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## **International Sports Federations, the GAIF and Power Relations with the IOC during the 1960s**

In 1967, a number of international sport federations (IFs) met in Lausanne, Switzerland and formed an organization that took the name of General Association of International Sports Federations (GAIF). The GAIF's main goals were to promote the collective interests of its individual members and to promote each sport internationally. Generally speaking, this meant the promotion of the IFs' role in the Olympic Games. Indeed, at its inception, the General Association focused almost exclusively upon the role and place of the IF in the modern Olympic movement. Its organizers were mostly stimulated by what they perceived as the IFs' subordinate and submissive relationship with the International Olympic Committee (IOC). While the IFs were not happy about a number of issues relating to the Olympic Games, the one-sided nature of their relations with the IOC meant, most importantly, that they were not able to reap what they considered to be their fair share of profits from the festival. (At the time, these profits stemmed mostly from the sale of television rights fees.) In an attempt to alter the nature of their relationship with the IOC, and gain control of some of those profits, the IFs formed the GAIF. For its part, the IOC was reluctant to give up the profits it was beginning to make from what it considered to be 'its' Olympic Games. Its leaders resisted the GAIF vigorously.

Power is the issue in this paper. Simply put, the IFs did not feel they had enough with respect to the IOC. The GAIF was the result of over a decade of mounting frustrations. On the surface, it appears as though the dispute was strictly a GAIF versus the IOC struggle, a variation of the usual labor versus management scenario. However, this view obscures a much more complex relationship. In a sporting world that was governed by a relatively small number of men (and it was overwhelmingly male-dominated), a significant number of the leaders of the IFs were also IOC members. Hence, a clear demarcation between the two groups did not exist. Divided loyalties were inevitable.

This paper examines how the members of the two organizations played out their struggle for power in this situation; often they had to decide on which side they would stand. An overview of the events leading up to the formation of the GAIF clarifies the

complexities surrounding its creation and subsequent actions. One of the best ways to do this is to examine the positions the key personalities took with respect to the evolving relations between the IOC and the IFs during the 1960s. GAIF leaders Roger Coulon and Berge Phillips were pitted against IOC President Avery Brundage. IOC/GAIF members such as the Marquis of Exeter were caught in the middle. Examining the actions of these men (and others) allows me to make some conclusions on how the formation of the GAIF affected interactions between the IOC and the IFs.

Finally, relations between the IOC and the IFs are significant to sport historians because of the importance of these organizations to the way that modern sport is structured and governed. As any international caliber athlete knows, s/he must comply with the dictates of these organizations in order to compete. Thus, beyond an examination of the structure and evolution of power relations between them, this paper also increases our general understanding of the organizations that control much of international sport.

The sources for this presentation come predominantly from the papers of former IOC president Avery Brundage. These papers include minutes of early GAIF meetings and IOC meetings, as well voluminous correspondence between Brundage, fellow IOC members, and the leaders of the IFs.