The Olympic Flame Has Been Lit for Beijing 2022

- Faith and Olympic Gold Medal: The Second Half of Liddell’s Life
- Albert Corey: The Only Frenchman of the 1904 Olympics
- Uneventful Winter Olympics, Joyless 1980 Moscow Games
- Music: A Key to Promoting the "Spirit of Olympia"
## CONTENTS

1. Welcome to the Issue
2. Happy 30th Birthday
   - by Christian Wacker
3. Beijing’s Olympic Flame Is Lit, Modernised Academy Reopened
   - by Philip Barker
4. A Trip to South America as a Pretence
   - by Volker Kluge
   - by Philip Barker
6. Facts and Figures about the Tokyo 2020 Games
   - by Myles Garcia and Philip Barker
   - by Michelle Ford-Eriksson with Anthony Edgar
8. Albert Corey: The Only Frenchman of the 1904 Olympics
   - by Clément Genty
9. Albert Corey: The Only Frenchman of the 1904 Olympics
   - by Clément Gentry
    - by Philip Barker
11. Music: A Key to Promoting the “Spirit of Olympia”
    - by Ian Jobling
12. Biographies of All IOC Members, Part XXXVII
    - by Volker Kluge and Morten Mølholm Hansen
13. Former IOC President Jacques Rogge Passed Away
    - by Volker Kluge
14. Obituaries
15. Reviews

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**On the cover:** The first torch bearer, Greek alpine ski racer Ioannis Antoniou (right), greets the second bearer, former Chinese speed skater Li Jiajun, before passing the flame to him, after the lighting of the Olympic flame at the Ancient Olympia site.

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**ISOH Journal**
Lindenstraße 2
15377 Oberbarnim OT Pritzhagen
Germany

**Editorial office and address for article submissions**
ISOH Journal
Lindenstraße 2
15377 Oberbarnim OT Pritzhagen
Germany

**Phone:** +49-3343-15892
**E-mail:** olympic.journal@t-online.de

**www.ISOH.org**

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Welcome to the Issue

The Olympic flame in Tokyo had hardly been extinguished when the flame for the XXIV Winter Olympiad in Beijing was ignited ten weeks later in Ancient Olympia. Philip Barker reports on both events in this issue, which closes the 29th year of the Journal of Olympic History.

A key focus will be on China, which will be hosting the Winter Games from 4 to 20 February 2022, still under the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Zhao Bo’s story looks at the tragic fate of Eric Liddell, who became known as the “Flying Scotsman” after winning the 400 m sprint at the 1924 Olympics, although the Chinese also consider him one of their own because he was born there.

Meanwhile, eyes are already turning to Paris 2024. France is one of the four countries that have taken part in every Summer Games, alongside Australia, Greece, and Great Britain (albeit represented by three Irishmen). The 1904 Olympics in St. Louis did, however, only have one French competitor, who also happened to be living in the US at the time. Clément Genty has been browsing the archives and reports what he has found out about the silver medallist in the marathon.

France is also the focus of a second article. Philip S. Sarrazin, who is studying in Canada, set out to trace the legacy left by the three Winter Games hosted by France in 1924, 1968, and 1992.

Part four of Richard W. Pound’s series takes a look back at TV coverage of the Olympics in 1980, which, in addition to difficult negotiations, was also overshadowed by the US boycott of the Summer Games in Moscow. He describes the broadcasts from Moscow as joyless and those from Lake Placid as uneventful, although they were celebrated in the US as the “Miracle on Ice” because of the American’s win over the Soviets in ice hockey.

Then Juan Antonio Samaranch appeared, no one could imagine the profound changes that would take place under his watch during his 21 years as IOC President. One milestone was the 11th Olympic Congress in Baden–Baden, at which the amateur rule was abolished and women were elected to the IOC for the first time. Also for the first time, athletes were given a say, including Australia’s Olympic swimming champion Michelle Ford, who vividly recalls what happened 40 years ago.

The “Spirit of Olympia” is at home in Australia. On the Sunshine Coast north of Brisbane, which will host the 2032 Summer Games, is Noosa Heads, whose “Olympic” community organised a concert under the five-ring logo. Ian Jobling, who played a major role in organising this, reports.

In the second part of the early history of the Olympic Movement in Turkey, Tolga Şinoforoğlu looks at the establishment of the Turkish NOC and the first time a small team participated in the Games in Stockholm in 1912. A Turk was also appointed to the IOC for the first time in 1909. With our biographical series we have now passed the 500 mark.
The International Society of Olympic Historians (ISOH) will celebrate its 30th birthday on 5 December 2021. We look back on these 30 years with joy and also a little pride, during which the Society has continued to develop constantly. For the future of ISOH, we have developed a strategy to provide access to information and stories for even more people interested in Olympic history. This future will be digital, transparent, and sustainable in line with the IOC Agenda 2020+5.

ISOH was founded by a group of historians, journalists, and Olympic history enthusiasts who first met at the now defunct Duke of Clarence pub in London, Kensington on 5 December 1991. This was preceded by correspondence between Ture Widlund and Bill Mallon since the 1980s, which prepared the foundation of such a society.1

For these reasons, and admittedly unanimously, Bill Mallon has been awarded the ISOH Lifetime Award for the year 2021. That small group of enthusiasts, meeting in a positive spirit in the style of the Society of Dilettanti,2 was obviously so preoccupied with the content of their passion for Olympic history that they initially even forgot to elect a board. So on that rainy December day, they returned to the pub and elected Ian Buchanan as ISOH’s first president.

Over the years, the ISOH has grown and now has over 500 members from 53 countries who share a common interest in Olympic history. Alongside our website, isoh.org, the Journal of Olympic History, launched in 1992 and which you are holding in your hands right now, is our most important organ for disseminating new knowledge, new archival material, and new historical interpretations. In the future, the philosophy of this Journal will continue to live up to Bill Mallon’s 2016 hope: “I like the fact that ISOH has always been a potpourri of academics, journalists, and hobbyists, and I hope that continues, and that the Journal never becomes a purely peer-reviewed one.”3 The Journal’s aim will continue to be to research and write Olympic history in accordance with academic practice, but to make it accessible to a general interested audience.

Our strategy for the coming years is to strengthen our digital channels such as the website, but also social media, and to make all the Journal’s contributions available online and to the public. Members will continue to enjoy receiving the Journal digitally or, on request, as a printed edition exclusively. After a period of one to two years, it will be made available to everyone on our website. In addition, new formats are planned, such as a series on Olympic history in regions of the world that have received too little attention so far, called Olympic History Global. Together with editors from the relevant regions, contributions will be collected and published in special volumes in English. The aim of this project will be to shed light on Olympic history from lesser-known parts of the world. Under the title Untold Olympic Stories, ISOH will also use its networks in the field of storytelling to collect unknown, interesting, and also curious stories and make them accessible.

Our concerns about digitalisation promote sustainability and transparency, but are also intended to expand networking opportunities and the data pool on Olympic history. In future, we will therefore organise a member event once a year to promote exchange, welcome, and get to know new fellow campaigners, present our lifetime award, and discuss Olympic history. These events will be offered hybrid in the future, so physical and digital participation will be possible.

The ISOH of the future will take into account the important achievements of the last 30 years, but will present itself even more transparently, even more democratically in terms of its structures and decisions, even more solidly, and even more digitally and sustainably. Parallel to this content-related orientation, we have already given the ISOH a new brand design and are following our new mission statement: “Serve and enhance the Olympic Movement by making available the skills, knowledge, and research of the largest worldwide network of Olympic Historians”.

3  Mallon, 19.
The Olympic flame has been lit for Beijing 2022 amid human rights protests at the archaeological site in Olympia. Protesters were arrested after unveiling a Tibetan flag and banner criticising Chinese government policy towards minorities. Organisers cited COVID-19 precautions for the decision to allow only invited guests to attend the ceremony.

The ceremony was watched by IOC President Thomas Bach, Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou, and members of the IOC Executive Board, who had met in Athens over the previous days. “In our fragile world, where division, conflict, and mistrust are on the rise, the Olympic Games always builds bridges. They never erect walls.” said Bach.

High Priestess Xanthi Georgiou lit the Olympic flame, and after the ritual procession of 26 priestesses through the precincts of the ancient site they performed a dance sequence, which, in the words of artistic director Artemis Ignatiou, was designed to “flood the hill with ethereal and dynamic motion in percussion sounds.” They were accompanied by 12 young men, or Kouroi, who “created motion based on images from vases, frescoes, and statues.”

The precinct was heavily guarded as Alpine skier Ioannis Antoniou, who had also been the first torch bearer for Sochi 2014, took the Olympic torch from the stadium to the monument commemorating Olympic renovator Baron Pierre de Coubertin. He passed the flame to short track speed skater Li Jiajun, who became the first Chinese athlete to carry the 2022 torch. The relay was restricted to a symbolic run to the outskirts of the village of Olympia.

Beijing 2022 Vice-President Yu Zaiqing pledged: “Under the robust leadership of the Chinese government, with the support of the people around the world, we can and will deliver a streamlined, safe, and splendid Olympic Games to the world.”

It is the first time since 1984 that no passage of the torch around Greece had been planned. The flame was taken directly to Athens. Security was once again very
tight in the precincts of the Panathenaic Stadium, as Athens 2004 water polo silver medallist Evi Moraitidou entered, before passing the flame to double freestyle skiing silver medallist Li Nina. She made the final exchange with cross country skier Paraskevi Ladopoulou, who ran through an avenue created by the Evzones [ceremonial infantry, part of the presidential guard] before lighting the Olympic cauldron.

It fell to Hellenic Olympic Committee President Spyros Capralos to hand the flame to Yu. He left the stadium with a lantern, escorted by two flame attendants.

When it arrived back in China, it was exhibited at the Beijing Olympic Tower and will be taken around the country in a series of displays with the theme of “Health, Joy and Energy”.

Beijing 2022 have announced that the formal domestic Torch Relay will not begin until 2 February 2022, therefore making it one of the shortest domestic relays. In 1952, the first Winter Torch Relay from Morgedal to Oslo lasted only two days. The first winter flame lit in Olympia in 1964 took less than a week to reach the Olympic stadium in Innsbruck, but since then the relays have been more expansive.

International forum in the spirit of solidarity and mutual respect

Thomas Bach described the International Olympic Academy (IOA) as “the bridge that connects us to our past and carries the Olympic spirit into the future,” as he cut the ribbon to formally reopen the buildings this week, after extensive renovations.

He recalled his first visit in 1982, as a member of the newly formed IOC Athletes’ Commission. “It still seems to me that it was only yesterday, that I was sitting on this lawn here with so many other young people from across the globe.”

Bach had earlier laid a wreath at the monument to Baron Pierre de Coubertin. In 1938, a ceremony interred Coubertin’s heart in the marble column. “If you listen closely, I am sure you can even hear the heart of Coubertin beating a little bit faster today,” said Bach. “Coubertin saw the Olympic Games as much more than just a sporting event. He wanted to make a better place through sport, this remains the mission. The Academy plays a central role to carry these values to the future.”

Coubertin had dreamed of such a centre, but it did not become a reality until 1961, thanks largely to the efforts of German professor Carl Diem and Greek IOC Member Ioannis Ketsas. Originally, participants lived in tents on the hillside but in the late 1960s, permanent buildings went up on the site.

The 18-month renovation programme, bankrolled by an IOC grant of 12.5 million euros, was masterminded by former Hellenic Olympic Committee Secretary Dionysis Gangas. It included a modernisation of accommodation on the site, conference rooms, dining hall, library sports facilities, and an upgraded water filtering and sewage system. The plans also included improved access for wheelchairs.
“Without this support, it would have been impossible to carry out a restoration project of this scale,” admitted HOC President Spyros Capralos. “The International Olympic Academy, with its new, renewed profile, will continue its educational work unhindered, aimed at spreading Olympism.”

Bach presented the IOC President’s Trophy to IOA President Isidoros Kouvelos. The trophy is traditionally awarded to groups who make a significant scholarly contribution to the Olympic Movement. “I feel very grateful that, from the very first moment, the IOC President trusted this vision and expressed his willingness to walk with us,” said Kouvelos.

Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou described the International Olympic Academy as an “international forum in the spirit of solidarity and mutual respect.”

The gathering included IOC Executive Board Members, academics, including IOA Dean Kostas Georgiadis, ISOH President Christian Wacker, and member Conrado Durantez, a pioneer of the Spanish Olympic Academy who had attended the first IOA Session in 1961.

The celebratory programme featured a performance of “Nymphes” by the ART Dance Theatre company, featuring many of the priestesses and choreographed by Artemis Ignatiou with music by Yiannis Psimadas. The Athens string quartet performed “Arkadikos” and “Kleftikos” and soprano Vasiliki Karagianni sang an aria from Vincenzo Bellini’s opera “Norma”.

Beijing 2022: All athletes and Games participants who are fully vaccinated at least 14 days prior to departure for China will enter the closed-loop management system upon arrival. Participants who are not fully vaccinated will have to serve a 21-day quarantine upon arrival in Beijing. Exceptions may be granted for athletes and team officials on a case-by-case basis, based on medical reasons. From 23 January until the end of the Paralympics, a closed-loop management system will be implemented to ensure the safe delivery of the Games. Tickets will be sold exclusively to spectators residing in China’s mainland, who meet the requirements of the COVID-19 countermeasures.

Athletes’ voice: The athletes at the Tokyo 2020 Games have elected Pau Gasol (ESP/basketball), Maja Włoszczowska (POL/cycling), Federica Pellegrini (ITA/swimming), and Yuki Ota (JPN/fencing) to the IOC Athletes’ Commission, for a term ending at the Olympic Games LA28. A total of 6,825 athletes voted in the AC election, representing a participation rate of 61.27 percent.

Football: The IOC Executive Board takes note of FIFA’s plans to change the football competition schedule and hold the World Cup every two years. A number of International Federations, national federations, clubs, players, players associations, and coaches have expressed strong reservations and concerns regarding the plans to generate more revenue for FIFA. The IOC shares these concerns and supports the calls of stakeholders, IFs, and major event organisers for a wider consultation, including with athletes’ representatives. (IOC/JOH)
A Trip to South America as a Pretence

The Executive Board of the IOC was founded 100 years ago

By Volker Kluge

The highest organ of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is the Session, which usually takes place once a year. Business between general meetings is conducted by an Executive Board (EB), which first met 100 years ago and has acted as moderator, coordinator, and think tank ever since. To mark its centenary, the now 15-member body met in Athens on 16 October 2021.

After the conclusion of the Congress, the IOC convened for a final meeting, in which Coubertin reminded his colleagues “that he would be absent in the autumn and probably for a long time, and that it was therefore important to take measures now to ensure the proper functioning of the Committee”. The talk was of a trip to South America, to which he had allegedly been invited.

He proposed the Swiss Baron Godefroy de Blonay, who had already replaced him as Président ad Interim during the First World War, as chairman of an “Executive Committee” to run the IOC during his absence (and beyond). Members were to include the Czech Jiří Guth-Jarkovsky, the Belgian Count Henry de Baillet-Latour, and the Swede Sigfrid Edström, who had distinguished...
themselves as organisers of the 1920 and 1912 Olympics, respectively. Coubertin intended his compatriot Marquis Melchior de Polignac to be the fifth member. The quintet, which was nominated for a period of four years, was to take up its duties on 1 October.

The Executive Board – a kind of “state within the state” – met for the first time on 7 November 1921 in Paris. Its chairman, however, was absent: De Blonay had excused himself, as had Guth-Jarkovský. The remaining three members agreed to appoint Baillet-Latour as vice-president. Polignac took over as secretary with the official address: 11, rue Anatole de la Forge, Paris 17e.

The agenda of the three-hour meeting consisted of several topics – mostly problems and open questions that had arisen from the June meeting. De Baillet-Latour wanted to write a letter to General Montu, who had left early with the Italian delegation under loud protest after the Session had awarded the 1924/28 Games to Paris and Amsterdam in a double header – a clever manoeuvre by Coubertin. The implementation of the Congress resolutions of 1914 and 1921 was to be communicated with Secretary General of the International Cycling Union (UCI), Paul Rousseau, who had proposed the foundation of an association of the international sport federations at the Congress. The succession of two IOC Members had to be settled, and the French NOC was reminded of the decision to award an alpinism prize in 1924 and to enshrine the names of future winners on the wall of the Olympic Stadium in Paris – an idea proposed by the Greek Count Alexander Mercati. The organisers of the previous Games in Stockholm and Antwerp were also asked to do the latter at this time. And Polignac tackled the question of the Olympic medal, for which the IOC wanted to organise a competition for its future design.4

Despite all announcements of resignation, Coubertin continued to preside over the event – although the list of delegates of the Olympic Congress had already started referring to him as “Président honor”.5 Although not a member of the EB, the British Reverend de Courcy-Laffan also attended the meeting; he happened to be passing through Paris at the time.

This kind of duplicity did not help the already tense relationship between Coubertin and Blonay. Given the Executive Board had not met before the next Session (also held in Paris at the beginning of June 1922), and as Blonay saw its role growing in the coming years, he proposed moving the IOC office to Lausanne. To finance it, he wanted to draw on the 10,000 French francs that the Swedish NOC had given as a donation in 1920 and which were the IOC’s only assets at the time.6

While some members had concerns about whether this plan might not run counter to the president’s interests, Coubertin accepted the proposal. In the same year, a room was rented in Lausanne on the third floor of the newly renovated Villa Mon Repos, where a local university student named Fred Auckenthaler was hired as office manager.7 After Blonay officially put him in charge on 12 April 1923, the 23-year-old took charge as the first IOC Chancellor. He managed finances, handled correspondence, and looked after the archives, which had been moved to Blonay’s Château de Grandson during the war years.

The new order had a positive impact. In 1923 alone, the Executive Board met four times, including twice in Lausanne.8 There was no rule as to when and how often it should meet; until the early 1960s, the IOC President decided on the basis of necessity.

Whether Coubertin, who had lived in Hotel Beau-Séjour in Lausanne since 1918, continued to attend meetings until his final resignation in Prague in 1925, is only partially clear from the limited records. However, it has been proven that he never made the trip to South America.9

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3 Minutes, 20th IOC Session Lausanne, 6 June 1921 (Paris: 1921), 15.
4 Minutes, EB meeting, 7 November 1921, Olympic Studies Centre, Lausanne (OSC).
5 Congress Olympique de Lausanne, 4–7 June 1921 (Paris: 1921), 38.
6 Minutes, 21st IOC Session Paris, 8 June 1922, OSC.
7 Volker Kluge, “Putting a Face to an ‘Unknown’”, JOH, vol. 23, no. 1, 2015, 15. On the ground floor of the Villa Mon Repos, two rooms were set up at the same time as an Olympic Museum.
8 Wolf Lyberg, Fabulous 100 Years of the IOC. Facts-figures-and much, much more (Lausanne: 1996).
As the Tokyo Olympics came to an end, IOC President Thomas Bach was probably entitled to a sense of vindication. “For the first time since the pandemic began, the entire world came together. Sport returned to centre stage. Billions of people around the globe were united by emotion, sharing moments of joy and inspiration. This gives us hope. This gives us faith in the future. We did it like athletes and for the athletes.” Even Bach had admitted “sleepless” nights before the Games finally took place.

The flame had burned longer than any in history. Only very few saw it begin its journey in Ancient Olympia and burn in the Olympic city. Although flame choreographer Artemis Ignatiou and High Priestess Xanthi Georgiou were both honoured by the Japanese government, they were forced to remain at home after the IOC had decided that there should be no guests at the Games. Bach himself did not run with the torch, in a break with recent practice. The arrival of the flame in the Olympic city, conducted away from public roads, was a sharp contrast, not only to Tokyo 1964 but all other torch relays as well.

Even Muhammad Yunus, winner of the Olympic Laurel, was unable to travel from his home in Bangladesh to receive his award in person at the opening ceremony. Attendance was strictly limited and parading athletes were asked to wear masks. That not all complied was a source of controversy.

There was a clue to the identity of the final torch bearer on the afternoon of the opening ceremony. The official news service announced, without emphasis, that Naomi Osaka’s opening match had been rescheduled from Saturday to Sunday. Few made the connection at the time. The choice of Osaka to light the cauldron was in keeping with the strenuous efforts made by the IOC to ensure gender equality at the Games. She was the first tennis player to do so. By coincidence the first female Olympic champion, the Briton Charlotte Cooper, had also been a tennis player.

An hour after the end of the formal opening ceremony, Rio 2016 badminton gold medallist Ayaka Takahashi, ignited an almost identical bowl at the Ariake Yume-no-Ohashi Bridge on the waterfront. It had been decided that the flame should burn in an accessible place, but a few days before, Tokyo 2020 announced they would “restrict access around the cauldron area and ask members of the public to refrain from visiting it”. In practice, members of the public were able to see the flame as they walked at the water’s edge, but they were instructed to “keep moving” by officials who carried placards stipulating that social distancing be observed. It was at least one way that local citizens were able to connect with the Games.

In March, organisers had also announced a ban on overseas spectators. By July, this had been extended to home fans. It did mean that the Games were, to some extent, a throwback to the days when most followed events, first through newspapers, then cinema newsreels, and later television. Past ISOH presidents Bill Mallon and David Wallechinsky were also in Tokyo in connection with their media duties.

Apart from members of the media, the only spectators at events were officials and team members. Messages from supporters were displayed on the scoreboards, and video calls enabled athletes “to connect with people in up to five locations to experience the joy of the Games together.” These were described as “Athlete Moments.”

At the Nippon Budokan, the presence of the other competitors for the team judo competition very nearly made up for the absence of a crowd. Teddy Riner and Clarisse Agbegnenou, both revered competitors in their own right, energised and inspired the French to victory in the inaugural mixed team competition at the expense of Japan. A curious echo of 1964, when Anton Geesink denied Japan success in the prestigious open category. The exuberant celebrations and outpouring of joy saw the entire French team fall in unison across the Olympic rings.

During the competition, Tokyo 2020 staff had waved flashcards asking to respect social distancing. As the celebrations continued, it became clear that they were
fighting a losing battle. The use of flash cards became a common feature amongst the teams of staff and volunteers. This was because relatively few spoke the Olympic languages of French or English.

The COVID–19 epidemic had made it impossible for many from overseas to travel to work at the Games, exacerbating the linguistic problem. Before the Games, a series of instruction booklets, known as “playbooks”, had been produced for each group of “stakeholders.” This was an ostensibly simple document, but it was followed by many extra regulations.

At the airports, the arrivals procedure typically took three hours. This involved a repetitive sequence of inspection of the same documents and a saliva-based test for COVID. Visitors were also required to supply certification of negative tests taken in their own countries before travel. Eventually, passage to the designated hotels was permitted. This was followed by three days confined to the hotel.

Each media “stakeholder” was then required to submit an “activity plan” and also to use a smartphone Online Check-in and Health Reporting App (OCHA) to enter daily reports on temperature and wellbeing. Members of the media were not permitted to use public transport until the 14-day period had been completed. All were also required to take regular tests during the course of the Games.

The Games were staged at the height of the summer. For years, many had warned of high temperatures and intense humidity. It was, after all, the reason that the marathons and walks had been relocated to Sapporo. Even so, the 50 km walk was still scheduled for 5:30 am and the women’s marathon was moved to 6 am because of heat concerns. It was perhaps a clue as to just why the organisers from 1964 had settled for October.

The earliest events to start in Tokyo were the triathlon and marathon swimming. Though these began at 6:30 am local time, the temperature was already 26 degrees Celsius and rising and humidity readings displayed on the scoreboard were already over 90 percent. The mixed team events in swimming, athletics, judo, and triathlon proved an eye-catching success.

The equestrian events have been so, to a greater or lesser extent, since women were first permitted to compete in dressage in 1952. The equestrian centre where the medals were decided was one of five heritage sites which had originally been used for the 1964 Games. In keeping with the theme of the Games, all three individual dressage medalists were women. Germany’s Jessica von Bredow-Werndl succeeded Charlotte Dujardin of Great Britain as champion. The individual eventing gold was won by Germany’s Julia Krajewski.

All the elements of modern pentathlon were held in the same stadium where a swimming pool had been erected for the purpose. Skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing attracted positive headlines on their respective Olympic debuts and will all keep their place for Paris 2024. Karate, another sport introduced after a long campaign for admission, remains hopeful of a return to the programme at a later date.

The theme of reconstruction was emphasised throughout the Games. A booth in the media centre, established in the cavernous “Big Sight” convention hall, offered information on various initiatives for reconstruction in Fukushima, Iwate and Miyagi, the three prefectures worst affected by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

Cultural activities which accompanied the Games were mostly held for an online audience. “Mocco”, a ten-metre-high puppet, made a stately appearance in Tokyo as part of the Tokyo 2020 Nippon Festival. Its arrival a few days before the Games was streamed live on the internet but no spectators were allowed.

An “Olympic Agora” was established in Tokyo’s Nihonbashi district. This included art installations, exhibitions and digital programmes. The JCII photo salon, a gallery in the Chiyoda municipality, also staged a retrospective, showing how the city looked in 1964.

When those 1964 Games came to an end, the scoreboard flashed the word “Sayonara.” The closing ceremony in 2021 also ended with a one-word message. This time it was “Arigato” – “Thank you”. It was a sentiment which was echoed the following month after the Paralympic Games.
Facts and Figures about the Tokyo 2020 Games

By Myles Garcia and Philip Barker

- These were first Olympics of the modern era to be postponed and held in an odd-numbered year.
- These were the first to be conducted without fans. A ban on overseas fans was announced on 20 March and the exclusion of local fans was added on 8 July.
- Tokyo 2020 was the fourth time that Japan had hosted a Summer or Winter Olympic Games.
- 206 teams and 11,091 athletes competed in 41 different sports and 339 events.
- North Korea (PRK) was the only NOC which refused to send a delegation, ostensibly because of fears of COVID-19, and it was only some days after the closing ceremony that any coverage was shown on state television. When the IOC Executive Board met on 5 September, the EB decided to suspend the North Korean NOC until the end of 2022.
- Ten largest delegations: USA (613), ROC (328), GBR (376), JPN (552), GER (425), ITA (372), AUS (486), FRA (398), CAN (370), CHN (431).
- Russian athletes participated for the first time under the name “ROC” (acronym of the Russian Olympic Committee). A flag with the emblem of the ROC was raised instead of the national flag. An extract of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto no. 1 was used for Russian gold medals.
- Lowest opening ceremony attendance, not only for the actual athletes marching in (est. a little over 1,000) but also just a few hundred press, audience numbers, performers, and field marshals (instead of a full stadium of 60,000+). Similar numbers attended the closing ceremony.
- Adjusted medal-awarding protocol: officials only handed the medals and flowers to each medallist; it was the athletes themselves who draped the medals over their respective necks.
- First time both cities were represented by women during the ceremonial Olympic flag handover ceremony. Yuriko Koike, governor of greater Tokyo, handed the flag to Thomas Bach, who then passed it on to Anne Hidalgo, mayor of Paris.
- First live use of drones at an Olympic Ceremony. 1,825 drones were used in the Tokyo OC. Sequences for drones were pre-recorded at PyeongChang 2018.
- At the closing, sopranoist Tomotaka Okamoto gave a falsetto rendition, the first time this had been done. A sopranoist is male soprano singer who sings the range of a coloratura female soprano by falsetto; related terms are countertenor or (previously) castrato.
- Most hours broadcast on TV: 7,000+ hours on US TV; exponentially the same in all other countries.
- Smallest TV audience: The Games drew the lowest television viewing figures in the USA for 33 years. NBC Universal averaged a nightly audience of 15.5 million viewers. NBC paid the highest figure of $1.418 billion for the US TV rights. By comparison, Rio 2016 (one hour ahead of New York time) delivered a nightly average of 26.7 million US viewers. London 2012 drew an average of 31.1 million viewers nightly.
- Most mixed-gender events: in archery, athletics, badminton, cycling, judo, rowing (allowed), shooting, swimming (4x100 m mixed medley), table tennis, and triathlon.
- This was the first Summer Games to allow openly declared transgender athletes and the first to have the largest openly declared on record. Three athletes: Laurel Hubbard (NZL), weightlifting; Quinn (CAN), women’s football, identifies as “they/them” and goes only by one name — possibly the first to do so in an Olympics; Chelsea Wolfe (USA), reserve on the BMX freestyle team.
- Five new sports added: freestyle BMX, karate, skateboarding, surfing. Also a new discipline in basketball (3x3), and mixed-team events introduced in athletics, judo, swimming, and triathlon.
- Baseball and softball returned.
- 20 world records: athletics (3), cycling–track (3), shooting (3), cycling (1), swimming (6), weightlifting (4).
- 88 countries were represented on the podium.
- 63 NOCs won gold medals, five for the first time: Bermuda, Burkina Faso, Philippines, Qatar, and Turkmenistan.
- First time medals for San Marino.
- First time siblings won Olympic gold in the same sport on the same day: Sister and brother Uta and Hifumi Abe (JPN) won gold within minutes of one another on the second day (25 July 2021).
MEDALS WON BY COUNTRIES

The IOC and the OCOG shall not draw up any global ranking per country.

