

HELLO FROM VIDY

This first “Hello from Vidy” of 1989 enables me to draw attention to the event which will be dominating the life of the Olympic Movement during the course of January 1989.

indeed, as the NOCs were informed at their meeting with the IOC EB in Vienna, in December 1988, Vidy will be the focus (around the middle of January) of attention within the Olympic world as it sends out for a four-month period of consultation, a second provisional version of the draft Olympic Charter.

This will represent an important stage in what is already a long history, since it was back in 1983 that the Executive Board appointed the working group to make a start on producing this new draft.

Chaired by Mr. James Worrall, IOC member in Canada, this working group has subsequently met on no fewer than 50 occasions, evidence that it has been taking a far-from-casual approach to its task!

Obviously there has never been any intention, either on the part of the working group or the Executive Board, of presenting this draft in its current form as the definitive opinion of the Executive Board. But the EB thought that the text, as sent out for consultation, was in a sufficiently advanced state to give rise to a wide and productive exchange of views within the Olympic family.

I feel I must stress too that the mission of the working group has not been to produce a document which will give its readers a thrill of excitement as they read through it. The aim was rather more to “spring clean” an old text in which many rules were out of date; to modernize the style and presentation; to make it easier to use; to give it a more logical structure; and to make innovations which will bring it nearer to the sensibilities and language of the present day.

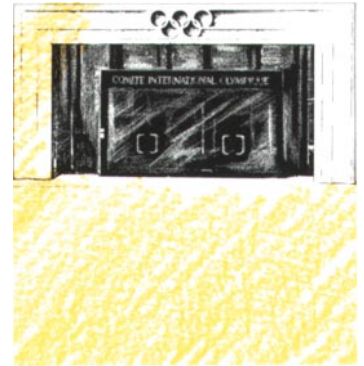
Even greater modifications, provided they seem to be genuinely justifiable, could thus be made within a new revised framework. The section on “Fundamental Princi-

ples” with a more specific and precise terminology now appears as an introduction to 71 Rules and their Bye-laws. The sections devoted to the IOC, the NOCs and the Olympic Games have undergone strict re-examination, and two new chapters dealing with the Olympic Movement and the International Federations have been added.

Certain controversial rules have been deliberately retained in their existing form in order to provide a wider basis for discussion. I am thinking in particular of the rules governing accreditation and the number of officials at the Olympic Games. In this way the most recent experiences acquired in Calgary and Seoul may be taken into consideration. The same applies to the new chapter on the International Federations, deliberately left in its embryonic state in order to allow those principally concerned to appreciate the substance of it.

It goes without saying that during the last six years of study, the draft has been constantly modified to accord with decisions taken at IOC Sessions and comments from IOC members, whose opinions were sought on a first draft version.

The “Hello from Vidy” is published under the sole responsibility of the one who signs it. I shall thus conclude with the personal observation that the Olympic Movement owes its longevity to its constant quest, for almost a century, to maintain a harmonious balance between its desire for change and its concern for permanence. In order to ensure that Olympism makes the transition from the XXth to the XXIst century in the most favourable conditions, the new edition of the Olympic Charter will have to respect, scrupulously, this principle of harmony. “Never change a winning team” traditional sports wisdom tells us. Who, pray, could legitimately claim that, obviously with the constraints, wastage and weaknesses of any human undertaking, the Olympic team is not, today, a “winning team”? So then, let us wish courage, lucidity and far-sightedness to those whose replies we in Vidy shall be eagerly awaiting!



By Raymond Gafner

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