

OLYMPIC NEWS NOTES

At the IOC Executive Board meeting in Cancun, Mexico, President Samaranch noted that there is a good chance that women weightlifters may compete at Sydney.

“They have shown us world championships with great success”, said Samaranch. “Maybe it is the time to open the door for the Olympic Games. This must be discussed with the international federation”.

There were 250 weightlifters at Atlanta, and if women are added, it is possible that some divisions in the men’s events would be deleted to keep the number of total lifters at 250. The IOC also agreed to add two teams to the tournament for women’s hockey (field) and handball (team), bringing the total to ten in each sport.

At Atlanta, it was noted that 37% of the athletes were women, and Samaranch stated that the goal is to reach 40% women’s participation in Sydney. (*USA Today*, 25 November 1996). Also, at its meeting in Cancun, the Olympic Solidarity Commission appointed Mario Vazquez Rana, President of ANOC and an IOC Member as Deputy President of the Olympic Solidarity Commission. Appointed were Feliciano Mayoral, ANOC Secretary General, as member of the Olympic Solidarity management committee, and Pere Miro, currently IOC Technical Director, as Director of Olympic Solidarity, to replace Anselmo Lopez, who has retired after 14 years as director.

The IOC will pay tribute to Anselmo Lopez for his distinguished service at the next IOC Session in Lausanne in September 1997. (*This Week’s Olympic News*, No. 238, 15 November 1996).

Dick Pound, chairman of the IOC New Sources of Financing Commission, informed the IOC Executive Board recently of the television analysis of the Atlanta Games. It would be completed in February or March 1997, but preliminary figures were up 15-20% from Barcelona in 1992 and the cumulative audience was of the order of 20 billion (US) viewers.

Pound also commented on the TOP Program, noting that 151 of the worlds 197 NOC’s had signed up. (*This Week’s Olympic News*, No. 238, 15 November 1996).

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Olympic Cup

The IOC has awarded the Olympic Cup for 1996 to the city of Baden-Baden (Germany) for recognition of its contribution to the promotion of the Olympic Movement. In 1981, Baden-Baden hosted the XIth Olympic Congress. (IOC News Release, 25 November 1996).

The IOC has chosen Barcelona to host the VIIth World Sport for All Congress in 1998. The theme of the Congress will be “Sport and Education”. Previous Congresses have taken place in Frankfurt, Germany (1986); Prague, Czech Rep. (1988); Helsinki, Finland (1990); Varna, Bulgaria (1992); Punta del Este, Uruguay (1994); and Seoul, Korea (1996). (IOC News Release, 21 November 1996).

The IOC received a special award from the National Academy of Television and Science (NATAS) at the International Emmy Awards Gala on 25 November 1996 in New York. (*This Week’s Olympic News*, No. 239, 22 November 1996).

The IOC and the World Bank have signed a cooperation agreement. President Samaranch noted: “We are convinced that our cooperation in field projects with the World Bank will be very positive, and we hope together we will succeed in bringing relief to those people who are the most in need of assistance”.

James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, who took part in the 1956 Olympic Games as a fencer for Australia, declared that this agreement had a special significance, “Personally, it means a great deal to me. I know the ideals of the Olympic Movement, and I see how congruous they are with the work of the World Bank. We both want to give people, especially those in the poorest countries, a reason to hope for a brighter future and the chance to fulfill their human potential. We both want a more peaceful world, founded on tolerance, cooperation and sustainable development. I look forward to working with the IOC to achieve tangible results on the ground, wherever the opportunity presents itself”. (IOC News Release, 25 November 1996).

The IOC has announced the following people will soon receive the Olympic Order: Karl Lennartz (GER), Norbert Müller (GER), Oscar Schmidt (BRA), Nadia Lekarska

(BUL), Nina Popova (BUL), Fernand Landry (CAN), Magdeleine Yerles (CAN), Pedro Ferrándiz (ESP), Andrés Mercés Varela (ESP), Manolo Romero (ESP), Matti Salmenkylä (FIN), Otto Schantz (GER), Yves Pierre Boulongne (FRA), Nona Gaprindashvili (GEO), James Stephen Parry (GBR), Miguel Angel Bruno (ARG), Karel Wendl (CZE), Carl Gustav Anderberg (SWE), and Alexander Chapman (TRI).

The International Society of Olympic Historians is well represented in this group, with Lennartz, Müller, Lekarska, Landry, Boulongne and Wendl, all members. Lennartz is a current member of the Executive Committee of ISOH, while Wendl is an honorary member and past member of the ISOH's Executive Committee. (*The Week's Olympic News*, No. 239, 22 November 1996).

Nagano 1998

A number of events were held in Nagano to commemorate day 500 in the countdown to the start of the XVIII Winter Olympic winter Games in 1998. They included the launch of the 500 Day T Shirt Countdown Auction, where the first shirt was sold for 670,000 Yen. A later sold T shirt (October 24th) day 471, even made the astonishing amount of 1,111,111 yen.

On October 17, a Shinto ceremony for the safety of the construction of the International Broadcasting Center (IBC) was held at the Wakasato site. About 80 people involved in the construction participated in the ceremony. Approximately 4,000 radio and television personnel will be working at the IBC, the nerve center for rights-holding broadcasters from around the world and for the Olympic Radio and Television Organization '98 (ORTO '98). Total floor area of the one-story main building is approximately 31,400 square meters. Facilities, including a restaurant, cafeteria, bank, post office and travel agency, give full consideration to the comfort and working environment for personnel working around the clock.

