

ORGANISING COMMITTEE FOR THE XIVth. OLYMPIAD

LONDON 1948

PROGRESS REPORT No 1

Organisation

According to the Olympic Rules, the Olympic Association of the country in which the Games are to be held is entitled to allot the task of organising the Games to an Organising Committee.

This was done and the following persons were nominated :

The Viscount Portal of Laverstoke D. S. O., M. V. O. (President of the Games); The Lord Burghley K. C. M. G. (Chairman) ; Lord Aberdare; Sir Noel Curtis-Bennett, K. C. V. O. ; Alderman H. E. Fern, O. B. E., J. P. ; Mr. E. J. Holt ; Colonel Evan Hunter, O. B. E. ; Mr. J. Emrys Lloyd, O. B. E. ; Mr. J. B. Cowley ; Mr. R. B. Studdert; Mr. A. E. Porritt, C. B. E., F. R. C. S.; Mr. S. F. Rous, C. B. E. ; Mr. Jack Beresford. Lt. Col. T. P. M. Bevan M. C. (General Organising Secretary).

General Organising Secretary

Lt. Col. T. P. M. Bevan was appointed General Organising Secretary for the Games in March 1946 and took up his duties on May 1st 1946. His permanent Staff to date consists of two Assistant Secretaries and three women secretaries.

Offices

Offices were obtained in the Army and Navy Stores, 105, Victoria Street on August 19th, 1946 and application made for building licences to carry out certain improvements. Licence for work in these offices, already occupied, has been obtained and work has now commenced.

Formation of a Limited Company

In order to limit the liability of the individual members of the Committee a scheme was prepared by Messrs. Farrer & Co., Solicitors, in conjunction with Messrs. Kemp Chatteris & Co., Chartered Accountants, for the formation of a non-profit making association limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

Application was made for the association to obtain the Licence of the Board of Trade to be registered without the word " Limited ", as it was felt that if the Committee were formed as a limited company bearing the word " limited " at the end of its name, it might give rise to the belief that the Committee was a trading company being formed with a profit motive. This Licence was obtained in November 1946.

The Memorandum and Articles were prepared providing :

- (1) For a Patron or Patrons to be appointed.
- (2) A grand Council of distinguished persons who desired to lend their support to the Games.
- (3) For the management of the Committee to be vested in an Executive Committee equivalent to and having the powers of a Board of Directors of a Company.
- (4) For the distribution of the Committee's funds upon dissolution to the British Olympic Association, the International Olympic Committee or otherwise for the benefit of amateur sport.

Messrs. Kemp Chatteris were appointed to look after the Committee's Accounts, subject to confirmation by the Committee after incorporation as a company limited by guarantee.

A Company Seal embodying the Olympic Rings, to be used on official documents of the Company, has been approved by the Organising Committee.

Venue for Olympic Games

As early as November 1936, the British Olympic Association was in touch with the management of Wembley Stadium. In March 1946, the Organising Committee asked the White City Stadium Company also to make an offer to stage the Games. After reviewing all the facts, it was decided that Wembley was the most suitable location. The Main Stadium at Wembley could stage the Athletics, Football, Hockey. The Empire Pool would be ideal for Swimming and Boxing and there were other buildings suitable for the Fencing, Wrestling and Weight-Lifting. The Wembley properties could also provide facilities for training and a separate running track and open air pistes for Epee. There were other buildings on the premises suitable for administration Offices.

Early in May, the Chairman and Organising Secretary met the Ministry of Works to secure approval to construct an open air Swimming pool which would take the Diving and Water Polo events. Licences were very promptly forthcoming and work has already begun.

The Ministry of Works also approved the construction of a new Motor road to connect Wembley Station and the Stadium. This work was about to begin in 1939 but had to be abandoned owing to the outbreak of the War. Work is now in progress.

The only suitable cycling track in or near London is at Herne Hill. This track was inspected, in conjunction with representatives of the National Cyclists's Union, and found to be suitable. Certain improvements will have to be carried out, such as increasing the Stand capacity and installing more, turnstiles at the gates and lavatories.

Other venues decided are : Henley for Rowing and Canoeing, Torbay for Yachting, Aldershot for Modern Pentathlon, None of these require any work done on them at this stage.

Wembley Agreement

The Wembley Stadium Limited has been interested in staging the Olympic Games since 1936. Even before the final decision to hold the 1948 Games in London, Wembley had made some firm proposals including an offer to finance the whole Games and to advance such sums to the Organising Committee as were considered necessary for the preparation.

The Wembley Company was willing to stand any loss which might occur.

