Citius, Altius, Fortius – Communiter
Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together

+ Kanō Jigorō – The “Father of the Olympic Movement” in Japan
+ From “Olympic Kindergarten” to Major Sports Power
+ Hitomi: The Long Fight in a Short Life
+ With the Interest Grew the Dispute: Who Should Pay for It?
+ Turkey’s Early Olympic Adventure
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**On the cover:** Fireworks illuminated the Japan National Stadium during the opening ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

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**Graphic Design / DTP**
Sirko Wahnsn (GER)

**Editorial office and address for article submissions**
ISOH Journal
Lindenstraße 2
15377 Oberbarnim 07 Pritzauhagen
Germany

Phone: +49-30-44359060
+49-33433-15892

E-mail: olympic.journal@t-online.de
www.isoh.org

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Welcome to the Issue

At this moment, as I write these words, the Games of the XXXII Olympiad in Tokyo – postponed by a year – are officially being opened. The Japanese hosts, forced by the COVID-19 pandemic to adjust their plans to constantly changing conditions, have done a great amount. Most importantly, they have promised safe Games, which will be held under a new Olympic motto that sees the addition of solidarity: Citius, Altius, Fortius – Communiter, or in English: “Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together”.

The best reward imaginable is the 11,000 athletes from 206 teams – who have had to show great patience and willpower to qualify for these Games – being able to compete. Many things will be different this time around. Without spectators, the atmosphere of previous Games will be absent. There are many restrictions for the participants. The focus will be less on the festivities and more on the sport itself.

As has been the case for more than half a century, billions of people around the world will have the opportunity to follow the medal hunt on their screens. The long road that had to be travelled to reach this level is revealed in this issue in Part 3 of our feature on Olympic television history, where Richard W. Pound turns his attention to the 1976 Games.

Those who do not know the past are unable to understand the present and cannot envision the future. The other articles in this issue, which are primarily devoted to Japan’s Olympic history, were also selected under this motto. In the beginning there was Jigoro Kano, the “Father of Judo”, whom Andreas Niehaus writes about with great insight. My pieces commemorate Japan’s first medallists: triple jumper Mikio Oda, who won the first gold medal; Kunie Hitomi, who was the first woman to win a medal; and swimmer Hideko Maehata, the first female Olympic champion.

David Wallechinsky continues his articles on Olympic film history. This time, his focus turns to the Tokyo Paralympics in 1964. This piece is also intended as a preview of the upcoming Paralympic Games, which will begin on 24 August 2021 at the same location.

Before statisticians are overwhelmed by another flood of results, Bill Mallon and Hilary Evans present corrected medal tables of the Summer Games from 2004 to 2016 – proof (and maybe even a reminder) that cheating does not pay off in the long run.

Tolga Şinoforoğlu went out in search of the roots of Olympic history in the late Ottoman Empire – and found what he was looking for. In Part 1, he looks at the Games from 1896 to 1906, during which Turkey was still officially absent. All of that changes in Part 2, coming up in the next issue.

Our series on the biographies of all IOC Members is now at instalment 36. There are also several obituaries where we remember famous athletes. A number of them passed away as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
The modern Olympic Games build on the spirit of antiquity, organised and held for over 1,000 years in the sanctuary of ancient Olympia. They were embedded in religious festivals and over the centuries took on a life of their own, becoming sports and games spectacles that were widely observed and copied in the ancient world around the Mediterranean.

These ancient Olympic Games were reintroduced from 1896 and not continued or revived as is often read. Pierre de Coubertin himself had a clear idea about this: “Modern, very modern, will be these restored Olympian Games. [...] It is only the idea embodied in them that can revive, and it must be adapted to the needs and the taste of the present age.” This attitude corresponded to the widespread opinion of the IOC founding fathers, according to which the necessities and needs of modern life should be taken into account.

References back to the Olympic Games of antiquity have existed since the beginning of the Olympic Movement and changed throughout the 20th century. Many components of the Olympic Charter have their roots in ancient theories and philosophies, inherited in the humanism of modernity. A crucial criterion of both ancient and modern Games is their timing.

The Games take place every four years, for which the term “Olympiad” was used in antiquity. This term is used to describe the period of time from the end of the Olympic Games to the beginning of the following Games and was a supra-regionally important temporal benchmark in antiquity. The Olympic Movement adopted this concept of time in a modified form, according to which the Olympiad begins on 1 January of the year in which Summer Olympic Games are held.

The ancient chronology of the Olympiads was maintained and continued for well over 1,000 years. Through the incomplete but comprehensive record of the winners of ancient games, it is also known that games were never cancelled — unlike the Games of 1916, 1940 and 1944, which were cancelled due to war.

Once, however, the venue was moved from Olympia to Rome at the behest of the Roman general Sulla in 80 BCE. Emperor Nero had the Olympic Games postponed for almost two years, because he wanted to compete in a grand tour from October 66 CE to August 67 CE in all major sports venues of mainland Greece (Action, Olympia, Nemea, Isthmia, Delphi) — victorious of course! Nero took the right to undermine the centuries-old tradition of timed Olympic Games, but it was to remain the only exception in antiquity.

Wars, famines, or epidemics never led to the postponement or cancellation of Olympic Games in antiquity. They were not backed by a global organisation like the IOC, which unites nations in peaceful competition, but by a regional organiser in the ancient city of Elis, which organised religious festivals including sporting competitions — even if these took on immense dimensions.

Against the background of the IOC’s global responsibility and in view of the pandemic raging worldwide since 2020, the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Games by one year was only consequent and logical in its historical dimension. Similar thoughts were already expressed 100 years ago about the Olympics in Antwerp in 1920, whether they should not be postponed by a year in view of the still circulating Spanish flu.

The Tokyo 2020 keychain that I recently received from my niece will have a special place in my collection and Tokyo 2020 is something to look forward to, also in 2021.

Hair braided with the colours of the Japanese national flag, tennis star Naomi Osaka lit the Olympic torch in Tokyo to set in motion the Games of the XXII Olympiad on 23 July.

It was a moment some doubted would ever come, but from the instant that they were postponed, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had been insistent the Games would go ahead in 2021. President Thomas Bach did admit that he had kept his own private doubts hidden.

The message of recovery from the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami was an enduring theme in the week leading up to the Games, although there were further flashpoints with the resignation of two key members of the opening ceremony. Both resigned after unsavoury revelations.

Veteran Japanese politician Taro Aso, who coined the phrase “Cursed Olympics” last year to describe the travails of Tokyo 2020, was perhaps more accurate than even he realised.

He drew parallels with the 1940 Tokyo Games, which never happened because of war, and with the 1980 Moscow Games, which were blighted by an American-inspired boycott.

Eventually, it felt that simply to arrive here deserved some kind of medal. Special “playbooks” designed to achieve “safe and secure” Olympics had been produced by the IOC in conjunction with the organising committee and Japanese government authorities. These were distributed to athletes, coaches, members of the media, and others involved with the Games.

These preliminary instructions turned out to have been deceptively simplistic. Those who made their way to Tokyo to report on the Games would tell a different story, as supplementary instructions were received which sometimes appeared to be contradictory. Gianni Merlo, President of the International Sports Journalists Association (AIPS,) was trenchant, branding some of the limitations “crazy”. His opinions were echoed by journalists from around the world.

Naomi Osaka was the first tennis player to light an Olympic cauldron.

Far left: As tradition demands, the host country staged the Parade of Nations. All National Olympic Committees with the exception of North Korea were represented. As in 2016, the Refugee Olympic team had a prominent position near the head of the parade.

Photos: picture-alliance
Most willingly observed a three-day quarantine upon arrival, confined to hotel accommodation. There remained an additional risk of being identified as a “close contact”. If another individual on the flight tested positive, those close by were “pinged” – a new term for the Olympic dictionary.

This happened to a number of athletes, officials, and journalists. The latter group were asked to remain in their rooms for 14 days after arrival. In many cases, this meant missing the opening ceremony and some of the sport. It emerged that the Japanese government, mindful of anti-Olympic opinion polls, had a political agenda behind the polite double talk.

Thomas Bach deliberately decided not to participate in the Olympic torch relay, which arrived in the Tokyo metropolitan area a fortnight before the opening ceremony. It is fair to say that the 121-day relay through Japan was a shadow of any normal event.

Although some did experience their authentic moment with the flame, many others were forced to content themselves with what were described as “alternative lighting ceremonies”, which were little more than a charade.

The torch relay in Okinawa conducted away from public roads was emblematic of the contrast with the previous Tokyo torch relay. In 1964, huge crowds greeted its arrival. In 2021, it was carried off road, away from the public.

Yet at the opening ceremony came redemption. Athletes who had been essential workers during the pandemic carried the Olympic flag. Then youngsters from Miyagi, Iwate, and Fukushima prefectures, the areas worst hit by the 2011 disaster, were handed an unforgettable moment as they took the flame to Osaka.

121 years before, the Briton Charlotte Cooper won the 1900 tennis competition to become the first female champion. Gender equality has been a major theme here, symbolised, among others, by the inclusion of both male and female flag bearers at the opening ceremony.

Female tennis star Naomi Osaka ignited the Olympic Cauldron in the Olympic Stadium at the opening ceremony on Friday night at 11:48 pm. A second flame, located at the Ariake Yume-no-Ohashi Bridge on the waterfront, was lit by 2016 badminton women’s doubles gold medallist, Ayaka Takahashi, at 12:50 am. Intended to follow the example of Rio in making the flame more accessible to the public, this too will now be out of bounds after a state of emergency was declared for the duration of the Games. Both flames will burn for the first time using hydrogen fuel, in the two nearly identical bowls designed by Oki Sato.
The Olympic Oath: A Century of History

In 1906, after the festival of the French sports organisation, Fédération des Patronages, IOC founder Pierre de Coubertin proposed to its general secretary, Charles Simon, that an athlete’s oath be established as part of the Olympic Games (Revue Olympique, 1906, no. 7, 107–108), with the aim of making opening more ceremonious and “to appeal to the competitors’ honour”.

This was not implemented until 1920 in Antwerp, where the Belgian fencer Victor Boin (photo) first uttered the solemn pledge that had been formulated by Coubertin – his right hand raised in oath, his left hand holding of his country’s flag.

Over the decades, the Olympic Oath has been modified several times. In 1962, the oath that was previously “sworn” became a “promise”, in which there was no longer talk of the “honour of our country”, but of “the honour of our teams”. The applicable national flag was replaced by the Olympic flag in 1984.

In Munich 1972, the oath was spoken for the first time by a woman, the German long jumper Heidi Schüller. The Winter Games in Sapporo marked the first time it was taken by an official. And the Coaches’ Oath was introduced in London in 2012.

The wording through the ages:

1920
Nous jurons de prendre part aux Jeux olympiques en compétiteurs loyaux, d’observer scrupuleusement les règlements et de faire preuve d’un esprit chevaleresque pour l’honneur de nos pays et la gloire du sport.

1924
Nous jurons, dit-il, que nous nous présentons aux Jeux Olympiques en concurrents loyaux, respectueux des règlements qui les régissent et désireux d’y participer dans un esprit chevaleresque pour l’honneur de nos pays et la gloire du sport.

1930
We swear that we will take part in the Olympic Games in loyal competition, respecting the regulations which govern them and desirous of participating in them in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the honour of our country and for the glory of sport.

1956
In the name of all the competitors I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship and that we will respect and abide by the rules which govern them, for the glory of sport and the honour of our country.

1962
In the name of all the competitors I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, committing ourselves to a sport without doping and without drugs, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honour of our teams.

1999
In the name of all the competitors I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, committing ourselves to a sport without doping and without drugs, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honour of our teams.

The 138th IOC Session decided on yet another update for Tokyo 2020. The number of people speaking the oath was increased from three to six with a view to gender equality: two athletes, two coaches, and two judges. The harmonised text for each group begins with the words: “In the name of…”

We promise to take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules and in the spirit of fair play, inclusion and equality. Together we stand in solidarity and commit ourselves to sport without doping, without cheating, without any form of discrimination. We do this for the honour of our teams, in respect for the Fundamental Principles of Olympism, and to make the world a better place through sport.”

Six representative athletes, officials, and coaches took the Olympic Oath during the opening ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Photos: Sportimonium/Hofstade, picture-alliance
“Father of Physical Education in Japan”, “Father of judo”, and “Father of the Olympic Movement in Japan”; these are titles given to Kanō Jigorō (1860–1938).

Indeed, Kanō Jigorō is one of the key figures in the modern history of sports and physical education in Japan, and his role in making the Olympics a success story in Japan earned him, next to athletes of the 1964 Olympics, a special place in the legacy campaign of the 2016 and 2020 Tokyo’s bids for the Olympic Summer Games.

The Life of a (physical) educator

Kanō Jigorō was born in 1860, a moment in which Japan was undergoing a transformation from a feudal country governed by a military government into a modern nation state. Starting in the 1860’s Japan underwent large-scale political, social, but also cultural transformations, which stretched from the establishment of a constitutional government, administrative reorganisation of the feudal domains into prefectures, abandoning privileges of the ruling warrior class, and forming of a national conscription army, to economic and educational reforms (including universal education), technological modernisation, and the building of railroads (1872).

Kanō’s biography very much mirrors the dual character of his time: born into the family of sake brewers in today’s Kobe, he began his basic education in a traditional temple school, while receiving additional private training in the Confucian classics and mathematics. His secondary education, however, brought him to Tokyo, the centre of modernising Japan, where he was enrolled in modern educational institutions that had adapted a curriculum based on American and European schools and his teachers were Europeans and Americans, teaching in German and English.

After graduation from the Kaisei Gakkō (which later became Tokyo University) in 1881, he worked as

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By Andreas Niehaus

Andreas Niehaus | PhD, professor and director of the International Office of the Faculty of Arts at Ghent University, Belgium; his main research areas include East Asian and Japanese early modern and modern body culture, sport in Japan, and the history of the Olympic Movement in Japan; Main publications: Leben und Werk Kanō Jigorōs. Judo – Sport – Erziehung. 2019.
teacher at the Peers School (Gakushūin) and at different middle schools, and was appointed member of several commissions in the Ministry of Education. During this period, he also went to Europe for one year in order to deepen his knowledge of European education and inspect educational institutions. In 1893 Kanō became director of the Tokyo Higher Normal School (Tōkyō Kōtō Shihan Gakkō; today’s Tsukuba University). As head of this institution, he supported extracurricular sport activities. Sport had just made its way to Japan through European and American diplomats, teachers, and businessmen as well as Japanese exchange students after their return to Japan. Kanō made future teachers form and join English-style sport clubs and he also organised sport competitions. This proved to be a crucial element in spreading modern sport in Japan and the establishment of school sport clubs all over the country, as these future teachers passed on their experience in sports and club organisation to their pupils across Japan. Also, judo was taught as extracurricular activity at the Higher Normal School. Kanō had presented a new jujutsu style, which he named Kōdōkan Jūdō in 1882. His new judo was based on pre-modern forms of unarmed combat, but included strong educational and sportive elements based on Western theories of physical education of that time. While Kōdōkan Jūdō was rather small during the first years, the number of students began to rise around 1885, and starting in 1887, Kōdōkan branches were established by former pupils all over the country. Judo was also taught at his boarding school Kanō Juku (founded 1882), and at the Kōbun Gakuin preparatory school, which he had established for Chinese exchange students in 1886. Judo eventually marginalised more traditional forms of jujutsu and in 1911 judo became facultative sport activity in middle schools.²

**Becoming first Asian member of the IOC**

Two years after the foundation of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the first Olympic Games of the modern era were held in Athens in 1896, with athletes from 13 nations competing in nine sports. The event was initially limited to athletes from European countries and the United States, but Coubertin hoped to be able to invite athletes from countries around the world to compete in the Games. Japan was the first Asian country to offer itself as a member, because of its rapid modernisation (which also included modern sport) and its political, military, and economic dominance in the Asian region at that time.

At the request of Coubertin, in 1909 French Ambassador Auguste Gérard (1852–1922) approached the Japanese Foreign Ministry and the Japanese diplomat Motono Ichirō (1862–1918), with the request to propose a suitable candidate as Japan’s representative for the IOC.⁴ Kanō’s commitment to modern sports as well as physical education during his tenure as director of the Higher Normal School in Tokyo, his position as director of the Kōdōkan, his political contacts within government agencies, as well as his experience in Europe and his excellent command of English eventually put him in the pole position when the IOC was ready to expand to Asia.⁵

After a private conversation with Gérard, Kanō agreed to represent Japan, and he was subsequently nominated as candidate at the IOC Session in Berlin in May 1909. In a lecture given for the Shūshinka Kyōgikai (“Conference on Moral Teaching”), Kanō recalls the circumstances of his appointment: “In 1909, I received an invitation from French Ambassador Gérard. He said something like: ‘Since the beginning of the Olympic Games, initiated by my friend Coubertin, the Games have already been
held four times. The Olympic Games are held all over the world. To date, other nations have participated in addition to the countries of Europe and North America, but there are no participating nations from Asia yet. I have asked around, and you are said to be a person who would understand the idea of the Games. Don’t you want to become a member of the International Olympic Committee?“"8

In a letter to Coubertin, Gérard also mentions that he handed over the following documents and writings to Kanō: “[...] avec les statuts du Comité, une collection de la Revue Olympique, et les principaux documents que vous jugerez être de nature à l’intéresser.” Kanō is more precise in his letter of thanks to Coubertin regarding the received writings: “The Review Olympic as well as your recently published book Une Campagne de Vingtetun ans [sic!] I have duly received for which publications please do accept my most cordial thanks.”8

Although, sources suggest, Kanō was not aware of the Olympic Games before his nomination, it can be assumed that Kanō actually had already read about this international sport event. Wada (2007) showed that the revival of the Games had already been reported on in Japan in 1896 and Ōmori Hyōzō (1876–1913), a physical educator, called “Father of Japanese Basketball”, and acquaintance of Kanō, published an article entitled “The Revival of the Greek Games” for the journal Taiiku (Physical Education).9

At the same time, Kanō’s involvement with the Olympic Movement created interest in his work and especially in judo. Just before the Stockholm Olympics, an article in the Olympic Review (January 1912) not only introduced judo to its readers, but also Kanō himself: “M. Jigoro Kano a ceci d’excellent qu’elle permettra aux Européens de se faire une idée un peu exacte et précise d’un sport dont mille légendes merveilleuses venaient embrouiller l’historique et rendre confuse la réalité présente.”10

By 1911 Kanō had, in fact, already been successful in making judo known outside of Japan. Yamashita Yoshitsugu taught judo to Theodore Roosevelt (1903–1907) and two more instructors (Tomita Tsunejirō and Maeda Mitsuyo) came to the United States in order to teach judo in 1914. Judo also started to spread in Europe beginning in England with Tani Yukio in 1905.

Kanō’s involvement with the Olympic Movement offered him new opportunities and opened new doors in promoting judo outside of Japan, and Kanō throughout his career would use his travels for the IOC to lecture on judo and give demonstrations.11 However, the First World War meant that his close involvement with the IOC and his promotion of the Olympic idea had to wait.

Kanō’s and Coubertin’s sport philosophy were actually very similar, as they approached sport and athletic competition from a national as well as an international perspective, and the correspondence between the two men archived in Lausanne suggests a rather good understanding. Like Coubertin, Kanō saw sport and sporting competitions as a means of education and more precise as a way of morally strengthening the male youth and instilling values of national pride and patriotism in athletes and the nation as a whole.

These, at least for Kanō, were also the main educational goals of Japanese sports like kendo and judo, which he consequently considered to be potential Olympic disciplines: “That is why I definitely want martial arts and athletic disciplines to develop hand in hand. Even though both are different, their aim is identical: to strengthen the physical constitution and steel the mind. That is why I think it is good to include jūdō and kendō in Olympic competitions that have developed in the West, and to incorporate the spirit of bushidō.”12

However, beyond the anticipated positive effects on the physical, mental, and moral development of Japanese male youth and the goal of creating strong soldiers, i.e. beyond the nationally motivated benefits that were certainly one of the reasons for Kanō’s interest in becoming an IOC Member, he also evaluated the Olympic Games from a cosmopolitan point of view – as a tool for fostering better understanding between nations:

*Japan sends ambassadors and envoys to many countries, companies and associations set up branches and offices in different countries. In this respect, there is a relationship between our country and foreign countries, but I don’t think we have reached the point of friendly relations with other countries yet. From this point of view, the Games not only promote the development of sport, but also the friendly relations between nations.*13

**Foundation of the NOC and participation in the Stockholm Olympics**

When the IOC subsequently invited Japan to participate in the 1912 Stockholm Olympics, the country faced considerable difficulties, as there was neither a performance-based national selection process, nor was there an organisational structure on national level that would have been able to take on the administrative tasks of a National Olympic Committee (NOC). In order to solve these problems Kanō approached the Ministry of Education for assistance, but didn’t receive the support he had hoped for. An attempt to refashion the existing Nippon Taikukai (Japanese Association for Physical Education, founded in 1891) as NOC also failed, due to the organisation’s sole focus on gymnastics.14

Kanō then invited university and college leaders and sports educators to establish an organisation that, on the one hand, had to select athletes for the Olympic Games in Stockholm, but on the other hand...
also had to promote sport in Japan in general. On 6 July 1911 the Dainippōn Taiiku Kyōkai (Japan Amateur Athletic Association, JAAA), which functioned as NOC, was finally founded. Its aim went beyond the specific role of an NOC to develop top-level athleticism. Kanō also wanted the organisation to contribute to national physical education and take a leading role in the general betterment of the physical condition of Japanese male youth.

As first president of the JAAA (until 1921) and member of the IOC, Kanō thus guided the development of Japanese athletics in the first decade, both nationally and internationally. He was therefore also involved in the Far Eastern Championship Games (FECG), which were created following an initiative by the president of the Philippine Amateur Athletic Association, Elwood Brown. The first games were called the Far Eastern Olympic Games, but due to protest by Kanō and the IOC, the name was changed to Far Eastern Championship Games in 1915.

Kanō was initially very critical concerning the FECG. This was partly due to the fact that he and Brown had a different understanding of the meaning and role of sports:

In the case of Japan, Brown was eager to challenge the martial arts-based idea of individual training and non-dependence on other players (or warriors), which he perceived as, ‘backward’ and a remnant of former feudalism. Some of the most important amateur norms and values were team spirit and non-violent competition, based on the ideal of egalitarianism and promoted through team sports [...] Kanō Jigorō, on the other hand, was especially interested in physical education as a way to shape stronger and healthier soldiers and workers loyal to the emperor and the Japanese Empire.

While Kanō agreed to stage the 1917 FECG in Tokyo, he was one of the driving forces behind the JAAA leaving the Far Eastern Amateur Athletic Association before the Manila Games of 1919. Although Japanese athletes continued to participate in the Games, in 1921 Kanō was still not on good terms with the FECG. In a letter to Coubertin he reports on the 5th Games in Shanghai and complains: “In short, I was not treated in China with due importance, which a special representative of the International Olympic Committee should be.”

The first qualifying heats for the 1912 Olympic Games were held on 18 and 19 November 1911. Eligible for participation were only males older than 16 years of age who were students of secondary schools or similar educational institutions, students and graduates of universities, members of the military, members of local youth associations, or persons who could present a recommendation from the mayor of their town. At that time, sport and sport activities were still mainly an activity of the educated elite, and these restrictions set by the JAAA certainly aimed to exclude workers and farmers from participation and guard the exclusivity of sport; a move that would also be in accordance with the position of the IOC.

Kanō was a member of the selection committee, alongside Nagai Michiaki (teacher at the Tokyo Higher Normal School), Ōmori Hyōzō, and Abe Isoo (Waseda University). The committee decided to send only two athletes to the Stockholm Games. Of more than 90 participants, Mishima Yahiko (1886–1954), from Tokyo Imperial University, who also trained in judo, was to run in the 100, 400 and 800 m, while long-distance runner Kanakuri Shizō (1891–1983) from the Tokyo Higher Normal School was to participate in the marathon.

Kanō was appointed as team leader and Ōmori as team manager, and by 28 June 1912 the team had reached Stockholm via Saint Pietersburg and Helsinki by train. As could be expected, this first performance by the Japanese athletes was not crowned with success, especially given the little time they had to recover from Antwerp 1920: The first Olympic medals for Japan were won by tennis players Kumagae Ichiya and Kashio Seiichirō, who lost to British Oswald Turbull and Max Woosnam in doubles. Kumagae lost the singles final against the South African Louis B. Raymond.

Photo: Volker Kluge Archive
their long train journey, and ultimately, Kanakuri did not finish the marathon.21

After returning from abroad, Kanō gave a lecture to members of the Imperial Education Association (Teikoku Kyōikukai), in which he reported his impressions and reflected on the reasons for the disappointing performance by the Japanese athletes:

Thanks to the kindness of the Japanese residents in Sweden, we were able to set up camp in the guest house of the legation secretary, so we were all together in one house, which was very convenient. As we gradually started training, the athletes tired quickly. This worried me and I found the following causes: 1. The climate is different from ours. Because of the extremely high latitude, one can read the newspaper outdoors until eleven in the evening and from two in the morning. Even in between it is always dusky, it never gets completely dark. Furthermore, the guesthouse is situated on a major road, so that the noise of horse-drawn carts, cars and people’s voices disturbed almost the whole night, and the athletes were therefore unable to sleep sufficiently at night. 2. The food is different from that in our country. Our two athletes eat only vegetables and radish in Japan, but in Sweden there was only meat. 3. During training, for fat loss – according to Takeda Chiyosaburō – we adopted the thick coat training method. If we had been able to make gains with this method, the participants from the other countries would have applauded us. But we were not lucky and lost, so they attributed our failure to this method. But it’s not just that: ever since our athletes left Japan, they talked about not losing. From the beginning, they were concerned with achieving a reasonable result. Their inability to relax is another reason for their fatigue.[...] Our two athletes were not able to achieve victories, but one should not only ask about victory and defeat. I believe that their behavior as representatives of the youth of our country was exemplary.22

After the Stockholm Games, Kanō did not return directly to Tokyo, but took the opportunity to travel through Europe and the US to further learn about sports and physical education through expert discussions and attending sporting events, with the aim of implementing this experience in Japan.23 He also used his travels for the IOC to make judo known beyond the borders of Japan by giving lectures and demonstrations.

During his Olympic career, Kanō only missed the Paris competitions (1924) due to health reasons.24 He was able to witness how the Olympics became increasingly popular in Japan and that his efforts to spread and popularise sport in Japan in general, but especially the athletic disciplines, bore fruit through the success of Japanese athletes.25 The first medals won by Japanese athletes were two silver in tennis at the 1920 Antwerp Games, and the first golds were won in the triple jump and in men’s 200 m breaststroke in Amsterdam in 1928.

The Los Angeles Games of 1932 were certainly a milestone in Japanese Olympic history as male swimmers were able to win five gold medals in six disciplines, breaking the dominance of US swimmers. In his memoirs, however, Kanō focusses lesson the success of the swim team and instead stresses the exemplary attitude of 5,000 m runner Takenaka Shōichirō, who only finished 12th:
Japan participated for the first time in the 5th Olympic Games in Stockholm in 1912. At that time, athletics was still in its infancy and we therefore had no victories. But in the following Games, Japan gradually made progress. At these Games [1932], our country showed a strength that holds up to international comparison. Especially in the swimming disciplines, Japan was able to achieve better results than all other countries. [...] Tanaka was far behind in the 5,000-metre race; even more than a lap behind in the finish. He was of small stature, which is unfavourable for the competition. Nevertheless, he was not slack and gave his best. As a result, he attracted the attention of the audience and he thrilled them especially by not giving way to the faster runners even though he was far behind. Therefore, we Japanese now have a good reputation not only because of our technique, but also because of our behavior.26

**The cancelled Tokyo Games of 1940**

Kanō Jigorō played a pivotal role in securing the Games of the XII Olympiad (1940) for Tokyo, which were eventually cancelled.27 In 1931, Tokyo mayor Nagata Hidejirō (1876 – 1943) submitted a motion to the municipal diet to host the Olympics in Tokyo.