Sydney 2000

Manolo Romero, who was responsible for the host broadcaster coverage at the Atlanta 1996, Barcelona 1992 and Los Angeles 1984 Games, will be Chief Executive of the Sydney Olympic Broadcasting Organization (SOBO).

Organizers of the Sydney Organizing Committee presented their report to the IOC and NOC's at Cancun, Mexico and the SOCOG and the IOC noted that they had agreed to a maximum number of 10,200 athletes for the 2000 Olympic Games.

The IOC Executive Board decided to maintain all 26 sports on the program of the 1996 Olympic Games, and adding taekwondo and triathlon, but dropping the white water kayaking events. President Samaranch noted, "The

sports lineup is not a perfect program and there could still be small changes within the next year." He noted that the important thing is to keep the number of athletes at about 10,000, adding that "if we have to accept some sports, then we have to delete some." (*USA Today*, 25 November 1996).

Salt Lake City 2002

Dave Johnson, vice president of the Salt Lake City Organizing Committee, made a progress report to the IOC Executive Board and to the General Assembly of the 197 NOC's, at their recent meeting in Cancun, Mexico.

Johnson said they expected 4,000 athletes and officials from 80 countries to take part in the largest Olympic Winter Games ever. A record 2 million tickets will be available. Most of the facilities are already in place, with the Olympic Village, the ice hockey arena and the 120 meter ski jump the main venues to be completed.

Salt Lake has also raised most of its projected \$423 million (US) in television rights, the largest share of its proposed \$920 million (US) budget. The latest TV deals are \$37 million (US) ones with NHK for Japanese rights and a \$1 million (US) with Korea.

Other television rights fees signed to date are as follows: US (NBC) \$545 million (US); Europe (EBU) \$120 million (US); Australia (Channel 7) \$11 million (US); and South America \$600,000 (US). The only rights deals outstanding are with Canada, South Africa and China. (*USA Today*, 25 November 1996).

National Olympic Committees

The President of the Republic of Lithuania, Algirdas Brazauskas, has conferred the order of the "Grand Duke Gedimina" on the members of the Lithuanian basketball team which won the bronze medal at the Olympic Games in Atlanta. Present at the ceremony were the NOC President Arturas Poviliunas and Secretary-General Petras Statuta.

At their General Assembly in Cancun, the 197 NOC's adopted the following series of proposals: (1) giving the national bodies jurisdiction over the uniforms and sports apparel worn by the national teams at the Olympics; (2) continuing to allow nations to send six athletes to the Olympics even if they have not met Olympic qualifying standards. These special invitations will now be called *invitation cards*, rather than *wild cards*; (3) a revision of Olympic Solidarity, which distributes aid, grants and television revenues to the national bodies; (4) making host cities keep the promises made in the bidding processes, especially to cover all the travel and housing expenses of athletes and officials, and (5) having regional and continental championships serve as the qualifying events for the Games. (*USA Today*, 25 November 1996).

International Olympic Academy

The 1997 Program for the International Olympic Academy consists of:

1. The 5th International Post Graduate Seminar on Olympic Studies from 1 May to 15 June with the topic: "The Olympic Movement: Past, Present and Future" an analysis from historical, philosophical and social perspectives;
2. The 9th International Seminar for Sports Journalists from 20 to 25 May with special topic: "The Games of the XXVI Olympiad and the Mass Media";
3. The 3rd Joint International Session for Educationists and Staff of Higher Institutes of Physical Education from 5 to 12 June with special topic: "Ethics in Sport and the Olympic Games";
4. The 37th International Session for Young Participants from 7 to 22 July with special topic: "The Olympic Movement today following the Centennial Olympic Games."

International Federations

The headquarters of the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) has moved to: GAISF Villa Le Mas, 4, Boulevard du Jardin Exotique, 98000 MONACO. Telephone: 377 93 50 74 13. FAX: 377 93 25 28 73.

International Olympic Committee Vice President Mark Hodler, head of the International Ski Federation, commented on the ski courses for the 1998 and 2002 Olympic Winter Games recently.

He noted the 2002 courses will be the best in North America, and the expanded resort will be able to host international events after the Olympics.

He also said the ISF will accept a less challenging course in Nagano, to avoid the problems with the environmentalists.

As for the opposition to the cross country and biathlon venues in Salt Lake, Hodler said he was unaware that wildlife advocates had declared the venue an environmentally sensitive site for water-borne wildlife. (*USA Today*, 25 November 1996).

Hodler also commented on the problems recently faced by Atlanta. He said that some of the problems were because the local organizers would not listen to Dick Pound, who headed the IOC Coordination Commission for the 1996 Olympics.

"I'm going to get a little nasty", Hodler was quoted, "Our friends in Atlanta didn't listen to [Pound]. They knew better". He also said that commercial sponsorship was a part of modern sports. "It's not in bad taste at all. We cannot today finance big sports events as the Olympic Games or world championships with money paid by taxpayers. Marketing and commercialism are absolutely required". (*USA Today*, 25 November 1996).
