

to coaching groups throughout the United States and Canada. Also as a result of the Olympic softball project, changes were adopted in the Little League Softball rule book regarding pitching regulations. A series of instructional pitching videotapes (from a biomechanical perspective) will also be developed by Little League in a combined effort between Dr. Werner and Michele Smith, a pitcher on the 1996 US Olympic softball squad. *Report to the Coaches: Softball Pitching at the 1996 Olympic Games* is available via the Internet.

Increasing interest in the scientific aspects of softball is encouraging. The impact of the IOC Olympic project has been far-reaching. Prior to 1996, research attention and support was non-existent in the sport. Today, interest in the biomechanics of softball continues to grow around the world. For the first time in its history, the international softball community appears to have an interest in the science behind the sport. The Amateur Softball Association and the ISF have expressed their concern for "replacing long-standing myths with scientific

fact to educate athletes, coaches, etc.". It is hoped that this interest will continue to grow and that additional studies will be undertaken. Thanks to the support of the IOC, a scientific basis has been established. As the sport moves toward only its second Olympic season, softball has the potential to join the list of other sports (i.e. athletics, gymnastics, swimming and diving, etc.) with rich scientific heritage.

*Steadman-Hawkins Sports Medicine Foundation.

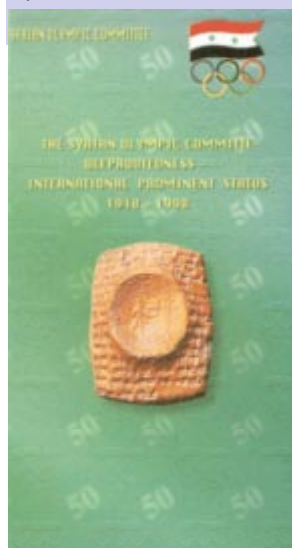
News flash

Syrian Arab Republic

To mark its 50th anniversary, the Syrian NOC invited numerous Syrian and Arab personalities, including Toni Khouri, IOC member in Lebanon, Hani Moustapha, director of the Youth and Sports Administration of the



Some of the guests at the Syrian NOC's 50th anniversary celebrations: (from right to left, first row) Nour El Houda Karfoul, Mohamad Ali Hassan, Toni Khoun, Souheil Khoury, Zeid Khiami, Samih Moudallal, Said Hammadi and Suleiman Ali Hajar.



League of Arab States, Suleiman Ali Hajar, secretary of the Egyptian NOC, Souheil Khoury, president of the Lebanese NOC, Zeid Khiami, director of Youth and Sports in Lebanon, Ali Youssef Hussein, treasurer of the Kuwaiti NOC and Mouafac Al Fawaz, vice-president of the Jordanian NOC. On the same occasion, the headquarters of the Syrian Olympic Academy

was inaugurated, in the presence of Said Hammadi, head of the Office of Youth and Sports in Syria. The NOC also organized a ceremony in honour of the pioneers of the Olympic Movement in Syria. Various speakers stressed the importance of the NOC's role in spreading the Olympic ideals and principles in the country and region as a whole, as well as relations

between the Syrian NOC and the IOC and other NOCs around the world. The election of Samih Moudallal as an IOC member was one of the highlights of 1998 for Syrian sport. In addition, the NOC has produced a book which retraces the development of Syrian sport over the last 50 years and looks at Syrian participation in the Olympic Games.