

The National Olympic Committees

(continuation II)

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and Great Britain.)

AUSTRIA (1908)

(Oesterreichisches Olympisches Comite)

Austria has participated in all the Olympic Games of the modern Era, with the exception of those held in Antwerp in 1920. This abstention was due only to the fact that the Organizing Committee did not issue an invitation to Austria to send her team to Antwerp, considering this newly founded State to be one of the former alien Central Powers.

No National Olympic organization existed in Austria until 1910 ; as a result the money to cover the expenses of sending the Austrian athletes to the Games in Athens, Paris, St. Louis, Athens 1906, and London, had to be collected by sports clubs and by private persons devoted to the ideals of the Olympic Movement.

The first Central Sports Confederation in Austria, founded in order to arrange a grand festival of sport on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the coronation of Emperor Francis Joseph I in 1908, was the first Olympic Committee. Under the title of *Austrian Central Committee for General Sports Interests*, this country made the arrangements for Austria's participation in the Games at Stockholm.

This Union continued in existence until the end of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the year 1918.

After the First World War the sports organizations of the newly founded State of Austria established *The Austrian General Central Sports Union*, which was also acknowledged as the National Olympic Committee for Austria.

Subsequently, in the year 1935, a completely independent new organization was founded with the title of Austrian Olympic Committee. It existed only for three years until the end of the First Austrian Republic in 1938, since there was no National Olympic Committee in the country during the German occupation.

Very shortly after the end of the Second World War and the renaissance of Austria, a few ardent apostles of the Olympic Movement set out to bring about the foundation of a new Austrian National Olympic Committee.

On December 11th 1946 at a meeting of all the Olympic Sports Federations of Austria, the proposal to constitute an Austrian Olympic Committee in compliance with the rules of the International Olympic Committee was accepted unanimously.

The new Committee was placed under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Austria, at present Dr. Adolf Schärf. Dr. Josef Gerö, Federal Minister of Justice and Chairman of the Austrian Football Association, was elected as the Committee's first President. Upon the death of Dr. Gerö, the Federal Minister of Education Dr. Heinrich Drimmel was elected as his

successor in 1956, and remains President of the present Committee.

At the Constituent Meeting Mr. Edgar Fried, a sportsman who has long been active in Olympic affairs, was elected as first General Secretary. He was re-elected for the two subsequent Olympiads and is also carrying out his functions for the Olympic Games of 1960.

SWITZERLAND (1912)

(The Swiss Olympic Committee)

The Swiss Olympic Committee has been founded in 1912 after the initiative of Mr. Godefroy de Blonay, member of the International Olympic Committee for Switzerland since 1899. However, in 1902, a *Swiss Committee for the participation to the Olympic Games* was already being created, which functioned for the Olympic Games in 1904, 1908, and 1912. After the Stockholm Games the Swiss Olympic Committee was definitively constituted. It now groups 28 federations counting a total of 900,000 members. The first president was Mr. Meyer de Stadelhofen from Geneva (an Olympic winner at shooting) with Dr. Fr. M. Messerli as a general secretary, who fulfilled this task for twenty-five years. Since its foundation, the Swiss Olympic Committee has had five presidents only : from 1912 to 1921 Dr. M. Meyer de Stadelhofen ; from 1921 to 1922 Dr. P. Reinbold ; from 1922 to 1923 Colonel A. Fonjallaz ; from 1923 to 1937 Mr. W. Hirschy and since 1937 Mr. Marcel Henninger from Geneva, the general secretary being Mr. Jean Weymann, from Lausanne, in function since 1946.

The Swiss Olympic Committee has organized several Olympic Congress and sessions in Lausanne among which the 25th, 40th and 60th anniversaries of the International Olympic Committee in 1919, 1934, 1944 and 1954. Twice the Winter' Olympic Games were organized in Switzerland, at St-Moritz, in 1928 and 1948.

The Swiss Olympic Committee is composed of the member of the International Olympic Committee, of one representative for each National Federation whose sport is on the Olympic programme or likely to ever be, of advisory members having possibly taken part in the Games or their organization.

All functions of the Swiss Olympic Committee's Executive Board and its Office are honorary.

Its Seat is in Lausanne.

BELGIUM (1906)

(Belgian Olympic Committee)

On February 18th 1906, a group of sports leaders founded the Belgian Olympic Committee. Baron E. de Laveleye was elected its president ; he was then holding the function of president of the Athletics Association, a federation which controlled both Football and Athletic sports and had even a cycling section. The aim of this Committee was to organize and ensure the participation of Belgium in the Olympic Games held in Athens in 1906. It carried out this mission successfully and thereafter it performed this duty for subsequently Games.

It organized successfully the Olympic Games held in Antwerp in 1920, thus realizing a real feat, when one takes into consideration that the First World War had only come to an end two years previously, and that Belgium had most of her territory under German occupation for the whole duration of the war.

In 1925, the Olympic Committee amalgamated with the National Committee for Physical Education and Public Health which was founded in 1919, thus constituting the National Physical Education and the Belgian Olympic Committee.

On May 4th 1953, it reverted to the former title of Belgian Olympic Committee (Union of National Physical Education and Sports).

At the present time 45 National Federations are members of the Belgian Olympic Committee which is under the high patronage of His Majesty King Baudouin.

The influence of the Belgian Olympic Committee is chiefly felt in the mutual study of all important matters concerned with the organization of Physical Education and Sport in general. It encourages intercourse between respective National Federations and endeavours to promote the fusion of their joint efforts in order to obtain the realization of their programme. It promotes and expands contacts with the Public Governing Bodies in order to solve problems appertaining to sport and Physical Education. It collaborates with official Governing Bodies in order to organize and direct sports programmes intended for national events of some importance, as was the case with the Commemoration for the Centenary of Belgian Independence and also with the International Exhibitions held respectively in Antwerp, Liege and Brussels. It also distributed the subsidies from this source amongst the federations who took part.