

The commemoration of Olympic Day by NOCs

On 23rd June 1894, the Sorbonne Congress in Paris, convened by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, revived the Olympic Games and constituted an International Olympic Committee.

The commemoration of this important event in contemporary history, the veritable rebirth of Olympism, is celebrated each year in a large number of countries.

We thank all NOCs that sent us a report on the celebration of this Olympic Day in their country.



Colonel Rodriguez rewards the former boxer Oscar Casanovas, Olympic champion in 1936.

In Argentina

This was the first time that Olympic Day had been commemorated at the headquarters of the Argentine Olympic Committee. In his speech on this occasion, Colonel Antonio Rodriguez, President of the NOC, reminded those present of the origin of this Day and paid tribute to the Olympic medal-winners among the audience. We recognised Mrs. Noémi Simonetto de Portela, winner of a silver medal in London, Mr. Pedro Quartucci, winner of a bronze medal in Paris, and the wife of the IOC member in Argentina, Mrs Jeannette Campbell-Peper, winner of a silver medal in Berlin.

The Day was brought to a close by a presentation of diplomas to the Olympic medal-winners and by a tour of the sports facilities.

In Brazil

A brilliant gathering of some 300 people, presided over by Major Sylvio de Magalhaes Padilha, President of the NOC and a Member of the IOC, was held in São Paulo to commemorate Olympic Day. In his important speech, fully reported in the press, Major Sylvio de Magalhaes Padilha described the main lines of the BOC's sports programme. First of all, the organisation in the month of July of specialised courses in athletics and wrestling, as well as other courses in different sports before the end of the year, followed by the holding of international meetings and tournaments in Brazil to which Olympic gymnastics, athletics and basketball champions would be invited. Finally, the President of the BOC announced the creation as from next year of special prizes for journalists, photographers

and athletes with a view to encouraging sports enthusiasts.

After his speech, Major Sylvio Magalhaes Padilha presented the Brazilian Medal for Olympic Merit to General Montagna, President of the National Sports Committee and to Cel. Pericles Cavalcanti, Secretary of the Department of Physical Education and Sport at the Ministry of Education and Culture.

In Malta

The commemoration of Olympic Day was celebrated by a one-day seminar. The 41 participants, including women, athletes, referees, coaches, organisers, a lawyer, sports journalists and representatives of 14 National Federations, discussed the following theme : "What can you do to improve sport in Malta ?" After fruitful exchanges of ideas, Mr. Carm Borg, President of the Maltese Olympic Committee, summed up the Day's work by emphasising the importance of the Olympic spirit and philosophy in all sports activities.

During the sports news that evening, the television devoted five minutes to the event.

In Japan

This year, the Japanese National Olympic Committee had chosen Nagoya, a candidate town for the Olympic Games in 1988, to celebrate Olympic Day. Various events had been organised between 21st and 28th June.

There were exhibitions and concerts, as well as lectures given by representatives of the Japanese sports world, and sports meetings. The 23rd June was celebrated with all due solemnity. Mr. Katsuji Shibata, President of the Japanese National Committee, read out a message that Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, President of the IOC, had sent him on the occasion of Olympic Day and in which he recalled that :

"The aims and ideals of Olympism have always been valued in Japan, and I am sure that an occasion such as this is an ideal opportunity to share your love of sport and your Olympic memories not only amongst yourselves but with all your fellow countrymen and women".



The participants of the Olympic day of the Maltese NOC.



The Olympic medal Nobre Guedes.

In Portugal

All National Federations with a large membership organised sports meetings throughout the month of June. Thousands of folders were handed out to spectators explaining the origin of Olympic Day, the importance of the Olympic spirit, the existence of literary competitions on the subject of Olympic sport and finally informing them of the holding of the XIth Olympic Congress in Baden-Baden.

The speeches made on 23rd June were broadcast by radio. After a dinner attended by all the sports authorities in the country, Mr. Fernando Ferreira Lima Belle, President of the Portuguese Olympic Committee, presented prizes and trophies to the winners of the competitions held that month, as well as to the Portuguese River Club, the best amateur athlete in 1980 and the winner of the 1981 Marathon.

In Tunisia

● The national Olympic day was held this year on 17th May throughout the whole country. In traditional style, Mr. Slaheddine Baly, secretary general of the NOC and Minister for national defence, presented the day as being one of decentralisation.

He thanked all the national federations for their care and their contribution to a programme which was aimed at popularising sport. The day began at an early hour with the raising of the Olympic flag at a ceremony headed by Mr. Mohamed Mzali, the NOC's president and also the country's Prime Minister.

Shortly afterwards, in a statement to the press, the Prime Minister stated: "As in each year, the Olympic Committee, Tunisian athletes and all the national sports federations are celebrating the Olympic Day which was instituted by a decree signed on 9th May 1959 by the Supreme Commandant, President Habib Bourguiba.

It is an occasion for us, the members of the sports family, to exalt the principles for which the Olympic movement was created; this is the movement which works to encourage young people by teaching them high moral values, and contributes to bringing young people together in a friendly and brotherly way through healthy competition and exchange visits."

Mr. Mohamed Mzali stressed the Olympic movement's unceasing work in this respect over the past half-century in consistently promoting these principles, pointing out that national sports policy had been drawn up along these lines with the same aims, i.e. raising the level of young people in physical, moral and social terms.

