



Olympic Solidarity

At its last meeting in Lausanne on 1 December 1997, the Commission for Olympic Solidarity approved the objectives, programmes and US \$31,820,000 budget presented for the year 1998.

The objectives

This year has two principal focal points toward which Olympic Solidarity has naturally directed its objectives and its framework for action: the XVIII Olympic Winter Games in Nagano and the implementation of four key programmes for the 1998-2000 three-year period, devoted exclusively to the less developed NOCs, and which, by virtue of their scope and budget, can be considered among the most significant ever launched by Olympic Solidarity.

XVIII Olympic Winter Games in Nagano

For the Olympic Winter Games in Nagano, Olympic Solidarity's aid programmes for all NOCs with participating athletes were put into effect. In addition to the usual assistance for NOC participation (payment of air fares for three athletes and one official, aid for logistics, a contribution toward the transport and accommodation costs for the NOC presidents and secretaries general, a US \$1,200 subsidy multiplied by the number of athletes who actually took part in the competitions), a special preparation programme for the less developed NOCs was set up in 1997 to enable them to provide their teams with optimal training facilities so that they could take part in

the Games in more favourable conditions.

This "à la carte" programme allowed the NOCs to put forward different proposals depending on their specific needs, which were approved after consultation with the International winter sports Federations concerned. Most NOCs opted for the organization of specific training courses for the athletes and assistance with participation in pre-Olympic qualifying competitions.

A total of 42 NOCs benefited from this special programme (Africa 1, Americas 7, Asia 5, Europe 29), which contributed to the preparation of 346 athletes, two-thirds of whom took part in the competitions in 60 different disciplines.

Four of the athletes in the programme won Olympic medals:

Ekaterina Dafovska (Bulgaria): gold medal, women's 15km biathlon event;
Elena Petrova (Ukraine): silver medal, women's 15km biathlon event;
Vladimir Smirnov (Kazakhstan): bronze medal, men's 15km freestyle cross-country skiing event;
Lyudmila Prokasheva (Kazakhstan): bronze medal, women's 5000m speed skating event.

In addition 37 Olympic diplomas (4th to 8th place) were awarded to athletes who had benefited from this programme:

six 4th place diplomas
nine 5th place diplomas
six 6th place diplomas
nine 7th place diplomas
seven 8th place diplomas,

Key programmes for 1998-2000

In 1998, the following four programmes will be launched: "Sydney 2000" Olympic scholarships for athletes; Olympic scholarships for young, promising athletes;



Bulgarian athlete Ekaterina Dafovska.

Olympic scholarships for coaches; and a training programme for sports leaders. These programmes play a crucial role in the context of Olympic Solidarity's general policy inasmuch as they are aimed at the least developed NOCs, providing direct assistance to athletes and coaches while setting up educational structures and programmes.

Based on the experience of earlier programmes, these key programmes seek to correct the weaknesses that have been identified and to adapt assistance to today's realities and requirements. The great challenge for Olympic Solidarity will be to achieve maximum efficacy in their implementation.

Olympic scholarships for young, promising athletes

Through the intermediary of their NOCs, young "hopefuls" can obtain Olympic scholarships which offer them the chance to develop their potential and talent with top-grade training, and to prepare for high-level competitions. This programme will demonstrate Olympic Solidarity's firm commitment in the area of advancement and education of young people through sport. The aim is to offer young athletes ideal training conditions in their own countries so that they can continue their schooling.

"Sydney 2000" scholarships for athletes

These Olympic scholarships will be awarded, through the intermediary of their NOCs, to athletes who have demonstrated the ability to qualify for and participate in the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney in the year 2000. The aims are to stimulate the practice of sport at national level by encouraging athletes who come under the responsibility of less developed NOCs to obtain their place at the Games in order to realize their maximum potential and even aspire to win medals.

The scholarships will be awarded to athletes practising an individual Olympic

sport and with proven potential. Olympic Solidarity will try to provide ideal training conditions for each athlete concerned. The decision as to whether athletes will train in their own environment or abroad will depend entirely on the athlete's needs and the requirements of his or her sport.

Olympic scholarships for coaches

Coaches who are actively involved in sport at national level and hold their country's highest official qualification can also benefit from an Olympic scholarship in order to improve their general ability as coaches and gain higher qualifications. This programme is based on the idea that the creation and reinforcement of basic training is a vital element of sport in any country.

The main aim is to give coaches in countries lacking in the necessary resources and/or infrastructure the chance to benefit from high-level educational facilities. The following three new training options are available:

- training in sciences applied to sport,
- specific sports training,
- development of local sports structures (with a coach from abroad staying in the country).

Training programme for sports leaders

Since 1984, Olympic Solidarity has been offering a sports administration programme as part of the curriculum of the itinerant school for sports leaders. In 1994, given the degree of development attained by certain NOCs, Olympic Solidarity decided also to train national course directors.

The aims for the three-year 1998-2000 period are, first, to complete the training of national course directors for NOCs which have not yet organized training seminars and, second, to allow those NOCs which already have trained directors to organize courses autonomously at national level. To this end, Olympic Solidarity provides teaching material appropriate funding.

The programmes

Olympic Solidarity's strategy centres on twelve programmes, eight of them for all NOCs and four specifically designed for developing NOCs:

For all NOCs:

The activities programme: to assist NOCs in developing sport through the organization of specific activities, in accordance with their own needs and priorities.

- *Administrative subsidy* to improve the NOCs' administrative conditions and thus reinforce their operational system.
- *Aid toward NOCs' participation in the Olympic Games* in order to reinforce the universality of the Games and compensate the NOCs for their contribution to the success of the Games.
- *Educational programmes and special projects in cooperation with certain IOC commissions:*

- *International Olympic Academy:* to promote Olympic education.
- *Sport for all:* to promote health, fitness and general well-being by encouraging the practice of sports activities throughout society.
- *Sports medicine:* to promote scientific and technical knowledge in sports medicine.
- *Sport and women:* to promote women's sports activities and access for women to administrative posts within sport.
- *Sport and the environment:* to encourage respect for and preservation of the environment through sport and support the establishment of action plans for preserving the natural heritage.

For developing NOCs:

- *"Sydney 2000" Olympic scholarships for athletes*
- *Olympic scholarships for young, promising athletes*
- *Olympic scholarships for coaches*
- *Sports leaders' programmes.*