



## The Olympic movement in the Americas

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There is complete identification between the American countries as far as the Olympic ideal is concerned. It is a fact that the reappearance of the Olympic Games, since the message of that illustrious French teacher Pierre de Coubertin to the world in 1892, received an enthusiastic welcome from the New World. Such enthusiasm and fidelity to this message proved to be not merely conventional but really direct and objective, so that Mr. W. M. Sloane from the United States was invited to participate in the Commission in charge of the preparation of the Congress to discuss the rules and regulations concerning amateur sport. This Commission, completed by Mr. M. C. Herbert (United Kingdom) and the Baron himself, participated in two preliminary sessions, the first in New York (1893) and the second in London (1894).

The Olympic movement, destined to congregate the world in the aim of attaining complete unity and brotherhood, immediately reached American feelings in terms of full co-operation. Apart from the limitless spiritual and material support, the Olympic ideal has been spread from one side of the American continent to the other and nowadays its philosophy and essence are shared by all the nations of the Americas. Proof of such communion have been the three Olympic Games held in America, first in 1904 in the city of Saint Louis, then in 1932 in Los Angeles and in 1968 in Mexico. The forthcoming Games will take place in Montreal, Canada, in 1976, celebrating the XXIst Olympiad of the modern era. The presence of Olympism in the Americas is a fact, together with the

support given by the respective Governments, anxious to develop their population's culture through the practice of sport. In addition to the fact that America has had the privilege of filling the Presidency of the International Olympic Committee through one of her most prominent citizens, Mr. Avery Brundage, the aims of such an authentic universal crusade have been accepted and maintained with a conscious and true fervour, demonstrated by the organisation of several regional games held in the three Americas in accordance with the spirit of the Olympic Games.

Several Games are regularly held on the American continent of 35 nations. Most of the countries from the New World participate in the Olympic Games, in tribute to the spirit of the sports demonstration of the youth of the world.

There are four Regional Games in the Americas: the Central American and Caribbean Games, the Bolivarian Games, the Pan American Games and the Central American Games. The first and oldest were held in 1926 in Mexico City with the participation of the Dutch West Indies, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, the West Indies, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Venezuela.

The following, held for the first time in 1938 in Bogota, Columbia, comprised Venezuela, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Columbia, Bolivia and Chile, all of them paying tribute to Simon Bolivar, symbol of their fights for liberty and independence.

The Pan American Games were held for the first time in 1951 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and are the most important of all since they include the participation of athletes from the three Americas. After Buenos Aires, the Pan American Games were held as follows: —in 1955 in Mexico City; in 1959 in Chicago; in 1963 in Sao Paulo, Brazil; in 1967 in Winnipeg, Canada; in 1971 in Cali, Columbia. The next will be held in 1975 in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and in 1979 in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The main merits of such Games are the contribution to the strengthening of American unity and the bringing together of nations and sportsmen under the inspiration of the Olympic ideal, in accordance with the philosophy that inspired the reappearance of the Olympic Games. Far removed from economic advantage and political interference, the Olympic movement in the Americas is free from any kind of subordination and rigorously follows the patterns established by the International Olympic Committee. Such procedure is shared by the American Governments, always willing to help the National Olympic Committees, without direct or indirect interference.

The Regional Games in the Americas are closely connected with the high ideals marking the presence of the Olympic movement in the world.

Far removed from materialism, which is a permanent source of selfishness, intolerance, violence and arbitrariness, the Regional Games are anxious to attain the foundation of the Olympic principles, love and meekness, carrying aloft the banner of goodwill, attempting to make the earth a place of peace and happiness.

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