With ten Olympic medals, including seven golds, the American Allyson Felix is the most successful track and field athlete.
At her fifth Olympic Games, the 35-year-old was victorious in the 4x400 m relay.
She won a bronze medal in the 400 m.

Youngest medallist: Kokona Haraki (JPN), 12, silver in skateboarding.

Oldest competitor: Andrew Hoy (AUS), 62, bronze in equestrian eventing.

Win-win mantra at work: in the men’s high jump, Mutaz Essa Barshim (QAT) and Gianmarco Tamberi (ITA) voluntarily agreed to share the gold and declined to do a jump-off. They both received gold medals; no silver was awarded.

Clean medal podia sweep (gold-silver-bronze won by the same country): Jamaica for the women’s 100 m, athletics; Switzerland for women’s cross-country mountain bike.

2032 Olympics: it was the first time that four designated host cities were lined up and committed to stage the Summer Games. The IOC Session formally confirmed that Brisbane would host the Games in 2032.

Belarus officials attempted to force sprinter Kristina Timanovskaya onto a flight to Minsk. She had been critical of decisions made by team officials. Poland and Austria offered Timanovskaya asylum and the Belarussian officials responsible for the attempted abduction were sent home.

French boxer behaving badly: superheavyweight Mourad Aliev head butted his opponent several times and thus was immediately disqualified. He appealed the decision and when it did not go his way, Aliev returned to the ring and sulked for one hour.

French marathon runner Morhad Amdouni knocked over a row of water bottles at a hydration station, apparently intending to deprive his competitors of water and grabbing the last one for himself. He later issued a statement denying that he had deliberately knocked the bottles.

First post-Tokyo reassignment of medals after doping offences: Great Britain’s sprinter CJ Ujah tested positive for banned substances ostarine and S-23. He had been part of the silver medal winning 4x100 m relay squad. After the British disqualification, Canada was awarded silver and fourth-placed China moved up to the bronze.
This is a first-hand account of Michelle Ford-Eriksson’s experiences as an athlete chosen to represent her peers at the 11th Olympic Congress held in Baden-Baden, Germany in 1981. It was also the first IOC Session and Olympic Congress for Juan Antonio Samaranch, who had been elected President of the IOC in Moscow the previous year. Baden-Baden would lay the foundation for the creation of the athletes’ voice within the Olympic Movement.

Preamble

Set against the politics of the Cold War, an Olympic boycott, and the emergence of systematic, state-sponsored doping, this was a time of great upheaval within the Olympic Movement.

Internationally, sport was operated and controlled by the International Federations (IFs). National Olympic Committees (NOCs) were static, passive bodies with no function except for the six months prior to the Olympic Games. The IOC’s legal responsibility was limited to the Games period. Every four years there existed the Olympic Games (summer and winter), but between the Games there was no activity within the Olympic Movement.

The Olympic Congress in Baden-Baden followed the US-led boycott of Moscow 1980 with the expected retaliatory Soviet boycott of Los Angeles 1984, which hung over all athletes like a thick fog.

The East German doping programme, only confirmed after the Berlin Wall came down and the Stasi [East German Ministry for State Security] files were opened,
had shown its ugly face in Montreal and Moscow. My deep-voiced competitors, with their hulking bodies and impossible speed, dominated the women's events in the pool at both Games. In Baden–Baden we called it "the most shameful abuse of the Olympic idea".

The IOC had held tight to its strict amateur code, yet there was a disparate canyon between the full-time sports programmes that existed in many Soviet bloc countries and those of us who needed to fit in training in and around work, or school like myself.

There was great gender disparity in sport worldwide. The IOC was a male-only club and few women held senior executive positions in any sport, with only 22 percent female participation at the Olympic Games in Moscow.

The US–led Moscow boycott had left us, the athletes of the world, with a sense of helplessness. The boycotts of Moscow and LA stripped thousands of athletes of their Olympic dream. The scars were still raw for those of us who had participated in Moscow, and even more so for those who were prohibited from participating by their respective NOC or governments. The government of my country even offered bribes to athletes to not compete in Moscow, with many of the public and media calling us traitors.

The boycott reinforced to us that the athletes played no part in the administration of sport. We felt we were treated as insignificant pawns by a political machinery. We were voiceless.

The IOC today loudly pronounces that "the athletes are the centre of the Olympic Games". This was not the case 40 years ago.

We wanted a seat at the table, the right to self-determination, the right to inclusion and equality. We wanted our voice, the athletes' voice, to be heard.

The IOC Congress in Baden–Baden would lay that foundation. This is that story.

Michelle Ford punching the air with joy at winning the gold medal in the 800 m freestyle at the 1980 Olympic Games. She started her Olympic career in Montreal 1976, at age 14. At Moscow 1980 she was the only non-Soviet bloc female swimmer to win a gold medal in the pool. In 1981, Michelle was part of a select group of Olympians invited by the IOC President to participate in the Olympic Congress, where she participated in athlete workshops and was heavily involved in the preparation of presentations to the IOC Members. She was director of sport at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL), before returning to Australia to work with the Organising Committee for Sydney 2000. "The Athletes’ Voice" is one chapter in Michelle’s yet to be published autobiography.
The original athlete’s certificate created for the Congress. It lists all athletes who were invited to the 11th Olympic Congress in Baden–Baden in 1981, and is signed by all athletes who attended the Congress.

Photo: Michelle Ford

IOC Executive Board and IOC Congress, 23–28 September 1981, Baden–Baden

Athletes Invited by President Samaranch to attend the Olympic Congress

Invited and attended
Yuko Arakida, JPN, volleyball
Pär Arvidsson, SWE, swimming
Thomas Bach, FRG, fencing
Sebastian Coe, GBR, athletics
Alexander Dityatin, URS, gymnastics
Irene Epple, FRG, alpine skiing
Michelle Ford, AUS, swimming
Ivar Formo, NOR, cross-country skiing
Mohamed Gammoudi, TUN, athletics
Bernhard Germeshausen, GDR, bobsledding
Slobodan Kačar, YUG, boxing
Kipchoge Keino, KEN, athletics
Zoltán Magyar, HUN, gymnastics
Herminio Menéndez Rodríguez, ESP, canoeing
Robert Nightingale, GBR, modern pentathlon
Svetlana Otsetova, BUL, rowing
John Peterson, USA, wrestling
Juan Daniel Pirán, ARG, fencing
Hans Kjeld Rasmussen, DEN, shooting
Esko Rechardt, FIN, sailing
Jürg Röthlisberger, SUI, judo
Teófilo Stevenson Lorenzo, CUB, boxing
Elisabeth Theurer, AUT, equestrian
Vladislav Tretiak, URS, ice hockey
Vera Zozuļa, URS, luge

Invited but did not attend
Yavé Cahard, FRA, cycling
Nadia Comăneci, ROU, gymnastics
Władysław Kozakiewicz, POL, athletics
Luděk Macela, TCH, football
Darell Pace, USA, archery
Daniel Senet, FRA, weightlifting
Sara Simeoni, ITA, athletics
Radu Voina, ROU, handball
Robert van de Walle, BEL, judo
Miruts Yifter, ETH, athletics

Lausanne, 10th July 1981, ref number 5623/81
Dear Miss Ford,

May I first congratulate you on your selection as a participant in the forthcoming XIth Olympic Congress, which is an event of extreme importance to the world of international sport …

The original athlete’s certificate created for the Congress. It lists all athletes who were invited to participate in shaping the future of sport and the Olympic Movement.

Invited were 35 Olympians, of which 25 attended the Congress. It was to be a watershed moment for the Olympic Games and world sport.

It was the beginning of the athletes’ voice.

The invitation

It was my 19th birthday, 15 July 1981, and an A5 envelope arrived in the mailbox. The Olympic rings bottom left and embossed in capital letters the words “COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIQUE, SWITZERLAND”. With a hastened sense of excitement and curiosity, I carefully opened the fine paper envelope. The official IOC letterhead shone in the top right-hand corner.
especially so for those who had been prohibited from participating by their respective NOC or governments.

These were different times. Athletes were considered insignificant to the administration of sport, and in part, to our own destiny. We were told to stay in our place, that our job was to perform on the field of play only, without consideration, and we were prohibited from making any financial gain from our sport activities, let alone being able to make a living from it.

We understood that any questioning of the authorities, or the way Olympic sport was governed or operated, or how decisions were made and who made them, would result in adverse consequences.

We were now invited guests and to be active participants at the highest table in world sport, and participate we would, leaving a legacy to which all sport still aspires.

We had one shot, and we took it.

The Congress

A two-hour drive south of Frankfurt, nestled in the Black Forest, and renowned for its thermal baths, the small village of Baden-Baden is an impressive town. At its centre, streets of colourful buildings line cobbled streets and the narrow River Oos winds its gentle path through groves of lush green foliage.

Seated in the back of the black Mercedes car along with my personal chauffeur, who had waited for my arrival at Frankfurt airport, I realised I was now at the gateway to the other side of the Olympic life. Every detail of our ten-day itinerary was precisely ordered, accentuating the tone that prevailed: that of a gentleman’s club of the highest standard. The athletes’ hotel, although not five star, was nonetheless elegant and private. Everything was organised to the second.

Targeted, yet diverse, the athletes that had been chosen to attend the Congress had been nominated by their IFs and/or NOCs and selected by the IOC’s Tripartite Commission. However, athlete names had not been forthcoming, and “there had been few nominations from NOCs outside Europe, and none from Africa”, and it was thereby noted at the June meeting of the IOC Executive Board that “the Tripartite Commission was prepared to accept two additional nominations from the African continent”. This would bring the number of invited athletes to 34, with 10 coaches.

Each athlete who attended had to be no older than 30 years old and have participated in at least one of the past three Olympics (1972, 1976, 1980), so Munich, Montreal, and the Moscow Summer Games and Sapporo, Innsbruck, and the Lake Placid Winter Games.

Most were household names in their countries, some of world acclaim. Yet here we all were bound by a common thread: we had surmounted the odds and won Olympic medals.

On 21 September, two days before the official opening of the Congress, the 25 athletes, some with trepidation, others with gusto, met for the first time in the athletes’ designated area: the International Hall. A welcome speech introduced our appointed staff and our official interpreters, followed by an overview outlining our heavy social calendar and the reason we were assembled:

“There will be four 5-minute presentations to be delivered by the athletes scheduled for day three of the Congress.” No topics or indication of what we might talk about was given.

“It’s now up to you!” stated IOC Member and Olympian Peter Tallberg, in his refined Finnish accent. A yachtsman who had competed at five Olympics between 1960 and 1980, Tallberg had been asked by President Samaranch
to be the IOC liaison between the IOC Members and the invited athletes and to coordinate our activities.

Tallberg introduced Donna de Varona, American dual gold medal-winning swimmer from Tokyo 1964 and the first female anchor for ABC’s Wide World of Sports, a guest of Congress Organising Committee President Willi Daume, to help provide guidance.

With the formalities over, the wine glasses began to be filled. This was a time when the Movement was said to have no money and was struggling to find cities to host the Games. Yet here the wine flowed, courtesy of Jürgen Schroeder, the former German oarsman and our go-to person in charge of the athletes’ programme.

Only six female athletes had been invited: myself, Australian swimming gold medallist in 1980; my roommate, Yuko Arakida, Japanese volleyball gold medallist in 1976; Svetla Otsetova, Bulgarian rowing gold medallist in 1976; Elisabeth Theurer, Austrian equestrian gold medallist in 1980; and the two winter athletes, Irene Epple, West German alpine skiing silver medallist in 1980; and Vera Zozuļa, Latvian luge gold medallist in 1980.

The athletes present were a convivial group, but all strangers. Each athlete from the Eastern bloc had an “interpreter” in tow, although we later came to understand that these were their political watchers, there to make sure they toed the party line.

Many of the athletes in the room had been victims of political plays by their governments. Seeing the African representative, I was reminded of the Olympic boycott by African nations in 1976, which followed the refusal by the IOC to ban New Zealand after their rugby union team toured apartheid South Africa earlier that year. I had a vivid memory of the African nations arriving at the Olympic Village in Montreal, and waiting for them at the opening ceremony, only to learn literally minutes before the parade of athletes that they had to withdraw.

At 14 years old, this had been my first encounter with a boycott. At the time, I had felt extremely sad for these athletes, among them medal prospects, who had their Olympic moment taken from them. Then, four years later, the impact of the 1980 boycott, of whether we would go or not, had been heavy on all of us. It was startling to think how many athletes around the world had been denied the opportunity to compete in both the 1976 and 1980 Games.

The conversations and banter filled the room – some serious, some casual – about home, family, their athletic exploits. The official languages of the Congress were recorded in our circular as being French and English, but language didn’t seem to be a problem among the athletes. It was obvious that many delegates at the Congress regarded us as a mere masquerade. This feeling was accentuated when we were joined by some of the IOC Members, national delegates, who sought to be seen with their star athletes.

School visits, excursions, wining and dining. It was all a far cry from my rigorous training routine. At 3 pm after a copious lunch, some of the athletes present reassembled to discuss what the four athlete speeches should focus on. What struck me was the fact that, regardless of sport, nationality, or personal background, we soon found a united, common voice.

For those present, there was limited understanding of the IOC and any knowledge of sports administration stopped at the door of our national and international sporting federations. Convinced we were there to
“contribute”, we could not be blinded by the fanfare and attitudes of others.

Nods of agreement set forth an interesting dynamic. The issues were multiple and complex, and preparation time, unlike for the other delegates who had months to prepare, was limited to hours. We needed to make mention of this in our first speech:

“We are coming from different countries and various sports to present the opinions of the athletes. Due to this fact and to make our contribution most effective, sufficient time is required for preparation. During the last three days we have been working day and night in various discussion group sessions and we are therefore thankful that we have had the possibility to come to Baden–Baden some days before the Congress.”

Complaining was not the way to be heard. Instead, we felt we had to show our value by being clear and concise, expressing our concerns, and calling for action. As we talked, a burning question emerged: how, in four five-minute speeches, were we going to present all the topics that were important to us?

The quorum of athletes agreed: if this was to be our only chance to be heard and the integrity of the Olympic Movement was at stake, four short speeches would not be adequate. On 22 September, the eve before the official opening of the Congress, we drafted a letter, which was then typed and delivered to President Samaranch and the Executive Board of the IOC:

Baden–Baden, 22nd September 1981

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE IOC AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

THE ATHLETES ATTENDING THE CONGRESS WANT TO EXPRESS TO YOU THEIR ENTHUSIASM IN BEING INCLUDED AT THIS IMPORTANT BADEN–BADEN CONGRESS.

BECAUSE IT IS THE FIRST TIME THE ATHLETES HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE AND REALISE THE RESPONSIBILITY AS SPOKESPEOPLE FOR ATHLETES ALL OVER THE WORLD THEY RESOLVED IN THEIR MORNING SESSION THE FOLLOWING:

They would like to have more time to meet and discuss their concerns with the IOC President, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, and the Tripartite Commission

They also have requested more time during the Congress to address the serious issues challenging the future of the Olympic Games.

We agreed our topics would be:

• Doping
• Rule 26 – the eligibility to compete in the Games, the so-called “amateur rule”
• The inclusion of athletes at the decision-making table and the participation of women in the Olympic Movement
• Political involvement and boycotts
• Olympic ceremonies

We decided that Vladislav would present on Olympic Ceremonies, as this had been an important issue at the 1980 Moscow Games, where for some athletes, the Olympic flag was raised in lieu of the national flag.

Each topic touched a raw nerve. We had each been impacted directly or indirectly by these five key points, with the boycott and systemic doping being the most significant news stories from the Moscow Olympic Games. In my sport alone, the East German female swimmers had gone from no individual gold medals in Munich in 1972, to winning 11 of 13 gold medals in the pool in Moscow, breaking 10 world records, and a further 15 silver and bronze medals. They averaged two out of every three medals won by women in the pool. I was

15-minute speech on the last day of the Congress. Word also came through that one of these must be presented by the Russian ice hockey champion – and later, the President of the Ice Hockey Federation of Russia – Vladislav Tretiak.

Preparing the speeches

The clock was already ticking. We had one day to discuss and prepare, to determine what the speeches should address and then get them written. Five main topics emerged: issues that had bitterly affected the athletes over the past decade and consequently questioned the perennity of the Olympic Movement.

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the only non-Soviet bloc athlete to win a gold medal in Moscow, in the 800 m freestyle. It was to be another 18 years before the details of the systemic use of steroids on East German athletes, especially their female swimmers, became known. The devastating impact this doping programme had on the results in the swimming pool for Montreal and Moscow is well documented.

The inclusion of women in the Olympic Movement was also a very important point for us to address. Women’s events counted for only a quarter of the Olympic programme in 1981. There were no women among the IOC Members, nor were they to be found on any of the international or national federation boards. Although the Olympic swimming programme, for example, was almost identical for women and men, the imbalance across the spectrum of sports was astonishing.

The scars were evident – each had a story, but our passion turned into a dynamic that no one had expected. Although the social events had pulled some of our group away, those who remained wanted to seize this moment in the hope that they could protect the future generation of athletes from the harms we had suffered.

My small notepad was full of scribbled notes and thoughts on the experiences of the group: grief, injustice, lack of equality, and suppression of fair play. The subject of the boycotts was raw, yet where I could express my strongest feelings, under “Politics”, I drew a star, underlined it, then wrote:

- After preparing several years to participate in an Olympic Games an athlete may be faced with nothing.
- Propaganda through sport and athletes to promote political ideas.
- Athletes should not be punished by political decisions, and the IOC should be more proactive in setting up a body which governs the athlete.
- We appeal to the press of the world not to make political issues out of sporting events.
- We are proud to represent our country but make sure that it should not be abused.
- Protected from geographical boycotts, athletes need to be chosen solely on their athletic ability.

As discussions progressed, we voiced our different experiences and challenged each other closely. Athletes were not trained nor encouraged to speak. The system discouraged such “political” discussion, and among the group of athletes the effect was felt. Interest was fading – leaving only a few who realised that we needed to seize this moment and were prepared to do the work to meet the challenge.

We found it easy to speak with one another and agree on common positions. As members drifted away from the bistro table we had occupied, it became clear that while we wanted to ensure an East–West balance in our choices, we no longer needed the interpreters: those remaining all spoke good English, the language in which the speeches would be delivered.

It was decided between us that there had to be unanimous agreement between all athletes for what would finally be presented. This in itself was quite extraordinary. We were between a Moscow boycott and a possible retaliation boycott at Los Angeles 1984, in the middle of Cold War, yet we were a small group of athletes, none of whom had met two days prior, representing East and West, North and South, working together in a spirit of esprit de corps for the benefit of all. It was truly refreshing. It was the Olympic spirit in action.

With limited time, we decided to divide into groups to write the speeches. I had taken notes and written a speech on boycotts and injustices: the indecision, and in my case, the death threats, the Australian government offering financial rewards directly to athletes to withdraw from the 1980 team, were all still weighing on me. However, after writing the speech, I felt it would be more powerful to have someone who had been victim to a boycott present the speech. I turned to Kipchoge (Kip) Keino, unaware that he had not participated at the Montreal Games, telling him that he should deliver this speech as he represented the African voice: those who had been subject to the boycott in 1976.

Kip, a two–time Olympic champion distance runner who would go on to head the Kenyan Olympic Committee, was the only African delegate. At 41 years old, he was the oldest athlete amongst us – and after some coaching, he agreed to present the speech I had prepared, of which I was very proud.

Svetla Otsetova, the 1976 gold medallist in rowing from Bulgaria, would deliver the speech on women’s participation. Thomas Bach, a 1976 gold medallist in fencing from West Germany, who had a legal background, would deliver the speech on Rule 26, the “amateur rule”. Vladislav Tretiak, the Soviet ice hockey goalkeeper, was to deliver the speech on Olympic ceremonies. And Ivar Formo, the Norwegian cross–country skier and gold medallist in 1976, would be our lead off speaker, presenting our position on doping in sport.
We all agreed that Sebastian Coe, the track gold medallist at Moscow and a native English speaker from Great Britain, would present the final 15-minute speech on the last day of the Congress – his 25th birthday.

The round table

The general sentiment that we, the athletes, were seen as window dressing and not capable of such high-level talks, made us more determined to raise the issues that meant most to us.

Each of the five short speeches was met with a rumbling of interest and a smattering of applause from the members. We had exposed the issues and talked of the injustices but had not yet sought action. There would be a gap before our final flagship speech would be heard on the last day.

A small group had formed. A few athletes, a handful within the larger group, saw that this was our last chance to get the attention of the executive decision makers of the IOC. We needed to make them take note that we were serious about the mandate they had given to us. We had to demand action.

Back at the bistro table that had become our meeting place, Thomas Bach, Seb Coe, Ivar Formo, and I were the last to keep the flame alive: standing, sitting, writing, debating, and collating in detail each word to be delivered. Words were checked for clarity, to avoid misinterpretation and misuse, as we poured passion into our mission. It had to have an impact and be a call to action. Our deadline was 7 am, one hour before the Congress reconvened.

A call for action

We debated hard on every topic. On doping, if an athlete is found guilty, should they get a life ban or not? Too harsh? Should the ban extend to the coach and athlete’s entourage? Doctors? Administrators? Why just the athlete? We understood that “life ban” may not be possible on legal grounds, but it was also clear, too, that if we went in softly, nothing would change. We had to be tough and felt that athletes would understand, too much having been tolerated, too many having turned a blind eye. Doping was a shameful abuse of Olympic ideals. It had to be: a life ban on athletes, coaches, and doctors would be our demand.

Back and forth, from one topic to another, each exchange became more animated and more poignant than the previous. These issues had touched our lives, maybe even destroyed our dreams. The amateur rule? East versus West? How could athletes, those from the East, receive cars, houses, full medical care, food, and a monthly stipend and yet not fall foul of amateur rules, while other athletes from other countries were sanctioned? Athletes who had been given nothing and even had to pay for the privilege to compete? The sting of the Cold War in sport was real; we’d all felt it. There was consensus: the athlete from the West was falling behind and struggling, tied to a more stringent interpretation of the amateur rule than in the East.

Was it time to relax this most stringent, barbaric law that controlled the athlete, prohibiting them any financial gain? We believed so. Rule 26 had to be changed to allow every athlete the same opportunity. How to do this when the IOC was beholden to the amateur ruling? And, we knew that any ruling from the IOC would only be restricted to the Olympic Games and not the four years in between.

Analysing, discussing, and questioning we realised that to be effective we had to insist that the IFs – those governing the individual sports – would be a more effective target because it was their duty to deliver an equal playing field for athletes. Until now, the International Federations had remained independent from the IOC. If the Olympic Movement was to rebuild, the connection had to be stronger.

Our deadline was closing in. Our shorter five-minute speeches had addressed the issues and the Congress was attentive. We decided that this speech had to go further. Discussion on the sanctions and recommendations continued. We had to agree. More changing and redefining, making sure our words, the words of the athletes, would not be misinterpreted or misconstrued. Our message was absolutely clear.

Satisfied that the earlier speeches had made their mark, we deemed it important to reiterate our disappointment that the IOC had no women in its ranks and that female participation in less than 25 percent of
events at the Olympic Games was not good enough. It had to be said again that the IOC was “out of step” and that male and female participation should be made equal at all levels.

With only hours left, we asked ourselves a last question: what about all those who had to forgo the opportunity to participate in the Games? Every athlete, we concluded, should have the right to compete without being subjected to political pressure or discrimination of any kind, and the Olympic Games must play host to the best athletes from all corners of the globe.

With the discos closed and the parties finished, silence had fallen over the small town. Only the rustle of our papers and our words continued to be heard in our hotel, away from the mainstream of the Congress. We had been together for eight days – and although we didn’t know each other beforehand, a bond had developed, close friendships had formed, and our respect for each other had grown. The four of us, it seemed, had each come to Baden-Baden with determination and hope that we could make a difference. Before retiring to bed in the early hours that day, we granted ourselves a chuckle that anyone might have thought of us as window dressing, the “unthinking robots” of the Games, there to perform only on the field of play.

Then, one last thought occurred: we could say all we liked but we had no access to the decision-making process. We needed to change this by insisting on the

The Athletes’ Final speech at Baden-Baden, presented by Sebastian Coe on of behalf of all attending athletes

When I arrived here I had to admit to a certain amount of fear and trepidation at not only being included in the Congress, but also having the task of standing before you and articulating the feelings of the athletes. Well, my immediate fear was allayed. You could almost say that I felt quite in my own element when on Thursday I saw a queue forming outside the main hall for free tracksuits and inside the hall I stand here with the electric clock flashing away to my left.

We wish to record our immediate thanks to President Samaranch for his invitation to the Congress, to Willi Daume for his support and confidence in the youth of the Movement, and to the whole of the Organising Committee which provided us with the support, the staff and the facilities needed to accomplish our difficult and challenging task.

I feel it is necessary at this point to outline the working conditions and problems we had to overcome in order to address the Congress.

It may have been noted by the Congress that the athletes have been looking a little bit tired – we are! We have all been working long hours in the preparation of the papers – often working into the early hours of the morning.

No discos – just discussion.

Late nights have often been followed by early mornings. Frequent visits have been made in the mornings by the athletes to schools and throughout the day to community activities.

We are the first athletes invited to participate vocally at an Olympic Congress. It is for this reason that we realise the responsibility we have in securing the future inclusion of athletes. Since the athletes will be participating in future Congresses we ask you for your assistance in providing us with comprehensive information before we arrive.

This does not mean however that athletes will arrive here with speeches formulated and written, possibly by NOCs, IFs or even government authorities. Only independence ensures valid contribution. This is consistent with IOC philosophy.

As a group we have rejected every attempt at political pressure in both the choice of speakers and subjects.

We come here not knowing what our role would be and we had little time to define it. Fortunately, this diverse but well-balanced group was able to address a broad spectrum of challenges.

A dynamic group was formed. We worked with cohesion and efficiency, the subject always remained more important than the individual.

Five major topics emerged. They were – in order of presentation to the Congress: firstly, drug abuse; secondly, Rule 26 – the eligibility to compete in the Games; thirdly, inclusion of athletes in the Olympic Movement; fourthly, political involvement in the Olympic debate, and finally Olympic ceremonies.

While these were not the only subjects discussed we did consider them to be of immediate importance for the future of the Games.

Time prevents us from a full analysis of these subjects, but we athletes sincerely hope that you leave this hall fully aware of our feelings.

On “doping” we consider this to be the most shameful abuse of the Olympic idea.

We call for the LIFE BAN of offending athletes.

We call for the LIFE BAN of coaches and the so-called doctors who administer this evil.

