

THE OLYMPIC PROGRAMME

Women's progression

Although Baron de Coubertin was opposed to the introduction of women's events in the revived Olympic Games, several women took part as early as 1900 in Paris, in tennis and archery - sports which, strangely enough, have not returned to the Olympic programme until just recently - and also in golf and in ice skating. Women swimmers and gymnasts took part for the first time in the 1912 Stockholm Games, but it was not until 1928 that the first official women athletics competitors were recorded.

It is not until after the Second World War, that is from the 1948 London Games onwards, that one can speak of a real women's Olympic programme. The development of this programme, which is briefly outlined below, has had considerable bearing on the development of women's sport in general as a result of the increasing influence of the Games themselves.

To begin with, a rapid survey is necessary. In 1936 in Berlin, there was a total of fifteen women's events out of a possible seventy-one in seventeen sports. These included six athletics events, seven swimming events, one in fencing and one in gymnastics.

In Los Angeles in 1984 there will be sixty-one women's events out of the two hundred and twenty on the programme. Twenty eight per cent of events will therefore be exclusively reserved for women. Female athletes will be able to compete in all sports on the programme except for boxing, football, judo, wrestling, modern pentathlon and weightlifting.

In Seoul in 1988 tennis and table tennis will be added. Seventeen of the twenty-three Olympic sports will thus be open to women. Moreover, at the suggestion of the International Judo Federation, the IOC Commission for the Programme is currently studying the possibility of accepting women's judo events.

In the same way, the International Amateur Athletic Federation has just decided, during its December 1983 Council meeting in Manila, to ask the IOC to include the 10 000 m and the 10 km walking events in the women's athletics programme as from 1988. The men's and women's race programmes would then be identical from the 100 m sprint to the mara-



thon, except for the men's 5000 m (which has its counterpart in the women's 3000 m) and for the 3000 m steeple which is reserved for men.

In most of the events of three Olympic sports - equestrian events, shooting and sailing - women compete side by side with men. Even though there are usually few women in these mixed events, it does not prevent them from winning medals. In this way, Virginie Heriot (FRA) became Olympic sailing champion (8 m class) in 1928 ; Margaret Murdock (USA) won the silver medal for rifle shooting (50 m, 'three positions) in 1976 with the same number of points as the Olympic champion ; Janou Tissot-Lefebvre (FRA) won silver medals in the team steeplechase in 1964 and 1968. It even seems that dressage is becoming a discipline where the highest step of the podium is reserved for women, since Liselott Lisenhoff (FRG), Christine Stueckelberger (SUI) and

Elisabeth Theurer (AUT) were all three individual champions at Munich, Montreal, and Moscow respectively. In Los Angeles there will be fifteen mixed events.

The Winter Games programme includes two mixed events in which the man and the woman are partners : pairs figure skating and ice dancing. In Sarajevo there will be thirteen women's events out of a total of thirty-nine. In

skiing and ice skating there is an almost perfect balance between men's and women's events. On the other hand, three Olympic winter sports are not currently open to women : biathlon, bobsleigh and ice hockey.

The table below shows the development of the women's Olympic programme in the Games of the Olympiad as well as in the Winter Games.

Variations in the Number of Men's and Women's Events in the Olympic Games

		1948	1952	1956	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984	1988
Games of the W		+4	+5	+1	+4	+4	+4	+6 ²	+4	+6	+1	+11
Olympiad	M	+5	+3	+1	-2	+10	+5	+15	-3	+4	+6	+5
Winter Games	W	+2	+2	+1	+4	+2	0	0	+1	0	+1	-
	M	+2	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	0	-

¹ Since 1952 equestrian events in the Games have been open to women.

* Since 1968 Shooting events in the Games have been open to women.

As from 1984, three shooting events will be reserved exclusively for women

It can be seen that since 1948 the increase in the number of women's Olympic events has been constant, in general greater or equal to that of the men's programme. The table gives the names of women's events added to the programme from Olympiad to Olympiad. The most significant increase is for the Games of the XXIIIrd Olympiad in Los Angeles, with eleven new women's events. This tendency can only become strengthened after the XIth Olympic Congress in Baden Baden (1981) where numerous speakers expressed the wish that there should be increased female participation in the Olympic Games.