After approval by the deputies, Nagata worked to secure the support of Japan’s NOC, Japanese IOC Members, and government officials. He had, in fact, contacted the Japanese IOC Members Kishi Seiichi (1867 – 1933) and Kanō Jigorō for support earlier, but they were not supportive of a Tokyo bid. Kishi at that time was president of the JAAA and since 1924 member of the IOC.28 He cited the language barrier between Japan and the Western nations as an insurmountable obstacle.29 Nagata then met with Kanō,30 and also Kanō saw little prospect for a successful bid. In the end, however, the Japanese IOC Members supported the bid. Kanō did so in the hope of – as he recalls in retrospect – “introducing and allowing the world to experience Japanese economy and art and, moreover, Japanese culture in its entirety, as well as promoting common friendly relations”.31 In July 1932, Kanō travelled to Los Angeles and, together with Kishi, submitted Tokyo’s application to the IOC Members’ meeting.32 Yet winning the bid of hosting the Games in Tokyo seemed rather unlikely. For Kanō, who considered his assignment “to be not a simple task”,33 several reasons spoke against Tokyo: the large number of nine competitors bidding for the Games, among which he considered the city of Rome to be the favourite because of its infrastructure of stadiums and its great commitment to the bid. But also the great distance between Europe and Japan weighed heavily, as it would mean a considerable financial burden for the teams from Europe. The fact that Japan was a relatively new member country of the Olympic family also proved to be an obstacle, as there were voices within the IOC that favoured selecting a country that could look back on a more mature IOC membership.34 However, the increasing isolation of Japan from the democratic Western powers, especially as a result of the Manchurian Incident in 1931 and Japan’s withdrawal
Two influential lobbyists for Tokyo’s 1940 Olympic candidacy: IOC members Count Soyeshima Michimasa (left) and Prince Tokugawa Iyesato. After the foundation of the Tokyo organising committee he served as its president.

In order to lobby for Tokyo’s bid for the Games, Kanō joined the IOC Sessions in Los Angeles (1932), Vienna (1933), Athens (1934), Berlin (1936), and Cairo (1938). Between 1932 and 1936, he strongly advocated Tokyo as the venue, by organising banquets, talking to IOC Members, and giving lectures. In a letter to the Olympic Committee, Kanō formulated the following factors that spoke for Tokyo:

As you may know, the year of 1940 falls on the 2600th anniversary of the foundation of the Japanese Empire. To set the XIIth Olympiad against this background of our national celebration of the Empire’s 2600th anniversary, would attract far more spectators than at any other time. Because we can expect millions of visitors to Tokyo from both in- and outside of the country at that time. For this reason, if no other, 1940 is the time of all times to hold the XIIth Olympiad in Tokyo. Some may object to the selection of Tokyo as an Olympic City, because of its remoteness and consequent increase in travelling expenses. But you can, however, see from the Mayor’s letter to me that as counter measure, the Tokyo City authorities have recently passed a bill subsidizing to the extent of one million yen the travelling expenses of the Olympic competitors to Japan, if Tokyo is chosen for 1940. Moreover, we can promise every facility and convenience in 1940. Since the inauguration of the International Olympic Games, they have been held only in Europe and America, but, to our great regret, never in Asia, which has nearly one half of the world’s inhabitants. I believe that athletic interest is now world-wide and that Japan has shown sufficient loyalty to the Olympic Spirit and athletic ability since her participation to the Games to command the confidence of the IOC. If Tokyo be selected as host to the XIIth Olympiad of 1940, the true spirit of the International Olympic Games will spread over Asia as well as in Europe and America.

In the years following the submission of the bid, most of the candidates withdrew their applications, leaving only Tokyo, Helsinki, and Rome as candidates. Japan’s chances of hosting the Games then significantly increased when Italy “surprisingly” withdrew its bid. This was achieved by Soyeshima Michimasa (appointed IOC Member in 1934 after the death of Kishi Seiichi) and Sugimura Yōtarō (member of the IOC since 1933 and Under Secretary General of the League of Nations between 1927–1933), who met with Benito Mussolini in January 1935. Both were able to persuade Mussolini to accept Italy’s renunciation, on condition that Japan supported Rome’s bid for the 1944 Games.

IOC President Henry Baillet-Latour saw this move from the Japanese side as a blunt violation of the political independence of the IOC and expressed his protest in a letter to Kanō, who had not attended the Oslo meeting due to health reasons:

On our arrival at Oslo we realised what a pity it was that you had been unable to come to Europe. The very unfortunate position in which we found ourselves is due to the fact that, with the best of intentions, the two new Delegates of the IOC to Japan had taken the wrong course. Instead of referring [sic!] directly to me, trusting, that I would have told them what to do, they got in touch with authorities outside of the Committee. What was bound to happen happened. The freedom necessary to the IOC to dispose, outside of any foreign influence of the games which are its own property, was handicapped by those private negotiations. [sic!] It was quite as impossible to allocate [sic!] the games of the XIIIth Olympiad at the same time and, to make it more confused than ever, by the withdrawal of Rome, under the existing conditions the votes sent by mail could no more be used. Helsingfors being the only town competing against Tokyo. The only wise thing to do was to postpone the decision until next year. I was very anxious to give you these facts, hoping that you will use your own influence and make sure that all that outside work will be stopped.

At the 35th IOC Session in Berlin on 31 July 1936, after Kanō and Soyeshima had given speeches to secure Tokyo’s bid at the morning meeting on 30 July, the decision was finally made in favour of Tokyo by 36 to 27 votes. An important aspect that contributed to the decision for Tokyo as host city, apart from the open support of Baillet-Latour, was certainly the generous financial support promised by the Japanese NOC. The minutes of the meeting of 30 July read as follows:

Le Président donne lecture d’une lettre du Comité Olympique Japonais confirmant les points suivants: Subside d’un million et demi pour les transports des participants étrangers, engagement d’un conseiller
The importance of the election for Japan is evidenced by the fact that the decision was directly reported via radio. The “deep emotions” of those involved is vividly described by Murata (2001): “During the broadcast of the programme, Soyeshima was so moved that he could not utter a word. He sank down in front of the microphone and sobbed through his tears. Kanō, on the other hand, reported in a joyful voice.”

Even while Tokyo was awarded the Games of 1940, in Japan, a struggle between the JAAA and the city of Tokyo started, concerning the control of the Olympic Organising Committee and the influence of the government. These tensions continued even after it was formed in 1936 with Prince Tokugawa Iyesato (also called Iyesato) as president, and the new mayor of Tokyo Ushizuka Toratarō and General Oshima Matahiko as vice-presidents.

The correspondence between Soyeshima and Baillet-Latour reflects the tensions and political struggle between the members of the Organising Committee. In a letter from 20 March 1937 Soyeshima reports that he faced opposition from Kanō in the Olympic Organising Committee. To Soyeshima, Kanō overly favoured the side of the city of Tokyo (e.g. concerning his plans to enlarge the Meiji Jingu compound as venue). However, he expressed his hope that, as “Fortunately the Mayor of Tokyo … is not likely to be reelected”, Kanō would be isolated, as “other members sympathise with me”.

These inner committee conflicts also touched the question of who should represent the Japanese bid at the IOC meetings. It seems that Kanō “strongly objected” to the decision by the president of the Organising Committee, Tokugawa Iyesato, backed by the JAAA, to nominate Soyeshima as official representative, arguing that he himself should be nominated as he was the “senior member”.

Soyeshima and Kanō also disagreed on the meaning of the Olympics for Japan. Official statements as well as the public discourse moved between the poles of promoting nationalism and the training of strong soldiers and internationalism through the Olympic Games. Soyeshima stressed the aspect of an unpolitical peaceful international sport event, while Kanō, as suggested in an article in the Japan Advertiser from...
17 November 1936, saw the event as an opportunity to primarily promote the Japanese nation, and Kanō is quoted as having expressed that: “the sports activities of the Olympiad are only of secondary importance to Japan, the primary object being to show the world the cultural development of the nation”.

This public statement promoted Baillet-Latour to immediately write a strong letter of protest to Kanō, in which he quotes Kanō’s newspaper statement, demanding that “[i]f this statement is true, it is worse than the Jewish problem during the preparation of the Berlin and Garmisch Games and if you have not contradicted [sic!] it officially already, you must do it immediately.”

However, political international developments called the IOC’s decision to award the Games to Tokyo into question. Alarmed by the increasing militarisation of Japan, the Anti-Comintern Pact, and the outbreak of war with China in 1937, a faction within the IOC formed behind the USA, England, and Finland, demanding a rejection of Tokyo as the venue for the 1940 Olympics. Tokyo’s delay in the preparations provided additional arguments for this faction.

At the request of the new president of the JAAA, Shimomura Hiroshi (1875–1957), Kanō decided to travel to the IOC Session in Cairo in order to convince the committee members to continue their support for Tokyo. Additionally, he wanted to obtain the IOC’s commitment to host the 1940 Winter Games in Sapporo.

At the beginning of the morning meeting on 15 March, aboard the yacht Victoria, Baillet-Latour read out a telegram from Chinese IOC Member Wang Chenting T. proposing that Tokyo should be deprived of the Summer Games. However, no further action was taken on this proposal by Wang for “flimsy” formal reasons. But even Baillet-Latour, who, since his “private” inspection tour to Japan, which was entirely paid by the city of Tokyo, had so far unreservedly supported Tokyo’s bid, started to doubt whether Tokyo had the ability to hold the Games, and he emphatically pointed out to Kanō at the meeting the consequences for Japan if the Games could not be held:

Le Président demande à M. Kano si le Japon est capable d’organiser les Jeux de 1940, et si oui, qu’il considère les Délégués du CIO pour le Japon, qui l’ont conseillé, comme responsables. Si le Japon ne peut pas donner une garantie suffisante pour l’organisation des dits Jeux, il est tenu de prévenir à temps le CIO, afin que l’on puisse choisir pour les Jeux une autre ville que Tokio.

Si le Japon ne le prévient pas en temps opportun, on serait obligé d’annuler complètement ces Jeux. A la suite d’une discussion, à laquelle prennent part Pietri, Kano, Edstrom, le Président répète que seul le Japon est indiqué pour décider en la matière. Il est donc nécessaire d’avertir le Japon en le mettant en garde sur la gravité de cette situation. Il faut que le Japon examine à fond la question avant de se prononcer pour ou contre, car, en cas de manquement de sa part, il sera considéré le premier responsable. Si, au début des Jeux, les hostilités en Chine n’auraient pas pris fin, il serait à conseiller au Japon, dans son propre intérêt, comme dans celui du CIO, de renoncer à l’exécution de ces Jeux. Kano ne voit aucune raison pour laquelle le Japon ne devrait pas organiser les Jeux, ni pourquoi les Nations devraient refuser d’y participer. […] Après discussion, on réitère au Prof. Kano de se tenir très sérieusement en garde.

Despite massive reservations, the Japanese delegation succeeded in convincing the members to continue their support for the Games in Tokyo and even awarded the
1940 Winter Games to Sapporo. However, Baillet-Latour was very concerned and handed a note by the IOC Members addressing the “dangers and responsibilities [sic!]” (dated 18 March 1938) to Kanō and Nagai Matsuzō, and both were asked to lay the note “in front of the Organising Committee.”

Baillet-Latour also addressed the Japanese population directly by pointing out the consequences a failure to host the Olympics would have for the reputation of the Japanese nation as well as for the Olympic Movement warning that “not only Japan, but the whole of Asia would be deprived for years of the possibility of receiving the moral values which the countries derive from this great event. Japan, I am sure, is too sincerely attached to the Olympic cause to fail in its duty and do such damage to the admirable work of Baron de Coubertin. Let us hope that peace will soon be concluded and that, through the fortunate mediation of sport, harmony, and good understanding will reign anew among the youth of the world.” That following month, however, on 16 July 1938, the Japanese Olympic Organising Committee cancelled the 1940 Games.

Convinced that the Games would be held in Japan, Kanō died on his way back to Japan on 4 May 1938 aboard the *Hikawamaru*. It was not until 1964 that the Olympic Games were finally held in Tokyo and Japan was symbolically reintegrated into the international community. Although it had been decided during the 1937 Warsaw IOC Session that judo would be included in the programme as a demonstration of a national sport, it was in 1964 that Kanō’s judo, which by then had spread as competitive sport throughout the world, finally became an Olympic sport.

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2 See also the webpage of the Japanese Olympic Committee, which stresses Kanō Jigorō’s importance for the Olympic Movement in Japan: https://www.joc.or.jp/english/historyjapan/kano_jigoro.html.
3 Although official documents from the Ministry of Education speak of “jujutsu”, it was in fact judo that was taught in schools and in 1926 the term “jujutsu” was replaced by “judo”, effectively excluding traditional forms of unarmed grappling.
4 See also Gérard’s letter to Coubertin from 19 January 1909 (IOC Historical Archives Lausanne, hereafter IOCHA). Gérard incidentally addresses his colleague as “Motono”. For the nomination of Kanō as first Japanese IOC Member see also the correspondence of foreign minister Komura Jutarō (1855–1911) to Gérard from 11 March 1909, and from Gérard to Coubertin from 15 March 1909, (both IOCHA).
8 Ibid., 89. Letter of 14 September 1909, Kano Jigoro Correspondance 1909–1935, IOCHA. Kanō’s nomination was also announced in Revue Olympique (May 1909), where he is introduced as “directeur de l’Ecole normale supérieure de Tokyo et fondateur de l’Institut de Jiu-Jitsu”, connu d’ailleurs pour ses travaux sur la natation et la gymnastique.” The text also mentions “comte Komura”, “baron Motono” and “M. Gérard” as supporters of the nomination.
the Cairo Session in North America after Kanō’s travelling to Coubertin, 17 November 1921, Jeux d’Extême-Orient, 212/1936, IOCIA. Kanō’s complaints also reached Eiwood Brown, who reacted in a letter to Coubertin (13 January 1933). He also asked Franklin H. Brown from the Japanese YMCA to react to Kanō’s statement. See letter Franklin H. Brown to Coubertin, 12 February 1922, Ibid. Both argue that the Chinese behaviour towards Kanō was mainly rooted in anti-Japanese sentiments and not in a disrespect towards the IOC or a misunderstanding concerning Kanō’s position.


Kanō’s letter to Baillet-Latour, 10 January 1935, Baillet-Latour Correspondance, IOCHA. The letter was also accompanied by a two-hour meeting with Coubertin on 7 July. Katō, Kanō Jigoro, 162, see also Murata, Kanō Jigoro, 248–250.

Kanō in a letter to Coubertin (3 February 1924) already announced that he would not come to Paris because of political obligations. Kanō had been elected as member of the House of Peers in 1922, of which Prince Tokugawa Iesato (also Iesato), who later became president of the Olympic Organising Committee and IOC Member (1936–1939), was president. New elections made a July meeting of the diet probable. In the same letter Kanō also informed Coubertin that Japan would send a significantly smaller delegation of athletes to the Paris Olympics due to the impact of the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake. Kano Jigoro Correspondance 1909–1935, IOCIA.


On the Tokyo 1940 Olympics see also Sandra Collins, The 1940 Tokyo Games: The Missing Olympics: Japan, the Asian Olympics and the Olympic Movement (Milton Park: Routledge 2008). Different from the Tokyo Olympics 2020/21, the Games of 1940 were wisely planned to be held from 21 September to 6 October in order to avoid the summer heat. Sigfrid Edström wrote a letter to Baillet-Latour warning him that “the period from July 1st – September 15th” is impossible to stand for white people.” Letter from 28 December 1936 JOETE 1940 (Non Celebres), Correspondance 1936–1938, IOCIA.

Kishi was nominated on Kanō’s recommendation. In a letter to Coubertin, Kanō even offered his resignation, should Japan be not allowed to have a second IOC Member. Letter Kanō to Coubertin, 3 February 1924, IOCIA.


Kanō, “Orinpikku Taikaikai,” 244.

English name decided on in 1921.


Stefan Huebner, Pan-Asian Sports and the Emergence of Modern Asia 1931–1976 (Singapore: Nus Press 2016), 42. Around 1915 Kanō seemed to have, at least partially, changed his mind: “However, Eiwood Brown later stated that he and his YMCA colleague Franklin Brown in Tokyo had personally converted Kanō to team sports through the broad public interest in the new sports attracted during the Games. Although Franklin Brown talked of only a partial change of mind, Kanō finally started to accept team sports at Tokyo Higher Normal School and no longer inhibited their spread around Japan. Kanō’s own physical education ideology thus had suffered a serious defeat, as Eiwood Brown later said, having “crumble[d] before the oncoming recreational element which the young men of Japan simply had to have.” Ibid., 42. On Kanō’s view of the FEG see also Jigorō Kanō, “Jūdō yori mitaru Kyōkutsu Senshukensu Kyōgi Taikaikai” Jūdō 3, no. 6 (1917). Quoted in Kōdōkan (ed.), Kanō Jigoro Taikei vol. 8 (Tokyo: Hon no tomosha, 1988), 235–238.

Kanō to Coubertin, 17 November 1921, Jeux d’Extême-Orient, 192/1936, IOCIA. Kanō’s complaints also reached Eiwood Brown, who reacted in a letter to Coubertin (13 January 1933). He also asked Franklin H. Brown from the Japanese YMCA to react to Kanō’s statement. See letter Franklin H. Brown to Coubertin, 12 February 1922, Ibid. Both argue that the Chinese behaviour towards Kanō was mainly rooted in anti-Japanese sentiments and not in a disrespect towards the IOC or a misunderstanding concerning Kanō’s position.

support: “In appreciation of our enthusiasm and sincerity, will you please ask every member of the IOC to vote for Tokyo as the Olympic City of 1940, and thus help us to realize the true spirit of the Olympiad, because in spite of Japan’s loyalty to the Olympic Spirit, the Games have not yet been held in the Orient?”

38 Letter from 9 March 1935, Non-Celebres, subfile Baillet Correspondance, IOCHA. On the same day, Baillet-Latour also wrote a strong letter to Soyeshima. Ibid. See also Tokyo-shi Yakusho (ed.), Dai jōshi kōrinpiku Tokyo-shi hōnōkakushi (Tokyo: Kawaguchi: Insatsusho, 1939), 39–45.

39 See Procès-verbal de la 35ème Session du Comité International Olympique. Berlin, 30–31 juillet au 15 août 1936, IOCHA. While Soyeshima defended Tokyo’s bid in public, he privately had concerns about Tokyo’s ability to stage the Games. He mentions the following obstacles in a letter to Baillet-Latour from 2 February 1938, which is marked “strictly confidential” as most of his letters are: “lack of money”, “lack of knowledge and energy”, “lack of material”, and “possibility of prolongation of the war with China”.


43 On 11 January 1937, Tokugawa Iyesato officially informed Baron Godfrey de Blonay about the formation of the Organising Committee. Japon Correspondance 1936–1939, IOCHA.


45 Ibid. On Kanō and the mayor of Tokyo in the Organising Committee, see also Soyeshima’s letters from 28 February 1937. In a handwritten letter from 9 January 1937, Soyeshima had already informed Baillet-Latour that “one of our mutual friends and colleagues” (Kanō) according to some of the “leading Japanese residents” in Los Angeles and San Francisco, had “not very nice things to say” about the Games and the JAAA. Ibid.

46 Baillet-Latour to Kanō, 4 December 1936, Japon Correspondance 1936–1939, IOCHA. In the same letter, Baillet-Latour also refers to another statement from the above-mentioned article, where Kanō states that the Organising Committee that would be established should be so powerful that it could even “reject a resolution of the International Olympic Committee should it be found not fitting to the national characteristics of Japan.” Japan Advertiser, 17 November 1937.

47 The minutes of the meeting read: “Le Président dit avoir reçu plusieurs télégrammes et lettres et donne lecture d’un télégramme émanant du Délégué pour la Chine, Dr. Wang, afin de changer le lieu où se dérouleront les Jeux de 1940. Étant donné qu’il n’a rien dans le texte de la Charte Olympique qui puisse permettre une telle décision, le Président commence par l’Ordre du Jour.” Procès-verbal de la 37ème Session du Comité International Olympique. Le Caire, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, Mars 1938, IOCHA.

48 Collins, The 1940 Tokyo Games, 67.

49 Procès-verbal de la 37ème Session du Comité International Olympique. Le Caire, 15, 16, 17, 18, Mars 1938, IOCHA.

50 Soyeshima continues by advising Baillet-Latour: “Please don’t hesitate to take away the Games if you think that we are not qualified to stage them.” Japon Correspondance 1936–1939, IOCHA. In a letter from 18 May 1938, Soyeshima complains that Nagai has not forwarded a “long telegram” signed by Kanō and Nagai; Japon Correspondance 1936–1939, IOCHA.

51 “Owing to the escalation of war in China, the Japanese government rationed the supply of steel, making it difficult to build the Olympic stadium and other sport facilities. Moreover, the issue of Government Bonds in order to raise funds was no longer possible. [...] On 14 July 1938 the Ministry of Commerce and Welfare decided to postpone the World Exposition then being planned, and subsequently the Ministry of Health and Welfare decided to cancel the Tokyo Olympics on the pretext the one was inseparable from the other. On the next day, 15 July, the Japanese Cabinet approved this cancellation, and consequently the Olympic Organising Committee (IOC) cancelled the Games on 16 July.” Jun’ichi Tahara, “Count Michimasa Soyeshima and the Cancellation of the XII Olympiad in Tokyo,” 467.

52 The cancellation of the Tokyo Games is also submitted his resignation as IOC Member after the cancellation and informed Baillet-Latour about his decision on 10 August; letter Soyeshima to Baillet-Latour, IOCHA. On IOC correspondence concerning the cancellation, see Japon Correspondance 1936–1939, IOCHA.

53 Kanō was also remembered in Olympische Rundschau, no. 1 (April 1938), 53–54. Translation by the author.

54 Second voyage: Kanō Jigirō on the Hikawamaru, on whose deck he died on 4 May 1938. Two months later, the Japanese government returned the rights to host the 1940 Games to the IOC.
From “Olympic Kindergarten” to Major Sports Power

by Volker Kluge

Modern sport reached the Japanese islands as early as during the Meiji Restoration, a time when Western imperialism was also imported. The social elite, whose sons had often studied in Western Europe or North America, played tennis or golf, while the poorer classes, who could not afford the expensive equipment and high club membership fees, devoted themselves more to running and swimming.

School gymnastics were encouraged early on, but was not included in the curriculum by the Ministry of Education until 1913. The Swedish system was chosen, with the aim being that “students above middle school should be trained to be soldiers with patriotic conformity, martial spirit, obedience, and toughness of mind and body”.

In 1969, Mikio Oda addressed these beginnings in a lecture he gave at the International Olympic Academy (IOA): “In fact, sports in Japan may be said to have made no progress during the 40-odd years of the Meiji Era.”

The sport did not actually spread until the beginning of the Taisho era that followed. Japan was the first Asian country to accept IOC President Pierre de Coubertin’s invitation to participate in the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm.

On the initiative of Professor Jigoro Kano, the Japan Amateur Sports Association (JASA) was founded in 1911, which fulfilled the tasks of a National Olympic Committee. Two years later, Japan was one of the six nations to compete in the first Far Eastern Olympic Games organised by the YMCA Physical Director Elwood Brown during the Manila Carnival. They had created an “Olympic Kindergarten”, he wrote to Coubertin.

One of the most eager pupils was Mikio Oda, who was born in Kaitaichi in Hiroshima Prefecture in 1905. After attending Hiroshima Daiichi Junior High School, he began studying at the School of Commerce at Waseda University in Tokyo, which was known for its baseball club. In the middle of the Russo-Japanese War, in April 1905, Professor Isoo Abe had taken the players on a three-month tour to California to broaden their international perspective.

Oda joined the athletics team at Waseda University, the captain of which was Yoshio Okita, two years his senior. They had known each other since their school days in Hiroshima. They now became friends, and also
shared accommodation together, as well as the tatami mat room. An approximately 280-m-long field was available to them as a practice area, right next to the Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences. The students were able to train here daily under the direction of Dr. Tadaoki Yamamoto – later also managing director of the All Japan Athletic Federation, founded in 1925. A traditional haiku poem has handed down the attitude of not even bad weather being a deterrent. It contains the following line: “Snowy days and Okita throwing the discus”.7

Japanese sport received a strong boost from the Far Eastern Games, from whose name the term “Olympic” had been deleted at the request of Kano, whom Coubertin had brought to the IOC in 1911.8 After Tokyo 1917, the fifth Games were again held in Japan – this time in May 1923 in Osaka.

A few newspaper publishers who had discovered the mass appeal of sport now also played an important role. In 1917, for example, the first *ekiden,*9 a three-day long-distance relay race over 508 km to celebrate the emperor’s move from Kyoto to Tokyo 50 years earlier, was sponsored by *Yomiuri Shimbun.* The *Asahi Shimbun* had funded the middle school baseball championships since the 1920s, and Mikio Oda was hired by the paper as a sports journalist in 1931. The employer of the legendary Kinue Hitomi, who set a long jump world record of 5.50 m at the Women’s World Games in Gothenburg in 1926, was the *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun.* Later, it was also to be that of Chuhei Nambu and Kenkichi Oshima, who will be discussed later.

At the age of 18, Oda experienced his first international championships in Osaka in 1923. He won the long jump with 6.90 m and the triple jump with 14.27 m – that is, with results that were already at the international level. In the high jump, he came third with 1.70 m. In retrospect, however, Oda did not want to ascribe himself any particular talent: “I was not an incredibly gifted athlete. What made me strong was working twice as hard as everyone else.”10

Dr. Tadaoki Yamamoto (1885–1951), coach of the Waseda athletes and managing director of the All Japan Athletic Federation.
In June 1920, the Japanese Ministry of Education decided to promote public physical education and established the National Institute for Research in Physical Education. For the first time, a larger team was sent to the Olympic Games in Antwerp, consisting of 15 athletes, two swimmers, and two tennis players. However, with the exception of the tennis players, none of them was able to place among the top positions. The latter won silver medals: Ichiya Kumagae, an employee in the New York Branch Office of the Mitsubishi company, won silver in singles, and again with Seiichiro Kashio in doubles.

Four years later, the Japanese were still learners, but national interest in doing well had increased. In order to increase motivation among the youth, the Ministry of Home Affairs sponsored the Meiji Shrine Games and proclaimed a National Physical Fitness Day, to be celebrated annually on the anniversary of the Meiji Emperor’s death on 3 November. Before the delegation left for Paris, Prince Chichibu, who was known as the “Sporting Prince”, presented the white national flag with the red circle of the sun, symbolically authorising the team to represent the empire. The equipment was provided by sporting goods manufacturer Mizuno.

With his two victories at the Far Eastern Games, Mikio Oda had also qualified, and he was also registered for the high jump. But neither the 1.80 m he achieved in that nor the 6.83 m he got in the long jump were enough for him to qualify for the finals. This was not the case in the triple jump, which – at a time when it consisted of two hops and one jump, at the end of an Irish period – had gone down in popularity, apart from in the Scandinavian countries.

In the qualifiers, Oda got 14.35 m on his first attempt – a Japanese record. But he injured his heel in the process, and so did not add to this. To win a medal, he would have had to jump more than a metre further. The gold medal was already out of the question. This was won by the Australian Anthony Winter, whom everyone just called “Nick” and who improved on Dan Ahearn’s 13-year-old world record in the last round, setting a new one with 15.525 m. Next to this muscular firefighter, toughened by playing rugby, the 1.67 m tall and only 60 kg Japanese man looked like a schoolboy. But what Oda lacked in stride length, he made up for with his sturdy legs, which enabled him to withstand the stresses of the triple jump on his knees and ankles better than other athletes.

By attaining sixth place in Paris, Oda had fulfilled the expectations of his compatriots. He remembers the Games themselves and the Olympic Village in Colombes, with its barracks, as being “very enjoyable”, recounting: “Every morning when I purchased cherries at the fruit shop, people were very kind and filled my bag with cherries. It was my pleasure to take a walk eating these cherries. I used a bicycle to look around the suburb and often enjoyed riding with French girls who were to their way to the work on bicycle.”

