

ARETE NEWSLETTER

SUMMER/FALL 2014 ISSUE



25 years of IOAPA



1989-2014

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**25 years of
IOAPA!!**



Editorial

By: Vagelis Alexandrakis (GRE)



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the Summer/Fall 2014 Issue of the Arete Newsletter!

This summer IOAPA completed 25 years of existence. Join us in the celebration of this anniversary and read an article which will familiarise you with the history and the development of the Association.

As usual, the Young Participants Session brought life to the premises of the Academy and the entire city of Olympia in June, and we bring you some insights and experiences from this year's session. In addition, find here information on the Arts programme of the session and the innovative "How Good is your #selfie Game" contest! A month before the Young Participants Session, the IOA Directors Session was held in Olympia. In this issue you can read the reflections of a participant about his experience in the session and his interaction with Olympia and the other participants.

On June 23, the whole Olympic Movement celebrated International Olympic Day. Many projects were implemented worldwide on this occasion and in this issue you can find out how the Day was celebrated in Belarus. Also, with the 1st European Games in Baku fast approaching (Summer 2015), find out more about the concept of the European Games and the experience of a past IOA participant who works with the Baku Organising Committee.

In fact, this summer was really eventful for the IOA. In the news section you can find information about all the seminars organised by the IOA this summer and also the IOA's presence in the YOG in Nanjing in August.

Finally, don't forget about the upcoming IOAPA Conference which will take place in Olympia next Summer. The exact dates will be communicated shortly and we look forward to welcoming many of you in Olympia!

Enjoy your reading!

Vagelis

Arete Newsletter Editor

Historical Reflection on IOAPA By: Laurel Brassey Iversen (USA)

It is an honor to write this article reflecting on the past 25 years of the International Olympic Academy Participant's Association. I have so many great memories of the sessions, having only missed two in all these years. We have certainly come a very long way, against all odds, to remain a vibrant and active part of the Olympic Movement. I'd like to dedicate this article to three instrumental people who shaped the landscape for us: Dr. Nikolaos Nissiotis, Hans van Haute and Mr. Nikos Filaretos.

Who hasn't dreamed while soaking in our common humanity at the IOA campus in Ancient Olympia? Who could resist thoughts of peace, and unity and of what could be? Especially in that unique place, it is impossible to turn away from meeting a new friend, trying a new sport, a dance, or a language. Any session at the IOA can be a life-changing experience. Those who grasp this opportunity to utilize sport as a means to teach respect for other ways of life, tolerance of things we have limited understanding of, fair play and inclusion, can surely find great satisfaction.



At the IOA sessions during the mid-eighties, there were many such dreamers. Individuals from the 1985 and 1986 sessions, with the encouragement of the President of the Academy, Dr. Nicolaos Nissiotis, had an idea for the formation of an organization that would celebrate what they were all living at the Academy, "Real Olympism". The single, biggest question that all participants were asking following the sessions, was, "Now what happens?"

So the idea was born for a way to keep everyone connected, to continue the New Olympic Movement upon returning home. We wanted a way to support each other as we strived to implement Olympism as a philosophy of life, in our own countries. We also wanted to ensure a way to return to Olympia, to find the profound joy we had experienced and rekindle those friendships and bonds that were made there.

Many young participants cannot remember the dark ages before fax, email, and SMS. Regular post was the best means of communication as it was simply too expensive even to make a phone call. At the close of the '86 session, Dr. Nissiotis offered the Academy premises for a "reunion" of the IOA participants. Upon the untimely death of Dr. Nissiotis that same summer, the plans stalled. The '85 group organized by Hans van Haute (BEL), a selfless guy with enormous energy and a contagious spirit, and the '86 group organized by Ingolfur Hannesson (ISL), Laurel Brassey Iversen (USA) and Yiannis Zoumboulis (GRE) started sharing information through newsletters.

The new IOA President, Mr. Nikos Filaretos met with Ingolfur and Yiannis in Athens in 1988 and discussed plans for a reunion to take place the following year. By that time Ingolfur and the '86 group were in contact with not only Hans ('85) but also Paul Baldacchino (Malta-'87). Mr. Filaretos added credibility by sending a formal letter to all NOCs and NOAs informing them of the upcoming conference.

All preparations were made by letter and fax and in the summer of 1989, 61 past participants from 20 countries met again in Olympia to form the International Olympic Academy Alumni Association.

The principles of democracy and Roberts Rules of Order were implemented to run the meetings and the elections. I recall that many of the members from the former Eastern Bloc countries were not accustomed to voting and told us to just make the decisions for them. There were small groups all over the lecture hall with someone translating into a common language, whether it was Italian, German, Russian or Spanish. Not only were officers elected, but the mission statement and each of the by-laws of the association was discussed at length and voted upon.

This was a tedious and incredibly painstaking process, which was undertaken without the benefit of simultaneous translation. Fortunately, there were numerous lawyers in attendance to make sure we did everything correctly. When I look back on this session, I am very proud that this organization was born out of such an incredible process and very proud to have been a part of it. I was elected the first president, followed in 1991 by Ingolfur Hannesson. I returned to the position in 1995 and served as President until 2005.



