

International Olympic Academy

*An institution often
underestimated
in international sport*

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The image of sport as presented by the media today is imbued with large scale international events, such as the “Tour de France”, the world and European championships of different sports, the developments of the football league’s season, as well as, to a certain extent, the activities of mass sport. Nevertheless, if one were to ask an average follower of sport about the International Olympic Academy, it is almost certain that he would know neither of its existence nor its aims.

German sports leaders, in conjunction with their Greek counterparts, contributed to the foundation of this international institution. In fact, it is to the devotion of Carl Diem and his Greek friend Jean Ketseas that we owe, after long preparations, the creation of this institution in 1961. The German Federal Minister of the Interior had at that time agreed to financial assistance, in order to allow the holding of the first Session of this international institution in the ideal setting of the ancient stadium which had been restored by German archaeologists. The fact that the International Olympic Committee had allowed this crea-

tion caused a great deal of world-wide publicity.

Since 1961, the Hellenic Olympic Committee has regularly organised courses, seminars and working weeks at Olympia which are attended by students, doctors and coaches from all over the world. Meetings and courses are also held on the promotion of national Greek sport, which bring together school inspectors, sports officials, etc. While this work is important, however, the international press scarcely mentions it or is even unaware of it.

On the site of the 1961 canvas camp concrete buildings have since been erected which greatly facilitate the organisation of the courses mentioned above. In addition, sports installations have been set up so that theory may be applied on a practical level.

The activities of the IOA, under the auspices of the Hellenic Olympic Committee, are supported by an IOC Commission; and by a great majority of Olympic officials who regularly attend the annual Sessions.

In 1977 the work programme comprised, in addition to the usual courses, a special week devoted to international educationists. It was the second attempt in five years to assemble, in ancient Olympia, scientists specialised in sport and physical education teachers from all over the world in the aim of studying the significance and possibilities of the Olympic movement in the field of education. This is not an occasion for losing oneself in long-term reveries which are unadaptable. The discussions and exposés have first of all to deal with the foundation and perpetual aims of the Olympic movement, in order to relate them to today’s particular conditions and attitudes, and to ask how they can be achieved. Above all, it is a question of showing what the Olympic idea can bring to general pedagogic practice.

Those engaged in a pedagogic activity know that in this field one should neither wait for nor hope to attain spectacular results from one day to the next. Only constant and well-directed efforts will allow a result, however modest, to be achieved.

F.L.



1978 programme of the IOA

2nd to 7th July

Special Session for members and staff of National Olympic Committees

- Main topic : "Olympism".
- Special topic : "The role of the NOCs".

7th to 23rd July

17th Session of the International Olympic Academy

- Main topic : "Olympism".
- Special topic : "Olympism in society".

The opening ceremony is planned for Saturday 8th July at 7.30pm on the hill of the Pnyx in Athens.

23rd to 30th July

8th Session for Greek Educationists

- Main topic : "Olympism".
- Special topic : "Olympism and education".

30th July to 6th August

Special session for educationists from the USA.

Study themes of the IOA

- History of the Olympic Games both modern and ancient.
- Olympic philosophy.
- Archaeology.
- Education.
- Psychology.
- Sports medicine.
- Technique in modern sports.
- Fine arts.

The themes of the last ten IOA Sessions

- 1967 : The athlete, a human being.
- 1968 : Competitive sport and education.
- 1969 : The modern Olympic Games.
- 1970 : Olympic preparation.
- 1971 : Prospects of the Olympic movement and of sport in general.
- 1972 : The environment of the Olympic competitor.
- 1973 : The contribution of the intellectual world to the Olympic movement.
- 1975 : The modern Olympic Games.
- 1976 : The new generation and Olympism.
- 1977 : The problems of modern Olympism.

