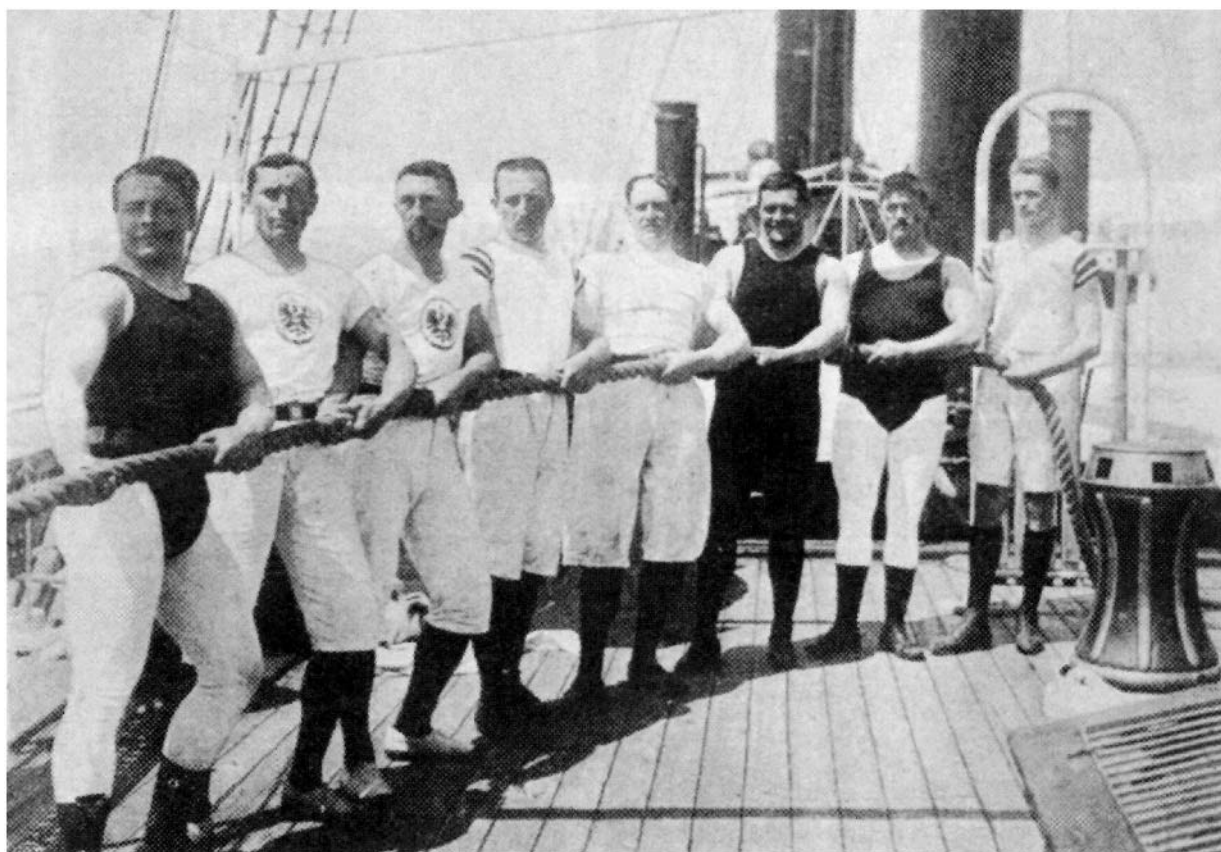
3. Italy (Pistoja) 16,71
4. Italy (Roma) 16,60
5. Germany 16,25
6. Hungary 14,45

In accordance with the rules, the teams that had received 18 to 20 points were placed in first place and those with 16 to 18 in second. Consequently, Norway and Denmark won first prizes, the Italian teams and the Germans second. Despite second prize, the fifth place finish from the German representatives in Athens was a shock. Excuses were sought, then causes. In the remaining gymnastics the Germans were only able to partly make up for it.

French fencing method, there were often quarrels about the interpretation of the rules. That also owed to the fact, that there was no written book of rules.

To the amazement of the other athletes, the German fencers were extremely successful in Athens. In individual foil-fencing Gustav CASMIR finished second - he achieved the same in the individual sabre. The German team of CASMIR, SCHÖN, de BARY and PETRI, with wins over the Netherlands and Greece, won first place in the sabre-fencing, as did CASMIR in the individual contest.

