

Boston in November 1889. It is stressed that COUBERTIN favored the educational value of athleticism which he estimated higher than the one of the American, Swedish and German systems of gymnastics. WASSONG explains that Coubertin's rejection of gymnastics was not arbitrary. During his first study trip in the USA Coubertin came into contact with representatives of the American and Swedish systems of gymnastics. They introduced him to various exercises. What Coubertin observed

in the gyms of US-American universities and schools convinced him of his opinion that gymnastic exercises are good enough for compensating deficits in physical weakness, posture and physical strength. By reading WASSONG's article it becomes evident that during his study trips in the USA Coubertin had come into contact with important representatives of US-American physical education at that time.

## REPORTS

### THIRD SCIENTIFIC UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE OF THE GERMAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE IN OLYMPIA

From 15th to 21st September the third Scientific university conference of the German Olympic Committee took place at the *International Olympic Academy*. What is this for a conference? The German National Committee invites the Sport Departments of German universities for this conference every two years. Of each department eight students and one or two professors can take part. The conference follows always a specific topic. The topic of this year was "Historical, current and future dimensions of olympic development". In total 80 students and 12 professors took part. The *German Olympic Committee* funded the days in Olympia. The participants only had to pay for the flight and for the accommodation in Athens. The programme of the conference also involved pre- and after tour of three days to ancient

places. The participants visited above all the ancient places where the ancient games took place – Corinth, Nemea and Delphi. In Olympia guided tours were held by Christian WACKER who recently finished his Ph.D. thesis on the ancient gymnasium. In the course of the conference each professor held a lecture on the topic of the conference. The eight students of each participating university attended a course at their home university before they went to Olympia. In Olympia they presented what they have done in this course. The next conference will take place in two years. As a participant I had the impression that the students learned much on the Olympic Movement. It would be desirable if other National Olympic Committees will also offer courses of that kind.

by Karl Lennartz

### 7TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR SPORT HISTORY (CESH), BESANCON, FRANCE, 26.-29. SEPTEMBER 2002

This year the 7th International Congress of the European Committee for Sport History (CESH) was hosted by the Department of Sport Science of the Franche-Comté University in Besançon. After international congresses in Rome (1996), Katowice (1997), Copenhagen (1998), Florence (1999), Madrid (2000) and Göttingen (2001) it was the first time in France for this society's congress.. It was attended by almost 150 participants who

came not only from Europe but also from the USA, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. It was a good idea to open the congress to students in order to give them a chance of gaining first experiences as lecturers or participants at an international congress. The meeting in Besançon was attended by students from Germany, France, and Spain. In the book of abstracts 92 papers were listed with scientific contributions to the main theme

of the congress Sport and Ideology. The choice of the topics aimed at investigating historical aspects of sport and physical education in order to throw more light on elucidate their underlying ideologies. In order to cover the areas properly participants and lecturers were asked to think in four directions: 1) Ideology, sport and epistemology, 2) Ideology, sport, and scientific fields, 3) Ideology, sport, and utopia and 4) Totalitarian ideologies, sport, and physical education.

The scope of the congress topic and its strong affinity to philosophy and sociology seemed ideal for 92 scholars to submit papers. This led to a marathon programme of lectures. One needed an elaborated plan to go to all the sessions which evoked one's interest. As usual at CESH congresses there was not one main language for oral presentations. Lectures were given in English, Spanish, French, and Italian. I do not want to make English the main language of a congress; other worldwide languages have to be accepted of course. But the demands on the participants are much higher when a third and a fourth language is also welcome. The participants felt relieved when they heard that the congress proceedings will be published in English and French.

Luckily the scope was a little bit narrowed by a special Olympic Session which took place in Lausanne. At the university and at the Olympic Museum lectures were given about the ideological construction of Olympism. By lecturing on Olympic amateurism, Olympic educational values, Coubertin's vision about the religio athletae, the Olympic Games in 1936, Olympic ceremonies and symbols It was stressed once more how the ambiguity of Olympism was not only used to support the formation and worldwide diffusion of the Olympic Movement but also to instrumentalize the Olympic Movement for the purpose of nationalistic propaganda. Otto Schantz made this point. In his lecture Olympism: from Religion to Popular Culture he mentioned that the different ways of interpreting Olympism are responsible for both the word wide success of the Olympic movement and the its various abuses. Karl Lennartz lectured about The Parade of Nations at the Olympic Games

(1906 – 1936). Apart from mentioning that up till then it was unknown who had invented the idea of the parade of the nations Lennartz stressed that this parade had never been free from political problems and tensions. Joachim K. Röl reported on The Ideology of Amateurism at the Much Wenlock Olympics from 1850 to 1895 and pointed out that William Penny Brooks, the Father of the Olympian Games", may have influenced Pierre de Coubertin long before 1894.

Bettina Kratzmüller from Vienna, who was awarded one of the three Junior Scholar Awards, held a lecture on The Olympic Flame – The Ancient Roots of a Symbol (mis-?)used for Ideological Propaganda in 1936. She argued that for the torch relay in 1936 images of antiquity were used which had nothing to do with the ancient Olympic Games. According to Kratzmüller a device for the ideological misuse of the torch relay in 1936 can be seen above all in the archaeological exhibition „Sport and Hellenism“ which took place during the Olympic Games in Berlin. In this exhibition only little attention was given to the torch relay.

At the congress in Besançon the proceedings of the international CESH congress in Göttingen and the Annual 2002 of CESH were exhibited and handed out to the members of CESH. Both the proceedings and the Annual contain well written and scholarly elaborated articles many of which are dealing with Olympic topics. For non-members of CESH it is possible to buy the proceedings and the annuals. The contact person is Prof. Dr. A. Kruger of the Georg-August-University in Göttingen (AKRUEGE1@GWDG.de).

Last but not least I briefly inform you about the next international CESH congress. It will take place at the International Olympic Academy in Ancient Olympia, 25-28 September 2003. The topic will be Ancient and Modern Olympic Games: Their Political and Cultural Dimensions. I think that this topic will be something like a must for the members of the International Society of Olympic Historians. The contact address is:

cesh2003@phyed.duth.gr.

A first announcement is available on the web site <http://www.phyed.duth.gr/cesh2003>.

*by Stephan Wassong*