On Rule 26: it is illogical to expect one rule to be capable of attending to the individual needs of all the sports in the Olympic Movement. We therefore echo the call in Congress for greater independence for International Federations in determining exactly what the needs of their sports are.

The demand for a modern Olympian is considerable. Such sacrifice to the cause of the Movement should never be
The closing speech

By 7 am the next morning, 29 September 1981, our presentation was ready by our deadline to hand over to the interpreters. Simple and direct, this was a wake-up call: a few words, a 15-minute speech, which we hoped would change the world of sport as we had known it.
Albert Corey: The Only Frenchman of the 1904 Olympics

By Clément Genty

The 1904 Olympics were initially planned to be held in Chicago, but St. Louis hosted them instead due to the possibility of twinning the event with the Louisiana Purchase International Exposition, honouring the centennial of the acquisition of Louisiana from France by the United States.

France, like many European countries, was not represented by a team. Only one Frenchman participated: Albert-Louis Corey, known as Albert Corey. He won two medals as a long-distance runner. The purpose of this document is to shed light on this little-known athlete, licensed to the Chicago Athletic Association, so that, 117 years after the Games, his true nationality can be recognised.

Albert-Louis Corey

There are few sources concerning Albert Corey. For his birth, we can rely on the civil registry of the commune of Meursault, France, digitised by the department of Côte d’Or. Thus, we can undoubtedly state that Albert-Louis Corey was born on 16 April 1878 in the commune of Meursault. He was the son of Étienne Corey, winegrower and landowner, aged 39, and Denise Buffenoir, without profession, aged 38. The two married on 6 July 1859 in Volnay, a neighbouring village of Meursault.

The family name Corey seems to be widespread in Meursault, as there are various inhabitants with this name. For example, in the census of 1876, there is a person named Charlie Corey, a winemaker living on Rue de la Planche Meunière, and in the census of 1886, there is a person named François Corey, a winemaker living on Rue des Forges. Albert Corey lived with his family on Rue des Prés, a street currently named Rue Pierre Joigneaux.

Military period

Albert Corey’s military service record is considered a reliable source and gives us insight into his army career as well as his changes of residence. Registered as a commercial employee, Corey volunteered for four years, starting on 4 November 1896. He joined the eighth battalion of Chasseurs à pied (light infantry) and was ranked 2nd class on 6 November. He was made corporal on 1 February 1898 and sergeant on 28 March 1900.
He was reappointed for two years on 31 August 1900 and was promoted to sergeant major on 23 October 1901. He re-enlisted for three years on 29 July 1902. He went missing on 2 January 1903 and was considered a deserter six days later.

First sport events

On 27 July 1894, Corey was registered as a participant in the amateur bicycle race Lyon–Dijon–Lyon, organised by the newspaper _Le Progrès_. Wearing bib number 42, he was one of the 89 competitors at the start. In Lyon, he ranked eighth with a delay of 5 hours and 26 minutes compared to the winner, who displayed a time of 10 hours and 55 minutes. The final result is unknown.

In August 1905, Corey was mentioned in the US press as having beaten – while serving in the French military – the long-distance running record of 100 miles in 1899, with a time of 16 hours and 22 minutes. In another article, it was mentioned that he held the record for the longest distance, covering 63 miles (101.39 km) in 12 hours.3

On 7 July 1901, Corey participated as a runner in the Paris Marathon, Paris–Conflans, as a soldier. He is registered as a resident in Amiens, which corresponds to the barracks of the second corps of the eighth battalion of _Chasseurs à pied_. He finished in tenth place with a time of 2 hours and 53 minutes. Despite not receiving a prize (only the first seven were awarded) he had the satisfaction of being in the top ten – a surprise ranking, since he was not mentioned by the newspaper _Le Vélo_ as one of the predicted top 12 winners. Later, _Le Vélo_ reported that Corey, who came to register for the marathon in his military uniform, was greeted with shouts of “_Vive l’armée!_” (long live the army).4

On 28 July 1902, Corey was part of a group of four non-commissioned officers and one officer who carried out a 92 km _raid_ (marathon race), Amiens–Abbeville–Amiens in 16 hours and 30 minutes, including a break of 1 hour and 15 minutes. “_Le raid a été effectué en tenue de campagne avec chargement du sac réglementaire, plus deux jours de vivres_” (The marathon was carried out in uniform with a loaded regulation bag, plus two days of food supplies).5

Returning to the Paris Marathon, organised on 6 July 1902 between Achères and Paris, Corey finished seventh, with a time of 3 hours and 12 minutes.6

On 17 July 1902, he he competed in the 150 km Paramé–Rennes–Paramé ultra-distance race. Registered as a licensee at the Union des Sports de Paris (USP), Corey “_a particulièrement grande confiance et escompte la première place_” (is particularly confident and is expecting the first place). Wearing bib number 43, he broke away at the start with two other runners and took the lead after the first 21 km. The outcome is not known.

On 28 September 1902, he took part in the 24-hour pedestrian race, organised at the Buffalo velodrome in Neuilly-sur-Seine. He was second after the first hour with 13,750 km covered, then first after the second hour with 26 km. He remained in the lead until the fourth hour, then regained the lead again after the sixth hour, when he covered 60,750 km. He gave up during the seventh hour, having run 65 km.

Move to the United States

Corey moved to the United States at an unknown date in 1903. He is not listed by the immigration office on Ellis Island. He settled in Chicago, Illinois. He first worked in a hotel located in Dayton, Ohio7. Then he moved to Chicago, Illinois, where he worked for Swift & Company meatpacking plant, for 22.5 cents an hour.8

The 1904 Olympic Games

The 1904 Olympics were the first to offer a medal system based on gold, silver, and bronze, corresponding to first, second, and third place, respectively. Held from 1 July to 23 November 1904, the Games introduced new Union Stock Yards in Chicago was the heart of the meat industry for decades. Corey came to the United States in 1903, where he first worked as a cook in Dayton, Ohio, and later in Chicago for the Swift and Armour stockyards. Far left: As a soldier, Corey took part in the Paris–Conflans marathon in 1901.
sports such as boxing, freestyle wrestling, decathlon, and dumbbells. A total of 651 athletes participated in the 95 events, with 12 NOCs represented; athletes from Africa competed at the Games for the first time.

While working for the Swift & Company slaughterhouse in Chicago, Corey read in a newspaper that runners were being recruited for the next Olympics. According to an article in The Washington Times:

Corey is a Frenchman by birth and a professional strike-breaker by occupation. Corey was attracted by the recent butchers’ strike. It was exactly six weeks ago that Corey made his first appearance on Marshall Field, Chicago, and told Trainer “Mike” Butcher that he was a distance runner and that he would like to represent the Chicago A. C. in the marathon. After watching Corey run at a good clip for forty-five minutes, Butler told him “he would do.” Corey’s training was all done over a cinder track. His showing under these circumstances was remarkable.9

Corey was listed as an American in the marathon race for an unknown reason. In a 2010 Los Angeles Times blog post, Brian Cronin wrote about this situation:

One last little curiosity occurred when Arthur [sic!] Corey finished second at 3 hours and 34 minutes. Corey was a Frenchman, but since he did not have the right papers, he was listed as an American, which is what he is still officially listed as to this day.10

1904 Olympic Marathon

Following the disqualification of Fred Lorz, who finished first, due to cheating, Corey placed second with a time of 3 hours and 34 minutes, behind Thomas John Hicks, who placed first with a time of 3 hours and 28 minutes. A lot has been written about this event, which in many ways was memorable. We won’t go back over these sports anecdotes, except for this comment made in a post-race report by Olympic chronicler Charles Lucas:

The Marathon race, from a medical standpoint, demonstrated that drugs are of much benefit to athletes along the road, and that warm sponging is much better than cold sponging for an athlete in action.10

Four miles

Albert Corey also competed during the 1904 Games in the 4-mile (6.44 km) team race with the Chicago Athletic Association squad. Corey teamed up with four other runners: Lacey Hearn, Sidney Hatch, James Lightbody, and Frank Verner. All four except Corey were Americans, which gave the team the quality of a “mixed team” or “international team”. Competing against the New York Athletic Club, Corey’s team placed second, winning silver.

Reports of the Games

There is no official report on the St. Louis Olympics. On its website, the Olympic Studies Centre states:

No official report on the Games was published by the Organising Committee. However, two works published in English in 1905 are jointly regarded as the official reports on these Games, namely “The Olympic Games 1904” by Charles J.P. Lucas, and the “Review of the Olympic Games of 1904” by James E. Sullivan.

The first report, however, states that Corey is French, without any doubt: “A Frenchman, wearing the colors of the Chicago Athletic Association, finished second.”
A few pages earlier, a possible reason for the unofficial recognition of Corey’s French nationality is presented:

*England and France did not send a single competitor to America, and the French people showed their ingratitude by an entire absence of representation. America made the Paris games a success, and without American entries the second revival of the games would have been a farce. Neither France nor England were missed from the games of 1904, however and it is doubtful, indeed, if a single Frenchman could have finished even fourth in any of the events. In fact, only one Englishman would have stood a chance of winning any event whatever, and that man was Shrubb, who holds several world’s records in the distance events.*

**Career in the United States**

On 6 May 1905, Corey participated in a 25 mile (40.23 km) marathon and finished fifth. On 23 September, he participated in the 25 mile marathon from Chicago, but dropped out halfway through.

On 7 December 1905, Corey, “the French long distance footracer”, participated in a 90 mile (144.84 km) race from Chicago, Illinois to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This race was linked to a prize offered by a Mr. Blast from Milwaukee for anyone who could cover the distance in less than 18 hours. Corey took part in the event with one of his friends, Joseph Replate.

Corey finished fourth in the 1906 Chicago Marathon, with a time of 3 hours and 13 minutes. He obtained second place the following year, with a time of 3 hours and 6 minutes, and won the race in 1908, with a time of 2 hours and 57 minutes. At the Missouri Athletic Club Marathon in 1908, he had his best time: two hours and 38 minutes; he finished fourth.

In 1907, he broke the record for 100 miles (160.93 km), with a time of 18 hours and 33 minutes; the previous time was 19 hours and 54 minutes. In 1916, this record was still unbeaten.

1908 was a decisive year for Corey. He received many proposals to take part in races, though mention of him in the American newspapers noted how he harassed his competitors in view of remunerative races. Unfortunately, he only suffered failures. In March 1908, he took part in a race in New York, where the objective was to cover the longest distance within six days at Madison Square Garden; ultimately, he was “handicapped by a bad partner”.

Two months later, he announced that he had refused the proposal made by France for him to wear the French “tricolour” uniform at the next Olympic Games in London. The reasons were administrative: having joined the First Regiment Athletic Association, he could not take

Corey went professional in 1905. That year, he participated in the first edition of the Chicago Marathon, organised by the Illinois Athletic Club. He was considered one of the favourites, but gave up. Two years later, he finished second in 3:06:55 h. The photo shows him after the race.

Above: medal and ticket from 1905.

Photo: Chicago Sun Times/Chicago Daily News collection, Chicago History Museum; Clément Genty Archive

In 1908, Corey ran without a sponsor, but with a French flag on his chest. Since he drank wine during the races, the press considered alcohol to be his secret.

Photo: Passaic Daily Herald, 1908
leave without fear of losing his place in the group; that would have ended his professional status, despite the fact that he had been running with them for almost ten years. The 1908 Olympics took place without Corey. Less than two months later, on 12 September, the press announced that he was no longer part of the “First regiment team” of Chicago.

On 25 November 1908, he was announced as a starter in the Yonkers Marathon the next day. He came in second, behind Johnny Hayes, a 22-year-old clerk at Bloomingdale’s department store in New York City. The jury had declared him Olympic champion in London because the first-place winner, the Italian Dorando Pietri, had been led across the finish line by officials, completely exhausted.

At the beginning of 1909, a particularity of Corey’s character was revealed: that he never drank alcohol between races, only during them:

“Champagne Charley” is the name which Albert L. Corey is known to some of his competitors in the long distance running game. This would indicate a free use of wine, but Corey never touches it or another stimulant while in training. It is only during a race that he has recourse to it. While on his run from Ravinia Park to Chicago in the I.A.C. Marathon, Cory took several “swigs” from a champagne bottle, and after crossing the line a winner he finished the bottle. His trainer at that time was Georges Pettitain, a compatriot and hotel chef.\(^\text{13}\)

On 23 January 1909, “The French Runner” participated in the Chicago Marathon but was outclassed by Dorando Pietri. Corey’s performance was considered “pitiable.” He was largely beaten, with a gap of 7 miles (11.27 km), by Pietri, who finished with a time of 2 hours and 56 minutes.

In February 1909, Corey, still in the United States, contacted the French newspaper L’Auto-vélo, which took the opportunity to recall his record:

Albert Corey, who left for America in 1903, is 28 years old. At the 1904 Olympic Games in St. Louis, he placed second in the marathon, behind the American J. Hicks. In 1907, in Boston, he was second in another marathon, behind JJ Hayes. Finally, in May 1908, he won the Chicago Marathon and was to be part of the team sent by the United States to the London Olympic Games. Corey was also the official holder of the American amateur 100-mile, 160.932 km track record in 18 hours and 33 minutes. Recently turned professional again, he was beaten in a marathon race by Dorando Piétri.\(^\text{13}\)

He repeated the Six-Day Race in New York at the beginning of March 1909 with a man named Hegelmann, but was apparently largely overtaken by a French duo.

Back to France

According to available records, Albert Corey worked as a journalist in France between July 1909 and December 1912. We can thus deduce that he returned from the United States between March and July. His articles may be found in newspapers such as L’Ouest-Éclair (25 May 1910), La Liberté (6 July, 3, 7, 10, 18, 21, 24, and 31 August; 4 September; 12 and 23 October; 9, 16, 23, and 30 November 1910) and Comœdia (1909, March and June 1911, 1912).

Corey’s son Albert was born on 31 October 1910 in the 14\(^\text{th}\) district of Paris, and officially registered on 19 November 1910; Corey’s declared profession on that document is that of journalist.

First World War

Corey joined the army in 1914, probably on the occasion of the mobilisation, and was “rayé des contrôles de la desertion” (struck off the desertion controls) on 14 August 1914. Amnestied, he was assigned to the eleventh depot company and was made corporal on 5 November 1914 and sergeant-fourrier (quartermaster) on 17 August 1915.

He was then assigned to the eighth battalion of Chasseurs three days later. He disappeared on 25 September, 1915 at Aubérive (Marne–France) and was taken prisoner for three years. He was repatriated on 13 December 1918. Wounded three times, cited twice, he was awarded the Croix de Guerre medal.

Post-war period

Corey married Marie Sassard on 17 April 1919,\(^\text{14}\) at which time he had the declared profession of “comptable, actuellement sergent-fourrier” (accountant, currently quartermaster). He was made a warrant officer on 24 April 1919. He was reappointed to the military for three years and was posted to the 124\(^\text{th}\) infantry regiment on 14 November 1919. He fought in Poland, Algeria, and the Levant.

He then changed regiments several times and was reappointed for seven months and thirteen days on 21 December 1922. He was discharged from military service on 18 January 1924. In 1921, documentation shows that Corey was working as a journalist for the newspaper Comœdia.

Death

Corey was declared unfit for the army on 5 August 1926, but the news never reached him. He died on 3 August 1926 at 10 am at Boucicaut Hospital, 78 rue de la Convention, in the 15\(^\text{th}\) district of Paris. His death notice states that he was an accountant by profession. He was buried in Bagneux Cemetery on 6 August. His wife Marie died on 2 January 1975 in the commune of Martigna.
Corey's French nationality and has corrected the spelling of his name and date of birth. Finally, Albert Corey's great grandson, Serge Canaud, was contacted about this in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Believing it to be a prank, he hung up three times. It was only after the fourth time that his wife took the call and, with the documents presented, the descendant accepted this story, which had been previously unknown to the family.

The press picked up on this beautiful story and more than 60 articles were written and published in France, in Europe, and on all continents. The IOC now mentions the French nationality of Corey, which makes France the only country, together with Australia, Great Britain, and Greece, to have participated in all Olympic Games.

Conclusion

We have already seen that the IOC recognises two reports as official concerning the 1904 Olympic results. The only report to mention Corey presents him as French. However, the IOC official website incorrectly identified him in several ways:
- His spelling is Albert COREY and not Albert CORAY;
- His date of birth is 16 April 1878 and not 1 January 1878.
- His citizenship is French and not American.

There is no doubt that he was a French citizen and his arrival in the United States in 1903 prevented him from becoming a US citizen a year later.

To this end, it seems important to recognise Corey's nationality and to correct an error that has been going on for too long.

Fun facts

Following the completion of research on Albert Corey by this author, a research project was set up and presented to the IOC through Guy Drut, former Olympic champion and IOC Member. As of 2021, the Swiss institution recognises Corey's French nationality and has corrected the spelling of his name and date of birth.

Albert Corey was also considered a French athlete, without any doubt. However, the IOC made him an American. Some press titles relied on the official source. Thus, in an article by Paris-presse-l'intransigeant published in 1956, Corey is considered a "Yankee".

As we have seen, the American press at the time always considered Corey a Frenchman. Likewise, when consulting later writings, such as La Galaxie Olympique (1996), The Olympic Marathon (2000), and The 1904 Olympic Games (2009), none of them lists Corey as an American. Finally, the scientific articles are unanimous: in articles such as “Development of the Marathon from Pheidippides to the Present with Statistics of Significant Races” (1977), “Viva l’Italia! Viva l’Italia!” Dorando Pietri and the North American Professional Marathon Craze, 1908–10” (2008), as well as the doctoral thesis by Sébastien Fleuriel (1997) – Corey is always referred to as a Frenchman.

Albert Corey's recognition as a French citizen would facilitate international recognition of these forgotten Games, especially in his country of origin – France. And particularly in light of the 2024 Olympic Games that will are due to take place in France, Corey’s two medals would allow the “tricolour nation” to have won medals at all the Summer Olympics to date – a result that only Great Britain has achieved so far.

1 Civil registry of the city of Meursault, year 1878, birth certificate number 34.
2 Military record for Albert Louis Corey, canton of Charenton, department of the Seine, class of 1898, no. 2790.
3 The Evening, Edition World, Thursday, December 1905, 16.
7 Frenchman Corey has run far enough to circle globe twice, The Dayton Herald, 27 February 1909, 6.
8 Claims for a Freeze-Dut. – Corey a professional and wants a six day race, The Inter Ocean, 31 December 1905, 9
10 Lucas, Charles J.P. (1905), The Olympic Games, 51.
11 Ibid., 15.
14 Civil registry of the city of 7th district of Paris, wedding certificate no. 326, year 1919.
In February 1945, Eric Henry Liddell’s life ended in the Weixian concentration camp, Shandong Province, China. Towards the end of his life, the gold medallist in the 400 m at the 1924 Paris Olympic Games was struggling physically, and he was sent to the concentration camp hospital. There, it was found his right foot was partially paralysed due to a stroke, he was blind in one eye, his speech was vague, and his mind was confused. Doctors suspected that he had a brain tumour, but as it was wartime the hospital did not have X-ray machines and other equipment, so it was impossible to diagnose the cause. Groups of friends came to see him and asked him if his headache was better. The Scotsman replied half-jokingly, “To answer this question, I need to know what’s going on in my mind.”

On 21 February 1945, Eric dictated a letter to his wife Florence:

I have undertaken too much work, resulting in slight neurasthenia. I feel much better after resting in the hospital for more than a month. The doctor advised me to change my job, give up teaching and sports and change to work like baking. This is a good change. I’m glad to receive your letter in July. Mrs. Scarlett is in good health. Davis and Naima are preparing for their wedding on April 18. I really hope you can celebrate together …

At the end of the letter, he wrote: “Love you and the children.”

Eric was trying to hide the true state of his health from his wife. Soon after dictating the letter, he spoke his last words to the people around him: “This is complete
surrender.” Then he convulsed, lost consciousness, and fell into a coma. At 9:20 that night, Eric Liddell died at the young age of 43.

Many people know of Eric because of the Oscar-winning film, *Chariots of Fire*. In this film he is depicted giving up the opportunity to win a gold medal because he refused to compete on a Sunday for religious reasons. In reality, the choices Eric Liddell made in the second half of his life proved to be even more momentous for him and his family.

In the second half of the 19th century, Christianity spread gradually into the mainland, and Xiaozhang Town became one of the missionary centres set up by the London Mission Church in Hebei. In 1876, British missionaries built three Christian churches, which were all burned down in 1899. In 1902, a Christian church (referred to as the North Synagogue) was rebuilt just south of the West Street entrance. On either side of the church were middle schools: one for men and one for women, called Luncai, which means “selecting talents”. In the later part of his life, Eric Liddell was to return to this town.

It was in this area, with its history of missionary service, that the Liddell family settled to live and practise their faith.

### Gold Medal or God? Choices in the Olympic Games

Eric Liddell was born in Tianjin on 16 January 1902. His father, James Liddell, was a London Mission Church pastor stationed in China, and his mother, Mary, was Scottish. On 11 September 1899, Mary came to Shanghai from England after a six-week sea voyage. On 23 October, James and Mary married in a church in Shanghai. Subsequently, the newly married couple were assigned to preach in North China. At that time, the Boxer Movement was surging in North China, and the family was forced to move from place to place around the region. James once lamented that so many things had happened in the past four years, “it’s like living four lives”.

During these four years, Eric and his older brother Robert were born. Shortly after Eric’s birth, James took his family to Xiaozhang, Zaoqiang County. This was the hometown of Hou Renzhi, a Chinese historical geographer. According to his son, Hou Fuxing:

> The most haunted is Xiao Zhang. Xiao Zhang Town is a small village located in the hinterland of the North China Plain, which is now known as Zaoqiang County, Hengshui, Hebei Province. The village was first named Liangguangdian and later became Jixian Town. Later on, people renamed it Xiao Zhang in memory of the Xiao He, Zhang Liang, and Zhang Er of the Western Han Dynasty.

In 1907, James Liddell, who had spent nine years in China, returned to his home country, Scotland. The Liddell brothers first attended at Drimen Primary School in Scotland, and then transferred to Blackheath School, a missionary school in the eastern suburbs of London. Eric spent more than ten years there as a student. During this time, Eric quickly showed his talent in all sports. He was captain of the school football team at the age of 16.

In the autumn of 1920, Eric entered the University of Edinburgh to study chemistry. Although he was still...
a regular on the school football field, he soon showed his talent in track and field. At the 1921 Edinburgh University Games, Eric, still in his first year, beat the favourite Stewart and won the gold medal in the 100 m sprint. On 18 June 1921, he won the championship at St. Andrews Stadium. Just a week later, he came first in two events at the Scottish Amateur Athletics Association Championship. The reputation of Liddell, dubbed the “Flying Scotsman” after the famous train, spread like wildfire.

On 11 August 1921, the *Glasgow Herald* wrote: “Eric of the amateur sports club of the University of Edinburgh is about to become a British champion and may even become a hero in the Olympic Games.”

This prophecy would soon come true. In 1923, Eric was selected for the British Olympic team. But at the 1924 Paris Olympics, upon learning that the 100 m heats were scheduled to be held on Sunday, 6 July, he decided to withdraw from the race as well as from the 4×100 m and the 4×400 m relay, which were also scheduled to be held on next Sunday. In Eric’s mind, the Sabbath was a day dedicated to God and he strongly felt he should not participate in any sporting activities on Sundays. In the end, the British relay team won only silver and bronze medals in these two races.

A British newspaper commented with regret: “If Eric participates, the British team may win the gold medal in the relay race, but his faith does not allow him to compete on a Sunday.” Some comments recognised the strength of his faith and beliefs. Not all agreed; someone even denounced him as “a traitor to his motherland” and he almost became the “most unpopular figure” in Britain.

As described in the film *Chariots of Fire*, Lord Lindsay, of the British Olympic team, decided to pass his qualification in the 400 m race to Eric. On Friday, 11 July at 6:30 pm, Eric ran 47.6 s in the 400 m final. Not only did this time help him win the Olympic gold, it also broke the world record. This success on the track made people forget the episode of refusing to participate on Sundays. Almost overnight, Eric changed from “the most unpopular person” to “the greatest athlete in the 400 m event so far”. Liddell was to become famous as the man who ran with his head held up high as an athlete and also as a Christian.

At the moment Eric was standing at the peak of his sports career, he suddenly decided to give up the world of athletics and return to his birthplace, China.

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**Physical education or education? Choice of life track**

One week after winning the gold medal, the “Flying Scotsman” graduated from the University of Edinburgh on 17 July 1924. At the ceremony, when he took the stage to receive his certificate, there was a roar of joy as the whole audience stood up and applauded. Sir Alfred James Ewing, the vice-chancellor, had to shout many times to make everyone quiet.

Eric Liddell had become a favourite of the University, the city of Edinburgh, and the whole of Scotland. As he handed him his degree, Sir Alfred said: “Mr. Liddell, no one can pass you now except the examiner!”

After graduation, Eric actually had many choices. He could stay and engage in chemistry-related research, or find other work in Britain, and continue to engage in his beloved track and field career. At the age of 22 he was nearing the peak of his athletic abilities. He could look forward to participating in at least two more Olympic Games and to consolidating his dominant position in the field of sprinting for another decade.

But at this juncture, Eric decided to return to China and teach at Xinxue Academy, a church school in Tianjin. For him, this seemed to be the natural thing to do; he considered it to be his destiny to follow his faith into missionary work. Long before he had graduated, Xinxue Academy had offered him a temporary teaching post – the reason it was temporary was because he had not yet obtained a university degree. Now that he had one, he decided to fulfil his obligation and return to China.

Why was Eric Liddell willing to sacrifice his glorious future in track and field and return to a foreign country so far away from Scotland? According to Julian Wilson in *Complete Surrender: Biography of Eric Liddell*: “What he
pursues is to let others share the great joy and firm faith he obtains from his faith.”

David McGovern, Eric’s roommate in Tianjin, wrote: “He is a faithful believer of Jesus Christ. At the same time, he is also a person who has trouble sleeping and eating without guiding people to convert to the Saviour Jesus through his own influence. The Saviour Jesus plays an extremely important role in his heart.

Another friend recalled, “He guided the Bible class in his extracurricular time, and the attendance was very enthusiastic. He always could not restrain his joy when he talked to us about the boys who devoted all their body and mind to Christ. I still remember this scene. No matter how busy he is, he can always spare time to meet the visiting Chinese students and have a cordial exchange with them. He is deeply loved by the children. I estimate that 90 percent of his students have heard his Bible class.

In Liddell’s mind, whether he went to Paris to compete to become an Olympic champion or to China to become a teacher in a church school, his purpose was to give to the glory of God.

After Eric’s conversion from athlete to theology teacher, the aura of being an Olympic champion faded. He did not participate in the major track and field events of the world, although he did participate in some regional athletic events in China.

In 1929, Eric had a friendly race with the German runner Dr. Otto Peltzer in Tianjin. The latter was the world record holder at 500 m, 800 m, and 1,500 m.

Eric won the 400 m, while the German won the 800 m event. In the changing room, Peltzer asked Eric if he would participate in the Los Angeles Olympics. His answer was: “I’m too old.” Peltzer smiled and replied, “Too old? I’m 32 years old, but I have to represent Germany in the next Olympic Games.” In fact, Eric did not participate in any major competitions held in the 1930s.

However, his sporting talent was revealed in other ways. In 1928, after attending a sports meeting in Dalian, Eric planned to return to Tianjin by boat. But as he went to leave the field, he stopped to listen to the British national anthem “God Save the King” and the French hymn “La Marseillaise” which were performed successively, which made the Scotsman miss the taxi waiting close by.

When he eventually arrived at the dock, the ship had departed from the shore. Just when Eric felt that the boat was too far away to jump on, a wave pushed the boat back. Taking advantage of this opportunity, he threw down his package and jumped. “I seem to have become a gazelle. I jumped up and happened to fall on the boat.”

