

Olympic Solidarity

Asian course in sports medicine

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The IOC Solidarity FIMS Asian course in sports medicine, was organised jointly by the Indian Olympic Association and the Indian Association of Sports Medicine at the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sport in Patiala (IND) from 5th to 25th November, 1979.

Following difficulties in communication and arrangements which resulted in a postponement, I am pleased to report that the course took place as arranged and that it appears to have been successful.

The general arrangements for the course were entirely satisfactory and the administration was almost flawless. There was a minor problem in relation to transport of one of the lecturers (which was not the immediate responsibility of the organiser in Patiala) and the only other criticism that could be made is that some of the Indian doctors present had previously had an opportunity to attend a FIMS course. One would have thought that for the future, in view of the relatively limited number of positions available on these courses and the demand for them, it would be preferable to accept as students only those who had *never* attended a FIMS course.

The faculty members were Dr. J. G. P. Williams, consultant in rehabilitation medicine, and Secretary General of the FIMS, Professor Eide Lubs from the Institute of Sports Medicine in Kassel (GER), Dr. Henry Robson, editor of the British Journal of Sports Medicine, and Surgeon Commander Dermot Crean, specialist in rehabilitation and sports medicine to the Royal Navy. Guest lecturers included Dr. B. K. Annand (neuro-physiology and sports), Surgeon Rear Admiral Mal-

hotra (physiology of sport in an adverse environment) and Professor Kurt Tittel from Leipzig (sports anthropometry) who was present at the expense of the Government of the German Democratic Republic.

The curriculum followed in general the pattern of the FIMS basic course of sports medicine with additional lectures, and a valuable part of the course was a series of seminars in which the students themselves presented their own material for discussion by their peers and by the lecturers. There was, in addition, a satisfactory cultural and recreational programme and the National Institute of Sport in Patiala provided excellent facilities for physical recreation.

Altogether, twenty-six doctors completed the course officially and there was one other doctor who participated as an unofficial student. Lectures were also attended by a number of doctors from local institutes and by coaches from the National Institute of Sport.

The following eleven countries were represented : BRN, Bangladesh, BIR, CHN, IND, INA, ISR, NEP, Qatar, SYR, THA.

At the conclusion of the course, the students were submitted to an examination, using the multiple choice questionnaire with minus marks for incorrect answers. The pass level was set at 50% with a discount of 5% to cover any problems relating to languages. Four students, all from India, failed to reach the pass standard in the examination. All others passed, and the best students were jointly one from India and one from the People's Republic of China. All students (pass or fail) managed to achieve a greater than 50% level of correct answers. After the completion of the course, diplomas were presented and those students who had not previously attended FIMS courses were admitted to associate membership of the International Federation of Sports Medicine. Following the course, a questionnaire was submitted to all students, requesting their views on the organisation and management

of the course, standard of lecturers etc. The general opinion was that the three-week course was a little too long, but it is understood that this three-week period is that selected for standard Olympic Solidarity courses. Some of the candidates felt that the material was a little basic, but it is interesting to note that these candidates were in fact those who tended to score lowest in the examination ! The general standard of the lectures appeared to be satisfactory. There were difficulties reported with two lectures concerning language — this emphasises the point that the lecturers for courses of this type must be really experienced and fluent in the vernacular of the course. It is interesting that Professor Lubs presented more difficulty to the Indians than to the students from other countries (previously in Thailand, Professor Lubs had presented no difficulty with regard to comprehension). It therefore appears that the problem may in fact be less one of fluency than of accent. The apparent difficulty was not reflected in the scoring in the examination papers, so that although students may have had problems with the lecturers, there were no apparent difficulties with understanding the actual material.

It is possible that some of the difficulties in the examination were accounted for by the unfamiliarity of the students with the multiple choice type of examination, particularly a tendency to guess at answers rather than to leave blanks — incorrect answers being frequently penalised with minus marks. In other respects, the students appeared to have enjoyed the course enormously and, despite some difficulties early on, a very happy and relaxed atmosphere developed among the students regardless of the disparity in their countries of origin. By the end of the course there was a free mixture of students with no constraints, a matter for which the organisers should take credit and which is of course the whole essence of the Olympic movement and indeed of the International Federation of Sport Medicine.

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