

The 2nd IOC Session in Athens

SESSION OF SATURDAY 4TH APRIL 1896

Chairman: Mr Vikelas, President. Present: Messrs de Coubertin and Kemély, Captain Balck.

Mr Vikelas explained the need for frequent meetings between the members of the International Committee who were present in Athens. He summed up the Committee's works since its origins. Mr de Coubertin said that it was first necessary to address the choice of the country in which the Olympic Games of 1904 would take place so as to mark clearly the continuity of the enterprise and as a reminder of its eminently international character. Mr Kemény called the Committee's attention to the regrettable in-

dress to H.R.H. the Crown Prince and a basket of flowers to the Princess. The Committee adjourned until Monday.

SESSION OF MONDAY, 6TH APRIL

The Committee met at the "Grande Bretagne" Hotel, under the chairmanship of Mr de Coubertin, as Mr Vikelas was prevented from attending. General de Boutowski, Captain Balck, Mr Kemény, Dr Gebhardt and Mr Jiri Guth were present. Mr de Coubertin summed up what had been said at the previous session and proposed the resolutions adopted for the Committee's approval. He read out a draft address to H.R.H. the Crown Prince: the wording



Members of the IOC and the Greek royal family. (standing from left to right) Jiri Guth, Demetrius Vikelas, Ferenc Kemeny, Pierre de Coubertin, Alexandre de Boutowski, Wilhelm Gebhardt and Victor Balck. (seated, from left to right) Prince George, Crown Prince Constantine and Prince Nicholas.

activity of some of its members who had not replied to any communication and had not apologized for failing to attend the first celebration of the Games. He wished to see the Committee adopt formal regulations so as to avoid such things' happening again. Captain Balck said that, for his part, it would be better for the 1904 Olympic Games to take place in Stockholm. He expressed the sympathies of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Sweden for the Games and called the Committee's attention to certain shortcomings in the 1896 programme. Mr Kemény proposed that they place a wreath on behalf of the International Committee at the foot of the statue of Mr Averof. Messrs Vikelas and Coubertin observed that the significance of such an act was not entirely obvious. Mr de Coubertin proposed that, instead, they present an ad-

dress to H.R.H. the Crown Prince and a basket of flowers to the Princess. The Committee decided to request an audience from H.R.H. to present the address to him. Dr Gebhardt expressed the desire that the 1904 Olympic Games be held in Berlin. Mr Kemény supported this proposal. Captain Balck proposed Stockholm and was seconded by General de Boutowski, who pointed out all the advantages of Sweden for a first celebration. The Committee considered whether it was indispensable to decide at that early stage on the city where the 1904 Games would be held. Mr de Coubertin recalled that the idea of organizing them in New York dated back to the Paris Congress and that a subsequent proposal had been made on behalf of Stockholm; finally a request had been made on behalf of Berlin. Berlin, New York and Stockholm therefore had the right to demand a prompt

solution. It was acknowledged that no request of the same type had been made in favour of London or any other capital.

The Committee then studied the ways of creating resources with a view to publishing the various documents concerning the management of the Olympic Games and having an international character.



SESSION OF TUESDAY 7TH APRIL

Chairman: Mr Vikelas, President. Present: Mr de Coubertin, General de Boutowski, Captain Balck, Dr Gebhardt, Messrs Kemény and Jiri Guth.

The Committee resumed consideration of the questions examined the previous day. Mr de Coubertin asked that a general report on the 1896 Olympic Games be

drawn up by a member of the International Committee and published: he proposed that the duties of rapporteur general be entrusted to Dr Gebhardt: adopted.

Dr Gebhardt said that there might be occasion to convene another congress to add to and review on some points the work of the Paris Congress. Mr Vikelas said that they should be in no hurry to modify this work at a time when it seemed to be in the process of being accomplished successfully. Mr Kemény proposed that they rely on the President to convene the Committee in conference when he deemed it possible and desirable to do so: adopted.

SESSION OF THURSDAY, 9TH APRIL

The Committee met at the home of Mr Vikelas, President. Present: General de Boutowski, Captain Balck, Mr de Coubertin, Dr Gebhardt, Messrs Kemény, Jiri Guth.

Mr Kemény asked that a group photograph be taken of the members of the International Committee and also that a group photograph be taken of all the competitors in the stadium. Mr Vikelas agreed to raise this with Mr Philemon: an appointment was made for the photograph of the members of the International Committee. The question of the Committee's budget being included once more in the agenda, Mr de Coubertin explained that advertisements would be the best way of covering publication costs. Mr Kemény asked that a subscription be instituted for societies wishing to join the Committee. Mr de Coubertin observed that, if they were to proceed in this way, they would be in danger of offending the major sports federations which might prefer to desist, while societies of minor importance would rush to join. This should not be the object of the exercise. Dr Gebhardt suggested that a powerful national committee, subsidized, where possible, by the government, be set up in each country. At the centre would be the International Committee which would have its headquarters for each Olympiad in the city where the Games were to take place; the Committee's Bulletin would be written in three languages: French, English and German. There would be three types of subscription: a basic subscription for societies affi-

ated to a union; a double subscription for independent societies: and a quadruple subscription for sportsmen who did not belong to any society.