In the individual foil, there was a small scandal. After the preliminary and intermediate rounds, six participants qualified for the final. In this round,



Tug-of-War: Gold for Germany

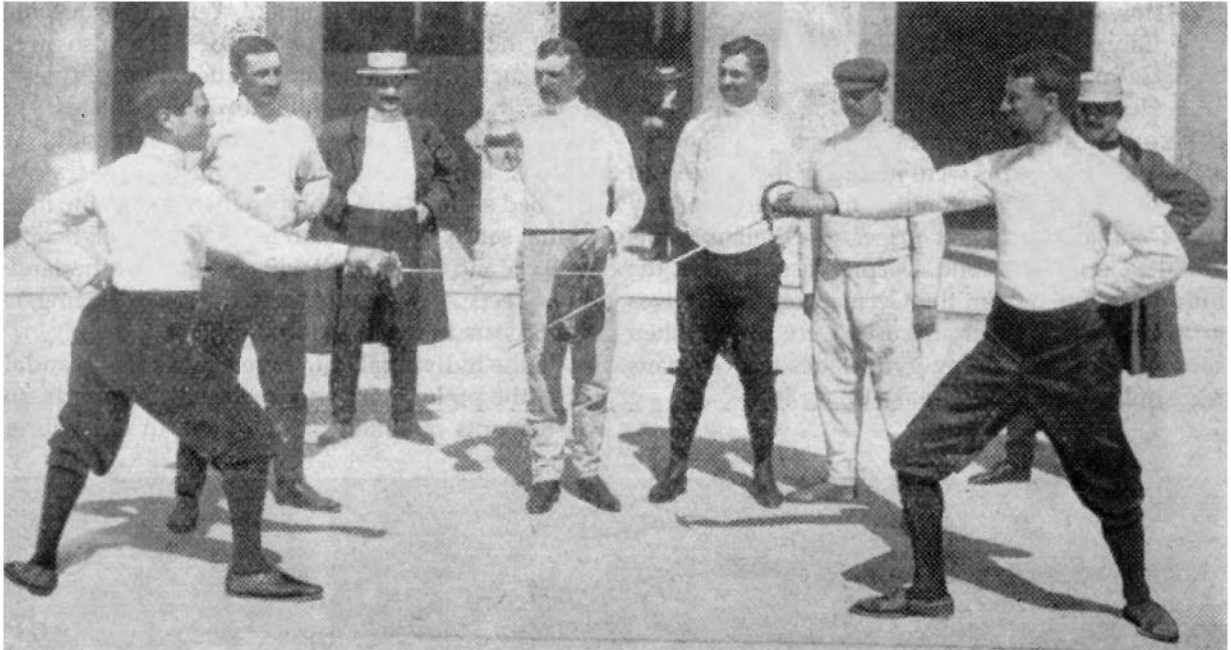
In one competition, the German turners were able to win first place, which they admittedly had to share with athletes from track and field und weightlifters. This was in the tug-of-war. During the crossing from Trieste to Athens, a team of the strongest German turners and sportsmen was selected for this competition. BORN; DÖRR; KALTENBACH; KRAEMER; RITZENHOFF; RONDI; SCHNEIDEREIT und WAGNER. The German team pulled the Austrians, Swedes and Greeks respectively over to their side.

The Successful German Fencers

In fencing, there was a clash between the French and Italian schools. As the Greek judges preferred the