As a result of negotiations between the Organising Committee and Sir Arthur Elvin, the Managing Director of the Wembley Stadium Ltd. a draft agreement has been drawn up by Mr. Emrys Lloyd in conjunction with the Wembley Solicitors, submitted to the Executive Committee and discussed by this Committee in the presence of Sir Arthur Elvin. This Agreement is expected to be signed at the beginning of November.

The main provisions of the " Wembley Agreement " are summarised as follows :

- (a) The Stadium Company will give to the Organising Committee sole and unrestricted use of the Wembley properties for the period of the Games and for a period of fourteen days prior to the Games and the Committee will stage on the properties such games and ceremonies as it considers fit.
- (b) The Stadium Company will give to the Organising Committee free of charge the benefit of the Stadium Company's organisation and Staff before and during the Games.
- (c) The Stadium Company will carry out at its own expense certain structural alterations to its properties, such as the provision of extra seating accommodation, the building of an open-air swimming and diving pool, the provision of an athletes' rest room, conference rooms etc., and the decoration of the main stadium with flags etc. The Stadium Company will also carry out certain work at the expense of the Committee, in particular the laying down of a running track in the main stadium.
Other work not specified in the Agreement would be carried out by the Stadium Company at the Committee's request, on the basis that the Stadium Company should pay for any work etc. which is of use or benefit to the Stadium Company after the Games, and that the Committee should pay for any such work which is of purely temporary nature and not of use or benefit to the Stadium Company thereafter.
- (d) The Stadium Company will advance working capital for the Organising Committee as required up to £ 60,000.
- (e) The Stadium Company will guarantee the Organising Committee's against loss up to £ 100,000.
- (f) All profits from programmes, catering, and other incidental revenue arising out of the Games will be to the profit of the Organising Committee.
- (g) Compensation will be paid to the Stadium Company in respect of actual loss, so far as can be calculated, which the Stadium Company will have suffered by the closing of the greyhound track during the period of the Games and prior to their Opening.

Sub-committees

As stated in the Chairman's Report to the I. O. C., it was planned to set up the following Sub-Committees : Technical, Housing, Finance, Transport, Medical Services, Reception, Press and Publicity, Arts.

Housing

The question of housing competitors has been taken up at a high level with His Majesty's Government. It was originally planned that competitors should be concentrated in the Northolt area and the Government was working on this scheme. The General Organising Secretary has been informed that this scheme has now been abandoned and that the Government is working on an alternative plan.

Application for inclusion in the Games

Applications have been received from the National Associations and other bodies for the inclusion of the following sports in addition to those already approved by the I. O. C. : Model Yachting, Women's Hockey, Lacrosse, Gliding, Baseball, National Folk Dancing, Rugby Football, Table-Tennis and Clay Pigeon Shooting.

Individual Events

The Technical Sub-Committee is having frequent meetings with the Governing Bodies of the various sports. The following are typical of the problems already arising :

(a) The Palace of Arts. It has been found that, in view of the number of pistes required by the Fencers, and because of the length of this programme, it will not be possible to stage the wrestling and weight-lifting in the Palace of Arts if the fencing is held there. Nor could the Art Exhibition be held with the fencing in the Palace of Arts. It will therefore, be necessary to find alternative venues for some of these events.

(b) Hockey Association. This Association which is not affiliated to the International Hockey Federation, is not anxious to participate in the Games, although many continental countries and America and India will send teams. On the other hand it is essential to obtain the full co-operation of the Hockey Association for the technical arrangements. One difficulty is that of obtaining suitable grounds since Hockey grounds are used for cricket in the summer.

(c) Jumping. There is some doubt as to whether the Stadium can meet certain minimum requirements for the Prix des Nations and whether the Dressage Demonstration can also be held in the Stadium.

(d) Shooting. The National Rifle Association is not affiliated to the Fédération internationale de tir. There is some doubt whether they will compete, but they will probably assist.

(e) Cycling. There has been some discussion whether Wembley or Herne Hill should be the venue for the track events owing to the high cost of making Herne Hill suitable. Enquiries are to be made of the Minister of Works whether Richmond Park could be closed for the road race and a gate charged.

(f) Pentathlon. The provision of horses for the competitors is normally the responsibility of the Organising Committee. It is estimated that 60 horses at approximately £ 150 would be required. This matter is being investigated by the Chairman.

(g) Basket Ball. The site has not yet been decided. The Amateur Basket Ball Association wants to hold it indoors and the Queen's Club has been suggested.

(h) Boxing. The Amateur Boxing Association has convened an International Congress on 28th. November in London, to endeavour to form a new International Federation.