Laurel Iversen and Hans Van Haute with the new officers list-1989



(Left) Annabella Pal, Ingolfur Hannesson, Wikka Srimalwasinghe, Andrew Sheilds, Yiannis Zoumpoulis and Geoff Yarema IOAAA -1989

We were off and running, or so we thought. We soon found out that printing, folding, addressing and mailing newsletters, our only form of communication to the new members and other past participants we were trying to reach, was a very slow, and expensive way to communicate. For the first 10 years of the association, most of the budget (received through dues-\$30 for two years) was spent on this endeavor. Weeks and months were required for any decisions regarding the association to be made.

Also, Mr. Filaretos and the Ephoria proved somewhat reluctant to wholly endorse the association. We were economically tied to the IOA, mostly because of the offer for free room and board at the Academy for our sessions. We only had to get ourselves there, which is no small financial undertaking.

We also met resistance on many initiatives we wanted to implement, such as proposing coordinators for the session and being allowed a few minutes to make a presentation about the IOAAA during the official program. I'm not convinced the IOA took us very seriously and thought maybe we wouldn't survive. Realistically, we probably shouldn't have when you consider that we were a global association without any sponsorship, funded solely by \$30 inscription fees of the members. One mailing of the newsletter could wipe out an entire year's budget.



IOAAA-1991



In all successful organizations, there are always some stubborn, persistent individuals who keep the train on the track. Fortunately, we had a few of those as well as some dedicated folks behind the scenes who were always willing to step up. Along the way, we nurtured our relationships with the IOA leadership and gained the trust and confidence that we desired while remaining an independent, self-sustaining entity. Slowly, we won over many of the Greek officials as they could see we were serious people, dedicated to Olympism and willing to work. Mr. Filaretos, although he referred to me as Mrs. Impossible, became one of our most ardent supporters until his death in 2007.

Almost from our inception we were defended and counseled by our dear friend, Dean Kostas Georgiadis. He has been the single most constant influence in the association. He first attended our session in 1991. We thought he was really there to spy on us, as he did not engage us in any conversations. (We learned it was because he didn't speak much English). But we quickly saw that he was the best thing that could have ever happened to us. He remains today the Dean of the IOA and has been supporting us through the many different government and IOA leadership changes. We can never thank him enough for his continued support and friendship.



Planting of the Hans Van Haute Memorial Tree after his death in 1991



IOAPA 2005

A big boost came for us in 1996 when we were invited by the Hellenic Olympic Committee to take part in the Centennial Olympic Games Flame Relay in Greece. Mr. Anathasios Kritsinelis played a key role to make this a reality and Yiannis Zoumboulis worked tirelessly to organize the entire affair. Forty-two members made the trip and attending the Lighting Ceremony in the Ancient Stadium in Olympia and ran with the torch over the rugged Mt. Taigetos south of Olympia.

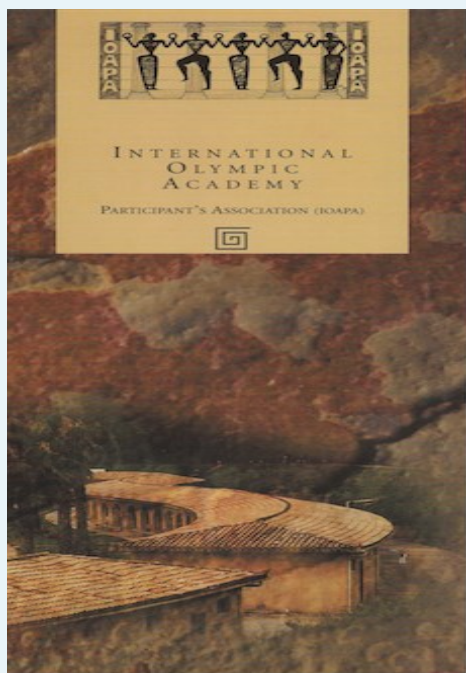


Flame Relay Delegation



Flame Relay 1996

In 1997, President Filaretos attended our session. It was then that the participants voted to change the name to IOAPA. Between 1997 and 2007, things remained rather status quo and sessions were generally organized around Olympic Education. The Association was still operating on the dues of the membership and really had no sponsorship or means to take on any large projects. Eventually the IOAPA president was invited to come every year to the IOA session as a coordinator and we were allowed to make a presentation in the lecture hall, distribute the beautiful brochure we produced and recruit new members.



Brochure and First Newsletter of IOAAA (notice the cut and paste technology)

The old guard gave way to the new generation in 2005 as technology enabled us to communicate worldwide in real time. The new wave of members, many of whom came from the Post Graduate seminar, were very well immersed in every aspect of Olympism, eager to get involved and experienced in all the latest means of social media and technology. Hector Arguilles (ESP) led this “Newest” Olympic Movement.