Record holder in four disciplines

In the Showa Era, which began with the enthronement of Emperor Hirohito in 1926, conscription and mass education played a growing role. The Tenno and his supposedly divine ancestry moved to the centre of the ruling ideology, which preached the superiority of the Japanese race over other nations.

With the rise of nationalism came a strengthening of sport. Foreign teams were invited to take part in international matches, in which the hosts demonstrated a growing self-confidence. Above all, this pertained to the swimmers, who had already caused a stir in Paris
thanks to the Waseda student Katsuo Takaishi and the freestyle relay.\textsuperscript{17} A comparison with Hawaii took on significance from a foreign policy perspective in October 1926, after the hitherto friendly relations with the USA were permanently tarnished by an exclusion law that was intended to stop “undesirable” Japanese immigration by means of a quota system.\textsuperscript{18} In Tamagawa Pool in Tokyo, the Japanese won all the freestyle distances. The winner of the 200 m breaststroke was the later two-time Olympic champion Yoshiyuki Tsuruta.

The athletics, which received particular support, also approached the European level, especially in the jumping disciplines. The Waseda team gained reinforcement in the form of Chuhei Nambu, who had previously studied at Hokkai Junior High School, where a picture of his role model Mikio Oda hung in his boarding room. During the long winters in Hokkaido, the liquor dealer’s son sometimes even trained in department stores, running up and down the stairs until he was ushered out.

When he switched to Tokyo to study, Oda found in him a training partner who had already given him a run for his money at the Far Eastern Games in Manila in 1925. His lead in the triple jump was only eight centimetres. He was already surpassed in the high and long jump, in which Nambu was second and third, but this did not change their good relationship. When Nambu was unable to travel to his distant home during the holidays, Oda invited him to his home.

At the beginning of the Olympic year of 1928, Oda held no fewer than four Japanese records: 15.355 m in the triple jump, 7.377 m in the long jump (both winning distances from the 1927 Far Eastern Games in Shanghai), 1.92 m in the high jump, and 6,784.256 points in the decathlon. After the Japanese championships, the JAAA registered him for Amsterdam in all jumping disciplines with the exception of the pole vault.

Before the Olympic Games, however, the Waseda team had committed to a friendly match with the English Achilles Club, a mix of former graduates from the universities of Cambridge and Oxford. Led by Dr Yamamoto, the team embarked on the more than 13,000 km train journey to London in mid-June, which meant three weeks without systematic training. A boat trip from Yokohama through the Suez Canal would have taken 39 days.

Oda used the time to acquire a basic knowledge of foreign languages. In an interview with fellow journalist and well-known author Kazuo Chujo, he recollects the difficulties of eating while driving, 70 years later.

Money was scarce, because, at that time, in the second year of the Showa emperor’s reign, Japan was stuck in a banking crisis – a precursor to 1929 that triggered the financial panic. “It was not easy, especially with food. There was a dining car, but I couldn’t stand Russian meals, and besides it was expensive. Soup was the only meal I could accept; otherwise I bought eggs and chicken at the station.”\textsuperscript{19}

Despite such problems, the Japanese had impressive results on 10 July 1928 at Stamford Bridge. They won six of the eleven competitions and only just lost with 31 points to 34. Something noteworthy to the press: Former Lord Chancellor Lord Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, was one of the judges.

One flag bigger than all the others

It was Prince Hendrik, the husband of Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, who opened the Olympic Games on 28 July 1928 in the sold-out Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam. On the second day of the competition, Oda started in the high jump, placing seventh along with four other athletes with a height of 1.88 m. Forty-eight hours later, he fell short of the final of the best six in the long jump, coming in eleventh place with 7.11 m.

His big moment came on 2 August in the triple jump. With 15.21 m on his third attempt, Oda took the lead in the field of 24 participants, and he defended this until the end. Although the American Levi B. Casey\textsuperscript{20} came within four centimetres of Oda in the final, the gold was
no longer to be taken away from the Japanese. Bronze went to the Finn Vilho Tuulos, the Olympic champion of 1920. Nambu, who was second with 15.01 m after the qualifiers, had to be content with fourth place. In 12th place, with 14.15 m, world record holder “Nick” Winter could not even come close to building on his great period.

The winning ceremony we are familiar with today did not exist back then – the three-step podium was only introduced in 1932. However, the medallists' flags were hoisted above the stadium’s large scoreboard showing the results, while a band played the winner's national anthem.

An adventure-filled story has grown up to this day around the flag that was hoisted for the first Japanese Olympic champion, which is said to have been four times larger than the others. Since Oda supposedly suspected that the Netherlands would not be prepared for a Japanese success, he brought his own flag and handed it to the organisers after the competition – at least that’s what they say. He himself gave this explanation:

I don’t know the truth. The commonly accepted explanation is that Dr Yamamoto handed Miss Hitomi the flag, which had been entrusted to him by His Imperial Highness for the purpose of wrapping Oda in it in the event of a win. Mr Nanbu (sic!) was flustered and forgot the wrapping story and ran to the pole and asked to hoist this flag. Therefore the flag was a different size from the others and smaller for the second and third. I can’t believe this story.

Since the award ceremony was only held on the last day of the Games, 12 August 1928, when Oda was already in Paris at the World Student Games, Yoshiyuki Tsuruta accepted the medal from Queen Wilhelmina on his behalf. The swimmer also got his own though, because he had won the 200 m breaststroke against the German world record holder, Erich Rademacher.

When Oda returned to Japan after three months of absence, there was no major event. Only a few students from Waseda University waited for him at the train station in Tokyo. “When I won, I didn’t become a star,” Oda reports. “Only some people acknowledged it as a wonderful achievement.”

But interest began to grow. A newspaper published a special edition, and the president of a textile company invited Oda to a welcome party in a restaurant. When a new stadium was opened in Dairen with an international match against France on 22 September, following two years of construction, the game attracted more than 50,000 spectators.
The Tenno system created new and complex forms of representation. The French guests were greeted by sung presentations given by 1,500 school girls. The two team captains – Oda for Japan and the high jumper Pierre Lewden for France – took an “athlete’s oath”, and the second day began with a service of Shinto worship. By the end of the 1920s, baseball tournaments and sporting meetings had become true festivals and parades, with the raising of the iconic Hinomaru flag and the playing of the Kimigayo anthem being highlights of their staging. Back then, they did not represent the state, but paid homage to the Tenno.

The significantly intensified intellectual climate as a result of the Japanese expansionist drive had an impact on sport’s position in society, and its importance was growing. Top European athletes like Rademacher, who was invited to tour Japan after Amsterdam (and again lost to Tsuruta), were amazed at the sport-friendly attitude of the authorities and the modern sports facilities.

Since the Japanese were mostly students who devoted themselves exclusively to sport, following the model of American colleges, international success was inevitable in the long run. The German athletes came to feel this, only narrowly winning an international competition in Tokyo in October 1929, as did the US swimmers. The latter suffered a significant loss in 1931 in the newly built Meiji Jingu Stadium – a taste of what was to come in 1932.

Memorable moment: a day of two world records

One of the most significant days for Japanese sport came at a politically explosive time. On 18 September 1931, two officers of the Kwantung Army carried out a bomb attack on the tracks of the South Manchura Railway, where Nambu was employed after his studies. The damage was insignificant, but for the army, who had long since acted independently, it served as a welcome opportunity to invade northern China and install the puppet state of Manchukuo. The United States responded with a doctrine of non-recognition named after Secretary of State Stimson, but it had little of the desired effect. Japan fell into international isolation, and, at the same time, its fascist tendencies increased.

27 October fitted in with this, because, for the first time, two Japanese set two world records at Meiji Jingu Stadium within just a short period of time. Oda, who had won the triple jump for the fourth time in a row at the postponed Far Eastern Games in 1930, improved on Winter’s seven-year-old record, attaining 15.58 m. In the long jump, Nambu exceeded Haitian Silvio Cator’s world record of 7.93 m, which he had set in Colombes in 1928, reaching 7.98 m.

The formation of an Olympic team for the 1932 Games became a “national affair”, especially since it was being held in Los Angeles. The government got involved, as did companies and individuals. First and foremost of these was Dr Seiichi Kishi, an internationally practising lawyer and member of the wealthy Matsue clan. He took on the travel expenses for a delegation of 190 people – including 41 athletes and 12 staff members of the aquatic team. “The dream of many years of defeating the American swimmers was finally realised at Los Angeles”, enthused Oda. At the opening, he had the honour of carrying the flag.

With the exception of the 400 m freestyle, Japan’s swimmers won five of the six men’s competitions, even winning the 100 m backstroke three times. With a total of seven first places, Japan performed even better than Hungary (six wins), as well as Germany, Great Britain, and Finland, who each racked up five. A gold and a bronze a piece were due to Nambu, who also improved on Oda’s world record when he hit 15.72 m in the triple jump. For the first and only time, both records were held by a single athlete.

Oda, who was injured at the time and only finished 12th, ended his active career after Los Angeles. But when necessary, he would put on his spikes again, like in the international match against Czechoslovakia in August 1935, when he finished second behind Kenkichi Oshima with 14.00 m in the triple jump. At 40 years old, 1.75 m in the high jump was no problem for him.
His main task, however, was preparing the athletics team – first for Berlin in 1936, then for the 1940 Games that the IOC had awarded to Tokyo. Japan had big plans; after all, it was important to celebrate the mythological foundation of the empire’s 2,600 years – the “2,600th Year Since Kigen” – with the Olympic Games and a world exhibition. Oda’s order: “My only concern after the LA Olympics was how to win against the American team at the Tokyo Olympics eight years later. Europe was not a rival of Japan, except Finland. America was a strong rival. I was not about how many flags we can hoist. My only thought was how to win against the USA.”

The fact that Japan was on the way to becoming a great power in athletics was already evident in 1934, when a US team was victorious on 15–16 September in Osaka in front of 20,000 spectators, with a sensational 77.5 points to 75.5. The triple jumpers were outstanding, although from now on they had to do without Nambu, who ended his career that year because of an Achilles tendon injury. In the international match against the USA, his world record was broken twice – first by Masao Harada (15.75), then by Oshima (15.82).

Behind them lay Naoto Tajima, who had finished sixth in the long jump in Los Angeles in 1932 at just short of 20 years old. After he had won gold in the long jump and bronze in the triple jump at the Far Eastern Games in Manila in 1934, he became student world champion in Budapest in 1935 in the long jump, ahead of Luz Long. Both – the German in second, the Japanese in third – flanked the great Jesse Owens on the podium in Berlin in 1936. Two days later, Tajima himself wrote sporting history when he won the triple jump with 16.00 m – a world record that the Brazilian Adhemar Ferreira da Silva was only able to beat 15 years later, by one centimetre.

A 15.21-metre-high flagpole

The Marco Polo Bridge Incident on 7 July 1937 sparked the outbreak of the Second Sino–Japanese War, as a result of which, Japan returned the right to host the 1940 Games to the IOC on 15 July 1938. In view of their inconceivable war crimes, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt had previously already demanded that the family of nations quarantine the aggressor, and an Olympic boycott was also discussed. Nevertheless, the doors remained open to peaceful solutions. Ultimately, it was the Japanese government that had cut the Olympic budget several times because of the rapidly rising armament costs, and now wanted to free itself from the burden of an international event.
In order not to lose face and to prove that the country was capable of organising important events, a Youth Olympiad was held in June 1939 at Kobe Stadium in Tokyo, to which 31 countries were invited, but whose programme only consisted of an athletics triathlon.

In order to deepen relations with Nazi Germany, a 12-person delegation was sent to the World Student Games in Vienna at the same time, although, after the “annexation” of Austria, the Confederation Internationale des Etudiants (CIE) had relocated it to Monaco. World War II began five days after the closing ceremony.36

The 20-year-old Gengon Kin had won one of two Japanese victories in Vienna, making him the last of a Japanese triple jump dynasty. He topped the world list from 1940 until 1943. Yet, what were his successes worth at the long-forgotten East Asian Games that Japan hosted in 1940 and 1942, at which only ethnic Japanese and representatives of Japanese colonies such as Nanjing, Manchukuo, and Mengjiang in Inner Mongolia were welcome? Kim Won-gwon, as the Korean was called by his real name, did not experience the Olympic Games until playing in 1948 in London in the team of his country of birth.37

After the catastrophe of the century that was the Second World War, in which Japan was an active participant, from the attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 until its surrender in 1945, the Japanese Olympic Committee began to reorganise itself from 1946 onwards under the direction of the physician Dr. Ryotaro Azuma. Like Germany, the country, occupied by US troops, was not invited to the 1948 Olympics.

First signs of convergence came in 1949, when the International Amateur Swimming Federation (FINA) recognised the Japanese federation again. Four of its athletes were then invited to the US championships in Los Angeles, which Mikio Oda was allowed to attend as a journalist. There were successes for him to report: Hironashin Furuhasi, known as the “Flying Fish”, won three freestyle distances, ranging from 400 to 1,500 m, and he and Shiro Hashizume set six world records in four days.

The travel and subsistence expenses were borne by ethnic Japanese, who also gave their compatriots new clothes when they arrived. Oda named the sponsors as Kazuo Wada, the owner of a supermarket chain in California, Takizo Matsumoto, former manager of the Meiji University Baseball Club and, after the war, a Diet member from Hiroshima, as well as Dr Katsumi Kometani, a Hawaiian dentist who had commanded the Japanese American corps when the Allies landed in Sicily in 1943.38

All three now became key lobbyists that Tokyo needed when it ran again for the Olympic Games, this time for 1960. But in the 1955 host city election, the city received only four votes – the fewest of the seven applicants. The second attempt four years later was better prepared. This time, the government backed the motion with a resolution of the cabinet. Anyone who was not yet convinced of Japanese hospitality by that point at least became so by 1958, at the opening of the IOC Session, when a choir in the NHK Hall intoned the Paen, the anthem by Samara from Athens 1896, whereupon Prince Axel of Denmark proposed to have it recognised as the permanent Olympic anthem, which was unanimously accepted.39

In the same year, Japan passed its sporting test at the 3rd Asian Games, in which its athletes won 36 medals, seven of them gold. Oda led the team as head coach as of Helsinki 1952, when Japan was welcome again for the first time. For the 1964 Games, for which Tokyo had won the bid in 1959, he was appointed Director of the Strengthening Committee. He did not forget his friends from the Waseda times. He made Nambu his assistant, and Shuhei Nishida, who had won two Olympic silver medals as a pole vaulter in 1932 and 1936, as well as Okita were given coaching positions.

As Oda’s son Kazuo reported, his father particularly worked on building the self-confidence of the Japanese
athletes, as he felt that they were easily intimidated by strong foreign competition. “That’s what vexed my father so much. Even if the athletes had capabilities, when they heard their competitor’s names they were prone to become hesitant. Japan was still in that phase at that time. Even by 1964, Japanese people still held onto the belief that Japanese could not beat the athletes from overseas.” But that all changed. Admittedly, the Olympic team did not achieve its goal of winning 30 gold medals. But with 16, Japan came in third place.

In the hunt for the last torchbearer, Mikio Oda was one of the candidates. The Organising Committee ultimately decided in favour of the young Yoshinori Sakai, who, like Oda, was born in Hiroshima – and, indeed, on that fateful day of 6 August 1945, when the city was wiped out by a US atomic bomb.

As far as symbolism was concerned, though, Oda was not forgotten in 1964. The mast in the National Stadium, on which the Olympic flag was hoisted on the opening day, was made so as to be 15.21 long – the length that Oda won with in Amsterdam. He himself rented a café near the Olympic Village in Yoyogi as a meeting place for coaches and athletes from all over the world.

After the 1968 Games in Mexico, for which Oda had prepared the US triple jumpers, he was elected to the IAAF Council, where he was a member for four years. He was a member of the Technical Committee until 1989. After his departure, he was appointed honorary president of the JAAF.

No honours were spared. Oda received a professorship in sports, and the IOC awarded him the Silver Olympic Order in 1979, making him only the second track and field athlete to do so after Jesse Owens, who had received it in 1976. In the justificatory text, he was referred to as “the principal factor in the development of sport in Asia.”

In 1989, he received the title of “Person of Cultural Merit”, the second highest award given out by the Japanese government, which had been issued since 1951 for people who had made an outstanding contribution to the development of culture and science. Oda was able to enjoy the annuity that came with this for another ten years. He died on 2 December 1998 at the age of 93 in a nursing home in Kamakura, the old capital of the samurai.

His memory is preserved by the Mikio Oda Memorial Athletics Meet, which he founded in 1967. Despite the coronavirus, this took place for the 55th time on 29 April 2021 in Hiroshima. The winner in the long jump was Daiki Oda.

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1 The Meiji Restoration is considered the period from 1867 to 1912, when the Tenno (emperor) regained his power upon the old estate-based society (shogunate) coming to an end and moved his seat to Edo, which was named Tokyo (meaning “eastern capital”). Having been strictly isolated up until that point, Japan was opened up to foreigners, which ushered in the development of a modern nation-state. Emperor Mutsuhito (1852–1912) was succeeded by his son Yoshihito (1879–1926), whose reign is posthumously called the Taisho period.

2 Ikuo Abe, Yasuharu Kiyohara, and Ken Nakajima, “Fascism, Sport and Society in Japan,” International Journal of the History of Sport
The JASA was recognised by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) in 1921 and renamed the Japan Amateur Athletic Federation (JAAF) in 1928.

Pierre de Coubertin, Olympic Memoirs (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1919), 171. Elwood Brown (1883–1924) became Physical Director of the Manila YMCA in the US Philippines Islands in 1910, where he introduced basketball and volleyball. In 1912, he proposed that Japan and China set up Far Eastern Games for February 1913, which were then to take place every two years. The inaugural event was called the First Oriental Olympic Games.

See Masako Gavin, “Abe Iiso and His 1905 US Baseball Tour: Japan’s First Overseas School Excursion for a Sportive Competition,” East Asia: An International Quarterly vol. 38 no. 2, 2021. Iiso Abe (1865–1949), known as the “Father of Baseball in Japan”, was dean of Waseda's athletics department. He co-founded the Japanese Social-Democratic party, which he represented from 1928 onwards as a member of the Diet. He withdrew from politics in 1940 due to the increasingly militaristic nature of the government.


Influenced by Coubertin, who wanted to preserve the exclusivity of the Olympic Games, Japan withdrew from the Far Eastern Athletic Association (FEAA) in 1919, which brought Kano fierce criticism in Japan, and led to his early resignation as JASA president in 1921.

In Japanese, the term ekiden consists of the characters for “station” and “send”. It dates back to an old communication and transport system in which every runner in a team passes on a sash or ribbon (tasuki) to the next runner after a certain distance.

Courtesy of Waseda University Archives, 2014.

Ichiya Kumagai (1890–1968), who until 1913 had only played soft tennis, a sport that was widespread in Japan, won both singles and doubles at the Far Eastern Games in 1915 and 1917. In the Davis Cup, he reached the final in New York in 1921 together with Zenzo Shimizu, but his country lost 0–5 to the USA.


The flag introduced in 1854, known as Hinomaru (“sun disc”) or Nissoshiki (“flag of the sun”), has been regarded as the national flag since 1868. Together with the anthem, it was officially recognised by the House of Representatives on 13 August 1999.

Until the 1924 Games in Paris, the Irishman Daniel Ahearn (1888–1942), who had immigrated to the USA, held the record with 15.62 m; this was set on 30 May 1911 in New York and is recognised by the IAAF as the first official world record. His three-year-older brother Timotheus, whose family name was still Ahearne, became Olympic champion in London in 1908 with 14.92 m.


Katsuo Takaisi (1906–1966) took fifth place in the 100 and 1500 m freestyle in 1924. He finished fourth in the 4x100 m freestyle relay. In 1928, Takaisi won third place in the 100 m freestyle and was the first Japanese swimmer to win an Olympic medal.


Interview, 4.

Levi B. Casey (1904–1983), a 1.85-m-tall and 84-kg-heavy Californian, was the only American who was able to win an Olympic medal in the triple jump between 1904 and 1976.

Interview, 5. Chuhei Nambu’s name is transcribed as “Nanbu” in various Japanese sources.

Ibid, 7.

The Chinese port city of Dalian, or Dairen in Japanese, was occupied by Japan after they won the war against Russia in 1905 and was returned to China after the surrender in 1945.

Sport-Tagblatt, Vienna, 24 September 1928.

The German military musician Franz Eckert (1852–1916), who lived in Japan, was the composer of the anthem Kimi Ga Yo (His Majesty’s Reign), which was performed on the occasion of the Emperor’s birthday in 1880. This was only officially recognised in 1999 by a resolution of the House of Representatives.


Seiichi Kishi (1867–1933) had been JOC President since 1921, succeeding Jigoro Kano. From 1924 onwards, he was a member of the IOC – the second Japanese person to be one. After his death, his family had the Kishi Memorial Hall built using his estate. Its new building, which opened in 1964, became the headquarters of the JOC and JAAF. See: Journal of Olympic History (JOH) vol. 19, no. 1, 2011, 62.

IOA, 100.

Interview, 8.


Richard Hyman & Eckehard zur Megede, Progression of World Best Performances and Official IAAF World Records (Monte Carlo, 1991), 250. Although both performances were recognised as Japanese records, the IAAF did not ratify them as world records, presumably because of the following wind of +2.2 m/sec. However, the official wind rule was not introduced until 1936.


President Franklin Roosevelt’s “Quarantine” Speech, 10/5/1937.

National Archives, College Park, MD.


Notwithstanding the CIE resolution, the Student World Games took place in Vienna from 20 to 27 August 1939, which led to a split in the international organisation. During the same period, there was a counter-event in Monte Carlo, with the USA, England, Scotland, France, Norway, Poland, and Switzerland, among others.

Kim Won-gwon (1908–73), 1939 world student champion (15.37 m) with a personal best of 15.86 m (1943), finished 12th (14.25 m) in London. In the long jump, he fell short during the qualifiers (6.71 m). The only Japanese who was later able to come close to the world record was Teruji Kogake (1932–2010), who missed da Silva’s record from 1955 by eight centimetres.

Interview, 10–11. After Pearl Harbor, Katsumi Kometani (1907–1979) set up a special battalion of soldiers who were AIAs (Americans of Japanese ancestry).

Minutes, 54th (55th) IOC Session, Tokyo 1958, 2.


Ibid.

Minutes, 81st IOC Session, Montevideo 1979, 89.
Prior to Tokyo 1964, the Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) invited the country’s Olympic champions to an event where this photo was taken. In the first row you can see Hideko Hyodo, née Maehata (1914–1995), then (from left) the 1960 gymnasts Takashi Ono (1931–), Masao Takemoto (1929–2007), Nobuyuki Aihara (1934–2013), and in the second row (far left) Takashi Mitsukuri (1939–), and (far right) Yukio Endo (1937–2009) and Shuji Tsurumi (1938–). In the middle: triple jumper Mikio Oda (1905–1998), and wrestler Shohachi Ishii (1926–1980).


In the last row (from left) are the swimmers Masanori Yusa (1915–1975), Hisakichi Toyoda (Minejima/1912–1976), and Masaharu Taguchi (1916–1982), triple jumper Chuhei Nambu (1904–1997), and swimmer Tetsuo Hamura (1917–2005). This list may include errors.

The 1936 marathon winner, Sohn Kee-chung (Kitei Son/ 1912–2002), a Korean who competed for Japan as his native country was under occupation, is missing. The equestrian Takeichi Nishi (1902–1945), and the swimmers Shigeo Arai (1916–1944) and Takashi Yokoyama (1913–1945) died in the Second World War.
Hitomi: The Long Fight in a Short Life

By Volker Kluge

The Japanese TV station NHK (Nippon Hoso Kyokai) has been broadcasting a so-called taiga drama every year since 1963. Its 58th edition bore the name of the Buddhist deity Idaten, which is also used as a nickname for people who enjoy running. The 47-part series with the subtitle The Epic Marathon to Tokyo, was intended to prepare the Japanese for the 2020 Olympic Games. The first episode launched with the story of Shizo Kanakuri, who had given up the Olympic marathon after 30 km in Stockholm in 1912 in a sizzling battle, but returned as a 76-year-old professor to continue the run where he had left off 54 years ago.

What was intended as a spiritual boost for Tokyo 2020, however, was met with only moderate interest from the audience. The series, which aired on Sunday evenings, only had an average rating of 8.2%, the lowest in the history of a taiga drama – possibly because of the pandemic or because the stories were set in the 20th century for the first time.

NHK did not give up. When it became clear that the Olympics would be postponed by a year, it was decided to bridge the gap with a “highlight version”. This more compact version of things was well-received, and followed by an English-language series of six episodes that aired in early May 2021.2 In episodes 3 and 4, viewers encounter two female athletes who contributed significantly to spreading Olympic mania in Japan: the track and field athlete Kinue Hitomi, who was the first woman to win an Olympic medal in 1928, and the swimmer Hideko Maehata – Nippon’s first female Olympic champion in 1936.

“Outstanding overall athlete”

The liberal–democratic tendencies of the late Taisho and early Showa periods made it possible for women’s sport in Japan to commence.1 The first athletics meeting took place in Osaka in the autumn of 1917. Two years later, there was a competition for primary school pupils in Tokyo, sponsored by the newspaper Hochi Shimbun. The first all–girls secondary school sports tournament was held in 1922, in which 85 girls participated.4 In the same year, the Japan Women’s College of Physical Education was founded in Tokyo.

Around that time, two books on women’s sports were published for the first time. One of these, written by Akira Terada, caught the interest of Tokyo’s Head of Labour and Social Education, Motoshige Osako. As a graduate of Columbia University and later mayor of Miyazaki City, he was one of the first people to advocate sending Japanese women to international competitions.5

Now, other newspaper companies began getting involved in women’s sports. The Osaka Mainichi Shimbun sponsored the First Annual Ladies’ Olympic Games, which brought together 1,800 female athletes in June 1924 – at that time, still a mixture of spectacle and serious competitive sport. The proceeds from the ticket sales went to the Encouragement of Women’s Physical Education Fund.6

One of the young women who benefited from this was Kinue Hitomi. Born in 1907 in the Okayama Prefecture by the Asahi River’s estuary, the second daughter of a farming family grew up in poor conditions. When she was 13 years old, however, she was the only girl in the village to be given the chance to attend secondary school: Okayama Girl’s High School, where she began to play tennis – a cult sport for schoolgirls at the time. From her second year on, she was one of the school’s most talented players. During her fourth year, she represented the
school at the Second Okayama Prefectural Interscholastic Athletic Meeting in the long jump, where she won her first prize with 4.67 metres.

After that, on the recommendation of her headmaster, she switched to the Nikaido Women’s School of Gymnastics in Tokyo to become a sports teacher. This private school was founded in 1922 by Tokuyo Nikaido, who had studied in England for three years on a scholarship and had returned in 1915 with the idea of founding her own training school for physical educators. Kinue Hitomi worked closely with Akuri Inokuchi there, another pioneer of Japanese women’s sports who had been trained in the United States and had worked as a sports teacher in Boston for some time. Inokuchi introduced a women’s exercise costume of bloomers and middy blouses and calf-length skirts in Japan.

The school had to close again shortly after it was founded. The Great Kanto earthquake on 1 September 1923 and the fires it started devastated Tokyo and killed an estimated 150,000 people. But Nikaido, who pursued a holistic educational approach according to her philosophy, did not give up. Within four years, her school brought forth 500 sports educators, of which Hitomi became the most prominent in 1924. As a student, she had also acquired the ability to train systematically – not just some, but all athletics disciplines, from the 50 metres to javelin throwing. The triple jump became her speciality, which was made popular in Japan by athletes such as Mikio Oda and Chuhei Nambu.

After a year of training, Hitomi got a job as a sports teacher at Kyoto Municipal First Girls’ High School, where she introduced volleyball and basketball. But soon she was asked to return to Nikaido Women’s School, as the Ministry of Education had promised that it would be recognised as the first women’s college of physical education in 1926. Shortly after the college was founded, in April 1926, Hitomi received another tempting offer, which she did not refuse. The Osaka Mainichi Shimbun, whose address was available to the Japanese Women’s Sport Federation (also founded in 1926) for international correspondence, hired Hitomi as a sports journalist. This gave her enough opportunities to train in the afternoons, which soon paid off at the Third Japanese Women’s Olympic Games. The decision was then made to send her as the only Japanese participant to the Second Women’s World Games, which took place in Gothenburg at the end of August. Mainichi Shimbun and the Encouragement of Women’s Physical Education Fund provided for the funding.

