

Participants in the Olympic Games



Dr Jacques Rogge is an orthopaedic surgeon by profession. In the course of his sports career, he competed in the yachting competitions (FINN class) at the Games of the Olympiad in Mexico in 1968, Munich in 1972 and Montreal in 1976, becoming world champion once and vice-champion twice. He was Belgian national champion sixteen times, and he also placed on the Belgian national rugby squad on ten different occasions. Chef de mission at the Olympic Winter Games in Innsbruck and Calgary and at the Games of the Olympiad in Moscow, Los Angeles and Seoul, he subsequently became a member of the IYRU Medical Commission, served as President of the NOC from 1988 to 1992 and became President of the European National Olympic Committees (ENOC) in 1989. Elected to the IOC in 1991, he is a member of several commissions: Olympic Movement, Olympic Solidarity, and Olympic programme (summer). He is vice chairman of the Medical Commission, and in 1995 he became chairman of the Coordination Commission for the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad in Sydney in the year 2000.

JACQUES ROGGE

OR : What is your earliest image of the Olympic Games?

I was a young athlete in September 1960 when I first saw the Olympic Games in Rome on television. On Wednesday 7 September 1960, I was impressed with the fantastic 1500m run by the Australian Herb Elliot, who left Michel Jazy in second place and set a new world record of 3'35"6 with astonishing ease.

OR : What is your best memory or favourite anecdote from the Olympic Games?

On Wednesday 6 September 1972, entering the port at Kiel after an Olympic regatta, I saw a cordon of police around the Israeli competitors Yaire and Izchak. In that moment, it became brutally clear to us that there had been a terrorist attack in Munich. Today, that image still makes me realize the relative nature of sport, even though it has remained one of my great passions.

OR : In your opinion, what is the significance of the Centenary of the Olympic Games?

The Centenary of the Olympic Movement proves that it is not a passing fad, and that it responds to a need in young people. It is both a reaffirmation that the Olympic Movement plays a useful role and an opportunity to re-evaluate objectives.

OR : What role do you feel sport and Olympism play in modern society?

Sport and Olympism form one of the greatest outlets for individual expression. Sport is educational, both for the body and the mind. It encourages an integrated society, inspires emotion and dreams, and promotes moral and ethical ideas such as respect for others, fair play and non-violence.

Jacques Rogge during the sailing events in Montreal.



Munich 1972



Montréal 1976



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OR : What message would you like to give to today's youth?

Our modern society is becoming increasingly sedentary and organized.

Young people should know that through sport, they can develop not just their bodies but also their minds and that they can fulfil their poten-

tial, dream and dare. Above all, they should realize that these things are possible only for a very short time.
