

The Olympic Football Tournament

The Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee, under the presidency of Lord Killanin, met with Dr. João Havelange, President of FIFA, and Dr. Helmut Käser, Secretary General, on 30th January, 1979, in Lausanne.

A very full discussion took place on what the Executive Board and the IOC Eligibility Commission regarded as a breach of the Olympic Rules by eliminating all South American and European players if they had taken part in the 1978 World Cup, and thus making them ineligible for the Olympic Games in 1980.

President Havelange explained that he was bound by the decision of his Federation's Congress and his executive had decided that they could not call an Extraordinary Congress of FIFA until the statutory meeting in 1980. The IOC has no objections to competitors in any sport competing in open competitions, provided they conform with Rule 26 of the IOC Olympic Charter.

The FIFA preliminaries commence in February and the Executive has had to accept, under protest, this ruling which will be reported at the IOC Session in Montevideo.

As these preliminaries are a technical matter for each International Federation, it was felt that the situation should be accepted in order not to jeopardise the many eligible teams and players who will take part in the Football tournament in the Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980.

Further, these discussions led to the whole question of entry into preliminary competitions for the final Olympic tournaments in all team sports. This is frequently done without reference to NOCs. Discussions were also held relating to the entry in preliminaries of teams which had no NOCs, and which FIFA agreed would not be eligible, if they qualified, for the Olympic Games.

The Executive of the IOC will meet with IFs on March 11th/12th, in Lausanne, when this latter question will be raised. Also, it will be on the agenda for the meeting of the Executive Board of the IOC with the NOCs in Puerto Rico in June.

(Press release)