Accompanied by a publicity campaign from her newspaper, Hitomi started her trip on 7 July 1926 in Yokohama. The 19-year-old crossed Korea and China, then Siberia on the Trans-Siberian Railway. In Moscow, she was received by the correspondent of Mainichi Shimbun, Otokichi Kuroda, who took her into his family. From Hitomi’s autobiography, we learn that he also gave her the opportunity to find out more about Soviet women’s sports and to train with Russian female athletes. Kuroda then accompanied Hitomi to Sweden, where she was received by the Japanese ambassador.

Nine countries competed in Gothenburg and could nominate two athletes for each of the twelve disciplines. Hitomi was entered in five competitions, two of which she finished as the victor. She won the long jump with 5.50 m, which was recognised by the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale (FSFI) as a world record – in Tokyo, she had already managed 5.75 m. She won the standing long jump with 2.49 metres, which was half a centimetre further than the American Camélia Sabie four years earlier at the World Games in Paris. In addition, Hitomi achieved second place in the discus event with 37.71 metres behind Halina Konopacka.
from Poland and was third in the 100-yard sprint. She finished fifth over the 60 metres and sixth over the 250 metres. Therefore, her overall rating was 15 points, for which she was awarded a gold medal as an “outstanding overall athlete”.  

At the fourth FSFI congress during the World Games, where representatives from 17 countries took part, President Alice Milliat managed another important success. At the IOC Session in May 1926, Sigfrid Edström announced that the International Amateur Athletic Association (IAAF) he had been leading, which had previously only been reserved for men, would now take up four women’s competitions in its Olympic programme for the first time in Amsterdam 1928. In return, the FSFI was prepared to dispense with the word “Olympic” when referring to the World Games. It recognised the IAAF’s rules but otherwise remained independent.

**Hitomi’s appearance in an invisible kimono**

The Japanese team at the Paris Olympics in 1924, at which women were only allowed to participate in the swimming, fencing, and tennis events, consisted of men only. Four years later, at the opening of the Games in the Amsterdam Stadium, a woman marched in at the very front for the first time: Kinue Hitomi. At the beginning of the Olympic year, she held six of the seven official Japanese records: the 100 metres in 12 4/10 s, the 200 metres in 26 1/4, the 400 metres in 59.0, the long jump with 5.75 m (but not recognised by the FSFI), the standing long jump with 2.61 m, and the triathlon (100 metres, high jump and javelin).

Before heading to Amsterdam, Hitomi travelled with the athletics team led by Dr Tadaoki Yamamoto to London, where the Waseda students fought a match against the English Achilles Club on 10 July 1928 in Stamford Bridge, one that was very narrowly lost. Four days later, Hitomi was allowed to compete in the Women’s AAA Championships. She set a world record in the semifinals over 220 yards with 25.8 s and won the final in 26.2 s. She earned a second English title in the javelin event (35.97 m). But none of these disciplines were part of the Amsterdam programme.

Because there were no alternatives, Hitomi concentrated on the 100 metres. She won the heat she took part in, but in the second semi-final, which was won by the eventual gold medallist Elizabeth Robinson from the USA, her Olympic dream came to an end. Despite her early departure, Hitomi caused quite a stir. Her appearance encouraged German journalist Fred Hildenbrandt to write a nice article with the heading “The Olympic Girls”. In it, he wrote:

*Miss Hitomi from Japan stood at the start of the 100 metres. Golden brown, truly perfect physique, with long, beautiful legs, deep black glossy hair, a ribbon in it and unparalleled ambition within. Weren’t we used to imagining Japanese women in any other way than in a brightly coloured kimono from neck to toe, carefully stunted feet on high wooden shoes, snow-white faces as if covered with thick porcelain, crimson lips, eyebrows finely drawn with fat ink, a comb steeply tucked into the hair? Miss Hitomi, however, stood on two perfectly well-formed feet, had her legs free like everyone else, was tanned from the sun and the wind, no make-up on her lips, no combs in her short hair. And none of her compatriots in the stands did hara-kiri because of it. Three of them sat in front of me, quiet little people in thick coats and thick glasses over their noses. Not many of them were able to come, but the few who sat scattered in the stands looked down at Miss Hitomi with awe. When she shot off from the start in the run-up to the 100 metres, the three of them powered up straight as a die as if they had been stabbed by a thousand tarantulas, screamed in a penetrating, high-pitched and weird manner, threw their arms into the sky, praised God and Hitomi and only sat back down quietly in their seats when Miss Hitomi had finished her run with no prize. But she had run so splendidly, and above all so gracefully, wonderfully and aesthetically, that the VIP stand showered her with applause as she passed by below. And at that moment, as she was walking surrounded by all that noise, her ancient education, her ancient shyness of the geisha must have got hold of her, because she neither looked up nor across, she neither waved nor smiled, she was wearing her kimono invisibly down to her feet, walked invisibly on high wooden shoes; far away from Europe she passed by slowly, her head bowed low, obedient and modest, secluded from this loud storm from the men.*
According to some traditions and the representation in *Idaten*, Hitomi wept unrestrainedly after failing. In the NHK production, the athlete played by dancer Koharu Suguwara asks if she can take part in the 800 metres tomorrow. Literally: “Men can go home defeated, but a woman cannot. They’ll say women are no good. They’ll laugh and say it’s pointless to try and run like a man! I’m carrying the hopes of all female athletes. All their dreams will end because of me!”

Apparently, she was then retroactively registered for this competition, in which she had never participated before, which sounds unlikely. In reality, Hitomi’s nomination for the 800 m race is recorded in the Official Report of the Games. With her unofficial world record in the 400 metres, which was considered a middle distance at the time, she had long since proven the endurance required for this distance.

Hitomi overcame the heat on 1 August 1928 with no problems – politely she let the German Lina Radke-Batschauer, who held the world record (2:19 1/5 min), go ahead. On the following day, she started the final run modestly; she managed the first lap very well in 62 to 63 seconds, which later turned out to be disastrous for some runners. After the 500-metre mark, Hitomi accelerated to the very front, which she had to concede to Radke-Batschauer 100 metres on. In the last corner, the German had managed to secure a ten-metre lead, but Hitomi caught up to her again insidiously on the finishing straight. She was rewarded with silver – the first Olympic medal for a Japanese woman.

Since some runners were completely exhausted after reaching the finish line – some also frustrated about their defeat – and had thrown themselves on the field, those who opposed women’s sport felt that their prejudices were justified. Among them was IOC Honorary President Pierre de Coubertin, who followed the events from Lausanne and who firmly believed that the Olympic Games should be reserved for “the solemn and periodic exaltation of male athleticism ... with the applause of women as a reward”. In his message to the Amsterdam participants, he wrote: “As for the participation of women in the Games, I continue to oppose such a move. It is against my wishes that they have been admitted to an increasing number of events.” For the critics, it was a small success that the 800 metres subsequently disappeared from the Olympic programme until it was finally added again in 1960.

**Normal or abnormal? – a journalist as gynaecologist**

While Hitomi’s appearance was mostly described as “something entirely feminine in her whole being” in a respectful way in Europe, the Japanese media was conflicted on this, from national pride to hounding discussions on the gender issue. Rumours spread that she must either be a man or a lesbian. Typical of this is an interview that Robin Kietlinski discovered in the popular women’s magazine *Fujin Sekai*. In it, a (presumably male) journalist embraces some people’s doubts of Hitomi being a woman, to which she replies: “Well, when I was overseas nobody had such suspicions, but I heard about the rumour upon my return to Japan.” The interviewer continued unabashedly: “Ha haha! Well, wouldn’t that be funny if you were really a man! It has a smack of mystery – this could be the main plot twist if I were to write a mystery novel. It might really baffle people, ha, ha, ha! ...” Hitomi’s reaction: “I’m embarrassed.”

In the course of the conversation, she had to put up with the fact that her body was “inspected” from top to bottom. According to the journalist, the chest...
and hips were not “like normal Japanese women”, but more like those of western women. Also asked about “gynaecological abnormalities” as the cause, supposedly “very intense physical activity”, Hitomi was able to reassure him with the answer: “It does not cause abnormalities. My health is just fine.”

Kietlinski states: “There is a cartoon drawing in the article with the title ‘The Journalist as a Doctor’ depicting the male journalist with a stethoscope around his neck, feeling around Hitomi’s chest, which happens to be at about his eye level.”

In this interview, Hitomi stated that she was 1.69 m tall and weighed 53 to 54 kg. If you consider that in 1928 the average height of a Japanese woman was 1.52 m and that an “average man” was only ten centimetres taller,27 then you can imagine what many people in Japan understood by “normal” at that time.

Hitomi epitomised the ideal of women’s sport

The negative comments overshadowed Hitomi’s successes. She lost motivation. When she saw the sports field, she wrote that she no longer felt any desire to continue training. But she dedicated herself to her journalistic work all the more intensely. Her several autobiographical books are devoted to women’s sport, although she did not spare any criticism towards the social conditions. In Japan, sport is viewed as an activity for girls and students, she wrote, while in western nations, female athletes are often married and return to competitive sport after having children.28

She tirelessly promoted women’s sport in articles and lectures, the potential of which she herself had not yet fully fathomed. This, in particular, applied to the long jump, in which she broke her own official world record of 5.98 m twice in the autumn of 1929 in Seoul: on 17 October, she achieved 6.075 metres, and a few days later 6.17 metres. For unknown reasons, neither performance was recognised by the FSFI. Apparently, because of objectionable tailwinds, although such a competitive rule against this did not exist at the time.29

Theory and practice in one person – in the long run, Hitomi’s efforts could not fail to bear fruit. After setting up a two-week training camp for 15 Japanese female athletes in 1929, she travelled with a women’s team for the first time the following year. Five teammates accompanied her to the Third Women’s World Games in Prague, where Japan came in fourth behind Germany (57 points), Poland (26), and Great Britain (19). Of the 13 points, twelve were won by Hitomi, who finished first in the long jump, second in triathlon, and third over 60 metres and in the javelin. The 13th point was achieved by coming fourth in the 4x100 m relay with Hitomi as the final runner.

In addition to that, they pulled a surprise. During examinations in a laboratory set up especially in the stadium, from which medical professionals hoped to obtain a scientific picture of the “athlete type”, it turned out that the Japanese women corresponded most to the body mass index favoured. That prompted the Austrian Dr Emil Reich, who was there in Prague, to write an article entitled “Hitomi. The Japanese embodies the ideal of women’s sports”.30 The well-known literary scholar had to know this because he was mainly interested in aesthetics.

Although Hitomi had finished second in the overall individual ranking, behind three-time Polish world champion Stanisława Walasiewicz, coming up to five centimetres closer to her official long jump world record, the Japanese were described in the reports as “tired”
and “stressed”. That was not surprising, since Hitomi had participated in six disciplines and had only narrowly missed the final of the 100 metres.

However, the World Games in Prague were just the beginning of a European tour that would last over a month. After Prague, they travelled to Warsaw for their international match against Poland, and from there to Berlin, where the Japanese ladies took part in the “city derby” between Berlin and London. Then they travelled to Belgium and finally to Paris, where an international match against the French team was held on 21 September. Hitomi did not go easy on herself. She took part in 19 competitions, 12 of which she won.

On the long sea voyage back to Japan, a visibly exhausted Hitomi showed clear moments of weakness, which is why the head of the delegation, Dr Tosaku Kinoshita, a doctor by profession, gave her pain medication. As soon as she had returned, Hitomi started teaching again at the end of November, against all advice. However, in March 1931, her condition deteriorated dramatically. She developed a high fever and started coughing up blood. She was admitted to Osaka University Hospital, from which she was never released. She was diagnosed with pleurisy. Kinue Hitomi died on 2 August 1931 due to pneumonia – exactly three years to the day after she had won Olympic silver.

Her sudden death at the age of only 24 caused an international stir. The world mourned her; 328 telegrams of condolence alone arrived in Japan. Many newspapers published extensive obituaries in which Hitomi was praised as the best athlete in the world and was even compared to Finnish super-runner Paavo Nurmi. Some articles highlighted her friendly, humble, and graceful demeanour. In Prague, Hitomi’s admirers even erected a monument for her a year later.

However, the controversial discussions on women’s sport remained. Even when Hitomi was already on her deathbed, rigorous speculations continued in Japan as to whether she was indeed a man or half a man. This unobjective criticism helped sustain the traditional roles of women for many years. It took a long time for Hitomi’s merits, which extended well beyond sport, to be recognised. In the meantime, there have been numerous publications about her, including a biography by Toshihiko Ohara in 1990. Visitors to Okayama can also see a memorial commemorating her achievements.

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1 NHK aired the 47 episodes of *Idaten: The Epic Marathon to Tokyo*, each 45 min long, on Sunday evenings between 6 January and 15 December 2019. Screenplay: Kankuro Kudo, main director: Tsuyoshi Inoue, producer: Kei Kurube.


5. Ibid., 60–63.


7. Hitomi’s birthday is generally recognised as being 1 January 1907. There is apparently no proof of this.


10. The World Games were organised from 27 August to 29 August 1926 by the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale (FSFI), which was founded on 31 October 1921 in Paris by representatives from Great Britain, France, Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Spain. The president was Alice Milliat (1884–1957) from France. The first World Games took place in 1922 in Pershing Stadium in Paris under the name “Jeux Olympiques Féminins” in response to the IOC’s refusal to include women’s athletics in the Olympic programme. At its meeting on 5 November 1925 in Paris, the IOC Executive Committee dealt with the designation “Olympic” used by the organisers and announced countermeasures. See: Minutes, 7–8, Olympic Studies Centre, Lausanne (OSC).


13. Spalding’s *Official Athletic Almanac* (New York: American Sports Publishing Co., 1923), 267–271. As a world record, the FSFI kept Sabie’s 2.485 m, as only verifiable achievements were recognised (Athletic Rules, Rule 24, World’s Records). Mihaela Camelia Sabie (1902–1998), however, had improved her record to 2.55 m on 23 September 1922 at the Newark Women’s Track and Field Meeting, which Barbara C. Holliday of the UK broke by two centimetres in 1927.


15. Minutes, 25th IOC Session, 5 May 1926, Lisbon, 5. In fact, five disciplines were held: the 100 m, 800 m, 4,400 m, high jump, and discus events. But the British Women’s Amateur Athletic Association (WAAA) was not satisfied with this and boycotted the competitions, although their athletes would have had good chances in the track events.

16. Japanese Women’s Sport Federation, *Records reconnus par la FSFI réalisées dans les épreuves supprimées de la liste des Records du Monde au 1er Janvier 1928*, 100. 194 points in the triathlon (100 m: 12 flee 5, high jump: 1.45 m, javelin: 28.89 m). The seventh official national record over the 80–m hurdles was held by K. Yoshihara (16.84 s). But the FSFI set a number of other Japanese records, which the FSFI apparently did not report, so they were not included in the list.


27. Bettina Wong, *Slim, Simmer, Beauty Crazed? A Qualitative Study of Striving for Being Thin Among Young Adult Japanese Women*, Master’s thesis, University of Vienna, 2016, 23. The average height of men today is 1.71–1.72 m, and of women aged 20–29, it is 1.58–1.59 m. While the average weight of men has increased noticeably since the 1950s, it has remained the same for women, with the exception of the crisis–ridden year of 2008.

28. Hitomi, 1931, 87–89. In this context, Kietlinski (64–65) mentions the person who beat Hitomi in Amsterdam, the German Lina Radke-Batschauer (1903–1983). In 1930, Radke–Batschauer set a world record in the 1,000 m (3:06 3/5 min) but did not take part in the Women’s World Games in Prague because the German federation refused to reimburse her husband for travel expenses (she had married in 1927). At the fourth and final World Games in London in 1934, Radke–Batschauer was third in the 800 m, three years earlier she gave birth to a son.

29. Richard Hyman and Eikehard zur Megede, *Progression of World Best Performances and Official IAAF World Records* (Monaco: International Amateur Athletic Federation, 1991), 438. The 6.075 m is mentioned as an unofficial achievement, but not the 6.17 m.

30. *Neues Wiener Journal*, 14 September 1930, 21. Dr Emil Reich (1864–1940) was, among others, the founder of the Austrian adult education centre (Volkshochschule) and secretary of the Grillparzer Society.


32. Toshiku Kinoshita (1878–1952), physiologist and professor who also worked as a sports journalist for *Osaka Mainichi Shim bun*. He was elected to the Executive Committee at the 9th FSFI Congress in Prague. During a stopover in Shanghai on his way back from Europe, he informed the press that the Fifth Women’s World Games, scheduled for 1938, would take place in Japan, which ultimately did not happen.


34. Ibid., 131.


Hideko Maehata, born in 1915, was the daughter of a tofu merchant from Hashimoto, Wakayama Prefecture. Almost without any instruction, she learned to swim at around three years of age in the Kinokawa River, which flows south of Osaka and has a strong current. She started with frog kick, a typical beginner technique that is easy to learn and is similar to the leg kick in breaststroke.

This was preceded by an episode that she wrote about in both of her autobiographies. She was a strong but often sick child. Her mother, a devout Buddhist, decided to go to one of the temples on Mount Koya with her daughter to consult a priest about her health. The priest inspected her hair and advised the girl to do sport like a boy. Her parents chose swimming.

But not everyone liked this. “When I started swimming,” wrote Maehata, “everybody used to say ‘what a tomboy: swimming!’ or ‘Girls have no need to swim. The only thing they need to do is help with the housework and the sewing.’ So the girls who started swimming at that time were really very unfortunate.

I can understand the real difficulties of that time because I was one of them.” It took her some time before she realised that swimming is an ideal sport for girls to maintain a healthy body.

Despite this realisation, women’s swimming remained in the shadow of men’s sport. Even the extensive publication Swimming in Japan, published in 1935 by the International Young Women and Children’s Society, only devoted a short paragraph to the topic:

As to swimming for women, Japanese girls are just as fond of the sport as the boys, but they were not permitted to swim for many years because the Japanese social customs differ so greatly from that of other countries. From the olden days, it has been considered that the women’s place is in the home; this idea still remains though modified. While girls are at school they are allowed to indulge in sports though not intensively for they are branded “flappers” if they do. But as soon as the girls leave school, their sports are dropped with their school uniform of middies and skirts, hence their talents cannot be fully developed. The writer believes that conditions in Japan will be ameliorated as the years go by, and consequently swimming for women will be improved.

The passage was written by Ikkaku Matsuzawa, a coach whose training methods were considered revolutionary at the time, as was said when he was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame, founded in 1965. “He emphasized developing leg muscles for a strong kick versus developing upper body limbs as the other countries were doing. He stressed the rhythmic motion of the trunk to minimize water resistance. He emphasized dryland training while providing leadership and instruction.”

Matsuzawa formed a winning duo with supervisor Masaji Tabata and in 1931 was appointed head coach for the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. It worked wonders: the team won five of the six disciplines and 11 out of 16 possible medals with a group of school boys and students – a humiliation for the Americans, unaccustomed to losing.

But there was also a 12th, silver medal that went to a young woman: Hideko Maehata. Her success story was...
also closely linked to that of Matsuzawa. In summer 1929 he accompanied four “mermaids” on a trip to Hawaii as a coach. Their destination was the National Women’s Swimming Championships at the War Memorial Natatorium in Waikiki, to which the Americans had invited the Japanese as guests.7

It was the first time a Japanese women’s team had competed internationally and the 15-year-old Hideko Maehata almost couldn’t be there. Her father was seriously ill and wanted his daughter to be with him. When the residents of Hashimoto, then a settlement of around 3,000 people, heard about this, they told him that it would be the greatest honour for them if Hideko could travel to far-off Hawaii. With a heavy heart her father let her go. On the day of her departure, half of Hashimoto came to the train station to give the girl a royal send-off.8

The trans-Pacific liner *Shinyo Maru* had brought thousands of Japanese immigrants to Hawaii since it was commissioned in 1911. Now the ship was transporting the small team of kimono-clad women, who arrived in Honolulu on 28 July 1929 and were greeted with “aloha”, Hawaiian flower leis, and hula dances. Many Japanese people had come to the port to do so — their share of the archipelago’s population had just reached its peak at around 42 percent.9

The tour gave Maehata her international breakthrough, as she met the world’s swimming elite for the first time. To kick things off, in the YMCA’s Nuuanu pool she narrowly missed Agnes Geraghty’s US 220-yard breaststroke record (3:19 2/5) by only two fifths of a second.10 A few days later she won the Hawaiian Championship in the 100 metres with a US (guest) record (1:30 1/5).

The 220-yard breaststroke race for the US Championship on 10 August 1929, with Maehata taking on Geraghty, was a highlight of the event, as thousands of Japanese in the crowd cheered on their compatriot. With a time of 3:20.0 min Maehata came second to Geraghty (who had earned Olympic silver in Paris in 1924 and won with a new US record of 3:17.0) and beat Margaret Hoffman, who came fifth in the Amsterdam Olympics.9

**Losers of 1920 turn into winners**

Breaststroke was already seen as a Japanese speciality at this time, but this was because of the men, who had taken the first three places in the first international match with Hawaii in Honolulu in 1926. In first place was Yoshiyuki Tsuruta, who was to win Japan’s second Olympic gold in Amsterdam two years later. The almost 25-year-old first learned to swim as a seaman at the Seseho Naval Station — albeit in the classic *hira-oyogi* style, which was once a martial art for samurais on the open sea and was similar to modern breaststroke.

However, front crawl was far more popular than breaststroke, even though it was completely unknown to the Japanese a decade earlier. Before that, they had practiced a style called *chimba-nuki* over short distances, known as “doggy paddle” in other countries. For longer distances, a stroke called *kata-nukite-hitoe-noshi* was common, in which the swimmer put one hand forward while the other arm paddled under the water.12

The turning point came when the swimmers Seiren Uchida and Kanekichi Saito, despite their self-confidence beforehand, returned from the Olympic Games in 1920 as losers. They brought the news with

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Four Japanese “mermaids” in Hawaii in 1929.
Right: 15-year-old Hideko Maehata.

Photo: Swimming in Sport, International Young Women and Children’s Society, Tokyo 1935.
people. It was also the venue for the American–Japanese Swimming Meet, which took place that same year and was won by the Japanese by 40–23. Some foreigners were also astonished by the physical strength of these young and slender athletes. If questioned, Matsuzawa would say, “Look at the aeroplane! The scout-plane has a very small body but it can fly faster than the heavy bomber.”

One of Japan’s strengths was that they developed their own style in the freestyle and backstroke, which helped give them the edge over other nations. According to Matsuzawa, “These swimmers try to aid their arm stroke by strongly kicking the legs. Japanese people have flexible ankles which enable them to kick strongly without much effort”. But each individual still had their own style.

In addition, the athletes underwent a professional training regime. Tsuruta revealed that he swam 2,500 to 3,000 metres four times a day in the run up to Amsterdam. The workload was even greater before the Los Angeles Olympics, where Tsuruta repeated his victory. In preparation, Matsuzawa brought the athletes to a training camp twice, once from 25 December 1931 to 10 January 1932 and again from 21 March to 10 April 1932, where “he enforced a strict system of training according to military discipline.”

A silver medal as new motivation

Maehata, who was still working on perfecting her style, had been one of the world’s best breaststroke swimmers since Hawaii. In the 1929 rankings she came in fifth place for the 200 metres, with Hedy Bienenfeld from Vienna coming in at number 1 (3:15.8 min). A year later she was already second with 3:12.4 minutes, behind the English Celia Wolstenholme, who had set two world records over 200 yards and 200 metres, but in a pool shorter than 50 metres.

In Hawaii, Maehata was still an inexperienced young woman who swam as fast as she could, but who was often unaware of the champions she was competing with. It was Matsuzawa who first taught her to recognise her competitors’ weaknesses.

In the meantime, Maehata was invited by the headmaster to attend the Sugiyama Girl’s School in Nagoya, which had just built a new pool. But the year before the Olympics was not a happy one. Maehata’s mother and father both died of a stroke within six months of each other. It was not until November 1931 that she was able to qualify for the Los Angeles Olympic team at the Meiji Jingu Memorial.

Matsuzawa had trained Maehata to believe that she would win the gold medal in Los Angeles. But when she arrived in California, her self-confidence took a knock. Compared to the tall swimmers of the other nations, she later admitted, the Japanese seemed like children.
Maehata was beaten by Clare Dennis by a tenth of a second in the Olympic final, which for breaststroke was only held over 200 metres until 1964. The Australian, at just 15 years old, had set a world record in Sydney on 18 January 1932 with 3:08.4 min, which was beaten twice over the following four months, ultimately by Denmark’s Else Jacobsen with 3:03.4 min. Although Maehata received universal praise for being the first female Japanese swimmer to get a medal, she was deeply disappointed in herself.

Maehata turned 18 in May 1933. While many of her friends had started thinking about marriage and having children at that age, she decided to go to Los Angeles to continue swimming and try to win that gold medal in four years’ time. If you trust NHK’s Idaten as a source, then Tokyo’s mayor Hidejiri Nagata, preparing for his city’s upcoming bid for the 1940 Games, also helped motivate her. He said, “If only you had won that gold medal. It’s so frustrating. Don’t forget the bitter taste of defeat. Let it drive you to do better four years from now at the Berlin Olympics.”

As soon as the water in the outdoor pool got warmer in April, Maehata intensified her training regime to 10 kilometres per day, split into three swims. In her memoir, she recalls that sometimes she practiced the starting jump as many as 100 times, often causing her to cry out in pain.

Maehata, who studied at Sugiyama Women’s College in Nagoya after school, was unparalleled in Japanese women’s sport. She not only held all the national records in breaststroke from 50 to 500 metres, but also three world records since 1933: 200 metres in 3:00.4 min, 400 metres in 6:37.6, 500 metres in 8:03.4. She was also top of the 1934 world rankings for the 200 metres by a wide margin, followed by the German Martha Genenger and Clare Dennis.

“The Japanese flag will fly today”

It looked likely that Maehata’s goal of winning Olympic gold in Berlin in 1936 could only be achieved by defeating Genenger. The German from Krefeld had already benefited from the home advantage in 1934 when she became European champion in Magdeburg. Matsuzawa must have been aware that, though 24 years old, Genenger had continued to improve since then. A few days before the start of the Games, the Japanese coach and his team attended the German championships in Halberstadt to study the Germans’ tactics. They timed intervals and counted the number of strokes per length.
Unlike her teammates, Genenger had not trained in Hirschberg in Lower Silesia, but with her stepfather in Düsseldorf. As expected, she won the championship title with a time of 3:02.5 min – an outstanding result. The onlookers from the Far East had recorded a time of 2:17.0 min at the third turn, after 150 metres. That was seen as proof that she should be able to break the three-minute barrier. This was also something Maehata was capable of.

Everything went as predicted. The two favourites impressed in the heats: Genenger set an Olympic record of 3:02.9 min, which Maehata beat by one second in the next round. The next day, the Japanese swimmer won the first semifinal, the German the second. After a day of rest, the final followed on 11 August 1936, which Genenger saw as a good omen. Her birthday was 11 November and the street number of her swimming club in Krefeld was 111.

As on every other day, on 11 August the Olympic Swimming Stadium was filled to capacity with 22,000 spectators. At 2:50 pm – ten minutes before the start of the event – some leading Nazi officials began to turn up, including Hitler’s deputy Rudolf Hess and Reich Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick. The finals began with the men’s 4x200-metre freestyle relay, which, as expected, ended with a victory for the Japanese in world-record time.

At 3:50 pm the women’s final in the 200-metre breaststroke started with seven participants: Maehata in lane 6, Genenger in lane 7. After the first 50 metres they were both neck and neck. After 100 metres they practically turned in unison. At this stage Maehata was on 1:27 min. The Japanese spectators waved their flags enthusiastically, while the German fans cheered Genenger on, chanting “Martha, Martha!”. The Olympia-Zeitung later declared, “It seems that the German is not as fresh as usual, her movements look a bit forced.”

