

## Full support for sports in GDR \*



by *Günther Heinze*

*IOC member,*

Following numerous requests we received from different countries I am pleased to outline, the foundations of the development of physical culture and sport in the German Democratic Republic.

In accordance with the Constitution of our country "physical culture, sport and tourism are elements of socialist culture which serve the all-round physical and intellectual development of citizens".

Consequently, as further defined by the Constitution, "the state and society encourage the participation of citizens in cultural life, physical culture and sport".

In this connection particular attention is paid to the social, vocational and sporting inclinations and needs of youth.

"It is the task of all young people to learn, to acquire a high degree of knowledge and ability and to prepare well for the requirements to be met in their professions" and "regular sports activities are the object and task of every young man and woman for the development of their personalities."

These obligatory statements, contained in the "Law on the participation of youth in the shaping of the developed socialist society and on their universal encouragement in the Ger-

man Democratic Republic-Law on the youth of the GDR"-passed by the GDR People's Chamber, are supplemented by the stipulation that "the socialist state assures the youth an all-round training and education and systematically creates the conditions required for this" as well as "ensures physical culture and sport in all spheres of life of young people".

Thus, the young citizens of our country have all the conditions to develop their abilities to the their full extent, to live in social security and to indulge in their interests and inclinations.

Therefore, regular sports activities, the pleasure taken in training and competition and the natural striving of young people for achieving high performances are stimulated and supported by a number of measures.

For instance,

- the systematic construction and preservation of facilities relating to physical culture and sport,
- the free use of sports facilities,
- the utilisation of the cultural and social funds of enterprises and institutions for the development of physical culture and sport as well as the recreation of the working population.
- insurance coverage in case of accidents occurring as a result of sports exercises-as one form of social insurance benefits and payments to be made by the enterprise for loss of pay as is the case with an industrial accident,
- the release of athletes and officials from work for the purpose of participating in sports courses and sports events,
- the continued payment for loss of wages and salaries incurred by the release from work for the participation in sports courses and sports events,
- fare reductions for trips of sports groups to participate in competitions and courses,

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– the appreciation of outstanding merits for the development of physical culture and sport and of high performances in sports by awarding governmental prizes, etc.

These are governed through corresponding laws and instructions by the Council of Ministers of the GDR, the Governmental Committee of Physical Culture and Sport (the name of which is now State Secretariat of Physical Culture and Sport) and the respective professional ministries.

In addition to that governmental and municipal institutions as well as social organisations and nationally-owned enterprises utilise every

possibility within their jurisdiction to grant the necessary support to the development of physical culture and sport.

As a result of these versatile measures we can state that more and more citizens, and especially young people, of our country make use of the increasing possibilities of practising sports for the purposes of their health and efficiency.

*G.H.*