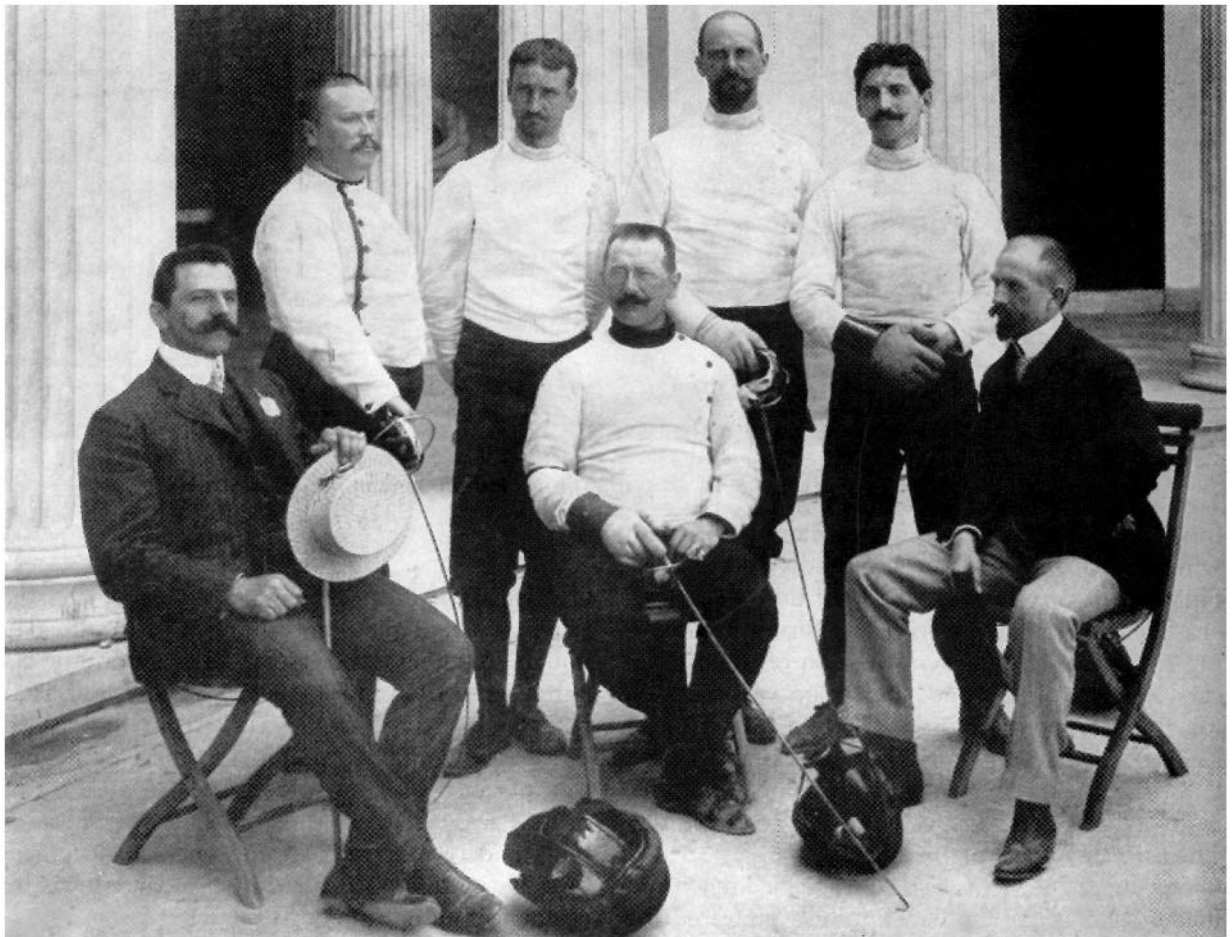
The successful German Tug-of-War team

CASMIR and the Frenchman Georges DILLON-KAVANAGH had the same number of points. The Italian Frederico CESARANO abstained from the last fights, since he could not achieve better than sixth places. His scores were struck from the record. CASMIR, who had beaten him, lost these points and was placed in second place. The German team's protest was rejected. Ahead of DILLON-KAVANAGH (who had two first places and one second place), CASMIR (with two firsts and two seconds) was the best fencer at the Athens tournament.