This scene happened to be seen by a reporter sitting in a nearby taxi. He claimed that Eric jumped 4.5 m that day, and the “Flying Scotsman” was still strong and athletic. Nevertheless, his chosen career was no longer in track and field, but in a Chinese schoolroom.

Eric’s time in China was also a time of frequent war. The Mukden Incident took place in 1931, and six years later, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. Despite the turbulence and danger surrounding him, Liddell chose to carry on with his mission and follow his faith in China.

Florence MacKenzie and Eric Liddell married in 1934 at the Union Church in Tientsin (now Tianjin).

Far left: Eric Liddell, Athlete and Missionary, 1925, by Eileen Soper (1905–1990)

Photos: Chris Beetles Gallery, Antonia Reeve; Baidu
Front line or peace? Choices during the war against Japan

Eric Liddell lived in China for 12 years, from his return to China in 1925 to the outbreak of the all-out war of resistance against Japan in 1937. Throughout those 12 years, although the clouds of war never dispersed, his own life remained calm and peaceful. During this period, the biggest changes to his life were marriage and starting a family.

Eric’s wife, Florence MacKenzie, was a Canadian. Her father, Hugh MacKenzie, was the financial and business manager of the Federation of Canada accredited to the Henan Chamber of Commerce, and her mother Anne worked in Weihui County, Henan Province. In 1926, the MacKenzie family met James Liddell and his son Eric for the first time. Anne’s first impression of her future son-in-law was: “He is very modest and gentle.”

In 1929, Eric fell in love with Florence. According to Liddell’s biographer Julian Wilson, “Both of them are shy, pinched and often have charming smiles on their faces; Eric was joking, but chivalrous — in short, a perfect gentleman.” After five years of courtship, Eric and Florence married in Tianjin on 27 March 1934. The Beijing and Tientsin Times published a report on the front page: “This afternoon, many Chinese and foreign guests gathered in the Tianjin Christian Congregation Hall to participate in the wedding of the famous Olympic champion Pastor Eric and Miss Florence (the daughter of the respected MacKenzie couple).”

Although they came from different countries and were far away from their home, Eric and Florence had a happy marriage. By 1935, two daughters, Patricia and then Heather, had been born. In his letter home to his father, he described in detail how his daughters went from toddling to running:

Patricia likes to sit on the small cushion on the bar of my bike. We ride around the yard or on the street. Heather is very good. She sleeps soundly all night. Except for feeding at 10 p.m., she could sleep until 6 a.m. and almost never prevented us from resting. Since their birth, the two children have never asked us to get up in the middle of the night to feed them, which is also the most worry-free place for the two children …

Soon, the normal married life the couple had enjoyed ended abruptly. In July 1936, the London Missionary Association held an annual meeting in Beidaihe, during which the teaching roster at Xinxue Academy was addressed. Due to economic factors, the school had to reduce the number of teachers provided by the London Society to four within three years, and the laid-off personnel would be sent to preach in the rural areas of North China.

On examining the list of teachers at the school it was felt some were too old and weak, some were teachers without church status, while others claimed to be “not good at learning the local language”. It was decided that Eric was the most suitable candidate to be dismissed. 

With the onset of Second World War, Eric Liddell brought his wife and daughters, Patricia and Heather, to Canada, where their third daughter, Maureen, was born. Eric returned to China alone to continue his missionary work.
from the academy. At first, he declined the request, on the grounds that his Chinese skills were too poor. But in 1936, the church insisted that he leave and threatened to stop his wages. In May 1937, Eric wrote to his family, “The decision has been made. Florence and I will go to Xiaozhang Town from September.”

Just two months after writing this letter, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident occurred on 7 July 1937. Because of the dangerous situation in North China, Eric had to go to Xiaozhang Town alone. After that time, he and Florence spent little time together.

During his stay in Xiaozhang Town, Liddell went from village to village and witnessed the tragedy of China under the iron fist of the Japanese army. In his letters he recorded what he witnessed on more than one occasion: This is a destroyed family. Except for two rooms, the whole house has been burned down, leaving only a large and long charred wooden fence. Two widows and two girls are still here. Before, the Japanese came here and took away the men at home. Because they did not collect the ransom in time, the men were shot, leaving two widows struggling and helpless to face the tragic world. I went into the yard, bent down and begged God to bless them. My words came out, and I could not help but reflect on myself and ask myself, “What can God do.”

But Eric was not only sad and angry, and certainly not helpless. During the war of resistance against Japan, he often helped people who had been mutilated by the Japanese army. Despite the risk of being punished by the Japanese army, he sent a Chinese man, who had been partially beheaded by the Japanese army, to the hospital.

In the meantime, Eric had a chance to leave the danger. In June 1939, the Executive Committee of the London Missionary Association asked him to return home for a year. In August of that year, Eric and his family made a detour on their journey from Tianjin to England to visit Canada, arriving in Edinburgh in early November. Compared with war-torn North China, Scotland was tranquil and away from danger.

Faced with the choice of returning to China or staying in Britain, Eric made the heartbreaking decision to send his wife and daughter to Canada and return to China alone. Florence once recalled, It was a very difficult decision. Eric had a chance to go with us, but he didn’t think he should go. He was worried that if they took us hostage, he would not be able to stick to his faith. I never thought his work was more important than everything. It shouldn’t be like this at all. But he thinks that since others stay, he can.

Another reason to support Eric’s return was his sympathy for the Chinese people in the Japanese-occupied areas. In the autumn of 1938, he wrote: “I have benefited a lot from being ordered to leave the city and having the opportunity to witness the tragedy in the vast war-torn area between here and Tianjin.” When asked by a friend if he regretted leaving the relatively safe Tianjin and the academy, he replied without hesitation: “Never! In my work, I have never had so much joy and freedom as here!”

The last years: meeting the end with dignity

After the full outbreak of the war of resistance against Japan, there was no safe place to be in North China. In the spring of 1941, the Missionary Society received an order from the Japanese army to leave Xiaozhang Town immediately. A week later, the missionary society’s buildings were razed to the ground. In August, Eric actually had another chance to leave China, but he still chose to stay.

On 7 December 1941, the Japanese army secretly attacked Pearl Harbour, the Pacific War broke out, and Britain and the United States immediately declared war on Japan. This meant British and American citizens living in China became the enemy in the eyes of the Japanese army. On 11 December, the Xinxue Academy in Tianjin was closed by the Japanese army and the students were sent home.

At this time, Eric, who had returned to Tianjin, was asked to move out of the British concession. After two years of turbulence, in March 1943, the British and American citizens in Tianjin were escorted by the Japanese army to a concentration camp in Weixian [also spelled Weihsien] County, Shandong Province.

According to David McCasland’s record, Eric Liddell was in the last batch of British and American expatriates transferred there. At that point, the number of people in the concentration camp had reached 1,800.

By this time, Japan’s military aggression had reached far into China, stretching its resources of food and materials. The many British and American citizens held in the concentration camps were faced with appalling living conditions, with cramped spaces and insufficient food.

Weixian concentration camp was likewise very crowded. Single men and women living in public dormitories were allocated a space measuring only six feet (1.83 m) long and three feet (91 cm) wide, with only 18 inches (46 cm) between the beds. Married couples with a family could have their own room, but its size was less than eight square metres.

Food was also scarce. The inmates of the camp recalled that every day there was little nutrition and the same menu: breakfast was two pieces of thin bread, often baked hard and shrivelled; sometimes millet porridge, occasionally with a little sugar. Dinner or lunch...
was a messy mixture, including a little soft eggplant, referred to as “SOS” (same old same). An occasional dessert, usually soup, was just actually another name for the usual mixture with water added.

Oswald Dallas, a former diplomat, became a baker at the Weixian camp. Whenever there was not enough wheat flour, he used peanut shell flour to make bread. “When it’s hot, you can barely make do with it, but when it’s accidentally cold, it’s as hard as a stone.” Later, the Japanese opened a small shop where people could occasionally buy some peanuts, eggs, honey, seasonal fruits, and so on.

Compared with the accommodation and food conditions, the health conditions in the concentration camps were worse. Langdon Gilkey recounted the situation at the camp in his book, *Shantung Compound: The Story of Men and Women Under Pressure*.

*When we open the door and enter the men’s toilet, a stench goes straight to our nostrils. We want to quit immediately and return to the fresh air. In the Oriental toilet, the ceramic bedpan is embedded in the ground. When we go to the toilet, we have to squat on it, which makes us feel uncomfortable. On the wall above the bedpan, there is a porcelain water tank with a long metal chain, but it is not connected to the bedpan. The upper pipe is blocked, and the bedpan is full to overflowing. There are no cleaners, pipe repairmen and running water in the detention camp, so it is almost impossible to stop the overflow of filth in the bedpan.*

Under such living conditions, Eric became physically and mentally exhausted. On the surface, he was happy as usual and unwilling to reveal his deep thoughts. However, due to the long-term separation from his wife and daughters and severe bouts of headache, he began to be depressed: “In the concentration camp, people often see him in a daze looking at the photographs of his wife and children.” He sometimes lamented to his cellmates that he had great regret that he couldn’t leave more time with his wife “Flossie”!

By January 1945, Eric was attacked by influenza and sinusitis, and there was no effective treatment available. Seeing that his health was getting worse and worse, his fellow inmates took him to the hospital. While in the hospital, he suffered a sudden stroke, resulting in partial paralysis of his right foot, vague speech, and he fell unconscious.

The doctor suspected that he had a brain tumour, but there was nothing he could do about it. On 21 February 1945, Eric Liddell died in Weixian County, six months before Japan surrendered.

It was not until May 1945 that Florence, who was far away in Canada, learned of her husband’s death. She held her daughters in her arms and said, “Dad is in heaven with Grandpa.” On 14 June 1984, Florence died in Canada, 39 years after the death of her husband. Eric and Florence’s were survived by their three daughters, who all lived in Canada.

The Tianjin Xinxue Academy where Eric worked was restored after the war. It was taken over by the Chinese government in 1950 and later renamed Tianjin No. 17 Middle School. It is worth mentioning that a room on the second floor of the middle school once stored a 400m gold medal won by Eric at Minyuan Stadium in November 1928. After the Japanese surrender, most of the European and American prisoners in Weixian concentration camp returned to their respective countries.

In the following years, the former inmates formed the Weixian Concentration Camp Friends Association, established a website, wrote memoirs, and regularly returned to Weixian (now Weifang City, Shandong Province) for reunions. But by the beginning of this century, fewer and fewer people remained alive and able to travel.

Weifang No. 2 Middle School was built on the former site of the concentration camp, and an exhibition room was set up in the school to display the history of the site.

At one corner of the school is a monument donated by the University of Edinburgh. On one side, Eric’s life story is engraved in Chinese and English; on the other side, the words from Isaiah 40:21 are engraved:

*They should be able to fly high and be eagles spreading their wings; They should be able to race forward and never say they are tired.*
The Shanghai Sports Museum, which was officially re-opened in June 2021, is located in the Sports Building at 150 Nanjing West Road, opposite the People’s Square. The ten-floor beaux-arts building was designed by American architect Elliott Hazzard and opened in 1928 to house the Western Overseas Chinese Youth Association (also known as the Foreign YMCA), becoming the home of the Shanghai Sports Club in the 1950s.

The renovation represents an upgrade of the previous exhibition space, known as the “Exhibition Room of the Shanghai Sports Museum”.

Renovation work was begun in 2019, and is a key cultural construction project overseen by the Municipal Sports Bureau. Many world-famous athletes are from Shanghai, such as basketball player Yao Ming and hurdler Liu Xiang, 2004 Olympic champion.

Dedicated to “spreading the spirit of sports and promoting sports culture”, the museum focuses on “Sports and Shanghai”. It aims to become an important sports and cultural venue in Shanghai, underpinned by “Four Histories” education, and providing sports and cultural support for accelerating Shanghai’s reputation as a “world-famous sports city”.

Once renovation works are completed, the museum will have a total exhibition space of more than 2,000 square metres with five exhibition halls devoted to the topics: “Preface Hall”, “Ship of History”, “Olympic Light”, “Vitality City” and “Window of the Future”.

The museum currently has a collection of more than 1,200 exhibits, over 500 photographs, and several films. The exhibition hall has an interactive experience area, a question and answer area, a film viewing area, and a light show exhibition area.

In 2021, two more sports museums were opened; one is Chongli Winter Sport Museum, located in Zhangjiakou City where the Olympic competitions on snow will take place in February 2022.
As the founders of the Olympic Movement, the French have always had a very strong connection to the Olympic Games. Having hosted five Games since the inception of the modern Olympiad in 1896, the French have since staged highly regarded Winter and Summer Games. Paris hosted the Games of the Olympiads in 1900 and 1924 and will host the upcoming 2024 Summer Olympics.

In 1924, France also hosted the inaugural Winter Olympic Games in the ski resort village of Chamonix. Having winter sports included in the Olympics under the presidency of Pierre de Coubertin cements the French connection and legacy to the Olympic Movement. Since then, the French have gone on to host two more Winter Olympics, Grenoble in 1968, and Albertville in 1992. All of these Games have left a legacy in some way for French citizens and the nation. This paper will focus on the legacy that these Winter Olympics have had on the regions of France in which the Games were held and the nation as a whole.

**Chamonix 1924**

Discussions about adding winter sports to the Games dates back to the Olympic Congress in 1894 in which skating was added, by request of Swedish delegates, to the programme for the future Olympic Games. However, the inaugural city of Athens unfortunately did not have an ice rink and was unable to accommodate such a sport. Figure skating had already premiered in London 1908.

The Winter Olympics took place three times in the French region of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes: in 1924 in Chamonix-Mont-Blanc; in 1968 in Grenoble, the capital of the Isère department and the Dauphiné; and in 1992 in Albertville, the capital of the arrondissement of the same name. Source: Philip S. Sarrazin Collection

*Philipp Sarrazin*  
Born in 1994, he was raised in Connecticut. In 2019 he received a Bachelor of Arts from Southern Connecticut State University, with a major in Geography and a minor in History. Currently he is pursuing a master’s degree in geography at York University in Toronto, specialising in global trade networks and Olympic athletes. He hopes to continue his work involving the Olympic Games well into the future.
At the IOC Session of 1911 in Budapest, Nordic countries such as Sweden and Norway suggested hosting separate Winter Games.3 However, some National Olympic Committees (NOCs) such as that of the United States, argued that some Olympic nations do not have the needed weather conditions to participate in winter sport.4 Pierre de Coubertin was also sceptical, insinuating in *Revue Olympique* (1914) that supporters of winter sports were just “noisy and everywhere pestilential travellers for pleasure”, and he warned against a lobby of Alpine hoteliers whom he referred to as “straw men of greedy shareholders”.5,6 Coubertin did, however, praise the Nordic games of Scandinavia and hoped that Sweden “would one day organise Olympic Games on ice and snow”.7

IOC Member Count Brunetta d’Usseaux from Italy hoped that the Nordic Games in 1913 could coincide with the 1912 Olympiad being held in Sweden and become the first Winter Games. However, the president of the organising committee, Viktor Balck, refused the count’s proposal.8 After this, the Germans planned to organise the first winter sporting week in conjunction with the upcoming 1916 Olympic Games. Ice events were to take place at the 1908 opened Ice Palace in Berlin, while skiing was to be held in the Black Forest.9 Because of the First World War, however, these Games never occurred.

In 1921, French IOC Members Comte de Clary and Marquis de Polignac announced that their country was prepared to organise Winter Games, provided that Paris receive the contract for the 1924 Summer Games. They were supported by Canadian James G. Merrick, who pointed out that ice hockey had undergone enormous development. The IOC pursued the recommendation, but remained cautious and only authorised under its patronage a “Winter Sports Week” in Chamonix as an appendage of the Summer Games.10

The small ski resort of Chamonix sits at the base of Europe’s tallest mountain, Mont Blanc, in the French Alps. At the time, the village had a population of less than 3,000.11 The Games were celebrated between January and February and were quite uneventful, aside from being the first Winter Olympics. Sixteen nations participated, and the Norwegians dominated the medals table.

Looking back, Coubertin wrote: “These winter games were a great success from every point of view, helping calm the ill-feeling and weaken the prejudices of the Scandinavians, whose champions naturally distinguished themselves.”12

On 27 May 1925, the IOC unanimously agreed a resolution on the introduction of a “special cycle” of Winter Games, which were henceforth to take place at the beginning of the Olympic year. In the following year, the Chamonix Winter Sports Week was dubbed in retrospect the *Premier Jeux Olympiques d’Hiver.*13

**Legacy of the 1924 Games**

The 1924 Winter Games have left a tremendous impact on the Olympic Movement and the winter sports. The Olympic Charter was revised in 1925 to include Winter Olympic Games every four years, held separate from the
Summer Olympic Games, adding the formulation: “The International Olympic Committee chooses the place for the celebration of the Olympic Winter Games giving the first refusal to the country holding the current Olympic Games on condition that it can give sufficient guarantees to organise the full programme of the Winter Games.”

What was supposed to be an exception for Amsterdam 1928, when the Swiss spa town of Saint Moritz was awarded the Winter Games, became an indisputable rule in 1948. Since the IOC had handed over the Summer Games to London, but Great Britain was not able to carry out the entire winter sports programme, St. Moritz had to step in again.

The pattern of hosting the Winter and Summer Olympic Games in the same year would last until 1992. That was also the last time the Winter Olympics were held in France, this time in the village of Albertville. Starting in 1994, the Winter Games took place every second calendar year, “following that in which the Games of the Olympiad are held”.15

Chamonix today

The physical legacy of the 1924 Games in Chamonix is not as prominent as it would be in later Games. The earlier Olympics did not have as many athletes competing or sports as they do today, therefore less physical infrastructure was needed. The legacy of 1924 is barely noticeable and some tourists coming to the area for the slopes may not even know that the first Winter Olympics were held in Chamonix. Another likely reason is that preserving the legacy was not as important at the time as it is today. However, there are a few reminders.

The ski jumps of the 1924 Winter Olympics, for example, can still be visited. They are located just behind the Téléphérique de l’Aiguille du Midi cable car. The Stade Olympique de Chamonix, a small stadium where the ceremonies, figure skating, and speed skating competitions were held, is still standing in the village. However, the venue was since extended to include basketball courts, enhancing its summer usage.
Next to the Stade Olympique de Chamonix is the Maison des Sports. In front is a podium, allowing visitors to feel like they are a medal winner. In the village centre, in the middle of a roundabout, there is a giant stone with the Olympic rings on it, commemorating the first Winter Olympics.

**Grenoble 1968**

The Xth Winter Olympic Games returned to France in 1968, with Grenoble selected as the host city. Located in the foothills of the French Alps, Grenoble was the perfect city to host the Winter Olympics. Today known as the “Capital of the Alps” due to its large population, diverse economy, and location, Grenoble was the largest of the three French cities to host the Winter Olympics.

Between 1946 and 1968, the city and surrounding areas received massive investment and its infrastructure rapidly grew. The Olympic venues were built in the snow-covered valleys surrounding the city, all within 30 to 35 km of Grenoble.

For the first time in 1968, East and West Germany took part in separate teams. This occurred after the IOC officially recognised the East German NOC in 1965. From 1956 to 1964, the Germans competed under a unified team. It was not until the next Winter Olympics held in France in 1992 that Germany again had a unified team.

Some of the most memorable events came from the athletes. Most notable was Jean-Claude Killy, an alpine skier from the host country. His three gold medals were the highlights of the 1968 Winter Olympics.

But there was some controversy with his third win, as his Austrian rival, Karl Schranz, was interrupted by someone running across the slopes during the slalom competition. Schranz was then given a repetition run, in which he beat Killy’s time. However, the gold medal was given to Killy after Schranz was disqualified by a jury of appeals, by three votes to two. This made Killy the second person in Olympic history to receive a Triple Crown in alpine skiing – a controversial decision because two of the jury members were French, including the race director. To this day, Schranz still feels betrayed.

Figure skater Peggy Fleming was another star. She won America’s only gold at the 1968 Winter Olympics. At 19 years old, she outshone her competition by wearing a stunning chartreuse dress, a nod to the Chartreuse Mountains of France, which start in Grenoble. Fleming’s win helped revitalise figure skating in the United States and inspired many young Americans to join the sport.

However, as great as Killy and Fleming were for the 1968 Games and winter sport, the 1968 Winter Olympics in Grenoble were overshadowed by a high degree of commercialisation, which IOC President Avery Brundage heavily condemned.

Some events were memorable for other reasons. The luge and bobsledding competitions had numerous problems from the start. The valley that hosted the luge events was plagued with dense fog during the events due to the altitude at which the luge track was built, and many competitions had to be rescheduled. The luge track was also plagued by rain and thaw as the Olympics continued, and some competitions had to be cancelled. There were even talks to move the luge events to the bobsled track, which was at a higher elevation.

The luge competition was also plagued by bad sportsmanship. During the 1964 Winter Olympics in Innsbruck, athletes from East Germany (competing under a unified German team at the time) won two gold and two silver medals in singles. However, at the 1968 Games in Grenoble, the women’s team was disqualified for heating the steel. The decision of the International Luge Federation (FIL) is controversial to this day, and the truth may never be known.

In the following year at the Session in Warsaw, the IOC recommended that the FIL revise its rules in order to standardise the equipment to avoid future problems like those in Grenoble.
Television was prominently used for the first time in Grenoble. Due to new audiences around the world, many sporting goods companies used the Games of 1968 for advertising and commercial purposes. This was against Olympic policy at the time, which banned advertisements from being placed on equipment.

Legacy of the 1968 Games

At the 1968 Winter Olympics in Grenoble, the International Ski Federation (FIS) violated the IOC policy forbidding advertisements from being placed on equipment being used for the Games, and commercial advertisements for sporting equipment were not removed from athletes’ equipment. During the 68th IOC Session in Warsaw in 1969, the IOC stated that advertisements of any kind should not be permitted in sporting areas. In contrast, the IOC during this Session also claimed that it would be “impossible to avoid advertising on sporting equipment”.25

Today, nations from around the world use the Olympics to advertise their national sport brands during the ceremonies and competitions. For example, the French often use Lacoste, a French apparel company, during the ceremonies and competitions of the Olympics. This brings an additional sense of national pride as nations can include their native fashion and sport brands into the Olympic Games.

Although television had the negative effect of commercialisation due to sports equipment companies using the Games for advertising purposes, television had a much more positive impact on these Games. By being the first Winter Olympics to be broadcast on a global scale, for the first time people from all over the world could watch winter sports on their televisions. This helped them to discover new sports and led to more support and commitment in winter sports from new fans and spectators.

Overall, the broadcasts not only helped to increase the awareness of winter sports, but also to popularise the Olympic Movement. Millions of people, who until then only knew about the Winter Olympics through reports on the radio or in the newspapers, actually saw the actual celebrations and competitions on their screens. This made the Olympics more accessible than ever and changed the perception of the Olympics as they were now in people’s homes and part of their everyday lives.

The 1968 Winter Olympics were also the first to have a mascot, who was named “Shuss” and meant to resemble a “little man on skis”. Originally, this was not an official mascot as it is today with a registered trademark. Back then, it was used more as a souvenir to bring the Olympics to a wider audience, including children. Due to the high level of commercialisation that surrounded the Games, its success was inevitable. After that, official mascots were presented at all Olympic Games from Munich 1972 onwards.

Grenoble today

Today, the physical legacy of the 1968 Winter Olympics is somewhat comparable to those of 1924. Unlike Chamonix however, most of the competition venues within the city are still standing, aside from the Olympic Stadium, which was built for the opening ceremony and torn down shortly after the Games. Many of these existing venues can still be visited, such as L’Anneau de Vitesse, which hosted the speed skating events, and Le Stade de Glace, which hosted the figure skating and ice...
hockey competitions. Both of these venues are located in the beautiful Parc Paul Mistral in the centre of Grenoble. The City of Grenoble has also sought to preserve its Olympic legacy by hosting special celebratory events to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1968 Winter Olympics, such as the Célébration des 50 ans des Jeux Olympiques d’hiver de Grenoble.

Held in 2018, this festival included many events hosted throughout the city to help commemorate the Games. They included the reigniting of the Olympic cauldron, which can also be found in Parc Paul Mistral along with the other existing venues, a lights show, and an ice skating showcase. The venues and events testify to the city’s commitment to uphold its Olympic heritage and legacy.

Albertville 1992

Albertville, located in the historical Savoy region of the French Alps, hosted the 1992 Winter Olympics. These Games were the last time the Winter and Summer Olympic Games were held in the same year. These were also the first Olympics since the end of the Cold War, and many new nations participated for the first time.

The Games led to many changes and enhancements to the Savoy region. The events would be spread across ten valleys with the opening and closing ceremonies, figure skating, and speed skating all taking place in Albertville. The Savoy region became economically deprived during the 1970s, when there was a decline in heavy industry in the area and the coal mines were shut down. The people of the Savoy region then diversified their economy and started to capitalise on their most valuable asset: the snow and the mountains. After this, ski resorts started to pop up all over the Savoy region. In the run-up to the 1992 Winter Olympics, the French government financed development to enhance the region’s public infrastructure, tourist accommodations, and ski resorts in order to host these Games.

The Games were awarded to Albertville in 1986 over Anchorage, Berchtesgaden, Cortina d’Ampezzo, Lillehammer, and Falun. After Albertville won the rights, the famed alpine skier Jean-Claude Killy was elected as president of the organising committee, adding to his already impressive Olympic resume.

The Games in Albertville turned out to be a huge success for the region and for winter sports. Some of the star athletes included American figure skater Kristi Yamaguchi, who won gold, beating off intense competition from Nancy Kerrigan (USA) and Ito Midori (JPN). Alberto Tomba of Italy dominated the slopes in alpine skiing. Many athletes from nations not usually known for winter sports did very well at these Games. Chinese speed skaters Ye Qiaoobo and Li Yan won the first-ever Winter Olympic medals for their nation. Annelise Coberger of New Zealand won the silver medal in slalom, helping the country and the region of Oceania obtain their first Winter Olympic medal.

Legacy of the 1992 Games

The successful legacy of the 1992 Games can be viewed in two ways: the first being the infrastructural and physical legacy that these Games had on Albertville and the Savoy region, the other being the success that many athletes and countries had at these Games, including Jean-Claude Killy’s Olympic legacy.

The infrastructural legacy of these Games in Albertville was caused by the billions of dollars the French government poured into the Savoy region in preparation for the Games. This included 1.1 billion dollars on transportation enhancements in the region and the construction of new roads, which helped ease historical traffic in the area and modernise railway lines. Millions more were spent on other enhancements, such as new sewage plants, hospitals, fibre optic networks, and a new theatre in Albertville. The French government also spent 180 million dollars to upgrade ski resorts in the area and build new Olympic venues, such as ski jumps and the Halle de Glace Olympique, which hosted short-track competitions in Albertville.

Athletes from all over the world helped cement the legacy of these Games. The medals won by both China and New Zealand at these Games signalled the start of a new era, as new nations were reaching for the gold in once European- and North American-dominated sports. With the success of the 1992 Games, Killy cemented his legacy as one of the greatest supporters of the Olympic Movement.
Albertville 1992 today

The 1992 legacy is still present throughout the village and is a bit more preserved than the legacies of Chamonix and Grenoble. If you’re driving to Albertville along the A430 motorway, you will notice Olympic rings painted on the road as you enter the village. Once in Albertville, you can find a sign with the 1992 Olympic logo on it that is illuminated at night, erected in the middle of a roundabout near the McDonald’s that was built for the Games. On this same roundabout, you can find one of the illuminated sculptures that was used for the opening ceremony of the Games.

