

Olympic Solidarity

Scholarships for coaches

Fourteen coaches (13 male and one female) from 11 NOCs were awarded Olympic scholarships in "option 1" (sports science) to attend a three-month training course organized jointly by the Centre d'Alt Rendiment (CAR) and the Institut Nacional d'Educació Física de Catalunya (INEFC). This was the first course organized, and its highly comprehensive programme consisted of 300 hours, 60% of which were theory at the INEFC and 40% of which were practical training at the CAR, where participants resided. The training programme was completed on 18 December 1998. During the closing ceremony, celebrated at the INEFC, the coaches received their

diplomas in the presence of Pere Sust i Sagau, general secretary of sports, Jose Antonio Sancha de Prada, director of the INEFC, Francesc de Puig i Viladrich, director of the CAR, and Beatrix Hurst, project manager with Olympic Solidarity.

It was agreed that the same programme should be repeated in 1999,

when two courses are planned: one between March and June and one between September and December. A circular letter indicating the exact dates will soon be sent out to all NOCs concerned, inviting them to propose candidates to take part in this programme under the Olympic scholarship scheme for coaches.



Scholarship recipients in Catalonia.

17th general assembly of the Olympic Council of Asia

On 8 December 1998, Olympic Solidarity attended the Olympic Council of Asia's (OCA) 17th general assembly, chaired by its president, IOC Member Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah. Pere Miró gave an update on Olympic Solidarity which consisted of a presentation of all 12 programmes offered, and the results of these programmes in Asia. He strongly encouraged the NOCs to maximize the funds at their disposal and to make full use of all the programmes offered.

During the general assembly the following items were presented and debated: reports by the OCA vice presidents; OCA audited accounts for 1997; reports of the various Standing Committees; the first Afro-Asian Games 2001; the 14th Asian Games in Pusan; the 5th Winter Asian Games in Aomori; the project for the OCA Indoor Games; the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney in 2000; marketing and the report by ISL Worldwide; and the pre-

sentation by the cities bidding to host the XX Winter Olympic Games in 2006. The opening ceremony of the XIII Asian Games was held on Sunday, 6 December 1998. These Games are very important for the Continent of Asia and close to 7,000 athletes representing 41 countries will have taken part which offered them an excellent opportunity to measure their performances amongst themselves and provided a key test in their preparation for the next the Olympic Games.

Whilst in Bangkok, Richard W Palmer, Beatrix Hurst, Yassine Yousfi and Simon Toulson visited the athletes' village in the Thammasat University Sports Complex and various competitions. A meeting was set with OCA Technical Director, Hussain Mussallam, to evaluate further ways of improved collaboration and to seek a method of greater involvement in approving, monitoring and evaluating the programmes of Olympic Solidarity within Asia as well as agreeing on

the strategies for 1999 between Olympic Solidarity and OCA.

OCA is the key link between the NOCs and Olympic Solidarity and during 1998 they have not only assisted in monitoring the different Olympic Solidarity programmes but have also greatly contributed towards the selection of regional training centres for athletes and coaches. For 1999 the aims of Olympic Solidarity in relation to the OCA are focused on perfecting the existing working systems. Solidarity Olympic will ask them to make a particular effort to help it with the control and follow-up of the scholarship holders for the "Sydney 2000" and "Young, Promising athletes" programmes, as 1999 is a crucial year particularly for the first of these. Furthermore, Olympic Solidarity intends to initiate some specific projects on a continental level, in accordance with their particular needs.

Beatrix Hurst