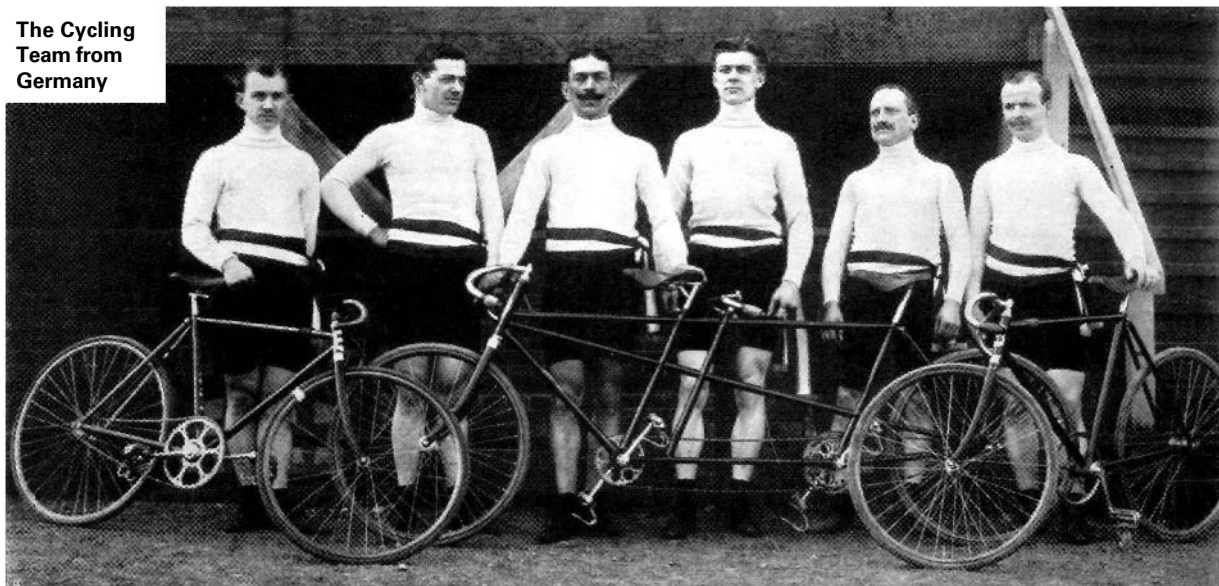


Sabre: van Rossem (NED) vs Casmir (GER)

The German Fencers posing for the photographer



The Cycling Team from Germany



Cycling

The good performance of the fencers was just as surprising as the results of the German cycling team were disappointing. They were mostly eliminated in the preliminary stages. The intermediate rounds were rarely reached. Only in tandem over 2000 m the German representatives were successful. The brothers GÖTZE were second, admittedly out of only six. The higher rated pair DANNENBERG/KÜPFERLING came third.

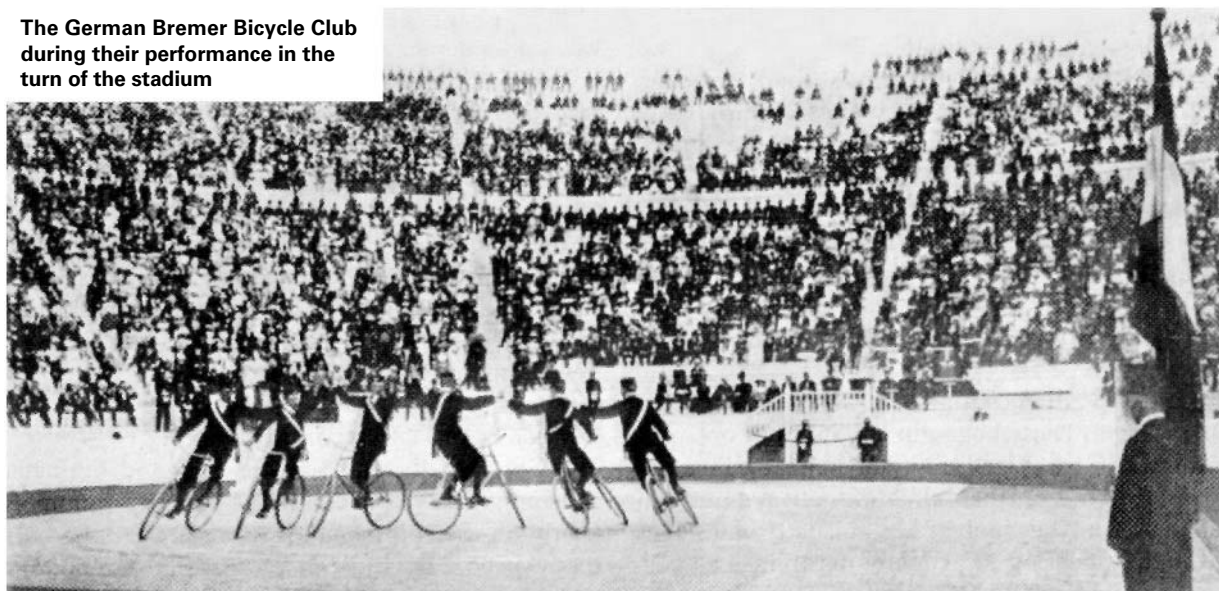
Display Cycling - A German Peculiarity

On April 30th, the German stunt cyclists, who stepped onto the wooden podium, specially erected for them, received great applause. They began with a sort of quadrille on high wheels. Then REHER and SPITLER performed a stunt ride. They finished the programme with a team of six on low wheels.