The logo that was created for the 1992 Winter Olympics in Albertville is prominently seen on municipal vehicles and buildings throughout the village and has become somewhat of a town logo. Furthermore, it is also featured on many non-municipal buildings, such as an apartment building in the centre of the village. Old advertisements featuring the logo, such as the Coca-Cola ad outside the train station, can also be seen throughout the village of Albertville.

At the train station in Albertville, the Olympic rings hang on the inside of the building, commemorating the 1992 Winter Olympics and perhaps their infrastructural legacy as well. The Théâtre des Cérémonies, a circus-like arena that was built for the Olympic ceremonies, has since been torn down. However, its main mast still exists in its original location.

Next to this mast you can find L’anneau de Vitesse, which was built to host the speed skating competitions, and La Halle de Glace, which hosted the figure skating and shorttrack competitions. On the corner, in front of La Halle de Glace, stands the Olympic cauldron from the 1992 Games. In front of that are shrubs trimmed into the shape of the Olympic rings.

Winter Olympic legacy in France

The three Winter Olympics held in France helped cement the legacy of the Games and helped spread the Olympic Movement beyond summer sports. The first Winter Olympics held in Chamonix 1924 were such a success that, since then, every four years a new city gets to showcase...
itself to the world and host the Winter Olympic Games. Therefore it could be said that Chamonix is the most important of these Winter Olympics, as it was the catalyst for all others. Its legacy can still be seen today.

Grenoble and Albertville, however, challenged the success of Chamonix by putting on spectacular Games for the world to enjoy. Even though the 1968 Winter Olympics were plagued with controversy surrounding the commercialisation of the Games, Grenoble was still able to make the Games memorable.

The legacy of the Grenoble Olympics can be seen in Parc Paul Mistral in the centre of the city, where you can find the Olympic cauldron and various venues used for the 1968 Games. The infrastructure developments also helped enhance Grenoble’s Olympic legacy by making it a key destination for winter sport in the French Alps today.

The 1992 Winter Olympics in Albertville provided a similar legacy to the people of the Savoy region. Infrastructure developments enhanced the area and made it a prime location for winter sport in the French Alps for years to come. Today, the legacy of Albertville is reflected throughout the village with the logo for the Olympic Games being used as logo for the city itself.

Overall, the Winter Olympics enhanced the legacy of winter sports in the French Alps and also helped enhance the Olympic Movement. The Winter Olympic Games in France can therefore be considered success stories.

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Uneventful Winter Olympics, Joyless 1980 Moscow Games  (Part 4)

By Richard W. Pound

Combustible context

Having two Games in the same year (as was the normal procedure at the time) but hosted by pugnacious super powers, which had twice competed for the Summer Games, created the potential for a perfect storm. That, unfortunately, was exactly what happened in 1980.

IOC Members who voted in 1974 for Games in Moscow were prepared to deal with criticisms relating to the political and human rights proclivities of the USSR as the price for providing a rare glimpse behind the Iron Curtain. On the other hand, they cannot be seriously faulted for failing to anticipate the December 1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the resultant impact on US President Jimmy Carter’s faltering campaign for re-election.

With respect to the Winter Games, the IOC Members were, however, not sufficiently alert to the difficulties which would inevitably be encountered by a small town in upstate New York attempting to organise Games almost 50 years after its initial effort in 1932. The size and scope of the Games had changed dramatically, far surpassing the human and financial resources available to a small community. Even without political complications, it should have been obvious that organisation of the Games would be a major challenge.

This article is not a study of the political and financial issues surrounding both Games, about which much has already been written, but is limited to a review of the television aspects of each Games.

The Olympic television landscape for 1980

Technically, the television-related difficulties with Lake Placid turned on the fact that there was no public broadcaster in place in the US willing to, or capable of, producing the necessary basic coverage of the Games. ABC ended up as the rightsholder in the US, but was not willing to play the role of host broadcaster and would agree to do no more than provide its own feed...
to foreign broadcasters, which were not satisfied with the decidedly US slant to whatever ABC might produce for domestic consumption.

This led the EBU and the Canadian broadcaster to collaborate in order to put together a joint operation for technical coverage of the Games, which was the first occasion on which optical fibre was used, as well as one-inch tape, with smaller and lighter cameras that operated as a single piece of equipment, the recorder no longer being a separate unit. For the first time, it was possible, for example, to cover alpine skiing from top-to-bottom of the courses.

In the USSR, the public broadcaster was an essential part of the OIRT, but the state of its art was well short of the standards now expected for the Olympic Games in the fully developed world. Nor was Soviet equipment satisfactory for foreign broadcasters. The USSR remained, from a television perspective, a second-level country. Two-inch tape was still used and the Soviet-made cameras and other equipment were inferior and difficult to use. It was necessary to have PAL as well as SECAM technologies. In addition, its system was not sufficiently robust to accommodate both its own and foreign technical standards. The USSR did, however, use the occasion of the Games to undertake a major upgrade of its overall broadcast capacity, including an increase to 22 available channels. The EBU Olympic operations were completely separate from OIRT and involved considerable amounts of unilateral coverage.

The IOC continued its patchwork approach to managing its largest source of revenue as well as its principal vehicle for reaching greater and greater world audiences. It remained effectively offstage and reactive to initiatives taken by the Games organisers, not all of which were necessarily well considered, nor consistent with the IOC’s expressed views regarding its ownership of Olympic television rights. Part of that dynamic involved trying to make certain that the IOC became involved earlier in the selling process of the rights, rather than being faced with agreements that the IOC would not be prepared to approve and some that were fait accompli. These had to be described as exceptions to what should have been treated in the “standard” manner, as had been the case in relation to the Montreal Games.

Moscow and Lake Placid had been duly advised regarding the IOC’s position and were asked by letter of 24 September 1975 to inform the IOC of any dealings regarding television so that IOC representatives might be present for negotiations. Vitaly Smirnov (URS), a member of the IOC and the Moscow OCOG, advised that television representatives from all over the world were already visiting Moscow and asked whether the IOC expected to attend every meeting held regarding television. Lord Killanin replied that the IOC request only applied to negotiations. Smirnov observed that although television rights money increased, so did the costs of organising the Games. He suggested that, since the IOC was not concerned with making profits, it should consider asking for a lump sum to cover its expenses, leaving the rest to the Moscow OCOG. Killanin stated, without details, that the Montreal COJO might have made more money had it referred to the IOC earlier. As it stood now, he said, the most the Montreal organisers would receive from television would be $27.5 million, of which at least $25 million would go to ORTO for technical facilities.

With respect to Lake Placid and Moscow, the Innsbruck Session was advised that preliminary meetings had been held between the IOC advisers and television

The television contracts with the EUB and OIRT for Moscow 1980 occupied the IOC Executive Board, headed by Lord Killanin, at its meeting in August 1978. An agreement was reached on a half-a-million-dollar share for the IOC.

Photo: Olympic Review, January 1979
representatives of both OCOGs. It seemed, at the time, that there were no problems in relation to Moscow. Talks were underway with Lake Placid. Killanin once again raised the point that the two OCOGs should not commit themselves before agreement with the IOC. During the Session, Killanin noted that the sale of television rights would be a major source of revenue. He reiterated that the IOC was only interested in the rights and not the signal, which was to be provided by the OCOG, and suggested, still unwilling to break free from the Munich model, that the IOC agree to a fixed sum, allowing for inflation.3

De Beaumont (FRA) thought it would be in the interests of both the IOC and the OCOG if the IOC’s share of television rights, taking only inflation into account (but not the quantum increase in the rights fees), amounted to what the IOC received from Innsbruck, and the money could be paid as soon as possible in several instalments.4

In connection with US television, Norman Hess, chairman of the Lake Placid OCOG’s Television Committee, explained that there were three private television broadcasters in the US (ABC, CBS, and NBC), representatives of which had visited Lake Placid. Since there were no public television networks in the US, government funds could not be used to build television facilities and the world networks would, therefore, have to give assistance. Jean de Beaumont’s timing point regarding payments had been discussed with the broadcasters, which thought that early payment to the IOC would be possible. The OCOG was proposing to invite the broadcasters later that year to determine their Games requirements well in advance.5

De Beaumont summarised the situation regarding television receipts from Innsbruck and Montreal. The total receipts were expected to be $46 million, of which the IOC’s share would be approximately $7 million from Montreal and $3.5 million from Innsbruck. Both figures represented increases over television receipts in respect of Munich and Sapporo. The total amount to be retained by the IOC for its administration was some $3.5 million, after division between the IOC, the IFs, and NOCs. As far as future policy was concerned, de Beaumont had two proposals. First, that the division of the “Olympic Family” share of television rights (one-third each to the IOC, IFs, and NOCs), should be reviewed, leaving a greater portion to the IOC, and second (repeating an earlier view), that the IOC should endeavour to cover its expenses not only for one Olympiad, but for the following four years, to cover two Olympiads. If a crisis occurred at the end of an Olympiad and the IOC were to receive no money from television, it would, under the current system, have no funds available for its administration for the duration of the next Olympiad.6

Smirnov and Gunnar Ericsson (SWE) disagreed with the idea of having an eight-year reserve of funds for the IOC. Smirnov argued (clearly wearing his OCOG hat) that the IOC was not a business organisation and should not be seeking profits. De Beaumont replied that the IOC only wanted to cover its expenses and avoid a situation in which it would need to borrow money. Killanin pointed out that, in fact, it was a question of four years’ reserve, since the receipts from the Games covered the current Olympiad (apparently oblivious to the possibility of a last-minute cancellation that might require reimbursement of advance payments made by broadcasters). He stated that administrative expenses were being watched very carefully and economies made in every possible way. Lord Luke (GBR) observed, however, that as things stood, the IOC was not even certain of covering its expenses up to 1980. It was only hoped that the deficit estimated to occur by 1979–1980 could be covered by interest.

The Marquess of Exeter (GBR) stressed that as far as the IFs’ share of television receipts was concerned, this was greatly needed in order to survive. Without the IFs, he said, there would be no competitions. There should be no change in the division of money for the time being.7 The October 1975 decision of the IOC Executive Board taken in Montreal was that the IOC would keep all interest derived from Montreal and Innsbruck television rights, given the heavy expenses incurred in dealing with television matters for the 1976 Games.8

Lake Placid

Negotiations with US broadcasters had already become the bellwether of Olympic television, since they were the most important source of television revenues and tended to set the benchmark levels for other broadcasters. For Lake Placid, the US broadcaster would also be the home – as opposed to host – broadcaster and the related television rights were important within the US for a variety of reasons. Early negotiations were, therefore, particularly important to the OCOG. Monique Berlioux reported that the IOC had accepted the principle of a contract with ABC for a total of $15.5 million, although no contract had yet been approved by the IOC.
In June 1976, Berlioux had been informed that the Lake Placid OCOG had received a first payment of $1.75 million from ABC, including $1 million for the IOC. She had immediately advised Lake Placid that the OCOG had no right to receive such money, which should be returned to ABC until a contract acceptable to the IOC was signed. She had since received a draft contract, which needed further review and as yet, no reply had been received from Lake Placid.9

The Finance Commission proposed a new distribution formula for the IOC’s share of television rights, relating to the Lake Placid Games: 50 percent for the IOC and the remaining 50 percent to be split into 60 percent for the IFs and 40 percent for Olympic Solidarity. This would enable the IOC to plan for an eight-year budget. The proposed division for the Moscow Games would not be made until the total amounts of television rights were known. On the Lake Placid issue, a meeting had been arranged for 12 July 1976, since the Commission was eager to “clarify” the deposit paid by ABC, which should have been passed through the IOC.10 Berlioux emphasised that it was most important for the IOC to be involved in negotiations between the OCOGs and the television companies. She gave the example of an agreement signed between Lake Placid and ABC for $6.5 million, which had been more than doubled after the IOC’s intervention.11 When reporting on the Television Technical Commission’s activities, Mohamed Mzali (TUN) said there had been three meetings already in 1976 and the Commission was drawing up a questionnaire for candidate cities and drafting contracts for television rights.12 He again requested that the Commission be enlarged to include members of OCOGs, IFs, and television companies.13

The first IOC Executive Board meeting after the Montreal Games was in Barcelona from 13 to 17 October 1976. Lake Placid television continued to be a problem. The ABC $15.5 million contract was still under discussion and various problems had arisen. The territory of Canada had been included in the ABC contract, which was unacceptable.14 The contract had originally included the rights for videocassettes and phonorecordings, but it was finally agreed to have a separate contract for these rights, which would be sold for one symbolic US dollar. It would probably not be possible to approve the contract before November. Killanin noted that Dr. Georges Straschnov, former director of Juridical Affairs at the EBU, had been appointed as the IOC’s technical adviser on television matters, which could also be helpful to the OCOGs. Berlioux stated that Lake Placid had no funds to build its television centre, since the $49 million funding approved by the US Senate could not be used for building purposes. The OCOG wished to ask the IOC for an immediate loan of $2 million, to be paid by way of deduction from its share of the television rights. Killanin regarded this as Lake Placid’s problem. It was decided to discuss the matter further with the USOC.15

Mzali reported on the Barcelona meeting of the Television Technical Commission, which included guidelines concerning television contracts for the Olympic Games.16 There was a proposal to schedule the Olympic Games programme according to the needs of television to satisfy the interests of spectators.17 Killanin stated that the interests of the International Federations and the athletes themselves must take precedence. Berlioux noted that in the Lake Placid/ABC contract there was a clause stating that the ice hockey and figure

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ABC Sports was granted exclusive television rights for coverage of the Lake Placid Games. For the first time in the television history, this American TV network was also named Coordinating Broadcaster, to provide the worldwide coverage.
skating competitions would be held at a time to allow them to be broadcast to Europe at peak viewing times, i.e., 19:00 to 23:00 CET. She had explained that this should be first discussed and approved by the IFs.18

The Lake Placid contract was to be studied by the Finance Commission at its meeting on 5 November 1976. Smirnov said negotiations for the Moscow Games were progressing and the OCOG would soon have a contract to submit for IOC approval. The US television companies were anxious to have the contract signed before the US presidential election on 2 November 1976, but it was agreed that this would not be feasible and the IOC did not want to be rushed.19 Berlioux and the IOC advisers, Daniel Mortureux and Straschnov were to visit Moscow to study the proposed contract and, upon their recommendation, it would be signed by the Chairman of the Finance Commission and then by the IOC President.20

A potential politically charged meeting of the IOC Executive Board was held in March 1977, in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire. It was linked with a meeting between the Executive Board and the NOCs and a scheduled meeting of GANOC. There had been some concern that African NOCs might boycott the meeting to protest the participation of Côte d’Ivoire in the 1976 Games (although no such protest occurred) and that there might be precipitate action demanded by some NOCs as a result of the boycott of the Montreal Games.

The television issues affecting Lake Placid were discussed. Berlioux explained that, at Innsbruck in 1976, Lake Placid had signed a contract with ABC, which the IOC did not approve because the figure was too low. The IOC managed to negotiate with ABC for $15.5 million, a certain amount of which was for technical facilities. Lake Placid, however, refused to accept the distribution key. There had been long talks in Barcelona (during the IOC Executive Board meeting in October 1976) between Col. Miller, Julian Roosevelt (IOC Member in the USA), and de Beaumont, the outcome of which had been that the IOC agreed to make a $1 million loan to Lake Placid and to donate a further $1 million on the condition that Lake Placid accepted the distribution key. But, when Berlioux had visited Lake Placid with the IOC television advisors, the Lake Placid OCOG’s television committee refused even to let the IOC see the (ABC) contract. Just before coming to Abidjan, Berlioux had received the contract for approval, pursuant to which the IOC would receive $5.2 million with the promise that the 30 percent withholding tax on income leaving the US would not be applied on any of the contracts for 1980. The IOC had not yet signed the contract.21

Later in 1977, the IOC Executive Board met in Prague, prior to the IOC Session. Killanin stated that it was proving extremely difficult to deal with the Lake Placid OCOG on broadcasting questions. De Beaumont reported that the OCOG was reluctant to return the $1.75 million which had been wrongly paid by ABC to the OCOG, which had deposited the funds with a bank in Lake Placid. He had received no answer to his cable to (Julian) Roosevelt. Killanin asked him to discuss the finance problems with Roosevelt and the Lake Placid OCOG while they were in Prague. Berlioux said that the IOC advisors in Prague were also discussing broadcasting in Europe (EBU and OIRT) with Lake Placid.22

The Finance Commission reported that, following agreements reached with the USOC and Lake Placid, the ABC contract had finally been approved. Negotiations between the OCOG and EBU, OIRT, and NHK were continuing.23

USOC and Olympic television rights

The USOC, represented by President Philip O. Krumm and Executive Director Col. F. Don Miller, made a formal appearance at the October 1976 IOC Executive Board meeting. The USOC requested a percentage of the television rights, not only for the Olympic Games, but for all amateur sport of an Olympic nature, even though the IOC had no jurisdiction regarding non-Olympic rights. The USOC suggested that this percentage should be 10 percent, which it thought would not affect the amounts received by the IOC for television rights. At this time, the USOC received no official subsidy from the federal government, although it was tax exempt and could give charitable receipts for all donations made to it. However, the US president had established a commission to study Olympic and amateur sport in the US and how to finance it. It had been proposed that there be a tax imposed on television rights to be used for the development of
amateur sport. The National Amateur Sports Foundation would be created to take care of this money and make grants. As far as the Olympic Games were concerned, the USOC blandly suggested that there should be no problem for the television organisation bidding for the Games to pay slightly more, so that when the percentage accorded to the USOC was deducted, the IOC would receive the amount expected.24

Moscow

Moscow negotiations had proceeded in the meantime and Berlioux reported that a contract, approved by the IOC, had been signed between the Moscow OCOG and NBC for $35 million. The IOC had also approved a contract for the Japanese rights for $4.5 million and negotiations with EBU were scheduled for 16 May 1977 in Moscow. There was, however, a problem connected with the NBC contract. In December 1976, the IOC had learned, through newspaper reports, that the Moscow OCOG had signed a protocol with Satra Corporation for cooperation with the OCOG regarding US television rights. The reports had stated that the television rights had not been sold and that the OCOG would go on negotiating with other networks. The IOC Finance Commission met on 5 January 1977, at which time no report had been presented to the IOC regarding the progress of the negotiations. The IOC’s only information had come through the press. Satra was not a broadcaster and was not eligible, pursuant to Rule 49, to acquire broadcasting rights. The Finance Commission instructed Berlioux to ask the Moscow OCOG for an official report on the television negotiations for discussion at its next meeting on 27 April 1977. Berlioux, having communicated the request, was advised that Moscow had sent information to de Beaumont on 19 January 1977 through diplomatic channels. Upon request, the same materials were then sent to the IOC in Lausanne.25

On 31 January 1977, the Moscow OCOG advised Killanin and Berlioux by phone that it wanted to enter into an agreement with NBC and requested the attendance of IOC representatives in Moscow. Berlioux and Mortureux were delegated by Killanin to go to Moscow to approve the NBC contract, provided it was in conformity with IOC requirements, that ABC and CBS had been treated on an equal footing with NBC and that, in addition, there was no misunderstanding with Satra. The IOC representatives met with President Ignati Novikov and the OCOG Presidium in Moscow on 1 February 1977. They were assured that the OCOG Presidium had studied the Satra and ABC offers, which it had rejected and had informed the companies accordingly the previous day through their representatives in Moscow. CBS had apparently left Moscow without making any constructive offer. After minor amendments were made, the IOC delegation decided to approve the NBC contract. Satra then issued legal proceedings against both the Moscow OCOG and the IOC. The IOC had engaged US counsel to deal with the lawsuit. Berlioux was to discuss the matter with Novikov, to try to find a solution.26

The Olympic Television and Radio Centre (OTVRC) was built in Moscow for the 1980 Olympics. Far left: A receiving dish on the roof of the Olympic Switching Centre (OSC). In the background is Ostankino TV Tower. Built in 1967, its height of 537 m made it the tallest free-standing structure in the world, until it was surpassed by the CN Tower in Toronto in 1976.
The matter had not been resolved by the time the IOC Executive Board met in June 1977. After hearing Berlioux’s explanation, the IOC advisors (Mortureux, Silance, and Straschnov) were invited to join the meeting and explain the current position regarding the case brought by Satra against the IOC and NBC over the letter of intent. The IOC Executive Board confirmed the decision taken at its meeting in Abidjan on 29 March 1977 to approve the contract. Berlioux was to organise a meeting between the lawyers, Novikov and Smirnov, de Beaumont, and herself to discuss the matter, with NBC to be invited if necessary.27

The Satra matter had not been cleared up at the time of the IOC Executive Board meeting in Lausanne in October 1977, although Smirnov said that the Moscow OCOG was doing everything possible to resolve the situation. It was being complicated, he reported, by an aggressive attitude displayed by Satra, which was attempting to exploit the fact that the IOC had recently stopped giving approval to contracts signed by the OCOG with other countries and had sent a circular letter signed by Berlioux to the NOCs. A meeting was planned for the following month, at which he hoped the legal actions against the IOC and NBC would be withdrawn. Killanin said it was the IOC Executive Board’s decision to refuse approval of contracts until the Satra matter was finished.28

In early 1978, the Satra case was finally reported as having been settled. Although Smirnov had said earlier that Satra had no chance of winning, it appears that, in addition to getting a contract dealing with chrome ore, it had extracted $3 million from the Moscow OCOG as the price of settling the matter. The Moscow organisers had initially taken the view that their position had been made more difficult because one of the IOC lawyers had given information to Satra, whose position had been considerably strengthened as a result of the IOC circular. Killanin had written to Novikov denying that this had occurred and Smirnov acknowledged that the misunderstandings had been cleared up.29

Only a small amount was to be received by the Moscow OCOG from the EBU, leading to a request that the IOC forego its share, to which Killanin replied that this share also belonged to the NOCs and IFs.30 The Finance Commission reported that, with the anticipated revenues from Lake Placid and Moscow, the IOC should be able to operate for six years, short of the eight years it considered optimal, but nevertheless improving.31

During discussions on Rule 49, Killanin referred to Marc Hodler’s report on candidate cities and their obligations with respect to television rights. He said he had received a letter from Marvin Josephson (involved in the Montreal negotiations), who had suggested that the television rights be tied up and made known before bids were made.32 Because the transmission costs of the signals were very high, Josephson suggested that the IOC be responsible for the rights and the OCOG be responsible for the transmission, hardware, and related aspects. The recommendation of splitting the rights and transmission negotiations was approved and a detailed paper was to be prepared by the Television Commission.33

As to distribution of the television rights, two proposals were discussed in connection with the Finance Commission report: first, creation of a reserve fund, which was to be 10 percent of the television rights before distribution according to the established formula and,
second, that assistance be provided for the expenses of judges and referees at the Olympic Games. The only recorded decision was to create the reserve fund.34

Smirnov asked the IOC Finance Commission not to describe the contract with NBC as $85 million, since this was the total of two distinct contracts, one for $50 million, covering hardware, and the other for $35 million, covering the television rights. Killanin said the $50 million for hardware had been accepted by the IOC as (another) “special” derogation to the contract.

In response to Smirnov’s complaint about an IOC estimate of the OIRT contract, on the basis that no contract existed, Killanin said it was up to the Moscow OCOG if it wanted to make a gift to OIRT, but the IOC, on its own behalf and for the IFs and NOCs, could not be involved in any such policy and the Montreal precedent with the CBC was to be observed. He would discuss the matter with Novikov as a matter of principle; he could not understand why part of Europe should not pay something toward television rights.35

Moscow noted that the IOC had made a gift to Lake Placid of $1 million and had asked what the IOC proposed to do for Moscow. De Beaumont said, on behalf of the Finance Commission, that Lake Placid had badly needed the money to be able to begin work on the facilities, but, unlike Moscow, had not requested payment for any hardware from ABC. He, therefore, considered that the treatment of each OCOG had been fair.36

The following year, during the 1978 Athens Session, de Beaumont reminded the delegations bidding for the 1984 Games that television rights were not to be used for hardware and that the division, as between the IOC and the organising committees, was calculated on the net amount. The candidate cities, with the exception of Los Angeles, the only candidate for the Summer Games, dutifully agreed.37 The Games were awarded to Sarajevo and Los Angeles.

The 1980 Games were fast approaching. The IOC Executive Board dealt with some operational aspects for the 1980 Games, such as daily event schedules. The Television Commission continued its efforts to expand and also announced that it had found several problems arising from the answers to the questionnaires for both Sarajevo and Los Angeles, which would be further studied.38

The 1980 Games

By the time the IOC Executive Board met in Lake Placid in 1980, the US call for a boycott of the Moscow Games was well underway. No one had any realistic expectation that the Soviets would (or could) get out of Afghanistan to meet the deadline imposed by US President Jimmy Carter. The IOC was more concerned with the existential issue of resisting the boycott than with television.

Television coverage of the Lake Placid Games was uneventful. The sports news was the improbable gold medal won by the US ice hockey team, which included the exciting victory over the Soviets, followed by a win over Finland, where the US had been behind in both matches. It became known (at least in America) as the “Miracle on Ice.”

The Moscow Games were held as scheduled, despite a badly damaging boycott which made them largely a
joyless event. They were not broadcast in many of the boycotting countries. That the Games took place at all was a testament to the surprising solidarity of the Olympic Movement, which, despite lacking both money and political influence, successfully withstood the boycott pressures.

But, in Moscow, the genesis of a profound change in the IOC occurred. Killanin had not sought re-election. To the surprise of no one, a new president of the IOC was elected on the first ballot – Juan Antonio Samaranch – and the Olympic Movement, not without considerable baggage, entered a new era.

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1 IOCEB 4–6 October 1975, 7.
2 IOC Sess. 1976 (Innsbruck), 4. At p. 10, during the Montreal OCOG report, under Television Rights, the enigmatic notation states: “Most problems were cleared up.”
5 IOC Sess. 1976 (Innsbruck), 15.
6 IOC Sess. 1976 (Innsbruck), 17. Television rights are dealt with at pp. 47–48, mainly recording what had been received and where the funds were held. See also pp. 53–54 for further details on contractual amounts and the division between rights and technical facilities.
7 IOC Sess. 1976 (Innsbruck), 17. Exeter was also president of the IAAF, so his intervention regarding the IFs was little more than special pleading. At p. 18, Hodler advised that the IFs shared the Winter rights on the basis of 20 percent each for skiing, skating, and ice hockey and that bobsleigh, luge, and biathlon shared the remaining 40 percent. Killanin said the division between IFs would be discussed again since, (counter-intuitively) from the view of sport, all federations were of the same importance.
8 IOC Sess. 1976 (Innsbruck), 18. Mzali reported (p. 25) on the meeting of the Television Technical Commission (Annex 25 at p. 76). No significant decisions had been taken, other than to propose that the Commission be turned into a commission for radio and television, including representatives of each of the five major international television unions, representatives of each OCOG and advisers nominated by the IOC. No mention was made regarding the US networks. A sub-committee to deal with special subjects might work separately.
10 IOCEB 10–31 July 1976, Montreal, 11. The idea that the payment should be returned to ABC seems to have evolved.
11 IOCEB 10–31 July 1976, Montreal, 12. Berlioux was still having problems with Lake Placid and mentioned this during the meeting of 27 July 1976. Killanin asked her to draft a “stern letter” to the OCOG (p. 55).
12 A draft standard contract for the purchase of television rights of the Olympic Games would be attached to the minutes of the 1977 meeting of the Executive Board (IOCEB 29–30 March 1977, Abidjan, 68–70). The proposed draft contract was to be between the IOC/OCOG as one party and the broadcaster as the other. Interestingly, the rights were expressed as television rights and expanded to include “television in monochrome or colour, by cable, by pay-television, by closed circuit, live or recorded, for private or public reception, in whole or in part.” Also, somewhat puzzlingly, given the IOC’s extreme reluctance to get involved in any of the technical aspects of broadcasting, section 3 of the draft contract provided that the IOC/OCOG undertook to provide the broadcaster, at the radio/television centre, with the basic signal produced by the authority of the host country of the Games. Similarly, the signature portion contemplated a signature by the broadcaster and a signature for the IOC/OCOG, not simply an approval of the contract by the IOC.
13 Killanin wanted to study the recommendations regarding expansion of the Commission in conjunction with his study of all the commissions for the next Olympiad. He was of the view that the Press and Television Commissions overlapped, which would have to be discussed with their respective chairmen. The meeting with the two commissions would take place in Barcelona later that year (IOCEB 10–31 July 1976, Montreal, 14). The Commission was eventually expanded to include a representative of the newsreels, the EBU (Werner Schneider) and US broadcasters which had been granted rights (IOCEB 13–17 October 1976, Barcelona, 25).
James Worrall, a Canadian IOC Member, drew attention to a telex from the CBC protesting against the proposal to include Canada in the rights contest with ABC for the 1980 Games. US television networks all had major transmitters close to the Canadian border and regarded Canadian audiences as effectively part of "their" audiences. Berlioux replied that an agreement had been reached with ABC not to include Canada in its contract. (IOCEB 13–17 October 1976, 18). Lake Placid reported on television difficulties with ABC, EBU, and ORTF in a letter to Killianin dated 10 September 1976 (See IOCEB 13–17 October 1976, Barcelona, Annex 6, 41–43).

