

The Second African Games



The Lord Killanin, President of the IOC, and Lady Killanin were present at the Second African Games which were held in Lagos (Nigeria) from 6th to 13th January 1973. Mr Avery Brundage, Honorary President, (Cheik Gabriel Gemayel, Mr Willi Daume, Vice-President, Mr A.D. Touny, Sir Ade Ademola, Mr Giulio Onesti, Dr A.M. Halim, Mr Raymond Gafner, Mr Louis Guirandou, N'Diaye, Mr Ydnekatchew Tessema) members of the IOC, were also present.

Organisation

The Presidency of the Organising Committee was bestowed upon Brigadier H. E. O. Adefope, who was assisted in the task by Mr Abraham A. Ordia, Secretary general.

The Organising Committee started work in 1970.

A national sports centre, comprising a stadium for 60,000 spectators, a swimming pool, sports hall, pitches for basketball, handball, football, volleyball and tennis were provided with electronic equipment.

3,000 athletes, including 300 women, representing 36 countries, took part in the Games in the following sports:

a) Olympic Sports: athletics (men and women), basketball (men and women), boxing, cycling, football, handball, judo,

swimming (men and women) and volleyball.

b) Other Sports: lawn tennis and table tennis.

The athletes stayed in three villages, two for men and one for women, in Lagos University. Approximately 1,200 officials, judges and jury members were involved in the organisation of the Games.

Sports Results

The technical results obtained in the Olympic sports demonstrated good progress in sport in many African countries.

In athletics and swimming many African records were broken and, in spite of unfavourable atmospheric conditions, excellent performances were achieved in the different events.

In athletics the 18 year old Chene Kari-Kari from Ghana won two events with good performances. The Olympic champion in the 400 m hurdles, John Akii-Bua of Uganda, won his event with an excellent time of 48" 05. One of the best results of the Games was achieved by Cosmos Silei (Kenya) who won the 800 m in 1'45"3, one second outside the world record. The 1,500 m was won by Filbert Bayi (Tanzania) in 3'37"18 defeating the double Olympic winner in Munich Kip Keino (Kenya). A new world record was established in the 3,000 steeplechase by Ben Yipcho (Kenya) in 8'20"9.

In general, the Olympic standard was reached in all the events, from the 400 m to the Marathon, won by the Ethiopian Mamo Wolde.

Good progress was also noted in swimming. Twelve countries took part in the events which were dominated, as expected, by the Egyptians. The Egyptian Eldin Gabr won the 100 m freestyle in 55"56.1, but the most encouraging result was

achieved by a 16 year old Nigerian schoolboy John Ebitu, who covered the distance in 58"5.

The boxing competitions were dominated by the Nigerian athletes who attained three victories in the light welter-weight, light heavy-weight and heavy weight categories.

Contacts with African Sports Leaders

During the Games, President Killanin and other members of the IOC had many discussions with the African sports leaders. Mr Raymond Gafner presented a report on the protection of the Olympic emblems to a meeting of the African NOCs.

African Sports Journalists Union

The Congress of the African Sports Journalists Union (ASJU) held in Lagos on 6th and 7th January 1973, renewed its confidence in the Executive Committee under the Presidency of Mr Tshimpumpu Wa Tshimpumpu (Zaire) and unanimously elected Mr Pathe Diallo (Guinea) as Vice-President, a position left vacant since the death of Mr Victor Merhy (Ivory Coast) in 1970.

Four new members of the Executive Committee were also elected. They were: Messrs Abdellaziz Dahmani (Tunisia), Joseph Anani (Togo), Stephane Malonga (Congo) and Norbert Ranaivo (Madagascar).

The Congress of the African Sports Journalists Union has decided to organise a yearly referendum to designate the best

African athlete who will be awarded, for a year, the Trophy given by General Mobutu Sese Seki, President of the Republic of Zaire, and the property of the ASJU.

The Trophy in 1972 was awarded to the Olympic champion John Akii-Bua (Uganda), voted best African athlete at a referendum held in Munich.

At the end of the meeting, the journalists gave a vote of thanks to the Organising Committee for the Munich Games, to the Press Department and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Federal Republic of Germany for the help and kind co-operation they showed towards those responsible for the organisation of the second African Games.

Let us remember, for our part, that the idea of Pierre de Coubertin in 1924 to create African Games, consequently revived in French speaking countries under the name of the Friendship Games, has at last become a reality. Without any doubt, the third African Games will achieve considerable success and prestige.