Maehata increased the pace at 120 metres, but the race was only decided at the last turn. To the disappointment of the German crowd, Genenger, who had not swum a smart race tactically, was defeated. “Gold medal given away?” wondered the Reichssportblatt, a sports magazine. An insignificant detail: Maehata’s winning time (3:03.6 min) was worse than her results in the heats and semi-finals.

For the first time a female Japanese athlete had won an Olympic gold medal, which is still heralded as an event of national significance to this day. The development of modern media also likely played a role in ensuring this success long endured in the Japanese memory, although no film recording of the race survives. The director Leni Riefenstahl decided instead to include Tetsuo Hamuro’s victory in the 200-metre breaststroke over the German Erwin Sietas in the second part of her Berlin 1936: The decisive moment in the 200 m breaststroke came at the last turn, where Hideko Maehata (lane 6) bested Martha Genenger (lane 7).

Right: The “second man” of the Nazi regime, Hermann Göring (in a white suit) watched the race standing.
Below: The last few metres.

Photos: Reichssportblatt; Die XI. Olympiade Berlin 1936, Heinrich Franck, Ludwigshurg
epic, *Olympia*. Nothing is known about the whereabouts of the recordings of the women’s races. A radio report did survive, however.

In 1932 the organising committee for Los Angeles refused to cooperate with foreign broadcasters. Japan’s sports announcer Norizo Matsuuchi had to visit the NBC studio in Los Angeles before he could send a short report to Tokyo. In contrast, four years later in Berlin, original shortwave broadcasts could be made to all continents with the exception of Australia. Some of the reports were also recorded and broadcast at a later date by the Overseas Department of the German *Reichs-Rundfunk*. Thanks to this, Sansei Kasai’s energetic commentary of the race still exists today. Robin Kietlinski has published it in English:

*Maehata and Genenger are side by side. Ah, Maehata pulls ahead! She’s in the lead! She’s a little bit ahead. Fifty metres down, 100 metres down. Fifty metres left to go. Maehata is a little ahead, Ah, Genenger is coming. Come, come on! Maehata is in danger, she’s in danger! Go for it! Maehata go for it! They turned, the swimmers just now turned and Maehata holds onto a slight lead. C’mon Maehata. Go for it! (Repeated four times) Forty metres to go. (Repeated four times) Maehata is ahead! Maehata is ahead! Genenger is coming, it’s just a very small lead by Maehata. Go for it Maehata! (Repeated four times)*

“Maehata, ganbare!” Sansei Kasai gave the historic report on 11 August 1936. Below: Award ceremony: On the left, in third place, Dane Inge Sørensen; on the right, Martha Genenger. The small oak tree that Hideko Maehata received for her Olympic victory was planted at Sugiyama Girl’s School, which she had attended.

Photos: *OFFICIAL REPORT BERLIN 1936, Olympia-Weltzeit, Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft, Berlin.*
times) Twenty-five metres left to go! Maehata’s lead is small, it’s very small! ... Maehata! Go for it Maehata! (Repeated eleven times) Maehata is in the lead! (Repeated six times) Five metres left to go! Four metres left! Three metres, two metres. Maehata is ahead! Maehata has won! (Repeated eighteen times) By a small margin Maehata is the champion! Thank you Ms. Maehata, the Japanese flag will fly today. Thank you! For the first time in the history of women’s swimming the Japanese flag will fly.28

What their victory over the Soviets in the ice hockey was for the Americans in 1980 (“Miracle on Ice”), Maehata’s triumph over Martha Genenger was for the Japanese, even decades later. At least that’s what Roy Tomizawa thinks: “Reminded by Kasai’s ringing voice in the lead up to the [1964] Tokyo Olympics, the Japanese were primed to see their underdog athletes give it their all, and on occasion, stand on the top podium, and see their flag fly.”29

However, considering the eight-hours time difference between Berlin and Tokyo and the fact that Kasai’s report may have been broadcast with a time delay, how many Japanese people actually experienced Maehata’s Olympic victory at midnight on the radio “live”? Anyhow, even in the present new legends can be created, as NHK has shown with Idaten. At the end of Maehata’s story in the programme, an angry Hitler can be seen leaving the stands without a word.30 In fact, he was at the Olympic sailing events in Kiel that day. A late arrival at the swimming stadium, Prime Minister Hermann Göring, who was standing at the edge of the pool in a white suit to watch the 200-metre breastfinal, was probably not significant enough for the producers.

“Maehata” has been floating in the sky since 1992

According to the NHK script, Genenger said goodbye to Maehata, hoping to swim together again soon. In reality this was indeed a possibility, as the Japanese team, divided into groups, took part in a few more competitions in Germany after the Games. There was no rematch between Maehata and Genenger, however. The German had other plans. As her stepfather had announced before the finals at the Olympics, “She is to be married ...”31 She got married to a farmer on 2 November of that year, after which Martha Engfeld, as she was now called, only returned to competitive sport for a short time. In Copenhagen on 7 March 1937 she beat the world record, previously held by Maehata, in the 400-metre breaststroke with a time of 6:19.2 min.

Maehata had also reached a turning point in her life. After a 40-day journey by boat, she received a hero’s welcome numerous times. Ballad singers performed a so-called nanïwa-bushi in her honour: small episodes from her life that were accompanied by shamisen, a traditional Japanese musical instrument. Her welcome at Sugiyama Girl’s School, which Maehata once attended, was especially warm. She gave the school the “Olympic Oak” sapling that she had received in Berlin with her gold medal.32

A big media event followed on 3 March 1937, when Maehata married Masahiko Hyodo, six years her senior. She was the daughter of a tofu merchant, he was a surgical assistant who came from a princely family. His father had served as an imperial court advisor under Emperor Taisho.33 The groom later became professor of medicine at Nagoya University. She remained by his side and gave birth to two children.

In the first few years after Berlin, the memory of her victory was still very much alive. On the second anniversary of her Olympic gold, the newly opened
swimming pool in Wakayama was named "Maehata Stadium". And when the American Avery Brundage, member of the IOC Executive Board since 1937, came to Tokyo in the spring of 1939, she and Hamuro were invited to the welcome party. By this point, Tokyo 1940 was no longer a possibility. The Second World War followed, and Maehata lost her Olympic gold medal in an air raid.

Coach Ikkaku Matsuzawa’s hope that women’s swimming would soon improve in Japan only gradually came to fruition. Alongside her already significant contribution to the sport in spirit with her victory in the Olympics, the only gold for a Japanese woman until the success of the volleyball team at Tokyo 1964, Maehata also made a physical contribution. In 1967 she opened a swimming school in Gifu, where she lived with her family. Meanwhile, Martha Engfeld, née Genenger, was doing the same thing at a sports and recreation facility in West Germany. It wasn’t until the 1978 World Championships in West Berlin, held in the same pool in which they had once competed for medals, that they met, and swam together, again.

Hideko Hyodo (née Maehata) died of acute kidney failure on 24 February 1995. Martha Engfeld outlived her by 158 days. Three years earlier, another “Maehata” was floating in the sky – an asteroid discovered by the director of the Gesei Observatory, Tsutomu Seki.14 He made use of his right to name it and chose the heroine of his youth. She will now fly, perhaps forever, in the vault made use of his right to name it and chose the heroine of his youth.

Photo: Olympic Review, 1982, no. 5.

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2 Hideko Hyodo, Maehata ganbare, 20.
3 International Young Women and Children’s Society, Swimming in Japan, Tokyo 1935. 90. The organisation was founded in 1905 by foreign missionaries and one year later became part of the World Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA). The director was Tetsutarō Hasegawa. The book has 260 pages, which in addition to the short treatise on women’s swimming also contains an eleven-page article by Hideko Maehata on the topic of “Women’s Breast Stroke”.
4 Ikkaku Matsuzawa (1900–1965) came to swimming through the International Young Women and Children’s Society, the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA). The director was Tetsutarō Hasegawa. The book has 260 pages, which in addition to the short treatise on women’s swimming also contains an eleven-page article by Hideko Maehata on the topic of “Women’s Breast Stroke”.
6 Masaji Tabata (1898–1984) was a political reporter for Asahi Shimbun and co-founder of the Amateur Swimming Federation of Japan.
7 The natatorium, with its 100 m x 40 m (l x w) saltwater swimming pool, was opened on 24 August 1927 by the legendary Hawaiian swimmer Duke Kahanamoku. The 100 m freestyle Olympic champion of 1912 and 1920 turned 37 on that day.
8 The Nippu Jiij, 6 August 1929, 3. This newspaper has been published in Honolulu since 1919 in both Japanese and English with a circulation of 15,000 copies. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, The Nippu Jiij was discontinued and re-registered as the Hawaii Times in 1942.
9 Robert Schmitt, Demographic Statistics of Hawaii 1778–1965 (Honolulu: 1968), Table 1. According to this, the 139,631 ethnic Japanese in Hawaii made up 42.7 percent of the population on the 1 April 1930.
10 The Nippu Jiij, 6 August 1929, 3.
11 Ibid., 11 August 1929, 1, 3. A chapter written by Maehata on women’s breaststroke in Swimming in Japan, 179, states that the race was won by Eleanor Garatti. This is clearly an error, as Garatti was a freestyle swimmer who had set a world record (1:09.8 min) in the same championship in the 100 m freestyle.
12 Swimming in Japan, 4–5.
13 Ibid., 6–7.
14 Ibid., 88.
15 Ibid., 89.
16 Ibid., 248.
18 Idaten, episode 4.
19 On 30 September 1933 in Tokyo Maehata achieved a time of 3:02.8 min in a 25 m pool. In 1934 she also became the world’s best in Olympic-size 50 m pools with a time of 3:02.8 min.
20 Today Jelenia Góra, Poland.
22 Olympia-Zeitung, no. 23, 12 August 1936, 454.
23 “Weltrekord aber auch Enttäuschung” [World record but also disappointment], in: Reichssportblatt, vol. 3, no. 34, 18 August 1936, 1287.
27 Sansei Kasai (1898–1970) was a commentator for the Japan Broadcasting Association, later president of the Sendai Central Broadcasting Association and the Japan Broadcasting Publication.
30 Idaten, episode 4.
31 Völkischer Beobachter, 11 August 1936, 1.
32 The “Olympic Oak” planted at Sugiyama Girl’s School died in 1997.
34 The “Olympic Oak” planted at Sugiyama Girl’s School died in 1997. A new one was planted on the Hoshigaoka Campus in Nagoya.
35 Kietlinski, 74.
Two weeks after the Games of the XXXII Olympiad end, the 16th Paralympic Games, which also had to be postponed by a year due to the COVID–19 pandemic, will begin. They will now take place from 24 August to 5 September 2021, involving 22 sports with 540 medal competitions.

***

The 1964 Paralympics were the second to be held in the same city as the Olympic Games. There were 378 athletes from 21 nations competing in 144 medal events in nine sports. All of the athletes had been disabled by spinal injuries, for which reason they all competed in wheelchairs.

There are said to have been six films made about the 1964 Paralympics, but only two are known to have survived and only one, *Tokyo Paralympics: Festival of Love and Glory* (*Tokyo Pararinpikku Ai to Eiko no Saiten*), has been available for general viewing. Found in the archives of the Kadokawa Corporation, it was brushed up and, in anticipation of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, shown in Japan and through foreign sources such as the Japan Society in the United States.

The Games, which took place for five days in November, were known as both the Tokyo Games for the Physically Handicapped and the Paralympic Games.

Directed by well–known cinematographer Kimio Watanabe, the film shows the Opening Ceremony, including the Parade of Nations, and the Closing Ceremony, including a speech by Ludwig Guttmann, director of the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, who is credited with initiating the Paralympic Movement. There is also limited coverage of some of the competitions: men’s basketball and weightlifting, and women’s and men’s fencing, swimming, table tennis, archery, and athletics (both track and field). There are even events that one does not normally see, such as javelin throw for accuracy and, to go along with the shot put and discus throw, the throwing of a club.
However, most of *Tokyo Paralympics: Festival of Love and Glory* is devoted to presenting the stories of six Japanese athletes. Early in the film, the narrator, actor Jukichi Uno, says, “War injuries, traffic accidents, or work-related injuries and illnesses — they tend to happen when we least expect them. … Spinal injuries can cause paralysis of the lower extremities and even damage to the internal organs. But as the upper body and the brain functions remain intact, people turn to sports as a way to restore the balance.” The film then gives several examples.

Javelin thrower Fumiyo Ogasawara’s disability was triggered by a fever after her second daughter was born. She considered suicide but thought of her children in her parents’ care. She says she wants to support herself as a seamstress and be there when her daughters need her. Eventually we follow her two little girls, Koko and Satomi, as they travel to Tokyo and visit her. They attend the Opening Ceremony. The little one sits on her mother’s lap on the wheelchair, and they push her wheelchair on the grass. Later, they watch Ogasawara fall while mounting the podium after earning a bronze medal.

The man who recites the Athletes’ Oath, fencer Shigeo Aono, was shot in the back on the battlefield in 1943 and incurred a spinal cord injury. He became frustrated with his condition, but his wife “confronted me, saying that I needed to pull myself together. She said that she trusted me the most and needed me to be there for her. … We had a heart-to-heart like that. So I thought I might as well take the plunge. I would try and move what I had left and get my health back. And they said sports was the best way to achieve that. I used to love sports. So once I started, I was pretty good at it and it was fun. Then, as luck would have it, the Paralympics came along.”

Archer T. Matsumoto tells his story: “It was when I was a prisoner of war, the Americans told us to cut down the trees of the palm forest. The trees were tall with little branches on top, and they were grouped together. I was trying to climb up between them … and the next thing I knew I was lying in an American field hospital. At first I felt I’d lost all hope for tomorrow. … I had to do something. I wanted to make use of my upper body. … I thought archery would be the best sport for me.”

Although *Tokyo Paralympics: Festival of Love and Glory* is about sport, it is also a call to action for the Japanese government to do more to help disabled people. The Japanese athletes who competed at the 1964 Paralympics came from sanatoriums and many needed grassroots fundraising to pay their way to Tokyo.

In voice-over, a man comments that in the UK disabled people work and pay taxes, while in Japan the disabled are supported by others. Discus and javelin thrower Sugiuira proposes that the government could find work for the disabled. “It would be good for us, and we’d be working instead of just living off pensions.” A woman, also in voice-over, sums up the Japanese athletes’ exposure to disabled athletes from other nations: “The international athletes are always so cheerful,” she says, “it’s as if they’ve been drinking.”
Over the last 10 years the medal tables for the 2004–2016 Olympics have changed drastically, as the IOC has re-tested multiple doping samples, using newer, more precise methods of detecting use of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs). Many of these medal adjustments related to the systematic doping policy that was discovered in Russia, and which forced them to compete at Rio in 2016 and PyeongChang in 2018 as Authorized Neutral Athletes (ANA). Sanctions against Russia are still ongoing and being worked out by the IOC and IFs.

Below are the medal tables for the 2004–2016 Olympics, showing what are the current medal tables and the original final medal tables, on the day of the Closing Ceremony for each Olympics. In addition, we have listed the medal adjustments that have occurred for the affected NOCs, both positive and negative. The adjustments listed are those from the original medal tables to the current medal tables. The overall NOC rankings have also changed slightly in many cases. They are shown both currently and originally by the two differing systems: RankUS – ranking by total medals (TM), gold, silver, bronze; and RankInt – ranking by gold, silver, bronze.

The medal adjustments are still in flux, and these eventually may not be definitive. The IOC does not automatically move up all positions after somebody is disqualified for doping, although the media may often report that will happen. Usually it does, but a determination is made, looking at any past doping offenses, and there are often legal appeals to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). Thus, some of the medals that have been removed in 2004–16 have not yet been reassigned, and in some cases, will not be. It usually takes several months after a medal is removed for a positive re-test before the IOC announces any medal adjustments, and they don’t always make that announcement public, which makes this difficult to track.

It is very complex to keep track of this, including the dates at which changes have been made.

However, we have a complete database of doping positives at the Olympics and do communicate frequently with the IOC concerning any medal upgrades. Our Olympedia database was checked against Wikipedia and also against a personal spreadsheet that tracks all medallists. We believe these are up-to-date and accurate as of 7 May 2021.

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Innsbruck, host of the 1964 Winter Games, was perhaps more surprised than pleased to be encouraged to step into the shoes of Denver when Denver reneged on its successful bid to host the 1976 Winter Games. In the event, both Innsbruck and Montreal, hosting Canada’s first Olympic Games, benefitted enormously from the holistic and integrated example of the Munich television experience. With the political tensions that had existed in relation to the then divided Germanies prior to the Munich Games now a thing of the past, Innsbruck enjoyed a sophisticated technical cooperation between the EBU and OIRT that had not been available during the preparation and delivery of the Munich Games.

Fortunately, it was possible to adapt the still modern Munich model more or less intact, since the extraordinary acceleration of television technology developments had not yet occurred.

The Winter Games are smaller than the Summer Games, involving fewer sports and, at the time, fewer competition days. They involve special venue challenges from a television perspective, as well as more exposure to weather risks, but Innsbruck had already hosted the Winter Games in 1964 and was not starting from scratch. Montreal, although possessing sports television expertise, was new to the Olympic experience and was, from the outset, besieged with financial problems, some self-created by the city of Montreal, others that were the result of national political constraints that denied Montreal access even to existing financial programmes, and others arising from the evolving world popularity of the Games.

On the television front, however, Montreal was the headquarters of the national broadcaster, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), which had considerable technical expertise, in both the official Olympic languages. There were many more countries interested in broadcasting the Summer Games, including Brazil with TeleGlobo, than at previous Games and more channels available for transmission of the television signals. Montreal’s Olympic Radio and Television Organization (ORTO), once financing was assured, proved to be technically very competent, operating from the CBC headquarters on what was then Dorchester Boulevard, while ABC, the US rights holder, was sequestered on the grounds of Expo’67 on an island in the middle of the St Lawrence River.

Although the IOC continued to benefit financially from somewhat increased television revenues, it had made little, if any, progress in the organisational management of its biggest source of revenue. Montreal, like previous organising committees, paid no attention to the IOC’s dictat of its rights ownership and negotiated its own deals, including with ABC for the US rights, thus contributing to a generally fractious relationship.
between the IOC and COJO. Despite these tensions and the overriding financial difficulties (which led the provincial government to take over responsibility from the city of Montreal to ensure that construction would be completed in time for the Games), COJO was otherwise quite competent and delivered superbly organised Games.

Catching up with the business of television

By the end of 1972, COJO had decided to sell the US rights to ABC for $25 million. ABC had signed a contract in November that year, followed by COJO’s signature in January 1973. Only then had the contract been submitted to the IOC for its approval. The IOC Executive Board met in early February 1973. It appears that the IOC had not pursued its previous instructions regarding television rights or, if it had, no one had paid any attention. Lord Killanin, discussing the report of the Finance Commission at the meeting, had explained that there were three distinct issues: the basic facilities (such as power, cables, telephones, and accommodation) which were the responsibility of COJO, the rights fees, which were the property of the IOC, and hardware or equipment, which were the responsibility of the broadcasters. There was some disagreement with this view within the Finance Commission, which did not agree with providing for such facilities from within the gross rights fees, which was what COJO had done with the $25 million ABC contract, in which half of the entire amount had been designated as facilities costs. The Finance Commission was requested to determine the proper amount for the rights fees.

The Finance Commission had refused to accept the allocation provided in the contract, relying on the “agreement” established during the Amsterdam Session of 1970, and insisted that the full $25 million be regarded as rights fees, with no deduction for facilities. Apparently, Killanin had written to COJO to this effect, presumably at the behest of the Finance Commission. It is difficult to tell whether his personal view differed from the harder line urged by the Finance Commission, and this was one of the first meetings of the IOC Executive Board which he had chaired, so he may not yet have had his presidential feet firmly beneath him. COJO was firm that half of the ABC contract value was for facilities and that the IOC should only get one third of the remaining $12.5 million. The COJO president, Roger Rousseau, who was regularly in confrontational positions with the IOC, threatened that if agreement was not reached along the lines proposed by COJO, he would go to the press to complain that the IOC wanted too much money. Once again, the IOC concluded that it would have to do something about this problem, since it was bound to arise on future occasions (as it had already arisen on previous occasions).

The issue of agents hired by COJO was raised. The individual engaged by COJO was Marvin Josephson, a New York lawyer who had been very much involved in the ABC negotiations. The EBU, however, said that it would not deal with agents (preferring, in its own interests, to deal with inexperienced organising committees). EBU also said that its own contract would be for rights only and even ABC said that it would have preferred to have dealt only with the rights in its own contract.
The IOC, despite its apparently firm resolve on the matter, capitulated and agreed that the rights fee was $12.5 million of the $25 million, despite its asserted legal and moral right to the entire amount and that, by exception, the contract would be divided half-and-half. All other contracts signed by COJO were, however, to be treated in the “normal” manner. In addition, the IOC was to be brought into the picture much sooner in the process, the IOC Finance Commission was to be represented at discussions with the EBU, and future contracts were to be discussed by the respective Finance Committees from the early stages of negotiations.

Still feeling his way, Killanin observed that there were two courses open to the IOC for the future. One was that organising committees would give the IOC the funds it needed and would then negotiate its own contracts and keep all of the money it managed to obtain. The other possibility was that the IOC could be responsible for negotiating all contracts, but this would involve a great deal of technical knowledge, which the IOC did not then have.

Juan Antonio Samaranch, destined to follow Killanin as IOC President in 1980, had earlier suggested that all future investments of the IOC be made in Swiss francs as opposed to dollars, but, with respect to the moneys from television, Killanin was firm about “freezing” the funds, since the IOC would have to refund the money in US dollars if, for some reason Montreal or the US were to withdraw. De Beaumont agreed and suggested that insurance be taken out against such an eventuality. The maintenance of advance television rights payments in the currency in which the obligations were expressed has generally continued since that time, although the rights have not always been insured. The former Press and Public Relations Commission was to be split into two separate commissions, one to deal with the press and the other to deal with electronic communications.

By 6 June 1973, legislation had been introduced in the Canadian Parliament to permit the operation of programmes designed to generate revenues for the Montreal Games, including silver commemorative coins, postage stamps, and other related products. The federal government had also approved its support of CBC’s ORTO (Olympic Radio and Television Organization), which put COJO in a position to continue television negotiations “at an accelerated pace” with countries other than the US, since many had been reluctant to finalise contracts until the ORTO arrangements had been settled. COJO undertook to keep the IOC informed of progress and would submit agreements for approval before they were signed.

One of the problems that was beginning to become acute was how the television rights were to be shared among the IFs. In respect of the Munich Games, it had been done on a seat-sold basis, but, predictably, that formula had led the IFs to demand the largest venues possible, to accommodate the largest Olympic audiences, thus to maximise their own short-term revenues, with no attention paid to the post-Games use of the facilities and the related operational costs. There was a suggestion, then under discussion with the IFs between the GAIF president, Thomas Keller, that the first 20% of the funds be divided equally among each sport, with the balance on a percentage basis depending on the transmission time for each sport.

The first instalment in respect of the Montreal rights, in the amount of $1,166,000, had been received from ABC, which, as previously decided, would be invested in dollars, for “repayment reasons”. As soon as the first instalment for Innsbruck was received, the IOC believed it would be financially secure until 1980.

The Montreal global television situation was, however, far from clear. Killanin advised the next meeting of the Executive Board that the IOC had made it quite clear at the time of bidding (in 1970) that all television monies were to be turned over to the IOC. Rousseau, however, thought that the contract should be split down the middle into hardware and rights. The contract between ABC and COJO stipulated a split – 50% for rights and 50% hardware – and, after some discussion (and bearing in mind Rousseau’s threat to go to the media), the IOC decided to accept that position. The IOC was anxious that a 50/50 agreement across the board should not create a precedent with EBU, which seemed to be the IOC’s real concern, notwithstanding the relatively minor fees it paid in comparison with those derived from the US. Indeed, the IOC seemed all but in the thrall of the EBU and was never prepared to push for higher rights fees to reflect the size of its market and the value generated by the Olympic programming.

Killanin, who constantly vacillated on the point of how the IOC should participate, thought that a lump sum should be given to the IOC, similar to that received from Munich, plus a percentage for inflation. Killanin was generally concerned that the IOC must build up...
some capital with interest, since if the Games were cancelled, at the moment, the IOC would be in a very difficult position and would hardly have enough money to pay the staff wages. Killanin observed that the IOC had insured the Munich rights because the IOC was living on borrowed money, but all receipts for Montreal and Innsbruck had been put in a frozen account and were earning compound interest.

As for Innsbruck, the IOC Finance Commission had agreed to change the distribution key, since the organising committee needed $1 million to build the technical facilities. The IOC had also received a letter from an IF requesting sight of the television contracts, seemingly for insurance purposes against the cancellation of the Games. He did not think that a federation should be given details of contracts made by COJO, but thought that certain points could be answered by letter.

When the COJO delegation appeared at the February 1974 IOC Executive Board meeting, Killanin led off by saying that there had been a lot of confusion and misunderstandings (between the IOC and COJO) on the subject of television and that he wanted all questions cleared during the meeting. It had been suggested that the IOC receive a lump share, as had been the case for Munich, with a percentage increase for inflation. Killanin had a somewhat disjointed manner of speaking and the minute takers did not always make the best sense of what he had said, but his point on the lump sum seemed to be that he did not think the 50/50 split on all contracts was acceptable to the IOC, but there had apparently been some indications that the EBU might offer a lump sum for rights and then negotiate the hardware later. The IOC did not want the EBU to offer a sum for rights and then find it split into rights and hardware. Rousseau countered that this was not a problem, since COJO intended to add the hardware and rights on all contracts together and then split them down the middle, half for COJO and half for the IOC. Thus, even if the EBU were to offer $5 million for the rights and $7 million for the hardware, the two figures would be put together and the IOC would receive $6 million.

Willi Daume, who had led the Munich Games, asked questions about the hardware. Rousseau said that COJO expected to spend $56 million on hardware, of which $25 million would be paid by COJO, $25 million by the federal government, and $6 million by the CBC. He did not think the figure was too high, since COJO would be renting most of the equipment. Daume said, in that case, the costs should be much lower, as Munich had spent far less and they had bought all their equipment. He thought that if the IOC paid for half the hardware, it should be part owner of the equipment. Rousseau said it was impossible to have television rights without a signal and the necessary infrastructure had to be paid for. It would be knocked down after the Games and would not be used again. The American continent, he said, was very different from Europe, as both the US and Canada operated on a strictly commercial basis, whereas in Europe, most stations were government owned. In addition, he pointed out that COJO was financing the Games, without asking for public support.