15 IOCEB 13–17 October 1976, 6. Regarding Moscow, it was simply reported that negotiations were in progress. De Beaumont, on behalf of the Finance Commission, had nothing to add to the minutes of the previous meeting (p. 15). On 26 January 1977, a delegation from Lake Placid visited Dublin to meet with Killianin who said, during the meeting, that it was intended to make a donation of $1 million to the OCOG through the USOC, which awaited confirmation. Lake Placid said this would be used for sports installations (IOCEB 29–30 March 1977, Abidjan, Annex 5) 27–32 at p. 28). It is not clear what caused Killianin to change his mind on the loan issue.

16 Recommendation 5, 61.

17 Annex 13, 60–61.

18 IOCEB 13–17 October 1976, 18. It is hard to imagine what European-based IF would object to competition schedules in North America which would suit their European audiences, but the athlete-centred rhetoric can almost always be found in statements made by IFs and the IOC. It is even more difficult to imagine how a US broadcaster would agree to put two of the most popular sports of a Winter Games on television in the middle of the afternoon in America, when the rights fees it paid were multiples of what would be paid by the EBU. The issue of discontent among IFs (especially FINA) regarding distribution of their shares was also noted, but Killianin wanted no part of that matter, unless the IOC were to be asked by the IFs to arbitrate on the internal division between them (p. 19).

19 The broadcasters’ concerns would likely have been that, in the context of USA–USSR relations, one could never be certain of the directions of foreign policy, but that political interference with contracts executed prior to any change in leadership and foreign policy would be less likely than with respect to contracts still under negotiation at the time of any such change. The IOC was probably oblivious to the possible impacts on US foreign policy.

20 IOCEB 13–17 October 1976, 20. Killianin expressed concern that, in addition to a possible tax on televised sport for the promotion of sport within the US, there might also be a possibility of a withholding tax on sums earned in the US in connection with the Lake Placid television rights. Berlioux was to consult a fiscal expert and a lawyer on the matter (p. 20). Killianin also announced that he had been approached by Werner Schneider, from German television, with a request that track and field be organised during the first week and swimming in the second week of the Moscow Games. However, the programme had already been drawn up, and it was felt that television should not be allowed to dictate the timing of events (p. 22).

21 IOCEB 29–30 March 1977, Abidjan, 5. The 30 percent tax referred to is the default rate of US withholding tax on certain types of US-based income paid by a US resident to a non-resident. The withholding rate may be reduced, or even eliminated, pursuant to a tax treaty between the US and the recipient’s country of residence. It is all but certain that, in making its offer not to deduct 30 percent of the payments, the Lake Placid OCOG had already determined (or been assured) that such taxes were not due. Given its precarious financial situation and dependence on government funding, the OCOG would not have taken the risk of incurring liability for failure to deduct and remit withholding taxes on payments made to the IOC.

22 IOCEB 13–14 June 1977, Prague, 2–3.

23 IOCEB 19–20 October 1977, Lausanne, (Annex 6), 52. The Lake Placid OCOG did not want to be burdened with subsidisation costs regarding television in Europe (p. 62).

24 IOCEB 13–17 October 1976, 16. The work of this commission led to adoption of the Amateur Sports Act of 1978. Obviously, some aspects changed along the way, especially regarding the imposition of taxes on all television rights. With the level of Olympic rights at the time, the 10 percent would have been insignificant for the USOC, so it is not evident what the request was all about — other than the USOC’s apparently insatiable appetite for money. Killianin merely thanked the USOC for bringing the matter to the IOC’s attention. The USOC demand became an issue that continued to escalate.

25 These were a letter of intent signed by the Moscow OCOG’s Vladimir Koval and Satra and a telex proposal for negotiations from another American organisation.


27 IOCEB 13–14 June 1977, Prague, 3–4. It seems there are no Abidjan minutes for 29 March 1977. The agreement with Channel 7 in Australia was not approved, pending amendments requested by Moscow; some minor assurances were to be sought from Japan regarding radio coverage (see Annex 3, 28) See also Finance Commission calculations showing division of revenues, Annex 6, 31–33, at p. 33.

28 IOCEB 19–20 October 1977, Lausanne, 14–16. The IOC had limited leverage to ensure that the Satra proceedings were resolved, but one aspect of this was the Moscow OCOG’s need for funds, hence the refusal to approve contracts until such resolution was achieved.

29 IOCEB 25–26 January 1978, Tunis, 10–11. Killianin expressed the view that the reason for the Satra case in the first place had been the signature on the letter of intent by the Moscow OCOG’s Koval (although someone would have had to sign the agreement on behalf of the OCOG), and great difficulties had resulted for all parties. The Finance Commission had recommended that the IOC’s legal costs be deducted from the Moscow deposit, but the position later evolved to taking them off the top of the television revenues (pp. 11–12).


32 This was a highly impracticable suggestion. Bidding committees would have no authority to commit on behalf of eventual OCOGs, and having to negotiate with every bidding committee would be complicated and ruinously expensive.

33 IOCEB 29–30 March 1977, Abidjan, 9. As earlier noted, a standard television contract was to be attached to the minutes for further study (p. 10). The Television Commission was scheduled to meet on 17 May 1977 (p. 11).


35 IOCEB 13–18 May 1978, Athens, 10. The eventual agreement was expressed in roubles and there was some question on how they could be spent. See: IOCEB 9–10 March 1979, Lausanne, 5. The matter was still not resolved in June 1979. See: IOCEB 26–29 June 1979, Puerto Rico, 27. Even in October 1979, it was not clear whether the NDCs could use the roubles to pay team expenses in the Olympic Village. See: IOCEB 23–25 October 1979, Nagoya, 7–8.


37 IOC Session, 17–20 May 1978, 18 (Gothenburg); 20 (Sanajevo); 21 (Sapporo); 25 (Los Angeles, which stated that it expected to follow the same formula as in the past).

38 IOCEB 9–10 March 1979, Lausanne, 22–23.
The exact details of the foundation of the Turkish Olympic Committee still remain open to discussion. This paper tries to clarify the subject in the light of documents and sources which have so far come to light.

The Ottoman Empire first engaged with the Olympic Movement in 1905. It was invited to send representatives to the third Olympic Congress held in Brussels from 9 to 14 June 1905. In his letter of 27 February 1905, Pierre de Coubertin conveyed his sincere wishes for the Ottoman government to participate with an official delegate in this important event, to be held under the auspices of the King of Belgium.

In an invitation letter sent by the organising committee to Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Pasha, dated 13 April 1905, the hope was also expressed that the Ottoman government would participate in the Congress (BOA, I.HR., 397–1323). The delegation was to be selected from those who had previously been sent to education congresses (BOA, MF.MKT., 853–42).

Instead of sending a delegate from Istanbul, budget constraints prompted the decision to send the Ottoman representative from Brussels, Mihran Kavafyan Efendi (BOA, BEO, 2621–196506; BOA, MF.MKT., 855–22). Mihran Kavafyan Efendi had earlier led the delegation to the Liège exhibition, which started in April 1905 (BOA, I.HR., 391–25; BOA, BEO, 2555–191584; Işıklı, 2012).

Mihran Kavafyan Efendi attended the Brussels meeting as the Ottoman government delegate, among 192 representatives from 20 countries (IOC, 1905). Unfortunately, the Ottoman archives have no record of a post-congress report. It is not certain if Efendi even wrote such a document. In fact, he was dismissed from his duty at the Ottoman embassy two months after the Congress as a result of illness and negative actions at the end of August (BOA, BEO, 2656–199151).

The next Turkish contact with Olympism came on a more personal level in 1907. Coubertin was looking to recruit IOC representatives from all over the world. He told his Paris schoolfriend Monsieur Gouvery that he wanted to meet someone who was passionate about sports in Istanbul. Gouvery contacted Selim Sırrı Bey (Tarcan, 1948; Selim Sırrı, 1910), who accepted the invitation to become the IOC representative in Turkey. In the environment of freedom that came with the declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy in Turkey, Sırrı Bey began work.
on the foundation of a National Olympic Committee towards the end of 1908 (Tarcan, 1948; Yıldıran, 2009).

At that time, an article titled “Athlétisme Ottoman” appeared in Revue Olympique, the official publication of the IOC. The article describes the sports activities of foreigners living in Istanbul, sports life before the declaration of the constitutional monarchy, and the organisations and clubs which existed. It also stated that only a start had been made and more efforts were envisaged. Social restructuring, sports propaganda, and the plans of the Young Turks, who were great supporters of physical exercise and athletes, were also mentioned. “The adherence of the Ottomans to this truth too long unknown to them will be, for the future of their race, the starting point of the regeneration to which they have the right to claim” (“Athletisme Ottoman,” 1908).

The official report of the 1908 Olympics lists IOC Members but does not include a representative for Turkey (Cook, 1908). In the January issue of Revue Olympique in 1909, Selim Sirri Bey was mentioned as Turkey’s first elected IOC representative after the election held on 15 December 1908. It described him as a soldier and athlete trying to restructure and popularise body training in his country (Bulletin Officiel, 1909). Selim Sirri Bey became the 59th member of the IOC and the first from the Asian continent (Buchanan & Lyberg, 2010; Repertoire Olympique, 1975). İkdam reported that Selim Sirri Bey was the first representative from Turkey at the IOC and noted that Turkey should participate at the Olympic Games every four years and have a permanent seat at the IOC (“Olimpiyad Oyunları,” 1909a). Selim Sirri Bey, who was planning to go to Stockholm in the first week of April 1909, sent apologies for not being able to attend the IOC Session in Berlin. However, changes in his travel plans (TOC Archive, 20 April 1909), did, in fact, allow him to attend the Session in Berlin. (Discussions et décisions, 1909; Coubertin, 1977c). Thus, Turkish Olympism, born in 1908, enjoyed its most productive years in the Ottoman period until 1914 (Yıldıran, 2009).

Selim Sirri Bey continued to correspond with Coubertin during his one-year stay in Sweden and requested documentation related to the Olympic Movement (TOC Archive, 27 July 1909). Selim Sirri Bey, who continued to work on the official establishment of the Turkish Olympic Committee after his return in May 1910 (Bulletin du Comité, 1910), did not receive the support he had been hoping, because the Turkish authorities considered the Olympic Games to be an event made only for Greeks (Tarcan, Selim Sirri, 1923).

Meanwhile, the organising committee of the 1912 Games asked Selim Sirri Bey to complete the establishment of the NOC in his country before the Olympics (Riksarkivet, SE/RA/730226/E II/9). By the end of 1910, the formalities were not yet complete. In 1911, Selim Sirri Bey attended the IOC Session in Budapest (IOC Archive, 1911; La XIII réunion, 1911; Coubertin, 1977d), where...
Selim Sırrı Bey was convinced that military and politics would be incompatible with his passions and resigned at the end of August 1908 to pursue his dream of developing physical education in his country. He opened the first private Physical Education School in Turkey on 20 December 1908 (Terbiye-i Bedeniye Mektebi, 1908; Tarcan, 1948). It is quite possible that he started his work on the Olympic Movement at that time and founded the Olympic Committee. In fact, the publication of an article titled “Athléisme Ottoman” in the IOC publication in October 1908, two months before Selim Sırrı Bey was elected as an IOC Member, could well have been a precursor to establishing the committee. Related news published in the Stamboul newspaper on 21 December 1908 points to the same direction (“École de Culture Physique,” 1909):

Upon invitation of IOC President Coubertin, Selim Sırrı Bey [...] will be representing Turkey, and the Olympic Movement trusts him regarding organisation and leadership for the National Olympic Committee.

Further arguments for an early foundation date of the NOC are given by Haluk San, who met Selim Sırrı Bey shortly before the latter’s death in 1957:

After forming the administrative committee of OMOC [Ottoman National Olympic Committee], I applied to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. They said that this is a sports association and there is no need to register and issue regulations. (Fişek, 1998).

The fact that Selim Sırrı Bey went to Sweden shortly after the establishment might have only prolonged the process of gaining official approval for the committee from the government. As a result, taking into consideration the statements in the press and writings of Selim Sırrı Bey, it can be assumed that the TOC was established in 1908.4

Participation in the 1908 London Olympic Games

The 1908 Olympics were once again held in conjunction with an international exposition. The Games took place between 27 April and 31 October 1908, but the main events were held in the period from 13 to 25 July. At the same time, a constitutional monarchy was declared in the Ottoman Empire on 23 July 1908 as a historical milestone for the development of modern Turkey.

The 1908 Official Report names two Turkish athletes, Mr. Moullos (Athlete Mulos) in gymnastics and Kinan (Kenan) Bey in wrestling (Cook, 1908). Sabah newspaper reports the presence of Ottoman athletes at the opening ceremony:
The wrestler who went in front of the Ottoman delegation was holding the Ottoman banner. His clothes were made up of red and white coloured fabrics ... (“Londra’ da Olimpiyat Oyunları,” 1908).

The Times reported that 2,000 athletes attended the opening ceremony in the presence of King Edward VII. “First came the red and white stripes of Austria [...] and the red Turkish flag with its crescent.” (“The King and,” 1908). American newspapers also reported: “In all 21 countries were represented and among that gathering Turkey was represented with one competitor” (“King Edward VIII, “1908; “King Edward Opens,” 1908; “Olympic Games in London,” 1908; “Peace and Olympic Games,” 1908). According to the American newspapers, only one Turkish athlete was present at the opening ceremony, while Sabah newspaper and British newspapers referred to a delegation, which would seem to indicate at least two people.

For a long time, it was believed that Turkey did not participate in the 1908 London Games. It was only after research, conducted at the London Embassy in 1956, that light was shed on the first Turkish participant, Aleko Mulos. Konstantin Devecis, one of the 1906 participants, remembered that Mulos was doing gymnastics at the Tatavla Club while a student at Galatasaray High School: “Now I remembered. Mulos was Baron Pierre de Coubertin’s guide when he came to Istanbul.” Also, Selim Sırrı Bey was reminded of Coubertin’s guide and added: “So the Baron invited that gymnast to the London Olympics by using his personal means. This was a pleasant surprise for me (...)” (Atabeyoğlu, 2004). In contrast, the list of participants identified by Bill Mallon did not mention the name of Mulos (Mallon, 2000).

In the 1970s, the Olympic Review published a series of articles about National Olympic Committees. The section on Turkey, probably authored by members of its NOC, listed Aleko Mulos in 1908 as Turkey’s first Olympian. (“Turkey and Olympism,” 1975).

As late as July 2020, no official document had been discovered to corroborate the information in the official report. However the TOC recently discovered a note stating that Mulos finished equal 67th of 96 in the heptathlon gymnastic competition (individual all-around competition) which would seem to have finally proved his attendance at the 1908 Olympics (TOC Archive, 2020).

Less information is available about Kenan Bey, the other competitor. He taught European wrestling in the Physical Education School, which Selim Sırrı Bey opened on 20 December 1908 (Selim Sırrı Bey, 1909a). Kenan Bey conducted a comprehensive interview for Spor Alemi journal in 1920, but did not give any information about his participation in the Games (“Geçmiş zaman olurki,” 1920). The Times of 23 July 1908 stated that Kenan Bey did not compete in freestyle 61 kg wrestling competitions (“The Olympic Games,” 1908). Although his name was included in the Official Report, it is very probable that Kenan Bey ultimately did not compete in the 1908 Games.

Considering the difficulties of foreign travel at the time, just before the declaration of the constitutional monarchy in Turkey, and the fact that the NOC has not yet been established, it is possible that Mulos had taken part at Coubertin’s personal invitation. But this new information returns us to the question of whether or not Coubertin had ever visited Istanbul.

First official participation in Stockholm 1912

Turkey was one of the 26 countries to be invited to Stockholm. The invitation letter for 1912 was sent to Selim Sırrı Bey on 18 November 1910 by the Swedish Olympic Committee. Documents about the programme, participation conditions, and the facilities followed in a letter in May 1911 (Riksarkivet, SE/RA/730226/E II/9).

Selim Sırrı Bey was appointed to represent the Turkish government (BOA, MV., 227–70; BOA, İ.MMS., 149–1330/R–06; BOA, BEO, 4025–301852). In his letter to the organising committee on 23 November 1911, he says that he distributed the relevant documents to the responsible bodies, but was not sure whether Ottoman athletes would be able to participate because of the Turkish–Italian War. He further told them that his application to the government had proven positive and that it was also planned to send five delegates to the Congress (Riksarkivet, SE/RA/730226/E II/9).

Selim Sırrı Bey made an open call through İkdam and Sabah newspapers to motivate athletes wishing to participate in the Olympics. He also wrote to the naval and war ministries, asking them for names of officers who were interested in the Games. The reply was unequivocal: “We consider the participation in the competitions unnecessary as it will not be of any benefit to the military service” (Tarcan, 1948).

The Times published a preliminary list two months before the Games, which mentioned that there would be four athletes from Turkey (“The Olympic Games,” 1912). American newspapers put the participation of athletes at over 2,000 from all over the world, including China, Japan, Chile, and Turkey. They also mentioned that Turkey was proposing to hold a wrestling championship (“Olympic Games Will,” 1912; “Over Three Thousand,” 1912; “Olympic Games Open,” 1912; “Preparations for Olympic,” 1912).

Without the support of the army, Selim Sırrı Bey only received confirmation from two athletes of Armenian origin: Migirdiç Mgryanyan and Vahram Papazyan. As Selim Sırrı Bey was unable to guarantee the government’s support, these two athletes were to travel to Sweden by their own means.
Papazyan was the son of a newspaper and tobacco shop owner in Bebek. Early in the morning he would run from Bebek to Cağaloğlu (around 15 km), bringing the newspapers to the shop, and then go to school. Since his family's financial situation was not favourable, his sporting club, Ardavazd, organised a theatre performance in Arnavutköy to support his participation in the Games (Atabeyoğlu, 2004). Papazyan himself played a role in the play, entitled Sacrificial Sailor, and performed in Turkish. In the audience were ladies from the palace (TOC, 2008).

Papazyan, a student at Robert College, competed in various athletics competitions in Istanbul and was the fastest over 1.5 miles in the city (Yıldız, 2015). The expenses for his trip to Stockholm were covered by the Kuruçeşme Ardavazd Club (Atabeyoğlu, 1956).

Mıgıryan was able to cover his own expenses due to his good financial situation. He was chairman of Üsküdar Raffi Club, founded in 1907 (Demoyan, 2014). The exploits of both athletes were reported in the Armenian sports journal Marmnamarz, which had reporters in Stockholm (“Ermeniler Stokholm’dan,” 1912).

Meanwhile in Sweden, 25 labels bearing a Turkish flag were prepared for use on the luggage of the Turkish party. Furthermore, 800 original Turkish posters and 27,400 smaller poster reproductions were printed. It was decided to depict the Turkish poster flag on the posters to be used in Sweden. Advertising stamps had been sent to Turkey.

Selim Sırrı Bey arrived in Stockholm on 28 June 1912, a week before the official opening of the Games (BOA, HR.İD., 1223–28). The athletes arrived in Stockholm after a long five-day journey and met him at the Turkish Embassy. Turkish athletes were allocated the primary school in Linnegatan (Swedish Olympic Committee, 1913) and the pension at Stureplan 13 was reserved for Selim Sırrı Bey (Jönsson, 2012).

Papazyan complained that he had not seen the Turkish flag in the streets alongside other nations’ flags. He said that if the flag were not raised, he would not participate in the competitions. The Turkish ambassador took the necessary steps and his wife sewed the Turkish flag on his sport uniform. (Atabeyoğlu, 1956).

Mıgıryan gave an interview to the Stadion newspaper about the disciplines in which he was to participate. He spoke about his victory in a pentathlon competition in Athens the previous year after graduation from Robert College. He also talked of being a wrestler and his pride in representing the Ottoman Empire at the Olympic Games (“Bay Migirdiç Migıryan,” 1912).1 In an interview for Aftonbladet on 1 July 1912, Selim Sırrı Bey mentioned that only two of his fellow countrymen were with him because of problems connected with the war and the distance to be travelled (BOA, HR.İD., 1223–28).

Ottoman athletes did not take part in the parade at the opening ceremony held on 6 July 1912 (Jönsson, 2012). Although Papazyan stated that he was to compete in the 800 m, 1,500 m, and 5,000 m and the participation forms signed by Sırrı Bey and lodged with the organising committee (Riksarkivet, SE/RA/730226/EII/5), he participated only in the 800 m and 1,500 m and did not finish his heats. (Mallon & Widlund, 2002)

Mıgıryan competed in the discus throw, shot put (best hand), shot put (both hands), pentathlon, and decathlon (“Olympiska Spelen,” 1912; The Olympic Swedish Committee, 1913). In the throwing disciplines he finished in the minor placings, in the pentathlon he had to retire after three events, and in the decathlon he withdrew after the long jump due to an injury (Mallon & Widlund, 2002, TOC, 2008).

In the report he sent to the government after the Olympics, Mustafa Şekib, Ambassador in Stockholm, included information about the opening ceremony, the competitions, the kings and princes coming from abroad, Selim Sırrı Bey having been highly respected by everyone, and the two students from Robert College participating in the competitions on their own account. He also reported that the Ottoman flag was hung in the stadium and streets of the city during the Games (BOA, HR.İD., 1223–30). Shortly after his return, Selim Sırrı Bey was awarded with a special Olympic order by the Swedish State (BOA, BEO, 4123–309213; BOA, İ.TAL.481-1331).

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After the Games, arguments emerged about the two Armenians. Before going to the Olympics, an appreciation of the Armenian athletes appeared in Selim Sırrı Bey’s journal, Terbiye ve Oyun: “Thank you...
very much that two venerable Armenians, Mıgıryan and Papazyan will save our faces by being included in the name of Ottomans in these competitions." (Selim Sırı, 1912c). In his comprehensive article, he wrote:

The most distinguished of twenty-six different nations were there. There is no single trace of us. My tears are filled with my sorrow. There is no trace of the existence of the vast Ottoman Empire, which used to be accepted by the Europeans with the saying “as strong as the Turks”. (Tarcan, Selim Sırı, 1912d).

Savarş Krisyan, one of the pioneers of Armenian physical education and a colleague of Selim Sırı Bey, wrote a severe riposte in his magazine Marmnamarz:

Let’s keep it short. Two Armenians went to Stockholm at their own expense and with some support from the Armenian community, not as Armenians but as Ottomans. They wore the Ottoman crescent on their breasts, fought to promote Ottomanism in sports in Europe, and were applauded as Ottoman athletes, then Selim Sırı Bey pretends to cry because there are still no Turks in the Stockholm Olympics, and he won’t remember the two Ottoman Armenians [...]. It was the Ottoman homeland, not only the homeland of the Turks, as Selim Sırı Bey thinks. The Armenians also defend the Ottoman homeland with their own weapons in their hands.” (Krisyan, 1912).

Selim Sırı Bey wrote different articles in the years to follow. In Terbiye ve Oyun, he implied the absence of the Ottoman athletes at the opening ceremony. That is absolutely true as mentioned before. However, it is interesting that the article did not mention the Armenian competitors at all. In his articles in Spor Alemi and Vatan in 1923, he stated that there had been no one from Turkey at the Games. But in his book Olimpiyat Oyunlar ve Stadyumlar (Olympic Games and Stadiums) written in 1914 and in further writings after 1923, he mentioned the participation of Armenian athletes.

This should be considered in terms of the social and political context surrounding Selim Sırı Bey. If we look at his writings in a broader context, they become more comprehensible. From 1915 to the first years of the Turkish Republic, when minorities such as the Armenians were not welcome, he did not mention them. He did so in the years before and after, when this topic was less sensitive. Similarly, in the years that followed, Papazyan was to attribute his collapse in the 1,500 m when leading the field to more political reasons than simply the excitement of finding himself in the lead.

During the First World War, Selim Sırı Tarcan continued his studies and made efforts to introduce Olympism and spread modern sports. As one of the defeated powers, Turkey had been expelled from the IOC in 1919 and excluded from the 1920 Games. But the close relationship that Selim Sırı Tarcan enjoyed with Pierre de Coubertin saw Turkey return to the IOC’s fold in 1921. The sportspeople of the new republic, established in 1923, would return to the international arena in 1924 under the leadership of Selim Sırı Tarcan, with their modern clothes and a new nationality, leaving behind the days of the Ottomans. ■
There is no official source regarding the establishment process of the

In the study the word “communication” is used for any kind of

Vahram Papazyan was a student of Robert College from 1907 to 1908

In the IOC Archives there is no documentation on Turkey's participation

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Atabeyoğlu, Ç. (25 October 1956). Sport arimizin karişik kalmagı

Mulos is mentioned in the list of athletes

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Meanwhile, the author examined copies of the Servet-i Fünun newspaper, which was first published on 26 July 1908. An examination of the publications from July 1908 to May 1909 did not reveal the article. The information about the article given by San is also incorrect. The number given belongs to an issue two months before the proclaiming of the Second Constitution, and the page only consists of an article about the French navy. The opinion of the researcher is that San saw the relevant article, based on the fact that the author made such a clear translation, but he gave incorrect information about the publication and the citation information in his book.


According to the IOC Archives, the recognition of the Turkish Olympic Committee took place in 1911. It seems that five delegates from Turkey were invited to the 1912 Session. This indicates that the committee had been established. One can find many National Olympic Committees which were recognised later, even though their representatives were IOC founding members in 1894. According to Coubertin (1977b), referring to 1909, some NOCs were still in the establishment phase.

In the IOC Archives, there is no documentation on Turkey’s participation at the 1908 Olympic Games. Mulos is mentioned in the list of athletes on the IOC website, but there is no information about Kenan.

Vahram Papazyan was a student of Robert College from 1907 to 1908 and graduated in 1913. His nationality is mentioned as Armenian in the school records and his father’s profession appears as a civil servant (Yıldız, 2015).

According to the newspaper, Migryan was 19 years old. However, he was already 29, while Papazyan was indeed 19. This mistake was frequently made in different sources, stating that both athletes were 19 years old.

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Music: A Key to Promoting the “Spirit of Olympia”

By Ian Jobling

Amazing variety of inspiring and uplifting music from the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympics from their beginning in 1896.

* * *

In May 2021, a community choir in Queensland, Australia – the Noosa Chorale – decided to broaden its usually classical repertoire by researching and presenting some of the major musical presentations of the Olympic Games. The Spirit of Olympia was the title of its two concerts, both receiving a standing ovation, and the extent of the choir’s success may be seen by the above quote from an audience member.

As an Olympic historian (and a tenor in the Noosa Chorale), it proved to me that the music of the Olympic Games can do much to inform and educate people about the role and place of the Olympic Movement in Society.