Swimming and Diving

The aquatic competitions took place in the bay of Neo Phaleron. The officials had constant trouble cleaning the swimming lane of private boats. In swimming, too, the Germans were unable to do justice to their favourite style. This was partly due to the fact that, despite the pleas of the DRAfOS, the Greek committee was not prepared to include the German strengths, breaststroke and backstroke, in the programme. On the third day of the Games, April 24th, the swimming competitions began with the long distance swim over one mile. The Englishman Henry TAYLOR won in 28:28 min, second was another Englishman and third an Austrian. Only then came the four German swimmers Max PAPE (32:34,4 min), Emil RAUSCH (32:40,6 min), Ernst BAHNMEYER (33:29,4) and Oskar Schiele (33:52,6 min). RAUSCH, who had won over

The German Bremer Bicycle Club during their performance in the turn of the stadium





The German swimmers

this distance in St. Louis and who, with 27:18,2 min had been considerably faster there, struggled as a side free style swimmer, to come to terms with the higher waves. For the swimming times, it must be noted that there were no lanes only a turning mark. On 26th of April the swimming and rowing had to be postponed owing to high waves. The weather improved over the next few days and now the German swimmers could win some prizes. In the 1000 m relay (4 x 250 m), they only came second, however, (17:16,2 min) behind Hungary (16:52,4 min). Only in diving the Germans were able to claim superiority. After dives from 4, 8 and 12 metre heights, Gottlob WALZ won with 156 points ahead of Georg HOFFMANN (150,2 p). In fourth was Albert ZÜRNER (144,6 p)

Only one Bronze and one unexpected Silver in Athletics

But now to athletics, the "real Olympic Games" as DIEM wrote. These began in the stadium on April 25th, the fourth day. As in gymnastics, cycling and swimming the German athletes - always brought up the rear. They only distinguished themselves through appearing in as many disciplines as pos-

sible. Two exceptions should however be noted. In the 110 m hurdles, Vinzenz DUNCKER managed third place with 16,3 seconds, only a tenth of a second behind the winner Robert G. LEAVITT (USA). According to the report of eyewitness AUERBACH, DUNCKER was in front from the 4th to 7th hurdles.

In the marathon, Hermann MÜLLER finished ninth or tenth. What is more astonishing is that he was under starter's orders once again the next day. It was an additional competition, a 3000 m walking race, inserted into the programme, to give another chance to those walkers who had been disqualified in the 1500 m for an unclean walking style. MÜLLER, who had not been able to enter the 1500 m, because he had had to travel to marathon, started here. He finished, 15 hours after the marathon in second place, having been overtaken shortly before the finishing line. Admittedly behind MÜLLER were only in walking inexperienced Greeks.

Cardiac Examinations on Athletes

The German doctor August SMITH and both his assistants BRUSTMANN and MALLWITZ examined nearly all the sportsmen in Athens. SMITH had already been carrying out observations on Berlin



Vinzenz Duncker



Hermann Müller

sportsmen during training and competition for four years. He had concentrated on measuring the size of the athlete's hearts with the help of a so called orthographic X-ray examination. SMITH concluded that short distance athletes had smaller hearts, long distance athletes larger ones, and that therefore heart size increases through endurance training. Being acquainted with unhealthy heart enlargement, already recognised for a long time in Internal Medicine, he equated the enlarged heart from training with heart muscle weakness and heart enlargement. In addition, he cited excessive eating and alcohol intake as causes for a harmful enlargement of the heart. For SMITH and his colleagues, the American sprinters and jumpers were the healthiest athletes; they had the smallest and therefore healthiest hearts. The positive factors of a heart muscle thickened by endurance training (slower pulse rate, a greater volume of beats, better use of oxygen, increased capillaries) were not recognized. The publishing of the results of this investigation meant that the attitude in Germany towards intensive sport training was one of great reserve.

BRUSTMANN compared body size, build and proportion of the athletes across individual countries and various types of sports. His conclusions can hardly be seen as objective. He established that the all rounders had the most proportional bodies. The same was true of the Scandinavians, for him an undiluted race, in contrast to the Greeks, who could boast no racially pure features. He observed in the fencers a prominent unbalanced musculature and a predatory facial expression. The gymnasts had a strong upper body musculature and the gymnasts' arched back. The swimmers were, for him, too fat. The weightlifters had too strongly developed shoulder muscles and upper backs, were also too flat chested and fairly corpulent. The cyclists' leg muscles were too strong. It is clear that BRUSTMANN was a representative of the "Power and Beauty Movement" and judged too much from his aesthetic point of view.