By the time of the next Executive Board meeting in October 1974, there had been yet another crisis with COJO, this time in relation to its contract with the CBC, pursuant to which COJO had granted the Canadian broadcast rights to the CBC for one dollar. The contract seemed to have caught everyone at the IOC, and the Finance Commission in particular, by complete surprise. Although COJO claimed that one dollar had been quoted in the contracts left with the IOC during the Executive
Board meeting in February 1974, it appeared that the amount had been left blank. Marc Hodler stressed how dangerous it would be for the IOC to accept such an agreement, since others, like the EBU, were just waiting to see what COJO agreed to with other bodies. The IOC should not give its approval to anything but normal figures, in the interests of such organisations. De Beaumont reported that when the Finance Commission had said that one dollar was not acceptable and that COJO should conclude another contract with the CBC, COJO had agreed to a figure of $900,000, of which the IOC would receive $150,000. The Finance Commission recommended the total figure of $12 million, which, divided according to the IOC formula, would guarantee the IOC $2 million. This sum was to be for rights only, otherwise the IOC would be paying for technical facilities when COJO had already paid for them. This was to be the IOC position when the COJO delegation appeared.22

The parties got right to the television issue. Asked to report on COJO’s progress, Rousseau enquired as to the position on Canadian television. Killanin stated that the IOC Executive Board had studied the report of the Finance Commission on discussions with COJO and agreed that if a small amount were received from the Canadian authorities, this would have a bad effect on European negotiations. Killanin said no amount had been referred to in the February agreements. The first mention of one dollar had been in a contract signed by COJO on 12 September 1974, which had been sent to the IOC for approval. The IOC could not accept the figure of one dollar. On the basis of fair payment and on the recommendation of the Finance Commission, the IOC Executive Board considered that the IOC should receive $2 million for the Canadian rights, which meant a figure of $12 million. He said that Lord Luke, Marc Hodler, and Luc Silance could meet with them to show how they had arrived at the figure.23

A hard-fought agreement was eventually reached. Silance, Daniel Mortureux, Neil Asselin, and Jim Worrall attended on 19 October 1974 to make the announcement. It was virtually a complete “win” for COJO. $300,000 would be paid as a guarantee by COJO, payment being due not within the 30 days first proposed, but on the date of the first payment by EBU. When the total of the television rights reached $37 million, a further $100,000 would be given and another $200,000 when the contracts reached $40 million, i.e., a possible $600,000 in all. It was realistic, by COJO’s projections, to expect COJO to get $50 million for the global contracts. COJO would make
a loss up to $34 million, but after that it would make a profit, which had been taken into consideration. While Monique Berlioux said that the IOC should receive the first payment, as was normal practice, when the CBC contract was signed, Silance said the EBU had to sign a contract quickly because of the technical facilities. He also said he had not used the Munich figures during the negotiations because the IOC would have received less money than it would by this agreement.

The problems with Montreal continued, enough so that a scheduled meeting of the IOC Executive Board in early 1975 had to be switched from Tunis to Lausanne. In many respects, the television aspects were relatively minor in comparison with the concern as to whether Montreal would actually be able to host the Games, but from the perspective of the evolution of the IOC's relationship with television, there were many important issues in play.

Negotiations with EBU/OIRT had taken place in Lausanne shortly before the Executive Board meeting and the parties were very far apart. COJO had wanted $30 million ($20 million from EBU and $10 million from OIRT, seemingly based on estimates of the number of television sets in the two regions), while EBU/OIRT, acting in concert, offered only $3 million. At the end of the negotiations, EBU/OIRT had increased the offer to $5.5 million. The IOC had concluded that the eventual figure would be important and set the long-term figure for television rights.

Television matters regarding Montreal continued to be of relative unimportance later in 1975, when major labour disturbances closed all construction sites in Quebec. Killanin had visited Montreal and found that despite the labour disruptions, ORTO was progressing normally. Clearly, someone must have suggested that negotiations in Europe might be broken up into individual countries, since Killanin stated that the EBU would not negotiate individually. He said that the negotiations should be taken up again rapidly in view of the fact that televised transmission of the Games was at stake, but with other potential television partners as far as COJO was concerned.

Berlioux had, on the advice of Silance, written to Neil Asselin of COJO with respect to the television contracts, which had been standardised into a model contract, which COJO intended to use for future contracts, including the clauses which the IOC had only agreed to “exceptionally” for the ABC and CBC contracts. She explained that if the IOC agreed with such contracts for Hong Kong and the Philippines, other Asian countries under the influence of the Asian Broadcasting Union (of which Hong Kong and the Philippines were members) would refuse to negotiate. The identified problems with the model contract included its length, the extent of force majeure, the use of the Olympic emblems and symbols, exclusivity rights, mixed shots of events, taxes, and income taxes. Worrall agreed to ask COJO to designate a lawyer to meet with Luc Silance and Walter Schatz, and to report to Berlioux.
The IOC Executive Board met again during the 1976 Innsbruck Winter Games. The issue of publicity and advertising at the Games remained a problem. While Brundage had thought the IOC’s chief concern was safeguarding the dignity of the Games, there were practical issues raised by the broadcasters, who objected to “additional” advertising. Typical of these was Swiss Timing advertising at both Innsbruck and Montreal. The contracts with Swiss Timing were found to conflict with the television agreements. No explanation was provided in the minutes, other than to describe this as “unfortunate” and that the discovery was only made after the fact. Berlioux, who was responsible for IOC contract management and who should have been alert to the discrepancy, had already spent a great deal of time trying to rectify the situation. German television was threatening to opt out of the EBU agreement as a result of the Swiss Timing contracts. Further talks were scheduled for March 1976.

As to IOC negotiation of detailed television contracts, Killanin continued to wonder whether this could be done, since the IOC was not responsible for the original signal, unilateral facilities, and other technical aspects. He asked that, in conjunction with the Finance Commission, the sum which should have been paid to the IOC for television rights, in respect of future rights, be calculated in comparison with the Munich rights and serve as a basis of what should be obtained in future. De Beaumont, also taking a step backwards regarding the IOC’s entitlement to television rights, stated that the IOC only wanted to obtain enough funds from television rights to cover its expenses. The reserves should be sufficient to cover the Olympiad in course and the following one. He thought the IOC should call on a television specialist to obtain advice.

New questionnaires for candidate cities (in respect of the two 1980 Games) had been approved by the IOC Session in Varna the previous year, and the only modifications which might occur would be in the television questionnaire, following Berlioux’s discussions with experts later that month.

When Innsbruck appeared, Killanin made it clear that all contracts submitted to the IOC were to be draft contracts, not already signed documents. Berlioux reported having seen a picture in the media of the signature of a contract with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, but Dr Klee, president of the Innsbruck organizing committee, replied that the caption to the photograph was incorrect and that only a press release had been signed. The EBU contract was expressed in Austrian schillings, or the equivalent of so many US dollars or Swiss francs, at the choice of the organizing committee. Klee was instructed to meet with Silance to finalize the contracts.

No mention of television occurred when the Montreal delegation reported. The recently resolved difficulties with ORTO were again examined, since the IOC had agreed in Vienna the previous fall to approve the contract, against a minimum guarantee of $300,000, but COJO had later refuted that agreement. It was eventually agreed that the contract was valid and that the IOC would accept this exception to its Rules as shown in the ORTO contracts and a letter was to be signed to that effect by Killanin and Rousseau.

The meeting in Lausanne on 29 January 1975 involved COJO, the EBU, OIRT, and OTI, and IOC representatives. EBU was negotiating together with OIRT on the grounds that both organizations needed the same technical facilities, but it could safely be assumed that it was mainly for “tactical” reasons. EBU was a union known for obtaining rights cheaply, while OIRT always purchased at a very low cost. The most extraordinary aspect of the entire dialogue of the deaf with EBU and OIRT is what could possibly have led COJO to the conclusion that its demands had even the slightest prospect of success. Not only were the absolute increases far beyond anything which would have been feasible, but the expectation that OIRT could pay half of what the EBU was asked for at that level of rights fee was all but risible. Budgeting on that basis seems nevertheless to have been what COJO had done, as can be seen from the projections used in the bitterly negotiated ORTO agreement in October 1974 regarding the Canadian rights. The only plausible explanation is that COJO’s consultants had made some theoretical population-based estimates, entirely devoid of economic reality, which had become, in COJO’s mind, realistic possibilities.
Some institutional turf was cleared up in October 1975, when Killanin wanted to change a paragraph of the COJO report to the IOC Executive Board, which had stated, “The funds received from the various broadcasting unions and agencies will enable the Organizing Committee to contribute $7 million to the IOC for the support of NOCs and International Federations.” Killanin wanted it deleted on the basis that the money belonged to the IOC.16

Stirrings of a different approach to technology

Regardless of the parochial perspectives regarding costs and the differences between privately operated broadcasters and publicly owned broadcasters, with their particular funding models, one thing at least was becoming more obvious: world interest in Olympic television was increasing. Television was undergoing changes and even if the Munich model was still technically adequate for Games in 1976, the volume of interested broadcasters was also growing, which significantly increased the technical needs and the costs of providing them. Notwithstanding the significant increases in rights fees, the rights fees alone could not offset the increased technical costs of producing the necessary signals. For Montreal, had COJO been able to keep the full amount of all rights fees and technical services payments, this still would not have been enough to fund the CBC’s ORTO, even bearing in mind that CBC was already a sophisticated national broadcaster. By the end of 1974, the choices of Lake Placid and Moscow had been made for the 1980 Games, one a small town in upstate New York and the other still, at best, a second–level television country.

The concept of a Host Broadcast Organization (HBO) had not yet matured and could not have emerged in the context of the 1980 Games. It was still two Olympiads in the future. In television retrospect, the IOC had made fortunate choices in respect of its 1972 and 1976 host cities, all of which had access to competent technical expertise and state–of–the–art equipment. Rousseau’s comment, that it was not possible to have television rights without a signal and that the facilities had to be paid for, was very much on the mark. The burning question was how and by whom would they be paid. This challenge was left significantly increased the technical needs

COJO refused, saying that all contracts would effectively be half rights and half facilities, which meant that the IOC would only get $9,333,000 instead of $12.5 million (one third of the one-half figure).

Ibid., 7. The ABC contract had also included the right for ABC to produce video cassettes, but the IOC had not thought to include this medium in its arrangements with COJO and could not, therefore, demand a portion of any revenues from that source. Later in the same meeting, the Executive Board proposed a change to Rule 48 of the Olympic Charter to provide that no audiovisual products about the Games could be sold without the permission of the organising committee after written approval by the IOC and under conditions laid down by the IOC (p. 34). The IOC’s view, expressed by Killanin, was that videotapes were becoming more popular and the rights from sales should be reserved to the IOC in future.

Ibid., 8–9. At the following Executive Board meeting, COJO was asked, and agreed, to clarify the announcement regarding the ABC contract, to make it clear that the rights fees were only $12.5 million, not the full $25 million as announced. [IOCExB 22–24 June 1973, Lausanne, 18] This was as much for the IOC’s comfort as for COJO, since the IOC did not want the IFs to have elevated expectations regarding their shares of the television rights.

Ibid., 9.

Ibid.

Ibid., 5. This was less a matter of principle than it was the then current strength of the Swiss franc in relation to the US dollar and the fact that most of the IOC expenditures were incurred in Swiss francs.

Ibid., 9. This was also the Executive Board meeting at which the decision was made to award the 1976 Olympic Winter Games to Innsbruck following the withdrawal of Denver, which had won the Games in Amsterdam at the 1970 Session. Other cities considered were Mont Blanc, Tampere, and Lake Placid.

Ibid., 29. Willi Daume was to chair the television portion. A chapter was to be added to the publication entitled “Administration of the Games” dealing with television rights and how they work (p. 31).
14 IOC 22–24 June 1973, Lausanne, 60. At the same meeting, the announcement of the national lottery was made, the first of six national lotteries to be held starting in October 1973. At the following Executive Board meeting in Varna, it was noted that there would be a questionnaire for television, in addition to the special (general) one for candidate cities and the technical questionnaire sent by the IFs. Montreal and Innsbruck were to be asked to fill in the television questionnaires for information purposes (IOCEB 29–30 September, 2 October 1973, Varna, 9–10). It was presented in much softer terms by Killian to COJO during its report to the Executive Board, when it was made clear that the questionnaire would apply only for the 1980 candidate cities, and would COJO be willing to complete it for the record and perhaps give any suggestions for amendments, to which COJO agreed (p. 25).


16 Ibid.

17 IOC 9–10 February 1974, Lausanne, 5.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid, 6.

20 Ibid, 16.

21 Ibid. This was somewhat misleading in the case of the CBC, which was a public broadcaster, subject to many government-imposed constraints on its abilities to generate advertising revenues and to choose a fully commercially-driven programming menu. The IOC did not seem to pick up on the contradictions inherent in Rousseau's statement.

22 IOCEB 18–24 October 1974, Vienna, 3. Lord Luke, Marc Hodler, and Luc Silance were to attend the meeting when COJO appeared.

23 It is not at all clear how the Finance Commission could possibly have thought that, given the respective sizes of the two countries, Canadian television rights would almost equal the US rights of $12.5 million.

24 Waiting games had already become part of Olympic television negotiations. COJO's strategy had been to try to delay negotiations, in the belief that, at a certain point, the EBU would have to cave in because of its need to get the technical facilities in place in time to broadcast the Games. The EBU had recognised the tactic and worked secretly on preparation of what was, in effect, a mobile studio that could be put into operation within days or weeks, instead of months, so, in the end, it was COJO which had to accept the EBU offer. It was a classic case, observed Manolo Romero, in a July 2011 interview with the author, of amateurs being out-manoeuvred by professionals.

25 IOCEB 18–24 October 1974, Vienna, 15. On 20 October 1974, the television matters resolved, Rousseau and the COJO delegation presented the balance of their report (pp. 15–19). The contract, as negotiated, appears as Annex 19 to the minutes of the meeting, at p. 35, as was signed in duplicate by Killian and Rousseau on 19 October 1974. They also signed two additional articles, dealing with the application of IOC Rules generally and with the exploitation of the rights granted in a tasteful manner, accompanied by a further explanatory memorandum (p. 36). There is an interesting additional element, which would later be relevant in dealings with the USOC, namely Rule 21 (referred to in the agreement) which provided that the NOC's authorisation is not required for the television use of the Olympic emblem or the organising committee's emblem during the broadcast of the Games. There could have been a potential collision, given the additional powers granted to the USOC in the forthcoming Amateur Sports Act, to be adopted in 1978.

26 IOCEB 20–22 February 1975, Lausanne, 1. The COJO report on construction and other problems is found at pp. 19–25. The concerns were great enough that, in addition to Rousseau, Executive Vice-President Simon St. Pierre and Paul Howell from COJO, Mayor Jean Drapeau, Roger Taillebert (architect of the Olympic Stadium), and Harold Wright (president of the Canadian Olympic Association and a member of the COJO executive committee) were part of the Montreal delegation (p. 20).

27 Ibid., 5. The IOC seems finally to have figured out that Marvin Josephson was more than merely an advisor to COJO, since he led the negotiations on its behalf. Annex 26 is a report of the Finance Commission, showing (section V) the receipts to date and anticipated future receipts from the 1976 television contracts (p. 37–38), a brief commentary on the failure regarding negotiations with EBUI/FRT and a reference to a proposed contract with Hong Kong for the Montreal Games in the amount of $25,000.

28 IOC 14–16 May 1975, Rome, 19 and 23 May 1975, Lausanne, 16–17. Killian never thought seriously about trying to go around the EBU and his successor, Juan Antonio Samaranch, resolutely refused throughout his 21-year presidency even to consider the possibility of individual negotiations, despite many efforts to get him to do so and the willingness of certain European broadcasters to acquire territorial rights at very attractive financial levels, often exceeding the entire EBU payments.

29 Ibid., 23. Part of the concern comes from the legal traditions of the civil and common law, the former preferring shorter contracts based on principles and the latter opting for much greater specificity in the drafting of contracts (pp. 23–26). The IOC had been sending a press communication to the NOCs regarding television (p. 26), although Killian had noted that no harm seemed to have come from it, since the NOCs were generally uninformed on such matters. (p. 16) In a discussion which occurred under the heading of “Other Income,” Samaranch suggested modifying the distribution key for television rights by granting 50% to the IOC, 25% to the IFs and 25% to the NOCs. Berlioux proposed deducting a certain percentage from the IF and NOC shares to cover expenses incurred by the IOC when investing the funds. Instead of receiving 33% of the television monies, the IOC could have 40% for its work in managing the funds (p. 19).

30 IOCEB 30 January–15 February, 1976, Innsbruck, 3. Swiss timing, however, was completely intransigent regarding its advertising demands and sought additional visibility. Discussions in March 1976 made the issue of advertising in Innsbruck entirely moot and no progress was made in respect of Montreal. The threat of withdrawing the timing and results systems proved decisive. It was a card that Swiss Timing would continue to play.

31 Ibid., 10. The rather bizarre situation was ABC’s complaint that CBS had shown a film of the Opening Ceremony in the US before ABC had. Dr Klee (president of the Innsbruck organising committee) was also aware of this and, together with ABC, was arranging to make a formal complaint, since ABC had the exclusive rights. ABC was drawing up a document which the organising committee would countersign. It later turned out that the Innsbruck organising committee had, indeed, signed contracts allowing CBS and NBC to do precisely that. See IOCEB 10–31 July 1976, Montreal, 8.

32 IOCEB 9–10 February 1974, Lausanne, 48.

33 IOC 1–3 June 1974, Lausanne, 21–22. The organising committee report is Annex 9 to the minutes. At p. 2, of the Appendix, there is reference to the press and television centre and the related costs and difficulties. The organising committee reported that agreement had been reached with the IOC regarding distribution of income from the contract with ABC. A contract was concluded with Austrian ORF as host broadcaster and had been submitted to the IOC for approval. Negotiations had been carried out in Munich with EBUI/FRT and agreement reached on all points, requiring only the drawing up of a contract to be submitted to the IOC, and a further contract was being worked out with the Canadian television company, CTV, also to be submitted to the IOC (p. 2).

34 No written report appears to have been presented by COJO.

35 IOC 20–22 February 1975, Lausanne, Annex 5, p. 44. The exceptions were contained at points 1.5, 3, 5, and 6 (excluding the last paragraph). See Annex 14 and Annex 15 (p. 83). Discussions during the meeting with COJO are noted at pp. 23–24. One issue, for example, was the right for CBC and its advertising sponsors to shoot commercials in the Olympic facilities, a right also possessed by ABC, and which had existed in Munich, with no adverse consequences. Naturally, this activity could not be done during competitions and the commercials were not to be superimposed on broadcasts of the competitions. An additional part of the problem was that the CBC was using the IOC Rules as they stood in 1970, when the Games were awarded, while some of these rules had been amended thereafter. Difficulties of this nature often occur, given the fact that Games were (before the recent changes in host selection) generally awarded seven years in advance and that the bids were made, often involving billions of dollars, against a known contractual or quasi-contractual matrix. Changes have the potential to significantly increase the financial exposure of a host city or broadcaster. This was one of the reasons why the CBC was reluctant to simply accept the IOC Rules as they found them. The IOC had a tendency to change Rules and then expect organising committees and others to follow them. On the particular commercial advertising matter and the concern that advertising be done in the “Olympic spirit” by CBC, Rousseau gave an answer which may have raised eyebrows for anyone with broadcasting experience (although it elicited no recorded comment), to the effect that he felt that the CBC was a government-owned network was valid proof of its ethics (p. 25).

The Japan Olympic Museum next to the Japan National Stadium was opened on 14 September 2019 – the year before the Tokyo 2020 Games were scheduled to be held. It is the first museum to be organised directly by the Japanese Olympic Committee. Let’s take a floor-by-floor tour of the museum.

The outdoor Monument Area is a square where you can experience the Olympic Movement and carry on the legacy. A giant Olympic symbol, life-size statues of Pierre de Coubertin and of Jigoro Kano, Japan’s first IOC Member and the founder of Judo, and colourful models of the torchbearers of the three Olympic Games held in Japan (Tokyo 1964, Sapporo 1972 and Nagano 1998) stand tall.

The Olympic values are engraved on the benches and the Olympic motto on the stairs. The pavements are inscribed with the record of Japan’s first Olympic gold medal, as well as the locations and years of previous Olympic Games.

The ground floor is a place where the Olympic Movement is presented from various perspectives. The “Welcome Vision” welcomes visitors with a vivid image of the Olympic worldview. The Welcome Salon holds a variety of exhibitions and events. The Olympic Study Centre provides education on the Olympic Movement. There are also a café and a museum shop for visitors to enjoy.

The first floor is the permanent exhibition hall – a place to know, learn, feel, challenge and think about the Olympic Movement.

In the “Introduction” section, visitors can ask themselves, “What are the Olympic Games?” and learn the story of the Games from their origins to their becoming the greatest celebration of humanity.

In the “World and the Olympic Games” section, visitors can learn about the relationship between the Olympic Games and the world from a variety of perspectives, taking into account the history of the Games. At the Olympic Theatre, visitors can experience the excitement of the Olympians and the opening ceremony with realistic images and sound.

In the “Japan and the Olympic Games” section, visitors can learn about the influence of Japan on the Olympic Games by focusing on the challenges of the Japanese people.

In the “Olympic Games” section, visitors can actually experience the movements common to the Games and challenge the physical abilities of Olympians.

In the “Olympic Stories” section, visitors can understand Olympism better through interviews and episodes with Olympians, learning about their ways of thinking and living.

In addition, visitors can learn more about the Paralympic Games and about the Olympic Village, where the athletes stay – something that the general public never gets to experience.

There is also a section called “The Olympic Games for Everyone” where you can learn about the people behind the Olympic Games, including volunteers and the people who make and run the Games. A visit to this museum is sure to enrich your understanding of the Olympic Games.

Past exhibitions include: Unravelling the Origins of Olympism: Coubertin’s Words and Thoughts; Creating the Olympic Games in Japan; The Story of Olympism vol.1: “Věra Čáslavská, the Famous Flower that Bloomed at the Tokyo Olympics 1964; From 1920 to 2020, 100 Years After the Antwerp Games: Striving for Restoration and Rebirth.

Past events include: The Spirits (special project celebrating the museum’s one-year anniversary); and Home Museum: Olympians’ comments.
This paper examines the Olympic Movement in Turkey during the late Ottoman State (1896–1921). The Ottoman Empire had diplomatic and political links with Olympism from the first Games of the Modern era. From the start of the 20th century it began to make official contacts with the Olympic Movement.

Turkey was not officially represented at the 1896, 1900, or 1904 Games. The first official contact with the Olympic Movement came when Mihran Kavafyan Efendi was sent as a delegate to the 1905 IOC Congress in Brussels by the Ottoman government. A significant number of athletes and officials participated in the 1906 Olympic Games, although these remain unrecognised by the IOC.

Two athletes from Turkey do appear in the official report of the Olympic Games in London 1908, but only one of them took part in the competitions. It is hard to view this official participation because this was a time when the Turkish Olympic Committee had not yet been established, nor was there a Turkish member of the IOC.

Immediately after the declaration of the Second Constitution in July 1908, Selim Sırrı Tarcan, who pioneered the Olympic Movement in Turkey, set about establishing a Turkish Olympic Committee (TOC). On 15 December 1908, he was co-opted as the IOC Member in Turkey. The Ottoman government recognised the TOC in the following year although formal recognition by the IOC did not come until 1911.

Tarcan set about promoting the Olympic spirit and philosophy of Olympism amongst the newly established Turkish sports organisations. He used the ideas he had absorbed at IOC meetings in the years before the First World War. As a result of his activities, two Armenian athletes represented Turkey, during the Ottoman Empire period, for the first and only time at the 1912 Stockholm Games.

The 1896 Athens Olympics and the Ottoman Empire

The first Olympic Games took place in Athens 1896. The Greek businessman and writer Demetrious Vikelas played a leading role in taking the Games to Athens. There were concerns from some quarters that he was leading the country on a wild adventure. (Coubertin, 1976a). In fact, Greek Prime Minister Charilaos Trikoupis was also afraid of being accused of “wasteful spending” at a time of economic hardship in the country. (Coubertin, 1976b).

The financial crisis in Greece forced the organising committee to call for help from wealthy Greeks. Greek benefactors in Marseille, Alexandria, and London responded to the call. By February 1895, 130,000 drachmas had been collected. There had been donations of 10,000 Drachmas from Paul M. Schilizzi and 5,000 drachmas from M. Evgenides in Istanbul (“Souscription Nationale,” 1895).

Despite all efforts, the money raised fell short of the amount needed. However, a donation of 1,000,000 drachmas from Georgios Averoff, an Ottoman citizen from Alexandria (Coubertin, 1909) made it possible for the renovation of the main stadium to proceed.

At the end there was not enough budget left for the piers and boathouses, for the shooting range, bicycle track, and water sports. Philately came to the rescue. An issue of souvenir stamps yielded 200,000 drachmas (Bergman, 1996).

It is understood from archive documents that the some of these stamps were purchased by the Ottoman government and were kept in the treasury due to their value (BOA Y.PRK.UM., 39–52). In addition, the Ottoman State Post Office printed two sets of commemorative stamps for the Games. These editions were never released, presumably as a result of growing tensions in Crete. The first Olympic–themed postage stamps printed outside the organising country therefore did not see the light of day (Bergman, 1996).

Since the day in 1830, when Greece gained independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1830, relations between the two remained tense. They intensified in the “Cretan affair” around the time of the 1896 Olympics. Even though there was correspondence between the two states. Greece planned to exhibit firearms from various countries including Turkey in the main hall of the Zappeion. Weapons of different calibres used in the army had been requested (Le stand, 1896). Turkey succinctly replied to the ambassador in Athens on 4 February 1896 that rifles, revolvers, and other weapons requested from...
the Ottoman Empire could be purchased everywhere and it would not be difficult to get them (BOA BEO, 738–55330). In a time of tense relations, even such a negative answer has its significance.

Although there was no official invitation to the Ottoman State (BOA Y.A.HUS, 349–26), it is known that some individuals and associations were invited. The Samian Amirite, which was an Ottoman province at that time, wrote a letter to the Ottoman Embassy in Athens on 19 June 1895 stating that the Samos Music Society had been invited to the Olympic Games to take part alongside other musical societies. They asked if others had been invited.

The Embassy referred the matter to higher authorities in Istanbul and received the reply that they did not know about an invitation to musicians from Samos or any other provinces (BOA DH.MKT., 418–66; BOA HR. TH., 161–82). This invitation, which was sent to a region where mainly Greeks lived, can be seen as an innocent demand, but it could be open to other interpretations when considered in conjunction with other events.

Another invitation made without the knowledge of the Ottoman government is even more intriguing and turned the Ottoman government’s attention to Egypt. In April 1895 the mayor of Athens went to Egypt to collect financial aid for the Olympic Games and told the Khedive that he was anticipating a meeting at the Games in Athens (BOA HR.SYS., 1003–8). Indeed a little later, a Greek police officer in Alexandria forwarded the message to the government that Mehmed Ali Bey, brother of the Ottoman Khedive of Egypt, would travel to Athens on his boat Kalokis in order to take part in the sailing races (BOA, Y.A.HUS, 349–26).

Asım Bey, the Ottoman ambassador in Athens, confirmed the news in a telegram to Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Pasha (BOA HR.İD., 1123–23) and emphasised that there had been no official invitation to Mehmed Ali Bey nor was there an official invitation to any Ottoman citizen (BOA İD, 1223–25). Nevertheless, accommodation had been set aside for him in one of the best hotels in Athens (BOA Y.A.HUS, 349–26).

Asım Bey also asked how the Khedive’s brother wished to be received in Athens (BOA HR.İD., 1003–10). The reply to Asım Bey from 4 March 1896 stipulated that Mehmed Ali Bey should be welcomed with “ordinary” dress by the Consul General of Athens and Piraeus on his arrival in Piraeus, but that necessary respect and convenience must be showed to him (BOA Y.A.HUS, 349–26). In fact, Mehmed Ali Bey, the brother of the Ottoman Khedive in Egypt never did travel to the Olympics. This was made clear in a telegram from Asım Bey to Tevfik Pasha dated 25 April 1896.

It was not Mehmed Ali Bey, but Mehmet Ali Pasha, one of the late Halim Pasha’s sons, would go to Athens instead of Mehmet Ali Bey, the brother of the Khedive of Egypt.

Source: BOA HR.İD., 1223–25

The 1896 report states that the brother of the Khedive came to Athens the night before the closing ceremony. He accompanied the Greek King during the ceremony (Les Jeux Olympiques, 1896; Coubertin et al., 1897). Following further discoveries in the archives of Istanbul, it has been established that it was not Mehmed Ali Bey, but Mehmed Ali Pasha who was present in Athens.

The correspondence shows that the arrival from Egypt was under constant observation by the Athens embassy. Considering that Mehmet Ali Pasha took part at the closing of the Games and then met with the king and prince in the palace, the reason for his visit would appear to have been for political reasons rather than participation in the Games. The official report and Coubertin’s memoirs only refer to “Mehmed Ali”, a vague reference which caused this historical misunderstanding.

The relationship between Ottomans and the first Olympics was not only political. The question of whether there was any participant from Turkey in the first Olympic Games is still being asked and there are different points of view. The first and most common of these arguments is the participation of a wrestler, Koç Mehmed.
“Koç Mehmed, who went to the Olympic Games as if he was going to a traditional wedding wrestling match, couldn’t participate in the competitions as he was considered by the organisers as coming from a non-IoC country.”