At a conference on Sport and Music held at the University of Aarhus, Denmark in 2006 a key issue was the scant attention that has been paid to the links between organised sport and music.1 Despite the significance of music in accentuating events and shows, many people do not readily recognise its importance and (even) neglect its presence.2

Prompted by this view, I advanced the idea of mounting a concert of Olympic music as one of the three main performances undertaken by Noosa Chorale in its annual schedule for audiences in the Noosa and Sunshine Coast region of Queensland’s south-east corner. To help the choir’s organising committee in determining whether to take up this idea, some preliminary background was prepared on the music that has been played at Olympic Games since their modern inauguration in Athens in 1896.

Background

Baron Pierre de Coubertin and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) were delighted that the inaugural modern Olympic Games included an Olympic hymn, especially written by Spyros Samaras and Kostis Palamas. In 1958, the IOC declared this the official Olympic anthem. Since the 1960 Squaw Valley Winter Olympic Games, this hymn has been performed as the Olympic flag was raised at the opening ceremony, and again when the Olympic flag was lowered at the closing ceremony.

During the intervening years (1900–1956), countries hosting the Olympic Games offered various musical compositions and presentations. Additionally, and increasingly, other music, songs, hymns, and anthems have been a part of both opening and closing ceremonies. In more recent Olympiads, much of this music has been related to the culture and heritage associated with the specific city and country hosting either the Summer or Winter Olympics. Anthems, hymns, and songs performed at Olympic Games have captivated people of the respective host nations and globally. The music itself has played a highly significant part, as Mohammad Suptu has stated, in creating:
... an atmosphere of high morale, spirit, and vigour. Connecting the emotions of the body with aesthetic and meaningful patterns can transform a sporting spectacle into a momentous event. Thus, the transition from a sheer processional ceremony to a celebration of humanity (has) simultaneously shaped and strengthened both the personality and collective identity of the Olympic spirit.¹

Inspired by this notion of “the Olympic spirit”, Noosa Chorale embarked upon the production of their “Spirit of Olympia” concert, performed in May 2021 to enthusiastic full-house audiences.

Why publish this article in the Journal of Olympic History?

The enthusiasm and interest in what Noosa Chorale presented in “Spirit of Olympia” has convinced me that there is great opportunity for further performances. So, in addition to providing background information and context for the Noosa Chorale, there is a vision and a desire that this article, along with the links to “Jobling’s Jottings”, would be published in the Journal of Olympic History, so that other Olympic historians could be encouraged to combine with their community choirs to perform choral and orchestral concerts of music of the Olympic Games throughout the world.

What follows are some of the concepts and planning that brought about this most successful event.

Selection of music for “Spirit of Olympia”

Adrian King, the Noosa Chorale music director, led the selection of the final musical repertoire, based on research undertaken by Ian Jobling. German-speaking Chorale soprano Jutta Rathgeber greatly assisted by translating details of the Olympiads 1896–1972 from a doctoral thesis by Elizabeth Schlüssel.⁴ Many Olympic historians and scholars in Australia, and internationally, also provided advice and encouragement to me for the concert.⁵

Music scores were sourced from an international supplier, and orders placed well in advance to be sure they would be available for the commencement of the rehearsal term. As many of the songs selected had not
been arranged for choirs, Adrian King added his own arrangements to incorporate four vocal parts for the choir. As the choir was practicing their parts, it became clear that many of the singers knew little about the relationship between the selected repertoire and the Olympic Movement. An initiative was commenced which became known as “Jobling’s Jottings” – a synopsis and explanation for each musical item, presented to the choir sequentially through the several months of rehearsals. The introduction to Jotting #1 read:

*Olympic Hymn, 1896 Athens: The “Olympic Hymn”, a choral cantata, was performed at the Opening Ceremony of the very first modern Olympic Games in 1896, but it wasn’t declared the official Olympic Anthem until 1958. It was then performed at the 1960 Rome Games and at every Opening and Closing Ceremony since. Rather appropriately, both the composer and lyricist were Greek, and the original song is in the Greek language – although host countries are permitted to perform the song in other languages, or as an instrumental if they prefer. That may be all you need or want to know, but IanJ is writing a little more about each piece of music we are singing for the “Spirit of Olympia: Music of the Olympics 1896–2016” concert series, for “the record”…

Contemporary Olympic historian Philip Barker has written that legendary BBC Radio commentator, Peter Jones, described the 1896 “Olympic Hymn” in the most reverential terms, as perhaps the most moving music of all. However, Barker then stated: … it remains little known. The official reports make perfunctory reference, or even ignore it.1*

There are 13 “Jobling’s Jottings”, which vary in length from 800 to 2000+ words plus images related to the music and the specific Olympiads. Those interested in reading one, some, or all can find them on my website: https://ianjobling.weebly.com

**Engagement of the Olympic community**

Following initial telephone contact and correspondence with the Australian Olympic Committee’s (AOC) Community Engagement and Olympian Services (James Edwards), and its Public Relations and Communications section (Strath Gordon), a most positive letter of endorsement from the AOC CEO Matt Gordon was received in May 2020:

*The Australian Olympic Committee is committed to promoting the Olympic Movement in Australian communities and the chorale’s initiative is certainly promoting the Olympic spirit in a most unique way. We therefore have pleasure in endorsing this initiative by the Noosa Chorale and would be pleased to*
publicise the concert through our digital channels and newsletters. ... On behalf of the President, John Coates AC, and the Executive, I wish the Noosa Chorale every success in arranging this unique concert.\(^8\)

Several other letters of endorsement were received from appropriate sporting groups,\(^9\) and Olympians\(^10\) were approached to ascertain their interest. These endorsements were added as support to an application for a Noosa Council (Australian) Community grant of AUD 5,000.\(^11\)

The grant was successful and, although some information is provided in the endnotes, anyone interested in further details related to budget estimates and actual costs (e.g. music, soloist and orchestral costs, venue hire, printing, etc.), Ian J would be delighted to provide further details.\(^12\)

The Noosa Chorale was fortunate that Dawn Fraser, Australia’s greatest Olympic champion, responded so positively to their invitation in March 2020 to be an ambassador for the “Spirit of Olympia” concert. In November 1999, Dawn was named “World Athlete of the Century” at the World Sports Awards in Vienna, and has resided in Noosa for many years. However, due to COVID–19 the 2020 concert did not eventuate and in fact, the Chorale had no performances all year.\(^13\)

Nevertheless, in 2021 Dawn dived into action as the concert’s ambassador by attending rehearsals of the Chorale. After the first one she said,

\begin{quote}
I got goose bumps when I heard them sing the “Hallelujah Chorus”. To me, music like this brings back a lot of memories. When you are at the Olympics you hear the music, but because you are concentrating on your sport, it goes out of your head. To have it brought back is marvellous.\(^14\)
\end{quote}

Dawn was also instrumental in arranging for Channel 7 to film a feature for a news programme a few weeks before the concerts, which added to the choir’s promotional efforts. This news feature highlighted to many the fact that, since the commencement of rehearsals in February, the current advice regarding the COVID–19 pandemic put severe constraints on choral singing. “Social distancing” during the choir’s rehearsals at Noosa’s J Theatre (our rehearsal and performance space) required singers to be seated in alternate rows and alternate seats, although there was provision for the performance to have singers less distantly spaced.\(^15\)

**The actual performances**

As mentioned, the concert series was a sell–out; more would have been accommodated except the outstanding 31–piece orchestra, including timpani and a wide range of percussion Instruments, utilised considerable space.

Early arrivals to the theatre were able to peruse a display in the foyer and auditorium of Olympic banners\(^16\) and several hundred official Olympic posters.\(^7\) They were also treated to a dual–screen “rollover” PowerPoint presentation of images of the Olympic Games, presented chronologically to reflect further the history, music, personalities, and events of the Olympic Movement – they were shown again during the intermission.\(^18\)

As the Chorale assembled outside the theatre, and the later–comers of the audience entered, Eden Jamal stood on a balcony holding aloft a Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch. At the sound of a trumpeter, Eden ran around the theatre perimeter and entered the auditorium to the backstage, where he awaited the entrance of the musicians, choir, soloists, and conductor. It was a dramatic piece of theatre when the young lad ran across the stage and down into the audience to the now spotlighted seat of Ambassador Dawn Fraser and handed her the Olympic torch.

Spontaneous applause erupted for Australia’s greatest Olympian, which was followed by the Master of Ceremonies Frank Wilkie\(^19\) introducing the initial musical piece, the “Olympic Hymn”:

\begin{quote}
Guest of honour was four–time Australian Olympic champion Dawn Fraser, who was presented with an Olympic torch from the 2000 Sydney Games. Far left: Dawn Fraser, who turned 84 on 4 September 2021, and author Ian Jobling.
\end{quote}
Imagine you are in Athens. It is 1896. You’re at the first modern Olympic Games, dressed in your finest outfits, sitting on marble benches, with the Athens sun streaming down on you. The harmonious strains of music floated on the air and kindled a fire of enthusiasm. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Noosa Chorale, soloists Judit Molnar and David Kidd, and the Olympic Orchestra present the “Olympic Hymn”.

The repertoire was generally chronological, and the audience could peruse information about each musical item from brief background notes in the concert programme and from an introduction by the MC.

The link to the concert programme is: http://www.noosachorale.org.au/concerts-this-year.html

Reviews of the concert

By all measures, the Noosa Chorale’s two “Spirit of Olympia” concerts were an outstanding success and fulfilled the sentiments and desires as outlined in the quoted statement. Admittedly, as the person who put forward the concept to the executive committee of the Noosa Chorale, I am more than a little biased. But you only need to read the rave reviews to get the flavour of the enthusiastic way our full-house audiences responded.

Congratulations Noosa Chorale on a brilliant concert. Amazing variety of inspiring and uplifting music from the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympics from their beginning in 1896. Wonderful singing from soloists and chorale who caught the spirit of every piece under the inspiring and dynamic musical direction of Adrian King. Enhanced by terrific and entertaining MC in Frank Wilkie. (John Woodlock)

It MUST be said that it was a MAGNIFICENT night! The Noosa Chorale were above and beyond this time. “Spirit of Olympia” – it was – Dawn Fraser was the ambassador and it was goose bumpingly wonderful when a photo came up on the screen of Dawn in the pool at one of the Olympics, and there she was in the front row watching with us! The screen YES! Two screens! And the most wonderful collection of photos from first Olympics through to the stagnated present. It goes without saying that the Chorale did a splendid job – songs from opening and closing ceremonies, an orchestra, soloists ... not forgetting the MC! I could go on and on but in a nutshell – if you live in or around Noosa, and this is going to be the calibre of the shows – you would be mad to miss them!!! (Susan Filmer)

The audience’s evident enjoyment was a mirror image of the joy and animation of the performers – 55 choir singers, 33 orchestral musicians, and two sublime soloists, Judit Molnar and David Kidd – and the Chorale’s musical director and conductor, Adrian King. The presence of Olympic legend Dawn Fraser at both concerts in her role of ambassador added to the sheer thrill of audience and performers alike. Spontaneous applause erupted when 15-year-old Eden Jamal opened the concert by carrying an Olympic torch across the stage and then presented it to Dawn.
The response by one member of the audience gives a clear and most positive indication of the success of the “Spirit of Olympia” concert.

*What a splendid afternoon we had on Saturday! The performance was magnificent! What talent we have. But the most wonderful aspect was the Spirit of Olympia’s originality! Ian’s concept, Adrian’s musical arrangement, Judit’s translations. What hard work was put into this performance from concept to thrilling presentation. My congratulations to every last one of you!*

_(Laurie Cowled)_

**Where to from here?**

As my research related to performances and presentations of music of the Olympic Games progressed, it became clear that the concept of choral and orchestral performance may be unique. Yes, the renowned American composer and conductor, John Williams, performed and recorded Olympic-related items, especially with the Boston Pops Orchestra. And there have been recordings, predominantly in recent years, of opening and closing ceremonies.

Olympic historians in Germany, Karl Lennartz and Christian Wacker, produced a recording of a live performance at the Deutsches Sport & Olympia Museum in Cologne in June 2008. However, it comprised a singer (Christa Hahn) accompanied by a piano, flute, bass guitar, and drums. There was no choir and no orchestra, and by the sound of the applause, very few in the audience. Dr. Elizabeth Schlüssel, whose doctoral dissertation has already been referred to in this article, has written a brief extract (about 500 words) explaining “what is an Olympic hymn”, which is most informative.

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**“SPIRIT OF OLYMPIA” – MUSIC OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES CONCERTS**

Repertoire in order of performance; “Jobling’s Jottings” (J’s Jottings in the table) are in rehearsal order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title of Item</th>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Lyrics</th>
<th>Olympiad(s)</th>
<th>J’s Jottings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Olympic Hymn</td>
<td>Spyros Samaras</td>
<td>Kostis Palamas</td>
<td>1896 Athens and many others</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>See, the Conquering Hero Comes</td>
<td>George Friedrich Händel</td>
<td>Thomas Morell</td>
<td>1908 London</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jerusalem</td>
<td>Hubert Parry</td>
<td>William Blake</td>
<td>2012 London</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Be Still My Soul</td>
<td>Jean Sibelius</td>
<td>Veiko Antero Koskenniemi</td>
<td>1952 (?)</td>
<td>#6 &amp; #6A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chariots of Fire</td>
<td>Vangelis</td>
<td></td>
<td>2012 London</td>
<td>Orchestral – see #14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>One Moment in Time</td>
<td>John Betts &amp; Alberta Hammond</td>
<td></td>
<td>1988 Seoul</td>
<td>#7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Amigos Para Siempre (Friends for Life)</td>
<td>Andrew Lloyd Webber</td>
<td></td>
<td>1992 Barcelona</td>
<td>#8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Time to Say Goodbye</td>
<td>Francesco Sartori</td>
<td>Lucio Quarrantino (Frank Paterson)</td>
<td></td>
<td>#9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Song of Farewell</td>
<td>Tune: “Waltzing Matilda”</td>
<td>William Tainsh</td>
<td>1956 Melbourne</td>
<td>#10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Will Ye No Come Back Again</td>
<td>Scottish Folk</td>
<td>Poem: Carolina Oliphant</td>
<td></td>
<td>#10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Auld Lang Syne</td>
<td>Scottish Folk</td>
<td>Poem: Robert Burns</td>
<td>1964 Tokyo</td>
<td>#10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Tibi Omnes</td>
<td>Herbert Berlioz</td>
<td></td>
<td>2000 Sydney</td>
<td>#11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Because We Believe</td>
<td>Andreas Bocelli &amp; David Foster</td>
<td>Amy Foster Gillies</td>
<td></td>
<td>#9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Hallelujah</td>
<td>Leonard Cohen</td>
<td>Leonard Cohen</td>
<td>2010 Vancouver</td>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Hallelujah Chorus</td>
<td>Georg Friedrich Händel</td>
<td></td>
<td>1936 Berlin and many others</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a historian of the Olympic Movement, the opportunity to be involved in the production and performance of this unique concert has been very special, both for my own learning about the role of music in the Olympic Games, and for the chance to bring the “Spirit of Olympia” to Noosa audiences. There is now much enthusiasm from singers in the Noosa Chorale, and members of the audience that there be another “Spirit of Olympia” concert, if not in three years’ time as a prelude to Paris 2024, then at least for Brisbane 2032.

As intimated, it is also a desire that other communities throughout Australia and the world link with choirs and orchestras to present a similar concept. To this end, please feel free to contact the author who would be delighted to correspond and assist in such a presentation.

Stop Press: A video clip of the Noosa Chorale’s final item of the matinee performance on Saturday May 29 – Händel’s “Hallelujah Chorus” has been uploaded onto YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkYSQms9sec

And don’t forget to turn up the volume! May the Peace of Olympia be with you.

Notes and References

Acknowledgment: Although I initiated the concept of the Noosa Chorale performing the music of the Olympic Games with an orchestra, there was great support and encouragement from so many associated with the Chorale. Without elaboration of their specific assistance, I express my appreciation to Janet Brewer, Jim Fagan, Adrian King, Rita Malik, Gai Ramsay, Pam Sage, Cal Webb, and Fran Wilson, especially.

2 Mohammed Faisal Suptu, “Music and the Olympic Spirit,” major assignment, HUID3035RT, The Olympic Movement and Society, University of Queensland, Semester 1, 2007 [Supervisor: Dr. Ian Jobling], 1.
3 Suptu, 3.
5 I am most grateful for the advice of several Olympic historians (Philip Barker, Bruce Ce, Richard Baka, Greg Blood, Rob Hess, Volker Kluge, Bruce Kidd, and Norbert Müller) and institutions (National Museum of Sport–Melbourne Cricket Ground – David Studham; Finnish Museum – Vesa Tikader).
6 Noosa Chorale’s deputy music director, Ram Sage, then converted these arrangements into digitised practice files.
8 Matt Carrol, Correspondence to Ian Jobling, 19 September 2019. In later correspondence, approval for use of the AOC logo incorporating the Olympic rings.
9 Letters of support and encouragement were received from Noosa Masters Swimming Club, Noosa Alive Festival, Queensland Olympic Council, and UQ Sport and Recreation.
11 The Noosa Council Community Grant required a statement of purpose and activity: “Noosa Chorale is a community choir dedicated to bringing a rich repertoire of diverse music to the people of the Noosa region and the Sunshine Coast. The shared love of music both personal and for the enrichment of the community, is at the heart of the Chorale. Its doors are open to anyone who wants to sing. We do not require auditions. Since its foundations in 1999, ... the Chorale has become a major feature of Noosa’s cultural landscape, providing a social and therapeutic engagement in singing over many community members for many years. The choir performs three major choral concerts each year including its annual Christmas Wassail and sings at major community and civic events, e.g. ANZAC Day, Australia Day Citizenship Ceremonies, as well as Christmas carols at Hastings Street. It has performed in association with local cultural festivals, such as Noosa Alive and the 10-day Noosa Jazz Party”[Noosa Council Community Project and Environment Application Round 12 PROJ 1222 – submitted by Cal Webb, September 2019].
12 Noosa Council Community Project and Environment Round 12 Acquisition Form R3, Application PROJ 1222 from Noosa Chorale, submitted by Rita Malik, 16 June 2021. Details of actual income and expenditure are outlined in its document.
13 Dawn Fraser is a multiple-Olympic champion – the only swimmer to win the same event at three consecutive Olympic Games, and an Australian icon.
15 The seating arrangement did not alter until the dressrehearsal, 24 hours prior to the first concert, when risers were used on stage.
16 The banners were provided by the Queensland Olympic Council.
17 The UQ Centre of Olympic Studies was the beneficiary of a gift from Syd Hughes, a printer who was licenced to produce the posters in the lead up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.
18 Audience members remarked that the 72 rollover-style PowerPoint slides on the dual screens on either side of the stage was a poignant and interesting feature. We believe copyright concerns were overcome because it was a feature provided by Ian Jobling, honorary director of the University Centre of Olympic Studies. Much of the Noosa Council grant money was used for the cost of providing the dual projection and screens.
19 The master of ceremonies was Frank Wilkie, a keen sportsman, actor, playwright, and deputy mayor of Noosa Council.
20 Script for master of ceremonies
21 Patrons were offered the programme as part of the cost of the ticket (AUD 45) but were offered the opportunity to make a gold coin donation. Most did and, thanks to the quality of the eight-page production, total donations exceeded the printing costs of AUD 3.
22 Noosa Chorale, Tune In, vol. 15, no. 3, June 2021.
The South Korean Moon Dae Sung received a taekwondo scholarship from Dong A University in Busan in 1995. After graduating, he became a member of the Samsung Corporation Taekwondo Team in 1999. In the same year, he won the world heavyweight championship. He won the Asian Championships in 2000 and the Asian Games in 2002. His greatest success came in Athens in 2004, when he defeated the Greek Alexandros Nikolaidis in the heavyweight final to become Olympic champion.

His popularity helped him get the post of official spokesman for the Audi Automobile Company. In 2012, he stood for the ruling Saenuri Party in the Korean parliamentary elections and won the constituency in which he was candidate.

In the 2008 elections for the IOC Athletes’ Commission in Beijing, Moon achieved an impressive 3,220 votes, which resulted in an eight-year IOC membership. He played a leading role in the successful bid for the 2014 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang.

In February 2012, Kookmin University, which had awarded Moon a doctorate in 2007, announced that he had obtained his doctorate through fraud. After a two-year investigation, it was discovered that large parts of his dissertation had been plagiarised.

In March 2012, the IOC was informed of the situation and handed the case over to the Ethics Commission. Moon resigned from his party, but he remained a member of the Korean National Assembly. He was absent from the 2012 IOC Session in London.

The IOC Ethics Commission investigation stalled as Moon denied the allegations. He took legal action against the decision by Kookmin University, which officially revoked his doctorate in March 2014.

Moon appealed against the decision and launched a nullification lawsuit. However, as the High Court’s ruling dragged on, the matter was provisionally shelved by the Ethics Commission in December 2013, allowing him to end his term at the IOC in a regular manner in 2016. (VK)
The Russian swimmer Alexander Popov was the outstanding sprinter of the 1990s. He won four Olympic gold medals in the 50 m and 100 m freestyle in 1992 and 1996, and a silver medal in the 100 m in Sydney 2000. He was world champion six times and European champion 21 times. In 2004, he took part in the Olympic Games for the fourth time, carrying the Russian flag at the opening ceremony in Athens, but this time without winning a medal. He ended his sporting career at the beginning of 2005.

Popov was first elected to the IOC Athletes’ Commission in Atlanta in 1996 and was one of the 10 athletes co-opted to the IOC in 1999. Four years later, in Sydney 2000, he came second to Sergey Bubka (UKR) with 1,471 votes, which entailed an eight-year term in the IOC.

After his term in office expired (see JOH, vol. 27, 2019, no. 1, 73), he ran again for the Athletes’ Commission at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. With 1,903 votes, he again came second, this time to Moon Dae Sung (KOR), which meant that he could be elected by the Session for another eight years. He served as a member of the IOC Evaluation Commission for the 2016 Olympics. From 2005 to 2010, he represented the IOC Athletes’ Commission on the Foundation Board of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

Popov, who graduated from the Volgograd State Academy of Physical Education in 1994, followed his coach to Australia after the Atlanta Games. From 2003, he lived in Solothurn, Switzerland, where he was brand ambassador for Omega. From 2009 to 2014, he was a member of the 16-member supervisory board of Adidas AG. In 2016, he returned to Russia, where he became a member of the Presidential Council on Fitness and Sports and a member of the Executive Board of the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC). Following the resignation of Alexander Zhukov, he ran for ROC president in 2018, but lost the election to four-time Olympic fencing champion Stanislav Pozdnyakov.

Claudia Bokel grew up in Ter Apel in the Netherlands. She holds dual German and Dutch citizenship. She passed her Abitur (A levels) in Bonn in 1992, where she spent three years at a fencing boarding school. She then began studying chemistry, and completed her degree in 2008 at Radboud University in Nijmegen in Netherlands.

Bokel began her sporting career in 1992 as junior world champion in épée fencing. She defended that title the following year. In 2001, she became individual world champion in the seniors’ category, and in 2006 she was also European champion.

She took part in the Olympic Games three times. In the individual competition she was ninth in 1996, eighth in 2000 and twelfth in 2004. In Athens, she won her only Olympic medal with the second-placed German épée team.

Bokel became the athletes’ spokesperson for the German Fencing Federation (DFeB) in 2000. From 2005 to 2009 she served as president of the Athletes’ Commission of the European Olympic Committees (EOC). In the 2008 elections to the IOC Athletes’ Commission in Beijing, she received the third best vote with 1,836 votes, and as a result she was elected to the IOC by the Session for an eight-year term.
Volleyball player Yumilka Ruíz, who attended a Sports Initiation School (EIDE) in Camagüey, attracted attention at a young age with her jumping ability. At the age of 18, she was nominated for the Cuban Olympic team, which defeated the People’s Republic of China 3–1 in the 1996 final in Atlanta. Four years later, in 2000 in Sydney, they managed to repeat their success – this time with a 3–2 win against Russia. Between the two Olympic victories was the 1998 World Cup win over hosts China.

Ruíz took part in the Olympic Games two more times. In 2004 in Athens she won the bronze medal with the team she had captained since 2001 after a generational change, and in 2008 in Beijing the Cubans came fourth. She won her last gold medal in 2007 at the Pan American Games.

Ruíz achieved the fourth–best result in the 2008 elections to the IOC Athletes’ Commission with 1,571 votes, and was elected to the IOC for eight years. After her retirement, she was appointed to the IOC Sport and Active Society (formerly Sport for All Commission). (VK)

Richard Neville Peterkin, who lives in Nijmegen, has been working as a senior consultant for the chemical company Bayer AG since 2009. He has been president of the DFeB since 2016. (VK)

Born: 18 April 1948 in St. George’s, Grenada
Elected: 9 October 2009
Resigned: 31 December 2018
Attendance: Present: 12, Absent: 1

In 2018, after the previous chair of the Athletes’ Commission, Frank Fredericks, had become a personal IOC Member in Namibia in 2012 and Bokel had applied to succeed him, she was able to prevail with seven votes against the British skeleton bob competitor Adam Pengilly (4) and the Russian swimmer Alexander Popov (2). She was elected to the Executive Committee at the 124th IOC Session.

In 2018, two years after her membership ended, she told an anti-doping conference in Oslo that she had been pressured and “internally bullied” in 2016 over the issue of Russia’s exclusion from the Olympics. An IOC spokesperson commented that, as a member of the Executive Board, she had abstained from voting at the time.

Claudia Bokel, who lives in Nijmegen, has been working as a senior consultant for the chemical company Bayer AG since 2009. She has been president of the DFeB since 2016. (VK)
Frederik André Henrik Christian, Crown Prince of Denmark, is the son of HM Queen Margrethe II and Prince Henrik of Denmark (d. 2018). He is in line to succeed to the throne.

On 14 May 2004 HRH The Crown Prince married Mary Elizabeth Donaldson. He met Miss Donaldson during the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Four years later they married in Denmark. The couple has four children.

In 1995 the Danish Crown Prince graduated from the University of Aarhus with a MSc (political science). In connection with these studies, Crown Prince Frederik studied political science at Harvard University from 1992 to 1993.

The Crown Prince also graduated in 1995 as Frogman from the Royal Danish Navy Frogman Corps – equivalent to US Navy Seals – and was active in the Frogman Corps from 1996 to 1998. In addition to holding several titles and ranks within the Danish military, he was a senior lecturer at the Institute of Strategy at the Royal Danish Defence College.

Crown Prince Frederik completed extensive physical training in the military service. That training has been kept up through active participation in various demanding sports events such as marathons, triathlons, skiing, and sailing. In 2000, the Crown Prince participated in Expedition Sirius 2000, which was a four-month-long and 2,795 km dog sled expedition in the northern part of Greenland.

Crown Prince Frederik served as an IOC Member from 2009 to 2021. During this time he was a member of several IOC commissions, including the Coordination Commissions for the Winter Games in PyeongChang 2018, the 3rd Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne 2020, and the Games of the XXXIII Olympiad Paris 2024, as well as the Sport for All Commission (2010–2015) and the commissions for the Olympic Programme (2014–2015), Sport and Environment (2014–2015), Sustainability and Legacy (2015–), and Sport and Active Society (2015–). (MMH)

Thanks to his expertise, he was subsequently appointed Deputy General Manager of the Federal Housing Authority in Lagos (1985–1992) and Executive Director (Operations) in Abuja (1993–1999). For a decade until 2009, Gumel was Director of Facilities and Stadia Development at the National Sports Commission, then Executive Secretary of the National Lottery Trust Fund.

Gumel was an active volleyball player. From 1988 to 2017 he served as president of the Nigerian Volleyball Federation, and since 1997 he has also been vice-president (Finance) of the African Volleyball Confederation (CAVB). He has been a member of the Board of Administration of the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) since 1998 and was elected FIVB vice-president in 2008.