Captain Balck considered that there should be a person of distinction in each country, qualified for the task, to organize the national committee to the best of his ability and that he should be responsible for collecting subscriptions in accordance with the local regulations he set up. Mr Kemény observed that there were already committees which had a stable and finalized character: in Hungary, for example. Mr Jiri Guth said that the situation of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy supposed a particular form of organization and that the great nationalities which formed part of it would each have to have their distinct committee, as the existence of a Hungarian and a Czech Committee did not sufficiently explain the participation of the other nationalities. General de Boutowski wished to see the role and functions of the International Committee clearly defined; he asked whether there would be any advantage for societies in affiliating to the Committee, given that it was not possible to close the Olympic Games to societies which were not so affiliated. Like Dr Gebhardt, he insisted on the need to broaden the regulations from the point of view of amateurism; the definition of an amateur established by the Paris Congress was very strict. General de Boutowski objected to specialization in sport and expressed regrets that the pentathlon had been omitted from the 1896 programme. The Committee unanimously seconded those regrets, which were shared by them all. Mr de Coubertin said that while all the members of the Committee retained, as far as he was concerned, their full freedom to express their views on pedagogical matters, it was nevertheless important to remember that the Committee was not really competent to judge whether one sport was preferable to another and was to be preferred. The Committee's role was to organize Olympic Games in which all sports were represented and not to make a choice from among those sports. Mr de Coubertin then explained what had already been decided by the French government in connection with the Games which were to take place during the 1900 Exhibition. Dr Gebhardt asked whether the French Committee and each national committee responsible for preparing the Games generally, could not bear during the four years preceding the Games all the expenses occasioned by the International Committee. In reply, he was told that the International Committee had to enjoy complete independence vis-à-vis the national committees and, if it were to accept such support from one of them, it would forfeit that independence. The President, Mr Vikelas, summed up the discussions and insisted that they abstain from creating too many rules and regulations and from making future commitments of an overly precise nature.

SESSION OF FRIDAY, 10TH APRIL

The Committee met at the house of Mr Vikelas, President, and under his chairmanship.



Mr Vikelas pointed out that, in accordance with the rule adopted by the Congress in Paris, the presidency of the International Committee belonged in the country in which the next Games would be celebrated. He proposed that his colleagues nevertheless confirm by a vote this decision of the Congress whereby Mr de Coubertin would perform the duties of President from 1896 to 1900: adopted.



Olympic diploma, designed by Nikiforos Lytras.

Mr Kemény said that the Committee had a final character and was self-recruiting. Consequently, it would be necessary to replace certain delegates who had proved by their inaction and their indifference that they did not take any interest in the work undertaken. Captain Balck suggested Colonel Fox as a someone suitable to represent England effectively. It was understood that each member of the International Committee would try to make a contribution to the Committee's publication costs by organizing the collection of advertisements and by grouping societies together.

At the end of the session, the members of the International Committee were received in audience by T.R.H. the Crown Prince and Princess to whom they presented an address and a basket of flowers.

SESSION OF SUNDAY, 12TH APRIL

Chairmanship of Mr Vikelas, present. Present: Mr de Coubertin, General de Boutowski, Captain Balck, Messrs Jiri Guth, Kemény and Gebhardt.

The following official record summing up the previous days' discussions was adopted unanimously:

The Committee, considering that the resolution adopted by the Congress in Paris to the effect that the Olympic Games must be celebrated successively in all the capitals of the world is the very basis of the work for which it is responsible, decided to put to a vote of its members for the celebration of the Olympic Games of 1904, in accordance with the requests addressed to it, New York, Berlin or Stockholm. The Committee took note of the proposal made by Mr Kemény that the Olympic Games be held in Budapest at a later date.

Dr Gebhardt has been instructed to write the general report on the 1896 Olympic Games. The International Committee will henceforth have its headquarters in the city where the next Olympic Games are to be held. The Bulletin will be published there, in three languages as far as possible: French, English, German. The presidency of the Committee still belongs, as decided at the Paris Congress, to the country in which the Olympic Games will take place. The President of the Committee will have full freedom to organize the secretariat. He may choose secretaries outside the Committee, but they will serve only for the time of his presidency.

Members of the International Committee who have not addressed to the President at least one report a year and who have failed, without valid excuses, to attend or be represented at the Olympic Games will be considered to have resigned.

The Committee recruits its own members and replaces those of its members who cease to be part of it. It has the right to exercise supervision over the decisions of a general nature taken by the national committees and affecting the institution.

Each member of the International Committee shall make efforts to contribute to the costs of publication of the Bulletin and the Committee's documents by collecting advertisements and grouping together societies.

The President may convene the International Committee in conference when he considers it possible and desirable.

SESSION OF TUESDAY 14TH APRIL

Chairman: Mr Vikelas, President. Present: Messrs de Coubertin, de Boutowski; Balck, Gebhardt, Jiri Guth, Kemény

The Committee addressed the question raised unexpectedly in the Athenian press and public opinion concerning the future celebration of the Olympic Games and their permanent establishment in Greece. After an exchange of views between Messrs Gebhardt, de Coubertin and Jiri Guth, it was unanimously acknowledged that it was not desirable for the Games to belong exclusively to one country and that, moreover, the Committee had a duty to implement on this point the decision of the Paris Congress and was not free to consider this. In consequence, there was no occasion to go back on the official record adopted two days previously.

The Committee decided to publish the minutes of the session. Following a proposal by Mr Kemény, the Committee addressed its unanimous thanks to Mr Vikelas for the zeal and talent with which he had presided over its work for the past two years.

Done in Athens 2/14th April 1896

President
Demetrius Vikelas

Secretary General
Pierre de Coubertin