The information about Koç Mehmed’s participation is based on an article written by Sami Karayel in the journal of Beden Terbiyesi ve Spor in 1939. It does not quote any sources but it has been repeated many times since. Karayel defended his argumentation in another article and stated that the Ottoman Embassy in Athens sent a telegram to the palace when Koç Mehmed arrived in Athens (Karayel, 1944). Primary sources offer no evidence of this. Atif Kahraman, the author of Sport in the Ottoman State, takes an opposing view. He even stated that some other authors mentioned that Koç Mehmed went to Athens at the end of a article in the Thessaloniki newspaper Asir and the mistake was further magnified (Kahraman, 1995). The article that Kahraman mentions refers only to Hungarian cyclists who arrived in Thessaloniki and took a boat to Athens. It is known that athletes from countries without established National Olympic Committees competed in the first Olympic Games, so it seems improbable that an athlete from the Ottoman Empire would be rejected for that reason alone.

Another argument is put forward by Güven (2011) suggesting that Mehmet Ali Bey went to Athens to participate in the sailing races as the first athlete from Turkey, but the race was cancelled due to weather conditions. The related article was based on Ottoman archives but this is a mistaken interpretation. As mentioned previously, the individual who came to Athens was not Mehmet Ali Bey but Mehmet Ali Pasha. He arrived in Athens in time for the closing ceremony. It does not seem possible that he was in Athens in time for the boat races, which were scheduled for two days before.

It is understood that there was no official invitation to the Ottomans. However, according to IoC publications, thousands of spectators from Alexandria, Istanbul, Izmir (in Greek Smyrna), and Thessaloniki went to Athens. These included more than 200 from Izmir and 800 from Egypt as well as crowds of spectators from Istanbul (Nouvelles et Renseignements, 1896). İkdam newspaper published a number of articles with news about the participating countries, the opening ceremony, and the competitions.

One remarkable article concerns the participating athletes from the Ottoman Empire.5 Dated 2 April 1896, it reports that a Greek citizen was to participate, as well as three athletes from Izmir, named Hristo Yanaki, Murat, and Tomprof (“Olimpiyad Oyunları,” 1896a). Mallon & Widlund have also established that an athlete and a cyclist from Izmir competed in the Games: Orpheus Sports Club athlete Dimitrios Tomprof participated in the 800 m and 1,500 m event, and the cyclist Loverdos.
took part in the 12-hour cycling race (Mallon & Widlund, 1998). The IOC website records that Loverdos and Tomprof competed in 1896 as Greek citizens (IOC, 2020a and 2020b).

To summarise, the interpretations on the possible participation of Ottoman citizens in Athens seem to be at odds with primary sources. According to the available data, Koç Mehmed did not participate, and Mehmet Ali Pasha did travel to Athens for political reasons. Since there is no official documentation and conflicting information about Tomprof and Loverdos, which makes it impossible to confirm their citizenship, it is not possible to talk about an official participation at the Games by Turkey.

**A delegate from Turkey in the 1900 Paris Olympics**

The second Olympic Games were held in Paris in conjunction with the 1900 World’s Fair. There had been great confusion over which sports events should be included in the Olympics, as the calendar was spread over six months and there were many additional sports events connected with the Fair. This situation caused the Games to be lost in the chaos of the World’s Fair. Such was the confusion that some athletes did not even know that they were competing in Olympic Games.

The Ottoman Empire had shown great interest and participated in World’s Fairs which were held to improve trade relations between countries and introduce new technologies to the market. The first of these had been the 1851 Great Exhibition held in London. Sultan Abdulhamid II regarded these exhibitions as very important in terms of the country’s prestige and participation in exhibitions and fairs had been a regular occurrence, in particular since the end of the 1880s (Işıklı, 2012).

This is why the Ottoman State was represented at the 1900 World’s Fair with a large delegation (mostly foreigners and members of minorities) under the presidency of the Ottoman Ambassador in Paris, Salih Münir Bey.

However, Ottoman documents indicate that Turkish athletes did not participate in the Olympics. But there is a striking name from Turkey in the official reports. An organising committee was formed by the fair management for the Olympic Games and other sports events. The committee formed sub-units to administer the sports events under the direction of the jury presidents. Representatives from different countries were included on these committees in order to ensure an international character to the sports events. One of these was Hector Passega from Turkey (Concours Internationaux, 1901).

Passega was part of a delegation of 19 which took part in the 1900 World’s Fair under the leadership of Salih Münir Bey. The delegation included Münir Bey, the secretary delegate E. Chesnel, a special delegate for congresses, and Passega as special delegate responsible for horse exhibitions. The group also included support staff (Report of the Commissioner, 1901).

It fell to the Paris correspondents of periodicals such as Servet-I Fünun and İkdam to report on the activities of the Ottomans at the World’s Fair. İkdam reported that the commission for the horse exhibition included Deputy Secretary General Commissioner Monsieur Schienel [Chesnel], Deputy General Secretary and document officer Monsieur Ebdubvason [Abdon-Boissou], Turkish clerk Samed Bey, French clerk Margosyan Efendi, scientific officer Leon Karakyan, Monsieur Tenre assigned to congresses, and Monsieur Pasker [Passega] (Paris Muhabiri, 1900).

According to the 1900 report, the head of the equestrian committee was Count Gustave Le Clerc de Juigne, who had formed juries consisting of French and foreign members for the different disciplines. Passega was joined by delegates from France, Austria, Russia, Great Britain, and Belgium (Concours Internationaux, 1901). In Mallon’s retrospective evaluation of the sporting events at the World’s Fair, all of the equestrian sports, which he collected under six events, are included in the Olympic programme (Mallon, 1998).

This means therefore that Passega served as a jury member for the equestrian competitions held within the scope of the Olympic Games. According to primary sources however, no Turkish athlete took part in Paris.

**“Wild Turks” at the Games in St Louis 1904?**

The 1904 Olympics faced similar problems to those in Paris. They were once again embedded in a trade fair and lasted six months. Ninety percent of the athletes were from North America and the Games took place in an atmosphere that resembled an American Collegiate Championship. No Turks participated at the Games, but it is possible to follow some trails in the “Anthropology Days”.

At the beginning of the World Fair, several conferences were organised by the Department of Body Culture, at which the head of the anthropology department gave speeches on the athletic skills of wild tribes. It was planned to show speed, endurance, and strength skills of tribes in an event lasting for two days (Sullivan, 1905).

Anthropological exhibitions had been held before. An ethnological village was built for the organisation and the way of life of various groups was presented. On the first day, a number of tribes held athletic competitions among themselves in running, throwing, and jumping. On the second day, the leading competitors in these events took part in the finals. The African, Filipino, Patagonian, Mexican, Japanese, and Sioux indigenous American tribes participated in the 100 yards. In shot
put, natives from Mexico, Patagonia, an Indian tribe, Ainu (Japanese), Africans, and Turks took part (Brownell, 2008).

American newspapers described the participants as “Egyptian, Chinese, Japanese, American, Moros, Indians, Cossacks, Turks, Grecians, Pygmies, and polyglot of nations in one grand and gorgeous pageant at World’s Fair grounds” (A Pageant of Nations, 1904). In the official report, a mile run within the scope of ethnological activities is introduced as the “Day of the Wilds at the World Fair Stadium” (Sullivan, 1905).

Coubertin was critical of these competitions (Coubertin, 1977a). Only Americans could dare to put such events on the Olympic programme. In addition, Coubertin suggested that Syrians and Turks were probably not from the places mentioned, but from the surrounding areas (Coubertin, 1909). According to Schantz (2008), Coubertin stated that the participants of the “Anthropology Days” were “Asian”, not Turkish or Syrian, and should be kept separate from other barbarian tribes.

In the Olympic report, the last page of the section on “Anthropology Days” (p. 264), features a picture which is captioned “A Turk throwing the javelin”. It seems unlikely that the man is from the Ottoman Empire.

However, Eichberg (2008) refers to the participation of Turks in other sports held within the scope of the World’s Fair, and notes that oil wrestling shows were held as well. Although these show events were not necessarily presented in an authentic manner, activities such as sumo, capoeira, wushu, tai chi, kendo, and oil wrestling (the Turkish national wrestling sport) all gained international recognition as a result.

**Participation of the non-Muslim Ottoman citizens in the 1906 Games**

The success of the 1896 Games, as well as the difficulties experienced in 1900 and 1904, had encouraged the Greeks who wished for the Games to be held in Athens in perpetuity. Greece organised Panhellenic Games on 21–23 April 1905, and in May 1905 called for the Athens 1906 Games (Kluge, 1997). The Second International Olympic Games in Athens 1906 are often described as “interim” even though they played an important role for the further development of the Olympic Movement. They took place with the knowledge of the IOC (Müller, 2000).

Although the Ottoman government did not find it appropriate to participate in the Games upon the invitation issued by the Greek government, they announced that those who wished to participate would be allowed to do so (BOA, MV, 113–20). A delegation was established in Istanbul, and it was reported that discounts would be offered on train and ferry trips to Greece (“Olimpiyad Oyunları,” 1905). Groups also took shape in İzmir, Thessaloniki, and Trabzon, to establish who wished to participate and to assist those who wanted to attend as spectators (Sullivan, 1906).

Although the Ottoman government allowed its citizens to attend, they were kept under observation. It denied the applications of some and suspected others of subversive motives (BOA, TFR.I.MN, 91–9048). The Embassy in Athens also kept watch on the contact made by Greek speaking Rums with the Macedonian Rum Committee. This was because there were movements wanting independence in Northern Greece, still part of the Ottoman Empire in those days (BOA, TFR.I.SL, 106–10533).

On the opening day, there were Ottoman citizens among the crowd of 100,000 and also among the musicians (“Olimpiyad Oyunları,” 1906a). Many athletes from Ottoman cities participated and represented their home cities rather than their country, as it happened in Ancient Greece. A significant portion of Ottoman citizen athletes were Rums; others were foreigners and minorities living in Turkey.

However, despite being Ottoman citizens, the Rums walked behind the Greek athletes in the opening parade. The İzmir football team demonstrates how problematic it has been to track Ottoman citizens: it consisted of five English, four French, and two Armenian players.

Mallon classifies the athletes from Ottoman Empire in two groups. The first are listed as “Turks”, the second “foreigners”. Accordingly, 27 Ottoman citizens from Istanbul (Constantinople), İzmir (Smyrna), and
Thessaloniki participated in the competitions. The number increases to 38 when foreigners are taken into account. 16 athletes were from İzmir, 13 from İstanbul, eight from Thessaloniki, and one from Bergama (Mallon, 2009). In this context, it is quite difficult to fully distinguish the athletes from Ottoman Empire and secondary sources are not fully reliable.

But contemporary periodicals mention that some qualifying races were held in İzmir for 1906 Olympics (Panyonik Müsabakaları, 1905a, 1905b). Gymnasts Yorgo Alibrantis and his brother Nikola from Tatavla Club in İstanbul both attended the Games. Yorgo won the 10 m rope climbing (“Olimpiyad Oyunları,” 1906b; Sullivan, 1906; Palmares Des Jeux d’Athenes, 1906). Nikola finished equal seventh with six other gymnasts in the individual five-event all-round competition with 90 points (Kaimakamis et al., 2001).

Other athletes from the Ottoman Empire who participated in the competitions are listed by different researchers: Habet Papazyan (Demoyan, 2014); fencing: A. Fotyadis and Aristides Kristefos, wrestling: Menolas Karaçozer (San, 1956); 5-mile race: Aleko Celepoğlu, triple jump: Hristos Parsales, discus throwing freestyle: N. Dorizas, 1,500 m walking: Georgios Saradakis, marathon race: Vladimiro Negrepontes, high jump: Nikolaos Murmurus, stone throwing: Mikhail Dorizas (3rd place), 100 m: Constantin Devecis, standing long jump: Pantellis Ameras, weightlifting, each hand: Theodoris Georgiades, football teams from İzmir and Thessaloniki (Sullivan, 1906) and the İzmir rowing team (Mallon, 2009). No athlete of Turkish origin participated.

However, wrestler Çorlulu İbrahim Pehlivan mentioned his intention to go to Athens in an interview with Sabah newspaper: “It seems that there will be wrestling in Greece soon. It is possible to participate in them. Because the distance will not be far, the wrestlers can go at their own expense. If I find friends, I am also thinking of participating in the wrestling.” (“Çorlulu İbrahim Pehlivan,” 1906). Two weeks later he mentioned his intention to go to the Olympics together with Kurtdereli Mehmed Pehlivan (Riyazat-i Bedeniye Müsabakaları, 1906). But neither took part in 1906.

A significant number of athletes from the Ottoman Empire did participate in 1906, even though it is impossible to identify all of the athletes from the different minorities and the foreigners residing in the Empire. As these Games have so far been denied IOC recognition, it is also not possible to consider them to be the first participants from Turkey.

1 This article is a slightly modified version of an article which appeared in Spormetre: the Journal of Physical Education and Sport Sciences 2020, 18 (Özel Sayı), 21–55.
2 “Bey” means “Mr” in Turkish. Legislation on surnames was passed into law in Turkey at the end of 1934. Before this time men were addressed as “… Bey” or “… Efendi” and women as “… Hanım”.
3 In official correspondences relating to the Olympic Games, the terms commonly used are “Turkey”, “Turks”, and “Turk” instead of “Ottoman Empire” and “Ottoman”, which is seen in the official correspondence with European agencies during the period.
4 Selim Sırrı Tarcan (1932) reports that four wrestlers, namely Kara Ahmed, Madrai Ahmed, Osman, and Koş Mehmed, went to the 1896 Games, but they were not accepted because they were not amateurs. However, there is no primary source to support this information. For articles on the 1896 Games, see: “Olimpiyad Oyunları”, İkdam, 2 April 1896a, 3; 4 April, 1896b, 3; 10 April 1896c, 3; 11 April 1896d, 3; 14 April 1896e, 3; “Olimpiyad Oyunları’n’nda Bir Garabet”. İkdam, 16 April 1896, 2; “Olimpiyad Oyunları”, İkdam, 17 April 1896f, 2; 19 April 1896g, 2.
5 The Greek was probably from İstanbul.
6 In contrast to İkdam newspaper and Mallon & Widlund, Mandell (2011) states that Tomprof was Bulgarian.
7 Although no information in the primary sources relates to the fair, oil wrestling was not included in the “Anthropology Days” programme. Similar sporting shows were held in the Ottoman exhibitions in previous fairs. This is why Eichberg (2008) assumes that oil wrestling was one of the events of the Ottoman exhibition as well.
8 “Rum” is an Ottoman word for the Greek-speaking people who lived in Muslim countries outside Greece. This definition includes the Greeks of Hellenic origin who were citizens of the Ottoman Empire. The term was used from the 15th century onward and is in common usage in the country even by “Rums” themselves.
9 According to Haluk San, 30 athletes had been citizens of the Ottoman Empire, foreign nationals excluded (San, 1998).
10 The bibliography will follow in Part 2 in the next issue.
The Canadian cross-country skier – Beckie to everyone – was elected to the IOC on the last day of the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin as an athlete representative for a term of eight years. She and Finnish ice hockey player Saku Koivu replaced Norwegian speed skater Ådne Søndrål and Koivu’s teammate Jarri Kurri, who served four years on the IOC. In the elections in the Olympic Village, Scott received 449 votes out of a total of 2003.

The Alberta native, who competed for the first time as a seven-year-old, was able to look back on a long sporting career in which the great successes came only at the end. After her debut at the Junior World Championships in 1988, it was ten years before her first Olympic participation. That was in Nagano, where she did not distinguish herself. She finished 15th overall in the World Cup competitions of 1999/2000 and 2000/2001.

Beckie Scott’s breakthrough came at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, where she finished third in the 5/5 km pursuit behind Russia’s Olga Danilova and Larisa Lasutina. However, after they were disqualified for doping on the last day of the Games, she was awarded gold retrospectively. She thus became the first American woman to win a medal in Nordic skiing.

She achieved her greatest successes in her last winter season 2005/2006. She won four World Cup races. At the Winter Games in Turin, she won the silver medal in the team sprint with Sara Renner. Narrowly beaten, she finished second in the overall World Cup.

Beckie Scott became involved in social causes at an early age. She donated her prize money from the 2001 Continental Cup to an Afghanistan project. She visited West Africa with UNICEF in 2003 as part of their Girls’ Education campaign. She is an active ambassador for the development organisation Right to Play, and was appointed co–chair of the Canadian advisory council. As a member of the World Anti–Doping Agency’s Athlete Committee, she became an influential lobbyist. She also served on the board of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC), and as a board member of the Organising Committee of the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. At the IOC, she was a member of the Coordination Commission for the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi. (VK)
Finnish ice hockey legend Jarri Kurri, who was an athlete representative to the IOC from 2002 to 2006, was succeeded by his teammate Saku Koivu. The 31-year-old was runner-up in the 2006 elections to the IOC Athletes’ Commission with 412 votes; this was linked to an IOC membership of eight years.

Koivu competed with the Finnish national team four times at the Winter Olympics – winning silver once (in 2006 after a 3–2 loss to Sweden in the final) and bronze three times (in 1994, 1998, and 2010). In 1995, he led Finland to its first World Championship title as team captain. He was twice runner-up in the World Championships with his team (1994 and 1999). He was selected three times (1994, 1995, and 1999) for the All-Star team. He was twice named best striker (1995, 1999) and once top scorer (1999).

Koivu began his ice hockey career with TPS Turku, with whom he won the Finnish championship in 1993 and 1995. In the summer of 1995, the centre moved to the Montréal Canadiens, where he was elected team captain in 1999, the first European player to do so. In the autumn of 2001, he was diagnosed with Burkitt’s lymphoma. Following successful treatment, he was able to return to the Habs in the play-offs the following year. For his comeback, he was awarded the Bill Masterton Memorial Trophy, donated by the NHL Writers’ Association, in memory of a Minnesota player who died in 1968 after an injury during a game. In the same year, Koivu established his own foundation dedicated to the fight against cancer.

Koivu played for the Montréal Canadiens between 1995 and 2009, only returning to his hometown club in Turku during the lockout that lasted several months and resulted in the cancellation of the entire 2004–05 NHL season. After his NHL contract expired, he decided to play another five seasons with the Anaheim Ducks. During his career, he played 158 games in the Finnish SM League and 1,124 in the NHL. Koivu then returned to Finland. In 2017, he was inducted into the IIHF Hall of Fame.

Andrés Botero studied at Stanford University in California and graduated as a mechanical engineer in 1969. During this time he met his wife, with whom he set up a company in Medellín to produce fibreglass boats. He is also considered a pioneer in Colombia for the construction of ultralight aircraft.

Botero has always been involved in the world of sport, both as an athlete and in the administrative sphere. As athlete, he was Colombian Water Ski Champion (1961–1971) for ten consecutive years. He was South American Champion in the slalom and jump categories. Between 1965 and 1971 he participated in the World Water Ski Championships three times and was World Champion in Tahiti in 1971. At the 1972 Olympic Games, where water skiing was part of the programme as a demonstration sport, he came 12th in the slalom on Passader Lake near Kiel.

After graduating from high school in Sanremo in 1987, Patrick Baumann studied law in Lausanne. Later, he also obtained a master’s degree in Sports Management (MEMOS) from the University of Lyon (1996) and a MBA from the Graduate School of Business at the University of Chicago (2001).

After working briefly for the Police des étrangers (immigration police) and the Société de Banque Suisse respectively, in 1994 Baumann was hired by the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) as a lawyer and became its deputy secretary general a year later. His passion for basketball – as a player, referee, instructor, and graduate coach – determined the course of his life. In 2002, he was appointed to succeed Borislav Stanković (1925–2020; JOH 1/2016, p. 71), who had been in charge of FIBA since 1976.

From then on, Baumann played an outstanding role in the development of FIBA. He radically changed the governance structure, built a modern headquarters in Mies, north of Geneva, and secured the inclusion of 3×3 basketball, an urban discipline, in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games programme. He was responsible for introducing a new competition system and was instrumental in the process of ONE FIBA, the merger of all regional offices into one group of companies.

Elected to the IOC in 2007 by a narrow majority of 47–37, the linguistically gifted Swiss (he spoke five languages) won over his colleagues with his tireless work. Baumann was a member of the Evaluation Commissions for the Olympic Games 2008 (as an IF representative) and 2020. He was a member of the Coordination Commission for 2012. In 2009, he was appointed to succeed Borislav Stanković (1925–2020; JOH 1/2016, p. 71), who had been in charge of FIBA since 1976.

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Andrés Botero was able to link his professional life to sport by becoming a professional boat designer. For his dedication to Colombian sports, in 2013 he received the prestigious El Colombiano Exemplar, one of the country’s most important awards. He was a member of IOC from 2007 until he reached the age limit of 70 in 2015. He served on several committees, in particular the Marketing Committee, serving as a member from 2008 to 2014. (MNW)
Rita Subowa studied at Kristen Indonesia University from 1965 to 1970 and earned a master's degree in Economics. During her studies she played on the University basketball team. Her interest in volleyball was aroused much later when she became an official of the National Volleyball Federation of Indonesia (PBVSI). In 1988, she was named vice-president, then president in 2000, a position she held until 2005.

In 2006, the princess was elected president of the International Federation for Equestrian Sports (FEI) and was re-elected in 2010. In 2014, she resigned her candidacy to avoid conflict of interest issues following the accusation of doping violations by her then husband. Since 2011, she has been patron of the International Federation of Gentleman and Lady Riders (Fegentri).

In addition to her dedication to sport, Princess Haya also engages in various charity projects. In 2003, she founded Tkiyet Um Ali, the first food aid NGO in the Arab world, in her mother’s memory. She was the first Arab woman to become Goodwill Ambassador for the World Food Programme (2005–2007).

In 2007, she was appointed Messenger of Peace by the then UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. In 2012, she was appointed to serve as the World Organisation for Animal Health’s first Goodwill Ambassador. In September 2014, she was made Officer of National Order of Honour, France’s highest distinction. She was awarded the 2015 Hunger Hero Award by UN World Food Programme in Davos.

Princess Haya is the daughter of the late King Hussein of Jordan and half-sister to King Abdullah II. She was educated in a British private school and graduated from St Hilda’s College, Oxford, with a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics. From 2004 to 2019 she was married to the ruler of Dubai, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

Princess Haya became a member of the IOC in 2007. In 2010, she was appointed to the International Relations Committee having also served on the Athletes’ Commission and Olympic Education Commission. Currently she is a member of the Honorary Board of the International Paralympic Committee. (MNW)

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Subowa became deputy chair of the National Sports Committee of Indonesia (KONI), which was founded in 1966 under President Sukarno as a superordinate sports organisation and at the same time performed the tasks of a National Olympic Committee. Since this status contradicted the Olympic Charter, the government had to enact a law in 2005 that restored the independence of the Indonesian Olympic Committee (KOL). For a transitional period, Subowa acted both as general chairman of the KONI and as president of the KOL, to which she was elected in 2007.

Subowo became a key figure in the Olympic Movement in Asia. She has been a member of the Olympic Council of Asia’s Executive Board since 2006.
First elected to the IOC Athletes’ Commission in 1996, the 1988 Olympic champion, six-time world champion, and 35-time world record holder in the pole vault, Sergey Bubka, was among the ten athlete representatives co-opted to the IOC in 1999 (see JOH 3/2018, p. 71). One year later, during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, Bubka was again elected to the IOC Athletes’ Commission.

As decided in the IOC 2000 reforms, eight commissioners were elected to the IOC by the 111th Session on 30 September 2000 – the four commissioners with the most votes were elected for eight years, while the other four were elected for four years. Bubka, who received the most votes with 1,506, then applied for the seat on the IOC Executive Board reserved for an active athlete. He won the election against Canadian Charmaine Crooks and Norwegian Olav Koss. In 2004, he was re-elected at the 116th Session.

Bubka was a member of the Ukrainian Parliament for four years from 2002 and worked as an advisor to the Prime Minister on youth and sports issues. In 2005, he became president of the NOC of Ukraine and, in 2007, vice-president of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF, now World Athletics).

After his mandate in the IOC expired (he had been a member of the Evaluation and Coordination Commissions for the Olympic Games in Beijing, among others), he stood as a personal member in 2008. After the Dutchman Hein Verbruggen (JOH 1/2021, p. 69), Bubka was the second to be elected to the IOC with a new number on the protocol list. His re-election for another eight years followed in 2016.

Bubka founded a sports club in his name in 1990, and was an ambassador for UNESCO and the World Health Organisation (WHO). Together with his brother, he runs a bakery business, and also has interests in petrol stations, grocery shops, and real estate management companies. (VK)
IOC Honorary Members have died

The IOC mourns the death of three Honorary Members. The Olympic flag was hoisted at half-mast at the IOC Headquarters in Lausanne.

The Portuguese Fernando F. Lima Bello died on 3rd June at the age of 89. He was a member of the IOC from 1989 to 2009. From 1981 to 1989, the former seaman and later engineer was president of the Olympic Committee of Portugal. Lima Bello took part in the Olympic Games twice as a dragon sailor – in 1968 and 1972. In 1953, he became world champion in the Snipe class. See also: JOH, vol. 24, 2/2016, 64.

On 9th July, the longstanding president of the International Ski Federation (FIS), Gian-Franco Kasper, succumbed to a heart condition. He was 77 years old.

The Swiss, who worked as a journalist and head of the St Moritz tourist office, first became general secretary of the FIS in 1975, and president in 1998, succeeding Marc Hodler. Five Winter Olympics took place during his tenure.

Kasper was a member of the IOC from 2000 to 2018. From 2000 to 2002 and from 2014 to 2020, he also was president of the Association of International Olympic Winter Sports Federations (AIOWF). See also: JOH, vol. 27, 2/2019, 70.

IOC Honour Member Youssoupha Ndiaye died on 17 July in Saint-Louis at the age of 83. He was an IOC Member from 2002 to 2008 and chaired the Ethics Commission from 2007 to 2017. A man of the law, he started his career as a judge before becoming president of the Dakar Court (1976–1984). He then held some of the highest positions within the Senegalese judicial system. He was also minister of state and sports (2002–2005). See: JOH, vol. 28, 2/2020, 71. (IOC/JOH)

IOCs Memberships

Following the recommendations made by the EB, the 138th IOC Session elected Nicole Hoevertsz (ARU) as new Vice-President. Dr Robin E. Mitchell (FII) and Denis Oswald (SUI) were re-elected as EB members; and Kristin Kloster (NOR) was newly elected to the Board. The Session approved the change of status for Kirsty Coventry (ZIM) from Active Athlete to Independent Individual Member.

Five members were re-elected for another eight-year term or until they have reached the age limit within these eight years: Octavian Morariu (ROU), Bernard Rajzman (BRA), Mikaela Cojuangco Jaworski (PHI), Paul K. Tergat (KEN), and Dagmawit Girmay Berhane (ETH).

New Honorary Members are Sir Craig Reedie (GBR), who has reached the age limit, and HRH Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark, following his resignation as an IOC Member. (IOC/JOH)
For him, it was a moment of happiness that changed his life. It was only with a heavy heart that his father let his son move to Stockholm. But he did not put any obstacles in his way, and he died a year later without a successor. Throughout his life, Ove probably never entirely got over his remorse.

A two-week internship turned into 40 years as a sports journalist. Ove initially worked for Idrottsbladet (1964–66), then for Associated Press (1967–71), Svensk Idrott (1971–76), and finally (until 1991 and then as a freelancer) for Lennart Brunnhage’s sports publishing company (later Strömbergs/Brunnhages). Especially with the latter, which has published the annual Idrottsböcker since 1947 and the Swedish Olympiaböcker since 1948, Ove was in his element, because he was able to contribute his extensive knowledge of sports and Olympic history.

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In addition to his professional activities, Ove was involved in many ways, especially on the media side of international sporting events in Sweden. He was a member of the Executive Committee of the International Sports Press Association (AIPS/1971–1981), press attaché to the 1980 Swedish Olympic teams, and co-founder of the Swedish Olympic Historians’ Association (SOF) as well as its secretary (1986–1988). In 1991 in London, he was one of the founders of ISOH, whose members elected him to the Executive Committee (2004–2008). In 2011, he was awarded the ISOH Lifetime Award for his many years of work.