Gumel started as treasurer of the Nigeria Olympic Committee (1997–2001) and then served as president from 2001 to 2010. He was re-elected in 2014, and still holds the position to this day. From 2006 to 2009 he was president of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) Zone 3, and from 2009 was treasurer general of the ANOCA. He has been a member of the Council of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) since 2010.

He was a member of various IOC Commissions, including the Coordination Commission for the Games of Tokyo 2020 and the Evaluation Commission for the 2024 Games. (VK)

Macki studied civil engineering at the Friendship University in Moscow. In the 1980s, he began a successful career with the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), of which he became chairman of the International Relations Committee (2003–2007). During the same period he was a member of the Bank and Finance Council and chairman of the Russian–Omani Businessmen’s Committee.

An active hockey player in his younger years, Macki became a board member of the sultanate’s oldest sport club, the Oman Club, from 1974 to 2003. He also served as vice-chairman of the Oman Football Association (OFA) from 1983 to 1985.

From 2005 to 2013 Macki was vice-president of the Oman Olympic Committee (OOC), and then served as its chairman for a brief period. From 2007 to 2010, Macki was vice-president of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), and from 2011 was a member of its executive board. In 2008, he brought the 2nd Asian Beach Games 2010 to Muscat, where he became its general director. (VK)
Former IOC President Jacques Rogge Passed Away

By Volker Kluge

Count Dr. Jacques Rogge, the eighth president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), passed away on 29 August 2021 in Deize, Belgium. He succumbed to Parkinson’s disease at the age of 79. In his honour, the Olympic flag was flown at half-mast for five days at IOC headquarters.

In a feature worth reading, ISOH member Roland Renson describes how his compatriot was discovered for an Olympic career in the Journal of Olympic History, vol. 26, no. 3/2016, pp. 64–65. The setting was the Bay of Acapulco in 1968, where “JR”, as he was called, first competed as a sailor in the Olympic Games. One day, as a violent storm approached, Rogge rushed from his shelter, wearing only his underwear, to bring his boat to safety. This kind of commitment convinced the then president of the Belgian NOC, Raoul Mollet, who had already seen a lot in his life. In 1976, Rogge, who was competing in Montreal for the third time, was appointed athletes’ representative at the Belgian NOC. In the same year, he served for the first time as Chef de Mission of the Belgian team at the Winter Olympics in Innsbruck.

Jacques Rogge was born into a wealthy family on 2 May 1942 in Ghent. His grandfather had founded an electrical trading company; his father was a civil engineer. Both were passionate sportsmen. French was spoken at home. The son was fluent in four other languages.

Rogge attended the Jesuit-run Saint Barbara College in Ghent. After leaving school, he studied medicine at Ghent University, where he met his future wife, Anne Bovijn. She became a radiologist, while he specialised in orthopaedics and became head of the orthopaedic surgery department of the Ghent hospital.

As the family owned a yacht on the North Sea, Rogge came into contact with sailing at an early age. At the age of 17 he won the Yachting World Cadet Trophy in Burnham, England. From 1965 to 1980, he won the Belgian championship 16 times in the Finn class. He played hockey like his father, but was even more passionate about rugby at the University of Brussels (ULB) club. He was nominated for the national team ten times.

Rogge became president of the Belgian Olympic and Interfederal Committee in 1989. A year later he was appointed chairman of the Association of the European National Olympic Committees (ENOC) and vice-president of the NOC World Organisation (ANOC). In 1991, he was elected to the IOC, where he served as chair of the Coordination Commission for the 2000 Olympics in Sydney in 1995, among other positions. A member of the Executive Committee from 1998, he was elected IOC President at the 112th Session on 16 July 2001 for a term of eight years, succeeding Juan Antonio Samaranch, and then again in 2009 for a four-year term. After Count Henry de Baillet-Latour (1925–1942), he was the second Belgian to hold this office.

After the turbulence surrounding the bribery scandal involving the 2002 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, Rogge introduced a different style of leadership. With his strict stance against manipulation and a “zero tolerance” policy on doping, he earned the reputation as “Mr. Clean”, whose diplomatic restraint in political matters was often not to everyone’s liking.

Despite all the critics, the six Olympic Games held under his leadership – three in summer, three in winter – went brilliantly and largely without any major disruptions. However, he himself – as someone who always believed in the educational power of sport – considered the introduction of the Youth Olympic Games as his greatest achievement. They became his favourite child.

When he handed over the reins to Thomas Bach in 2013, the IOC was in calm waters and on a stable financial footing. Revenues had reached record levels during the 12 years of his presidency, allowing reserves to be multiplied. However, the costs of the host cities of the Olympic Games also increased enormously during this period, despite a major goal being the reduction of the size of the Olympic Games and the setting up of upper limits for the number of participants and the amount of sports to be held. Despite the threat of drastic penalties, the number of proven doping cases also increased.

Rogge was knighted (Chevalier) by the King of Belgium in 1992 and raised to the rank of Count in 2002. He received no fewer than 24 honorary doctorates. His numerous honours include honorary membership of the ISOH, which he accepted in 2009. Professor Renson, who knew him well, described him as an emotionally balanced and well-read person who admired modern art. He played the role of the stoic Belgian – cool, elegant, efficient, and honest.
Yuriy Georgievich Sedykh (URS), *11 June 1955 in Novotscherkassk, RUS; †14 September 2021 in France. Sedykh, who grew up in the south of Ukraine, was already an outstanding hammer thrower as a teenager. In 1973 he became European junior champion, with a lead of four metres over the runner-up.

When he started studying sports in Kyiv, he was one of the students of Dr. Antoliy Bondarchuk, who had won Olympic gold in Munich in 1972. It was at the Soviet Championships in 1976 where Sedykh managed to defeat his teacher for the first time.

He then won the gold medal in Montreal at the age of 21, becoming the youngest-ever Olympic champion in the hammer throw. At the age of 36, Bondarchuk came third behind another Soviet athlete, Alexei Spiridonov, who was also one of his students.

Four years later, Sedykh repeated his Olympic victory and probably missed out on a third gold medal in Los Angeles in 1984 due to the Eastern bloc’s boycott. A few days before the start of the Olympic Games, he increased the world record in Cork, Ireland, to 86.34 m. His last world record came in 1986 at the European Championships in Stuttgart with 86.74 m, which remains unmatched to this day.

At the 1988 Olympics, Sedykh lost to his long-time Russian rival Sergei Litvinov (1958–2018), who had already defeated him at the first World Championships in Helsinki in 1983. It was not until 1991 in Tokyo that the then air force major also became world champion.

Even before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Sedykh decided to join the Racing Club de France together with his partner, the Olympic shot put champion and world record holder Natalya Lisovskaya. He worked as a sports teacher in France after finishing his active sports career.

Their daughter Alexia was born in Paris in 1993. She would go on to win the hammer throw in the French team at the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore in 2010.

Sedykh’s first daughter, Oksana, was also successful in the same discipline. She took part in the University four times and finished seventh at the 2013 World Championships. Her mother is the 1980 Olympic 100 m champion Lyudmila Kondratyeva, to whom Sedykh was married for several years.

Jan Jindra (TCH), *6 March 1932 in Třeboň; †20 September 2021 in Prague. The rower represented Czechoslovakia at three consecutive Olympic Games from 1952 to 1960. He was the last of the legendary “Třeboň four”, dying at the age of 89.

Jindra won the gold medal with the coxed fours in 1952 and the bronze medal with the coxed eights in 1960. In 1953 and 1954 he added the same medals with the coxed fours at the European Championships (gold in 1953 and bronze in 1954). With the coxed eights he also won the gold medal in 1956, the bronze medal in 1957, and the silver medal in 1959. In 1960 he added another bronze medal with the eights.

Kiyoko Ono (JPN), *4 February 1936 in Iwanuma; †13 March 2021 in Tokyo. Kiyoko Ono competed at the 1960 and 1964 Olympic Games, winning a bronze medal with the gymnastic team in Tokyo while finishing ninth individually in the all-around. Between those appearances she gave birth to her first two children.

Kiyoko was married to Japanese gymnastic legend Takashi Ono, and they later established a private sports club together. Her husband won five gold, four silver, and four bronze medals at the Olympic Games from 1952 to 1964.

Following her retirement from gymnastics, Kiyoko Ono went into politics, winning in the elections for the Japanese House of Councillors in 1986, where she served three terms. In 2003 she became the first woman to head the National Public Safety Commission. After retiring from politics, she served as director of the Japan Sport Council. In 2016, she received the Olympic Order in recognition of her contribution to the Olympic Movement.

Vladimir Stepanovich Golubnichy (URS), *2 June 1936 in Sumy, UKR; †16 August 2021 in Sumy. The sports teacher, whose proper Ukrainian name is Volodymyr Holubnychyy, took part in the Olympic Games five times. Twice, in 1960 and 1968, he won the gold medal in the 20 km walk; once, in 1972, he came second; and once, in 1964, he came third. In 1976 he bowed out with a seventh-place finish.

Golubnichy, who had been active since 1953, fluctuated between skiing and walking for a long time. Inspired by Vladimir Kuts’s record-breaking runs, he finally decided to take up athletics. After setting a world record in the 20 km walk with a time of 1:30:02.8 in Kyiv on 2 October 1955, Golubnichy had a good chance of competing in the Olympics in Melbourne. But while training for his state exams as a physical education teacher, he overextended himself and had to be hospitalised with liver inflammation in May 1956, while three other Soviet walkers were winning Olympic medals. It was not until 1959 that Golubnichy was able to return to the national
team. He took part in European Championships three times. After bronze (1962) and silver (1966), he won the title in Rome in 1974.

After his time in active competition, he was employed as a sports teacher by the regional committee. The sports school in Sumy was named after him. In 2021 he was inducted into the IAAF Hall of Fame. (VK)

Dietmar Lorenz (GDR), ♦23 September 1950 in Langenbuch; †8 September 2021 in Berlin. The trained car mechanic turned junior lieutenant in the army was East Germany’s first and only Olympic judo champion. Twelve kilos lighter than his opponent in the final, Angelo Parisi (France), he won the open class in Moscow in 1980, having previously taken the bronze medal in the light heavyweight.

Born in Thuringia, he started out as an acrobat. When the gym had to be closed one day due to structural problems, he joined the judo department of the neighbouring village, which set him on a new course.

As a judoka, he immediately came third in the light heavyweight category at the East German championships in 1969, after which he was delegated to the police sports club in Berlin-Hoppegarten as a promising talent the next year. In 1973 he won his first international medals: bronze at the European Championships (open class) and at the World Championships (light heavyweight). From 1975 to 1977 he was European light heavyweight champion four times in a row. In 1978 he won the title in both the light heavyweight and the “all category”.

In the same year, he was the only non-Japanese to win the traditional Kano tournament in Tokyo.

Lorenz was head coach at his home club from 1980 to 1989. After German reunification, “Itze”, as he was called, worked in an anti-violence project as a social worker in a sports and youth centre. (WK)

Karl-Friedrich Haas (FRG), ♦28 July 1931 in Berlin; †12 August 2021 in Nuremberg. Haas started for the football club 1. FC Nürnberg. In 1950, he became West German junior champion in the 400 m race with a time of 47.9 s. From 1952 to 1956 he won the senior championship title five times in a row. After finishing fourth in the 400 m at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics and winning the bronze medal with the 4x400 m relay, he achieved his greatest success four years later at the Melbourne Games. In the 400 m he won the silver medal behind the American Charles Jenkins Sr. with a personal best time (46.2 s). He was also commissioned to carry the flag of the joint German team at the Olympic opening ceremony.

Haas, who continued to compete until 1964, completed his engineering studies in Munich in 1958 and became a senior employee at Siemens AG, specialising in power plant construction. In 1956 he married the pentathlete Maria Sturm. Their son Christian Haas, born in 1958, took part in the 1984 and 1988 Olympics as a 100 m runner. (WK)

Hans Pfann (FRG), ♦14 September 1920 in Nuremberg; †9 September 2021 in Neuötting. After Pfann, who was one of the best gymnasts in Bavaria, became a soldier at the age of 20, he suffered frostbite on his right foot in Russia in 1942. As a result, his toes had to be amputated. After the Second World War, he was able to return to gymnastics with the help of an orthopaedic shoe.

He qualified twice for the German Olympic team, finishing fourth in 1952 and fifth in 1956. In 1953 he married the gymnast Lydia Zeitlhofer (1921–2019), who had also participated in the 1952 Olympic Games. Pfann survived his wife by two years. He died shortly before his 101st birthday. (WK)

Håkon Brusveen (NOR), ♦15 July 1927 in Vingrom, Oppland; †21 April 2021 in Lillehammer. Brusveen was one of Norway’s best cross-country skiers from the mid-1950s onwards, but was initially unable to achieve any great success. At the 1954 World Championships in Falun, he only managed to finish 20th over 15 km. At the 1956 Winter Olympics in Cortina d’Ampezzo and the 1958 World Championships in Lahti, Finland, he finished fifth on that course and fourth with the relay team. His record in Norwegian championships was better, winning twice each over 15 km (1957, 1958) and over 30 km (1953, 1958). At the Holmenkollen Games he managed to finish second behind the Russian Pavel Kolchin. In the same year he was awarded the Holmenkollen Medal.

As a result of unsatisfactory performances in the qualifying races, the Norwegian Ski Federation refused Brusveen’s nomination for the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, whereupon the country’s sports journalists organised a collection of signatures. As a result, the ski association decided to schedule another qualifying race, which Brusveen won comfortably. He was nominated retrospectively, and he showed his gratitude by winning the gold medal in the 15 km race. He won silver as the final runner of the relay. Four years later, Brusveen was once again part of the Norwegian Olympic team – this time as a reserve in the biathlon.

From 1968 to 1994 (the year in which the Winter Games were held in his adopted home of Lillehammer) Brusveen reported on ski competitions for Norsk Radio. He was only absent from Sapporo in 1972 because he found Japanese
Ivan Patzaichin (ROU), *26 November 1949 in Mila 23; †5 September 2021 in Bucharest. The Romanian canoeist won 12 titles at the Olympic Games and World Championships, missing the then record for men set by Gert Fredriksson (SWE) and Rüdiger Helm (GDR) by only one. Later György Kolonics (HUN) won 17 titles. Patzaichin’s Olympic record included seven medals, of which four were gold and three silver. He competed at five Olympic Games, from 1968 through 1984, representing the Dinamo Bucharest club.


Patzaichin grew up in a settlement in the Danube River Delta that could only be reached by boat. He was inspired in canoeing by the Olympic victory of his compatriots Dumitru Ismailiciuc, who won the C2 in Melbourne in 1956.

Later he became a canoeing coach and sports administrator. He took over the national team and was elected vice-president of the Romanian Canoeing Federation. In 2004, he was promoted to brigadier general. In 1990 he was awarded the Olympic Order in silver. (WR)

Orlando Martínez Romero (CUB), *2 September 1944 in Havana; †22 September 2021 in Havana. Orlando Martínez was a Cuban boxer who won the gold medal in the bantamweight at the 1972 Munich Olympics. “Orlandito”, as he was called, was Cuba’s first Olympic champion since Ramon Fonst, who won fencing in 1904 in St. Louis.

Martínez started boxing in 1963 in Juanelo, a district of Havana. He participated in three consecutive Olympics from 1968 to 1976. In 1975 he won another gold at the Summer Pan American Games, following up on a bronze one year earlier at the Central American and Caribbean Games. After his active time in competitive sports he worked as a youth coach. (WR)

Gunnar Utterberg (SWE), *28 November 1942 in Jönköping; †12 September 2021 in Mölltorp. Utterberg was a sprint canoer for Sweden, participating in doubles and fours at three consecutive Olympic Games from 1964 to 1972. He won the gold medal in the K2 1,000 m together with Sven-Olov Sjödelius (on the photo left) in Tokyo. He also finished fifth with the K4 1,000 m the same year and in 1968, and finished eighth in 1972. He won three silver medals in 1967 and 1969 at the Canoe Sprint European Championships, and added a bronze medal with the K4 10,000 m at the 1970 Flatwater World Championships. (WR)

OM = OlyMADMen, RR = Ralf Regnitter
TK = Taavi Kalju, VK = Volker Kluge, WR = Wolf Reinhardt

The ISOH offers the families of the deceased its sincere condolences.
BOOK REVIEWS

Jörg Krieger
Power and Politics in World Athletics: A Critical History
Routledge, Abingdon, 2021

Reviewed by Volker Kluge

Anyone expecting this book to contain descriptions of exciting competitions or portraits of famous athletes will be disappointed. This makes it all the more fascinating for those interested in the background and organisation of one of the most powerful sports federations, which was long known under the abbreviation IAAF, and has been called World Athletics since 2019.

It is athletics that – dating back to antiquity – remains the undisputed core of the Olympic Games to this day. No other sport has produced so many athletes who have shaped Olympic history. In contrast, relatively little was known about the organisation behind it, which has only had six presidents in its more than 100-year history. ISOH member Jörg Krieger, who received his doctorate from the German Sport University in Cologne in 2015 and who now teaches in Aarhus, Denmark, bridges this gap with a carefully researched publication.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation, as it was called until 2001, was founded relatively late. It was born on the sidelines of the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm, so it is no coincidence that it was first headed by Sigfrid Edström, a Swede. There was initially competition between Edström and IOC founding father Pierre de Coubertin, who associated the Olympic Movement less with sporting than with educational goals. But the two men were also brothers in spirit: Edström recognised the Olympics as World Championships, which was the case until 1983 when the IAAF introduced separate title competitions.


Five of the six presidents became members of the IOC, where Edström and Lord Burghley in particular held significant positions. The power of an IAAF president was later demonstrated by Primo Nebiolo. To keep his fiercest rival quiet, IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch had an extra rule introduced in 1992 that allowed the restless Italian to be admitted to the club on an unscheduled basis.

Of course, as the presidents changed, so did the agenda of the IAAF, which was dominated by men until very recently. Edström’s tenure, during which the competition system was stabilised, was characterised by amateurism (whose rules were strictly interpreted). A second constant was women’s athletics, which developed rapidly after the First World War. Given this was inevitable, it was hesitantly incorporated under the umbrella of the IAAF. This also meant it could be deliberately minimised until the 1960s.

The British dynasty began with Lord Burghley, later Marquess of Exeter, who continued Edström’s hierarchical and conservative policies. This was the period of the Cold War and decolonisation with a multitude of construction sites: two Chinas, two Germanys, the GANEFO movement, Israel, and South Africa. In addition to the ongoing topic of amateurism, there was the feminine sex test and the adidas vs. Puma “shoe war”. A blind eye was turned to doping, which was the last thing that needed to happen.

In Krieger’s stinging analysis, Adriaan Paulen, the only person who was not a member of the IOC, comes off best. The Dutchman drew on neutrality and goodwill, but like his predecessor, he made many lazy compromises in order not to be re-elected after five years. He had no chance against the unscrupulous Nebiolo, who consistently used the IAAF Development Commission for his own interests. Nebiolo transformed the once amateur organisation into a global brand – entirely in line with Samaranch, who opened the doors wide for “open games” at the 1981 Olympic Congress.

Far removed from good governance, the popularity of athletics grew from then on. The IAAF moved to the tax haven of Monte Carlo, or, as the book puts it, it moved from the equivalent of a pizzeria to a luxury hotel. World Championships were now held every two years. In between, there were a variety of lucrative competitions from the Grand Prix to the Golden League.

There had always been conflicts of interest in the IAAF, as well as scheming and clientelism. But with all the sponsorship money now flowing into the accounts, the propensity for manipulation grew – enabling even doping offenders and entire federations (like Russia’s) to buy their way out. The lowest point in IAAF history was reached when the Senegalese Lamine Diack, who had ascended to the throne after Nebiolo’s death in 1999, was convicted of active and passive corruption in France.
With all of this in mind, Sebastian Coe, who took over in 2015, will have to go to great lengths to restore the federation’s tattered reputation. But there is hope. Transparency appears to be growing, as World Athletics demonstrated with the first-ever annual report (2019), published last year.

Krieger, who was granted access to the federation’s previously mostly secretive archives, has written an important book. However, I do not share his sweeping conclusion. He claims to want to stir up the anger of athletes against the “corrupt leaders, who line their pockets and are uninterested in sharing the revenues of the sport with the participants”. Stir up the anger? Actually, critical distance should suffice – even for the most committed historian.

John A. Martino & Michael P. O’Kane

OLYMPIA: The Birth of the Games
Addison and Highsmith, an imprint of Histria Books, Las Vegas, NV, 2021; 228 pages, £24.00 ($24)

Reviewed by Philip Barker

The date 776 BC will be well known to all Olympic historians as the start of the earliest known Olympic Games in ancient times. This is an interesting retelling of the Games of antiquity in fictional form.

Author Dr. John Martino, a disabled veteran from the Australian Defence Force and a scholar at Monash University and University of Melbourne, as well as Professor Alexis Lyras, founder and academic director of the Olympism for Humanity Alliance, were both present in Olympia for the Lighting of the Tokyo Olympic flame.

The following day, the Olympic Torch Relay in Greece was suspended after Gerard Butler, star of the film 300, a fictionalised account of the siege of Thermopylae, had attracted such crowds while he carried the torch that it was deemed wiser not to continue.

The postponement of the Games was soon to follow, but they were the impetus for Martino, who worked with anthropologist Dr. Michael P. O’Kane, a specialist on indigenous communities in Australia, to write this novel.

Their story begins with a dramatisation of Baron Pierre de Coubertin’s visit to Olympia in the 19th century. A guide tells him that, “from this part of Greece, from Olympia herself, something extraordinary was born.”

The story of the first known Olympic Games in 776 BC is reconstructed through the eyes of mythical hero Pelops and Koroibos, a cook from the village of Elis, located some 60 kilometres from Olympia.

There are wonderfully colourful descriptions, which imagine what it must have been like to watch the competitions on the hillside in Olympia. There is also a recreation of Koroibus’s race to victory as the first Olympic champion. “Far from being overawed by the moment, as at first he had feared, Koroibus discovered a fierce joy in his heart as the crowd, seeing his recovery, now began to chant his name.” After his victory, the King tells him “you have made Elis proud, my cook.”

The authors have based their story on fact, and although they cannot know the exact course of events, this novel will surely help in bringing the story of the origins of the Ancient Olympic Games to a wider audience. It is pleasingly presented with the cover artwork reminiscent of amphorae of the period.
ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), the Bavarian Office for the Conservation of Historical Monuments, the German Academy for Urban Development and Regional Planning, the German Olympic Sports Confederation, and the non-profit Olympiapark World Heritage Campaign (Aktion Welterbe Olympiapark). ICOMOS Germany is a non-profit advisory organisation to UNESCO and has now published this book based on the conference.

The conference itself was dedicated to the architectural and sports historical significance of Olympic facilities of the modern era and confirmed the qualities of the Olympic Park in Munich, also in an international comparison. Considerations of the site in terms of its architecture were in the foreground; analyses based on its role in the history of sport, on the other hand, seem to have been of secondary importance in this volume. This will be forgiven, as it is precisely experts from the fields of architecture and architectural history who present new perspectives on sports facilities that would otherwise remain closed.

The author has lived behind the scenes of the Olympic Movement for over 40 years and he has managed to convey this experience in a unique way in his texts.

The book includes the discussion of several analyses and contests some facts, but as the author himself states, “My aim is to present some ‘facts’ and ‘thoughts’ on this relationship, without the slightest intention of imposing them.” The inverted commas around “facts” and “thoughts” are the author’s and he does not really impose his thoughts, but defends them.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first part, the author presents an analysis of the phenomenon of the Olympic Games as a space for political manifestations.

In the second part, he analyses the political and ideological ramifications through the prism of the Summer Games between 1896 and Tokyo 2020, which were held in 2021. The paragraph about Tokyo was written, according to the author, when “the lights have not yet been turned down in the Tokyo Olympic Stadium […]”

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Dionysis Gangas

Olympic Movement & International Politics
A Confrontational Coexistence Over Time
International Olympic Academy, Athens 2021
295 pages, € 22.99
ISBN 978-960-08-0849-0

Reviewed by Marcia De Franceschi Neto-Wacker

The publication Olympic Movement & International Politics: A Confrontational Coexisting Over Time by Dr. Dionyssis Gangas presents an interesting analysis on the political exploitation of the Olympic Movement. The book was written by one of the protagonists of this story, which makes it interesting to read and learn another perspective of analysis.

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Season’s Greetings and Happy New Year 2022
International Society of Olympic Historians (ISOH)

Beijing 2022 adds a panda called Bing Dwen Dwen to the Olympic “zoo”. “Bing” means ice and represents purity and strength. “Dwen Dwen” stands for the children and embodies the strength and willpower of the athletes.

The Paralympic mascot (right) is shaped like a Chinese lantern. Her name is Shuey Rhon Rhon, which stands for snow, tolerance, and fusion and expresses the desire for more inclusion.

Photo: picture-alliance
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BENJAMIN Jeff Mr. *15 January 1965; e-mail: rbenja26@aol.com; address: 719 Katan Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10312, UNITED STATES; tel: 01-917-6928-922; occupation: teacher/ writer, Olympics/sports publications: The Running Network, www.Runblogrun.com, www.SILIVE.com; specific Olympic research interests: Jim Thorpe, athletics Olympians.

BULLOCK John David Mr. *31 July 1942; e-mail: johnbbullock@post.harvard.edu; address: 1 Wainwright Road #MT #1W, Winchester MA 01890, UNITED STATES; tel: +1 978 760 7205; occupation: medical historian; specific Olympic research interests: Dave Sime and the 100 m dash at the 1960 Rome Olympics.

HANNA Josh Mr. *7 October 1971; e-mail: joshhannam71@gmail.com; address: 198 Lovell Ave., Mill Valley CA 94944, UNITED STATES; tel: +1 415 9908 450; occupation: author; Olympics/sports publications: researching and writing a book about an early summer Olympics.

MARGOLIS Jeffrey Mr. *13 July 1948; e-mail: educatorpartners@gmail.com; address: 5588 Hammock Isles Drive, Naples Florida 34110, UNITED STATES; tel: +1 6090 204 1420; occupation: college professor (retired); Olympics/sports publications: violence in sports (c. 1999 Enslow Publishers); specific Olympic research interests: anti-semitism in the Olympic Games.

PHILLIPS Tommy Mr. *12 November 1984; e-mail: packersfootball@yahoo.com; 176 Paree Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15239, UNITED STATES; tel: 01-412-6278-328; occupation: janitor; Olympics/sports publications: Penn State Bowl Games: A Complete History; specific Olympic research interests: Atlanta 1996, Moscow 1980, Los Angeles 1984.

XIN Lu Ms. *27 December 1988; e-mail: luxun27@hotmail.com; address: 172 Huayang Rd., No. 10, #501, Shanghai Changning, Shanghai 200042, CHINA; tel: 086 191-2135-0857; occupation: sports tourism product designer; specific Olympic research interests: diversity-related topics, especially ethnic and sexual/gender minority representations within national teams and the host country’s staff and volunteer crew.

OLD MEMBERS

HADDAD San Mr. New address: 210 Hall Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506, UNITED STATES.

Johannes Gutenberg-Universität
New address: Universitätsbibliothek Medien- bearbeitung, Jakob-Welder-Weg 6, 55128 Mainz, GERMANY.

KALAWAT Ki Mr. New address: 116, Padamawati colony B, Nirman Nagar, Near Mansarovar Metro station, Jaipur-Rajasthan 302019 INDIA, Mobile: 091-820-9487- 070.

KIELTINSKI Robin New address: 112 Wilmot Road, New Rochelle, NY 10804, UNITED STATES.

KUHN Sebastian Mr. New address: Nordmessenvejen 427, 2610 Mesnali, NORWAY.

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