More importantly perhaps for the future, is that, amongst the new 1984 Olympic events, there are two disciplines which have no equivalent in the men's programme. These are synchronised swimming and rhythmic gymnastics'.

Moreover, the Union Internationale de Tir (International Shooting Union) felt it necessary to introduce three events reserved for women, in order to promote their participation in this sport, in the Olympics whilst retaining the trap and skeet as mixed events. Other International Federations have plans to take such measures.

A progression is clearly taking place. So much so that the International Softball Federa-

tion, of which the President and Secretary General are men, is suggesting to the IOC that softball becomes an Olympic sport primarily for women. There are, after all, Olympic sports such as boxing, wrestling, and weightlifting which are reserved for men, and which are difficult to imagine as women's events. In this way perhaps "sport" and "masculinity" will cease to be automatically associated. The *human* qualities on which sport is founded would therefore be furthered.

Avery Brundage took pleasure in emphasizing that the Olympic Movement constitutes one of the most powerful social forces of our time. By incorporating more and more women's events in the Olympic programme on the initiative of its President SE. Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, the IOC is not contenting itself with following the movement for women's emancipation, but contributes to this to a great extent every four years by showing to thousands of people that both women and men are equally worthy of acclaim.

* In 1952 and 1956 a team portable apparatus event (very similar to today's rhythmic gymnastics) was included in the Olympic programme. Furthermore, the points won in this event were added to the total obtained by the women's teams in the other four exercise (floor, beam, asymmetric bars and horse vault) in order to draw up the awards list for the over-all gymnastics competition.

Women's events added to the Olympic Programme since 1948

Summer

London 1948 (+4)

200 m sprint, long jump, shot put ; 500 m single-seater kayak.

Helsinki 1952 (+ 5)

Individual all around gymnastics competition, asymmetric bars, floor exercises, horse vault, beam.

Melbourne 1956 (+1)

100 m butterfly.

Rome 1960 (+ 4)

800 m (re-introduced after trial competitions in Amsterdam in 1928). 500 m two-seater kayak ; team foil ; 4 x 100 m medley relay.

Tokyo 1964 (+ 4)

400 m, pentathlon (athletics) ; 400 m medley; Volleyball tournament (6 and later 8 teams).

Mexico 1968 (+ 6)

200 m freestyle ; 800 m freestyle, 100 m breaststroke, 200 m backstroke, 200 m butterfly, 200 m medley.

Summer

Munich 1972 (+4)

1500 m, 4 x 100 m relay ; one-seater kayak slalom ; archery.

Montreal 1976 (+8) (-2)

Coxed fours, double sculls, coxless pairs skiff, coxed double fours, basketball tournament (6 teams), handball tournament (6 teams) ; (Withdrawal of 200 m medley and one-seater kayak slalom).

Moscou 1980 (+1)

Hockey tournament (6 teams).

Los Angeles 1984 (+ 11)

3000 m, 400 m hurdles, marathon ; four seater kayak ; Individual road cycling ; individual rhythmic gymnastics ; synchronised swimming duo; 200 m medley (reintroduced). Air-rifle, pistol shooting competition, small bore rifle shooting.

Seoul 1988 (provisional)

Tennis tournament ; Table tennis tournament ; judo events.

Winter

St-Moritz 1948 (+2)

Downhill, special slalom.

Oslo 1952 (+2)

Giant slalom, 10 km cross country skiing event.

Cortina 1956 (+1)

3 x 5 km (later 4 x 5 km) cross country skiing

Squaw Valley 1960 (+ 4)

500 m, 1000 m, 1500 m and 3000 m speed skating events.

Innsbruck 1964 (+2)

5 km cross country skiing event ; one seater luge.

Grenoble 1968 - Sapporo 1972

None.

Innsbruck 1976 (+1)

Ice dance (mixed event).

Lake Placid 1980

None.

Sarajevo 1984 (+1)

20 km cross country skiing event.