Sadly, Ove’s last years were overshadowed. He developed diabetes and started having problems with his feet. However, he retained his sociability and sense of humour, as he demonstrated in 2017 when he was a guest at the ISOH Executive Committee Meeting in Stockholm.

As life’s coincidences would have it, his path and mine crossed at the start of our professional careers at the 1966 European Athletics Championships in Budapest. In Ove, I found a loyal friend for life. At the same event, he had met a young Hungarian woman named Vera, whom he married in Budapest in March 1968. A few months later she moved to Stockholm, where Peter was born in 1969 and Anders in 1975. They were born at Allmänna BB, the General Maternity Hospital, which had served as the Olympic Village for the 1912 Olympic Games. Not all of them, though, because there were too few beds and too many participants.

Of course, only Ove, the walking “Olympic encyclopaedia”, knew these and thousands of other facts. We will miss him very much.

By Volker Kluge
Ursula Happe, née Krey (FRG), *20 October 1926 in Danzig (now Gdansk, POL); †26 March 2021 in Dortmund. She grew up near a swimming pool, where her father was employed as a lifeguard. He fell as a soldier in Stalingrad in 1943. During the Second World War, after leaving school, she served in the Female Labour Service and in the War Auxiliary Service, including as a tram conductor in Berlin. At the end of the war, her mother and two sisters fled to northern Germany, where the rest of the family reunited.

Ursel, as she was called, was a farm labourer until she found a job as a laboratory assistant in a dairy. At the suggestion of her brother, who lived in Kiel, the 1.78 m tall and overly slim young woman joined the Neptun Kielswimming club in 1949. That same year she won the first of what would later be 14 national championship titles in the 100 m breaststroke. As the 1950 champion over both breaststroke distances, she was invited to the inauguration of a swimming hall in Dortmund – a visit that would change her life. She met the tax official Heinz Günter Happe, whom she married later that year. From then on, he was her trainer at the swimming club Westfalen Dortmund.

Happe took part in the 1952 Olympic Games, where she was eliminated in the semi-finals of the 200 m breaststroke and ended up taking seventh place. The next year, she gave birth to a daughter. But in 1954, she was once again at the starting block. In Turin, she became European champion in the 200 m breast and placed third in the 100 m butterfly. Another baby year followed in 1955 – her first son was born. Although already 30 years old, the mother of two was able to qualify for the all-German Olympic team in 1956 with best times – but without having any hopes of winning a medal. However, it was to her advantage that Ada den Haan of the Netherlands, who had set a world record (2:46.40 min) in the 200 m breaststroke shortly before, was prevented from participating by her NOC’s decision to boycott the Olympic Games because of the suppression of the Hungarian uprising by Soviet troops. In Melbourne, 2:53.1 min was enough for Happe to win the gold medal ahead of the favoured Hungarian Éva Székely (1927–2020), who had won in Helsinki in 1952.

After Melbourne, Happe’s sports career ended, but her family grew. In 1958, son Thomas was born, followed by another boy in 1966. Thomas Happe became a handball player and won three German championships with TuSEM Essen. He played 56 times for the national team with which he won Olympic silver in Los Angeles in 1984. His mother remained faithful to swimming until the end of her life. Until the COVID-19 pandemic put a stop to it, the oldest Olympic swimming champion could be found almost daily in the indoor or outdoor pools in Dortmund-Wellinghofen.

Paola Pigni (ITA), *30 December 1945 in Milan; †1 June 2021 in Rome. Paola Pigni was the best Italian woman middle-distance runner of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Born in Milan, she began with Sport Club Italia. After winning the 1966 Italian cross-country championship, she became Italy’s No. 1 in the 400 and 800 m. In 1967, she began working with Bruno Cacchi (1939–2019), who later became her husband.

Pigni had difficulty with injuries in 1967–68 and was eliminated in the semi-finals of the 1968 Olympics in the 800 m. In July 1969, she ran 1,500 m in 4:12.4 min, a world record that took 3.2 s off the previous mark. She was favoured at the 1969 European Championships, but placed third in the 1,500 m. In March 1970, she won her nation’s cross-country, an event that in 1973 became an official World Championship.

After the birth of her daughter, Chiara, in March 1971, Pigni returned in 1972. The event had significantly improved in recent years, and her time of 4:02.85 min in the final at the 1972 München Olympics brought her only a bronze medal, although she broke the Italian record in all three rounds. She finished her active career in 1977, as multiple tendon injuries and surgeries took their toll. Pigni set 29 Italian records and won 19 Italian titles.

John Konrads (AUS), *21 May 1942 in Riva, Latvia; †25 April 2021 in Noosa Heads, Queensland. John emigrated via Germany with family to Germany in 1944 to escape the Russians, then to Sydney in 1949.

Selected in the swimming squad for the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games at age 14, he did not swim in any event, much to the disappointment of his young coach, Don Talbot.

After dominating swimming over the next four years, breaking every world freestyle record from 200 to 1,500 m in 1958, he was favourite at the 1960 Rome Olympics for both the 400 and 1,500 m. He won a bronze medal against rivals Tsuyoshi Yamanaka (Japan) and Murray Rose (Australia) in the 400 m but recovered from a disappointing swim to defeat Rose and George Breen (USA) and won gold over the longer distance (17:19.6).

John studied at the University of Southern California in the early 1960s and retired soon after the 1964 Tokyo Olympics to become a coach, and later a successful businessman.
Anatoly Chukanov (URS), *10 May 1954 in Novospasovka/RUS; †12 June 2021. Chukanov became Olympic cycling champion in the team time trial with the selection of the Soviet Union in 1976. At the Road World Championships in 1977 he also won the team time trial title with the same team. In 1976, he won the national championships in the team time trial. He was also able to win the title in the individual time trial. After retirement he taught sport-related subjects at the East Ukraine Volodymyr Dahl National University. (WR)

Lee Evans (USA), *25 February 1947 in Madera, California; †19 May 2021 in Ilishan-Remo/NGR. At the 1968 Final Trials in the 400 m, Evans set a world record of 44.0 (44.06). He then reduced the world mark to 43.86 s in the Olympic final for the gold medal. He won a second gold, helping to set another world record plaque in the 4x400 m relay. His 400 m mark of 43.86 stood as a world record until broken by Butch Reynolds in 1988.

After his 400 m gold, when he led a USA medal sweep with Larry James and Ron Freeman, all three wore berets representing themselves as Black Panthers, although they wore berets representing themselves as Black Panthers, although they had produced Olympic shot put champions Galina Zybina (1952) and Tamara Tyshkevich (1956). He convinced her to move to Leningrad, where she finished secondary school and began studying at the civil engineering school in 1956. One year later, she was followed by sister Irina, who had meanwhile developed into a talented pentathlete and began studying at the Institute of Railway Transport.

Tamara Natanovna Press (URS), *10 May 1937 in Kharkiv; †26 April 2021 in Moscow. Born in Ukraine, Tamara Press was evacuated to Samarkand/Uzbekistan during the Second World War after the German invasion in the summer of 1941, together with her mother and younger sister Irina (1939–2004). Her Jewish father, Natan Press, was killed in the battle for Leningrad in 1942.

His eldest daughter became the Uzbek youth champion in shot put and discus in 1954. She then came to the attention of throwing coach Viktor Alekseyev (1914–1977), who had produced Olympic shot put champions Galina Zybina (1952) and Tamara Tyshkevich (1956). He convinced her to move to Leningrad, where she finished secondary school and began studying at the civil engineering school in 1956. One year later, she was followed by sister Irina, who had meanwhile developed into a talented pentathlete and began studying at the Institute of Railway Transport.

Tamara first became Soviet champion in the shot put (16.54 m) in Tallinn in 1958. However, she lost to Earlene Brown and Zybina in the international competition against the US and then to Marianne Werner (GER) and Tyshkevich at the European Championships. Surprisingly, however, she won the discus title in Stockholm, which she defended in Belgrade in 1962. There she also won the shot put in which she set six world records between 1959 and 1965. She was the first woman to throw over 17 and 18 metres.

She won the shot put at the 1960 Olympics as well as in Tokyo in 1964, where she also won gold in the discus. In Rome, she had to cede the gold in discus to her teammate Nina Ponomaryeva, who defeated her by a margin of 2.5 m. Seven days later, at a post-Olympic meeting in Rome’s Stadium della Term, she managed to beat the eight-year-old world record of Georgia’s Nina Dumbadze (57.04 m) by 11 cm. By 1965, Press had set five more discus world records – she was only 30 cm short of the 60 m mark.

During the Cold War, the Western media belittled the achievements of the 1.80 m tall and 102 kg athlete and questions were raised about her sex. However, there was no evidence for this. She and her sister Irina, who became Olympic champion in the 80 m hurdles in 1960 and in the pentathlon in 1964, were dubbed the “Press brothers”. The rumours were fuelled by the fact that both of them, along with other Eastern Bloc female athletes, resigned at the very moment the IAAF introduced the sex controls adopted in 1964, at the 1966 European Championships in Budapest.

Correction, JOH 1/2021, 74:
Dr. Margitta Gummel (GDR)
ISOH member Ralf Regnitter drew attention to the fact that the 1968 Olympic shot put champion died on 26 January 2021 and not 13 February.
Tamara tried her hand at coaching and then became head of the cultural department of the Soviet trade unions council in Moscow and chair of the Public Health Association. She published several reference books and an autobiography entitled Tsen Pobody (Price of Victory) in 1977. She was awarded a doctorate as was her sister, who received a professorship in Kiev. (UK)

Valentina Sidorova (URS), *4 May 1954 in Moscow; †9 June 2021 in Moscow. The Russian fencer was world champion twice in individual foil and seven times in team competitions. In 1977, in Buenos Aires she again moved into the battle for the gold individual event, while she again reached the team foil final unbeaten, in which France was also defeated. In 1980, she finished 13th in the individual foil competition after the Games.

She took part in the Olympics twice: in 1976, in Montreal she reached the team foil final unbeaten, in which France was also defeated 9–2. She finished the individual foil in seventh place. At the Olympics in 1980, she finished 13th in the individual event, while she again moved into the battle for the gold medal with the Soviet team. This time they were defeated by France 9–6. (WR)

Sergey Novikov (URS), *15 December 1949 in Moscow; †16 April 2021. Novikov was one of the most successful Soviet judokas of the 1970s. Besides his 1976 Olympic heavyweight gold, he also won the World Championships heavyweight silver in 1975 and heavyweight bronze in 1973. He was European open-class champion in 1973 and 1974 and heavyweight champion in 1976.


After finishing his sporting career, he worked as a sambo and judo coach. In 1996 he became president of the Federation International Amateur Unifight (a combat sport). (WR)

Ekkehard Fasser (SUI), *3 September 1952 in Glarus; †8 April 2021 in Rieden, St Gallen. Bobsledder Fasser’s original athletic pursuit was track and field, and he specialised in the high jump, long jump, and shot put. By 1978, however, he had taken up bobsledding and was the junior world runner-up in the two-man with Ralph Pichler.

Fasser made the reserve squad of the Swiss national team in 1981 and, the following year, participated in his first World Cup events. In 1983, he won the European Championships in the four-man and the World Championships as well. This earned the quartet a trip to the 1984 Winter Olympics, where they were expected to battle for the gold medal with the Swiss 1982 World Champions, Rico Freiermuth, Silvio Giobellina, Urs Salzmann, and Heinz Stettler. The two East German teams, however, had other plans, and took first and second in every run, while the 1982 world champions were consistently third, leaving Fasser’s squad in fourth position and off the podium.

He continued to compete and, in 1986, earned the title of World Cup champion with his crew. He returned to the Olympics in 1988 and pulled off a surprising victory in the four-man, taking advantage of a disastrous third run from defending Olympic champion Wolfgang Hoppe’s team and won by a margin of 0.07 s. Gold medal in hand, he retired from active competition after the Games. (OM)

Markis Kido (INA), *11 August 1984 in Jakarta; †16 June 2021 in Tengerang. In 2005 Kido won the Asian Badminton Championship and the Indonesia Open together with Hendra Setiawan. They also won the Jakarta Satellite, Hong Kong Open, and China Open in 2006. At the Badminton World Cup in 2007 in Kuala Lumpur, they advanced to the finals and defeated South Korea with 21–19 and 21–19. They also won the China Open Super Series in 2007. In July 2007 they were defeated at the China Masters Super Series by the Chinese world no. 1 pairing of Cai Yun and Fu Haifeng in the final with 15–21 and 16–21. In the last tournament in 2007 they won the final of the Hong Kong Open Super Series. Most recently they won the Malaysia Super Series in 2008.

The highlight of his career: Kido and his partner Hendra Setiawan won the men’s doubles final of the 2008 Olympic tournament in Beijing against the Chinese pairing Cai Yun and Fu Haifeng. Kido died from a heart attack. (WR)

Tormod Knutsen (NOR), *7 January 1932 in Eidsvoll; †23 February 2021 in Eidsvoll. Knutsen was a promising ski jumper as a teenager, winning the 1949 Norwegian Youth Championships and the 1951 Junior Championship. In 1954, he switched his concentration to Nordic combined, and won the bronze medal in his first national championships in the event, in 1955. He went to the 1956 Winter Olympics as a substitute, but Gunter Gundersen injured his arm two days before the competition and Knutsen was placed on the team. He finished sixth.

In 1958, Knutsen won at Holmenkollen, and after winning national championship gold medals in both 1959 and 1960, he was highly favoured for the Olympic gold. Before leaving for Squaw Valley, Knutsen surprised everybody by winning a silver medal at the Norwegian Championships in ski jumping.

In Squaw Valley, a newcomer from West Germany, Georg Thoma, led the jumping, but the Norwegians considered him a weak cross-country skier and reckoned Knutsen for a gold medal. However, Thoma surprised...
everybody in the cross-country, skiing 7.2 s faster than Knutsen and was a clear winner, with the Norwegian taking silver.

Thoma dominated the international scene in Nordic combined in the following years, but Knutsen continued to compete, placing fourth at the 1962 World Championships. After winning two more national championships (1963 and 1964), he felt well prepared for the 1964 Innsbruck Olympics. He placed second in the jumping section, only 2.2 points behind Thoma, but Knutsen was over 1½ minutes better than Thoma in cross-country and won the gold medal comfortably. Thoma got revenge over Knutsen by winning at Holmenkollen later in the season, where Knutsen was a distant sixth, after which the Norwegian ended his career, with his dream of an Olympic gold having come true. (OM)

Gillian Sheen, married Donaldson (GBR), *21 August 1928 in Willesden, London; †5 July 2021 Auburn, New York. The London-based dental surgeon from University College Hospital began her fencing career in Kent. In 1945, she became a student champion and, in 1949, she won her first junior title. She was British champion ten times.

Gillian Sheen made her Olympic debut in 1952, when she was eliminated in the second round. Four years later, at the Games in Melbourne, she won the only gold medal that Great Britain has ever earned in fencing. With six wins in the final round, she prevailed in the subsequent barrage, scoring 4–2 against the Romanian Olga Orbán.

After finishing second in the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Vancouver in 1954, she was victorious in Cardiff in 1958. In 1960, she took part in her third Olympic Games, but was eliminated in the second round. She ended her career in 1963. She married and settled in New York, where her husband ran a dental practice. (OK)

Viktor Kurentsov (URS), *5 April 1941 in Tukhinka/BLR; †7 April 2021 Odintsovo/RUS. Kurentsov took up weightlifting in 1959 while serving with the Soviet Army in the Russian Far East and soon rose to be the world’s best middleweight lifter during the late 1960s, being nearly unbeatable. During his career he won Olympic gold in 1968 and silver in 1964. He was world champion five times (1965–66, 1968–70) and European champion seven times (1964–66, 1968–71). He also won silver at the 1964 World Championships and 1972 European Championships and bronze at the 1974 European Championships.

Domestically, Kurentsov was also unbeatable, winning the Soviet title nine times (1964–70, 1972, 1974). He set 24 world records in 1964 to 1968: six in the press, eight in the clean & jerk, and ten in the total. After finishing his sporting career, he continued to serve with the Soviet Army, retiring in 1990 as a colonel.

After his retirement Kurentsov went into local politics. In 1990 he was elected to the Odintsovo city council, being the deputy chairman in 1991–93. From 1993 to 1998, he worked with the Russian Embassy in Italy. After returning home, Kurentsov moved back to Odintsovo and from 1999 to 2003 worked as an international relations consultant with the district government. (TK)

Jeannette Altwegg, married Wirz (GBR), *8 September 1930 in Bombay (IND); †18 June 2021 in Zollikofen (SUI). The British figure skater was born in India, but grew up in her mother’s homeland of England. She strapped on her skates for the first time at the age of six, in Liverpool. She was ten years old when she began to concentrate on figure skating, and perfected her technique in Switzerland, where her father had opened a textile factory. Jack Gerschwiler, uncle of the 1947 world champion Hans Gerschwiler, trained her.

Jeannette Altwegg was no glamour girl who could sweep the audience away. However, since she worked her magic and attained the required numbers on the ice with mathematical precision, a place on the podium was always reserved for her: after winning bronze at the Winter Olympics in St Moritz, she won the 1951 World Championship. In that same year, and in 1952, she earned the title of European champion. At the Winter Games in Oslo in 1952, eight of the nine judges put Altwegg in first place. In the free skating, she defended a lead of over 40 points against the American Tenley Albright. This was halved, but her Olympic victory was unequivocal. After that, she was offered a show contract that was to bring in £8,000 a month for her. However, she turned it down. She decided to take a post in the Pestalozzi Children’s Village in Trogen, in the Swiss canton of Appenzell, caring for war orphans. Her monthly wage: 120 Swiss francs. The IOC awarded her the Olympic diploma for this in 1953.

In autumn 1954, she married the Swiss engineer Marc Wirz; the couple divorced in 1973. She was mother of four children. One of them, Cristina Lestander-Wirz, became world curling champion in 1983. (VI)

Diana Igaly (HUN), *31 January 1965 in Budapest; †8 April 2021 in Budapest. Diána Igaly’s father and mother were sport shooters, so it was no surprise
that their daughter took her first shot at the age of six and became a shooter by the age of 13. Within the sport, she specialised in skeet and double trap. Between 1982 and 2007, she was a 22-time Hungarian champion. Internationally, Igaly won four World Championship and six European Championships, earning 32 medals at world competitions.

Igaly competed in four Olympics, finishing 42nd in open skeet at Barcelona, 3rd at the inaugural women’s skeet competition in Sydney, became Olympic champion in Athens (with perfect shot of 25/25 in the final), and finished 11th in Beijing.

Following her career as an athlete, she founded a shooting club in Törökbálint in 2007, where the goal was to educate young people in skeet shooting. Between 2013 and 2016 Igaly was a member of the Hungarian Olympic Committee, and actively participated in the work of the Athletes’ Committee. In 2013, she was elected vice-president of the Hungarian Shooting Association and sport director of skeet and trap shooting. She died from complications after contracting the COVID-19 virus. (RL)

Viktor Shuvalov (URS), *15 December 1923 in Nabornye Syresi/MDA; † 19 April 2021 in Moscow. Like many other early Soviet ice hockey players, Shuvalov excelled in football in the summer and ice hockey in the winter. Shuvalov started his career in 1947 with Dzerzhinets Chelyabinsk (now Traktor Chelyabinsk), where he played both football and ice hockey. In 1949 he joined WSS Moskva, where he played until 1953. He then joined CSKA Moskva and he ended his career in 1957–58, playing with SKA Kalinin (now Tver).

Shuvalov won five Soviet Championships (1951–53, and 1955–56) and was the best goal scorer in 1950 (31 goals) and 1953 (44 goals, with Aleksey Guryshchev). Internationally, he was considered one of the best lines in the mid-50s. Besides his Olympic gold in 1956, Shuvalov was world champion in 1954 and 1956 and second in 1955. He also won European Championships in 1954–56.

After retirement in 1958, he coached SKA Kalinin until 1964. Then he was head coach of Kristall Elektrostal and an assistant coach of Spartak Moscow in 1969–70. After that he worked with the Soviet Committee for Physical Culture and Sports and was also a children’s hockey coach in Spartak Moscow. He died in 2021 from complications after contracting the COVID-19 virus. (TK)

Alekandr Privalov (URS), *6 August 1933 in Pyatnitsa/RUS; † 19 May 2021 in Moscow. Military patrol was a standard practice in the Soviet Army and Privalov soon became interested in the biathlon. But unlike other early Soviet biathletes he was not a fast skier, so he concentrated on shooting, which brought him success at the international level. At the 1960 Winter Olympics, his time was only third among the Soviet biathletes, but with relatively clean shooting he managed to rise to a bronze medal position. At the 1964 Olympics, Privalov’s skiing time was only 16th, but with clean shooting he rose to second place.

Besides his two Olympic medals, he won one silver in the relay at the 1961 World Championships and was a five-time Soviet champion (1960, 1961, 1964, 1965 in the 20 km and in 1966 in the relay).

After his retirement, he worked from 1966 to 1994 as coach of the Soviet and Russian national teams. He was the head coach of the Olympic squad from 1968 to 1980 and the 1994 Russian Olympic women team. (TK)

Christa Stubnick, née Seliger (GDR), *12 December 1933 in Gardelegen; † 13 May 2021 in Borken. “What do you think of her shorts?” asked an Australian newspaper (photo) during the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956, when the East German won two silver medals in the 100 and 200 m, coming in behind Betty Cuthbert (AUS). The background to this question was the protest by the Vatican due to her allegedly offensive clothing.

Christa Seliger was the first world-class East German sprinter. In 1954, she equalled the 19-year-old European record for 200 m of Pole Stanisława Walasiewicz in Budapest with 23.6 s. Since the GDR Athletics Association was not yet recognised by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), she was absent from the 1954 European Championships, where she would have had good prospects of a medal.

The trained stenographer married the East German heavyweight boxing champion Erich Stubnick, but the marriage was not a happy one. She married a second time, taking the name Fischer. She lived for many years in Magdeburg, where, as a major in the police force, she was in charge of a reporting office. (VK)

The ISOH offers the families of the deceased its sincere condolences.
in this book: an international aerobatics competition, an airplane rally in Germany, and a great Olympic flying day involving German and foreign pilots. A glide on 4 August with participants from 14 countries counted as an Olympic demonstration sport.

The author has again succeeded in combining Olympic history with philately. The rare airmail documents that trace the route of the torch relay from Olympia to Berlin are likely to be of particular interest to collectors.

A significant part of the book is dedicated to the flights of the Hindenburg airship and of Deutsche Lufthansa. The LZ 129 Hindenburg had been promoting the Games on its trips to North and South America since March 1936, with the Olympic rings on its outer skin. Deutsche Lufthansa set the tone for the event with meter stamps and special postmarks.

A special event on the opening day was the “Olympic Flight” of the Hindenburg, which embarked on a tour on 1 August in Frankfurt, transporting 61,369 letters and 57,710 postcards weighing a total of 763 kg. Marked with an additional stamp, these were dropped down with parachutes in Berlin airport.

The book also features mail from the so-called signatory states: deliveries from countries that had a corresponding agreement with Germany. These includes letters and postcards from Albania, Iceland, Yugoslavia, Norway, and Poland, which are classed as rarities. In some cases, there are only one to three known specimens.

The last chapter recalls the time of the Second World War, to which the Olympic Games of 1940 and 1944 also fell victim. Among other things, airmail shipments to mark the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the IOC in Lausanne indicate that the Olympic idea remained active.

This is a book worth recommending. As this author learned, work on a third volume is already underway.
Festival of Love and Glory

Tokyo Paralympics:
"Maehata ganbare" – "Go On, Maehata!"

Olympic Movement" in Japan
Kano Jigoro – The "Father of the Olympic Games"

Pandemic-Hit Games Opened

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by David Wallechinsky

by Volker Kluge

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www.isoh.org
E-mail: olympic.journal@t-online.de
Phone: +49-33433-15892
Germany
Lindenstraße 2
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With the Interest Grew the Dispute:

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Editorial deadline for this issue:

Auburn Road, Auburn, NSW 144, AUSTRALIA; Tel:
holmes.tracey@abc.net.au;
*5 April 1957;
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*1 January 1963;
*1 January 1963;
*1 January 1963;
*1 January 1963;
*1 January 1963;
*1 January 1963;
*1 January 1963;
*1 January 1963;

BURNS Bob Mr. *7 July 1957; E-mail: bburns.sacsports@gmail.com; Address: 5901 Shepard Ave., Sacramento CA 95819, UNITED STATES; Tel: +1 9252851255; Occupation: freelance writer, Olympic/Sports Publications: book on the history of the 1968 Olympic, Track & Field Trials at Echo Summit near Lake Tahoe titled "The Track in the Forest". I previously served as the director of communications for the 2000 U.S. Olympic Trials in Sacramento and the national championship meets in Sacramento in 2004 and 2017. I covered track and field for the Sacramento Bee from 1985 to 1998, including the 1996 Olympic Games and the 2005 World Championships in Helsinki (as a freelancer); Specific Olympic Research Interests: Martin Sheridan and the Irish Whales and their experiences as Irish immigrants representing the USA.

GARVEY John Mr. *2 January 1963; E-mail: discus thrower at me.com; Address: 601 Rheem Blvd, Moraga, California 94556, UNITED STATES; Tel: +1 925851255; Occupation: Analyst; Olympic/Sports Publications: Several sports related articles in Olympian Magazine, San Francisco Olympic Club. Track and Field and Ice Hockey; Specific Olympic Research Interests: GARVEY Discus, Shot Put, Javelin and Hammer Throw.

HOLMES Tracey Ms. *5 April 1966; E-mail: holmes.tracey@abc.net.au; Address: 220A Auburn Road, Auburn, NSW 144, AUSTRALIA; Tel: +614 0722 0777; Occupation: Journalist; Olympic/Sports Publications: Australian Broadcasting Corporation; Specific Olympic Research Interests: Governance, history, politics, nationalism, human rights, Court of Arbitration for Sport, anti-doping, power, influence, UN, gender equality, etc.

MADDOX Mark Mr. *2 January 1963; E-mail: madoxm333@gmail.com; Address: 95-219 Aua Place, Millilani, Hawaii 96789, UNITED STATES; Occupation: retired; Specific Olympic Research Interests: 1960 Winter Olympics.

SHEMAL Fernando Mr. *6 December 1959; E-mail: shemal@email.com; Address: 612 Pantaleon Mawatha, Rilaulla, Kandana 11230, SRI LANKA; Tel: +94773584184; Occupation: Lecturer; Olympic/Sports Publications: IOC Scholar, Course Director; Specific Olympic Research Interests: Olympic history, Olympic Games, Olympians.

WHELAN Donald Mr. *31 August 1977; E-mail: don@wintervictor.com; Address: 18 Woburn Street, Andover, MA 01810, UNITED STATES; Tel: +1 978-528-7306; Occupation: Graphic Designer; Olympic/Sports Publications: Sprockets of Fire, website focused on the official films of the Games, www.sprocketsoffire.com; Specific Olympic Research Interests: Visual aspects: graphics, film, media, Historical context.

WICKI Olivia Ms. *24 May 1996; E-mail: olivia.wicki@san.t.ox.ac.uk; Address: 62 Woodstock Rd., St Antony’s College, Oxford University, OX2 6JF, UNITED KINGDOM; Occupation: Student at Oxford University; Specific Olympic Research Interests: Writing a master’s dissertation.

OLD MEMBERS
BARKER Philip
New Address: 8 Nursery Close, East Preston, Sussex BN16 1QD, UNITED KINGDOM.

DINEHART III Mason A.
New Address: 74 Sage Circle, San Ramon, CA 94583 UNITED STATES.

GERBER Hans-Dieter
New Address: Eulerstrasse 78, 4051 Basel, SWITZERLAND.

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KOEDAM Christian
New Address: Woudgraff 3, 2761 RD Zevenhuizen-ZH, THE NETHERLANDS.

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