Jeremy Cross– IOAPA President 2005–2007, Hector Arguilles IOAPA President 2007 – 2013, and Laurel Iversen IOAPA President 1989–1991 and 1995–2005

At many of the sessions a large amount of time was spent, re-hashing what the aims of the association should be. Because there are always many new participants, this had to be explained to bring everyone up to speed. Just recently, members attending the IOAPA session have begun to understand that its primary function is to provide a network of contacts and support in many different areas of sport to individuals who have attended an official session of the IOA and who chose to join the IOAPA. Most recently in 2013, the members present voted to make the initial membership fee a lifetime membership.

The IOA itself has been reborn out of the scorched trees of the fires of 2007 and is modernizing itself with new programs, initiatives and collaborations. Since the election of IOA President Isidoros Kouvelos in 2009, and the installation of Dionyssi Gangas as Director of the IOA, the IOAPA has enjoyed a new level of cooperation and encouragement.

IOAPA members continue to make impacts in their countries as members and leaders of their respective NOA, in some cases, being the driving force in their creation. They help in preparing the Young Participants for each year's IOA session. Our Orientation Manual can be downloaded and used in any county. They are respected professors of Olympic Studies, NOC officers, IOC members and Olympians. The future promises to bring us closer together as globalization shrinks our world. Technology will enable us to do more than ever before. The values of Olympism always shine brightly in troubled times, and we will always play a part in spreading these values.



Join the IOAPA and be part of the History!!!

We hope to see you next summer in Olympia at the IOAPA Conference!!!

International Olympic Academy –Young Participants Session 2014.

By: Ketil A. S. Husøy (Norway) & Stacey Cook (USA)



Greece: Athens and Olympia. The first days were a bonanza in speed talking with new people. I think I covered 58 nations within the two first days. Crazy. Little did I know that these people with whom I had short, informal chats while walking up to the Acropolis would just 17 days later be good friends that I had long, interesting and insightful conversations with. It all happened so fast.

Let's go back to Athens. After seeing the amazing Acropolis, we went to a hill called Pnyx, where we had the opening ceremony for the 54th International Olympic Academy's Young Participants Session. We were formally dressed, me of course with a bowtie, red shirt and a light colored jacket. I kind of stood out when most of the men arrived in black suits, ties and polished shoes. Enough about boys though, let's talk about the ladies. I was glad I was sitting in the bus when most of them arrived, because if you think seeing the Acropolis is a beautiful sight, the ladies of the 54th IOA were a sight for Gods... which of course was suitable when walking on ancient holy ground. The ceremony went off with pomp and circumstance, classical music, from Puccini to Bizet, and a lot of speeches. The opening was nice and grand, and I felt like a true VIP. After the opening, the bus headed down to the hotel for dinner and drinks. Once again, I discovered the cultural differences and that the northern people, especially us from Scandinavia, have a complete different way of partying. We need at least five or six drinks to start the party whereas the rest of the world (at least it felt as so) just need the smell of alcohol and music on the stereo to hit the dance floor. The dancing, I tell you this, was craazy, but in a fun-crazy sense. This was the first of many eye-openers, and I said to myself, "ok they might think you're Scandinavian tonight, but when the next possibility to dance arrives, I will show them that Scandinavian rhythm is something to count on." The night ended up to be a study of

Asian, African, South-American, European, North-America and Oceanic dance moves. Mind-blowing stuff!

After the days in Athens, the real deal was about to start. But before arriving in Olympia, we got to see another historical place on the way: the famous Delphi. Delphi is an astonishing place, in somewhat picturesque surroundings, with ancient stadiums, mount Delphi, and amphitheaters (which I tested the acoustic of. La Traviata has never sounded better in my ears). It was a great experience.

So eight hours after hitting the road in Athens, we finally arrived to the main destination, Olympia and the grounds of the Olympic Academy. I had seen pictures of the place, but actually arriving there and seeing it, smelling it, and feeling it was special. There was a football pitch, track and field, basketball, volleyball, swimming, tennis, and table-tennis facilities, and for a sports geek like me, this was paradise. I couldn't wait to grasp the racket or to kick the football, impatient as I am. I thought it took too long before the physical part of the session started, at least two days I had to wait. The reason for the "delay" was the official opening ceremony on the premises. Once again, we were treated to a grand and nice opening. Once again I wore light colored clothes, this time not a bowtie, but still, light colors stands out compared to a black suit. And once again, the ladies... I have no words, some things cannot be described by words, you know: seeing is believing!



From here on out the program was hectic, with lectures from early mornings, discussion groups, meals, more lectures, some sport and a couple of “excursions” to Olympic sights. The lectures were, for me, a little bit varying in quality and relevance. Some were great, some were interesting, and some sadly a little bit out of “tune”. The questions from the participants were extremely interesting. Sadly the lecturers, for reasons I don’t know, were passive in their answers, sometimes not even touching to answer the question that were asked. This was a great disappointment and as I see it as a lost possibility to really discuss the topics in question.

What was great and was the real juicy fruit of the whole experience were the people, my fellow participants, and how easy it was to talk with everybody. Coming from a somewhat introverted country, the openness and interest I was shown was overwhelming. In the group discussions we were able to examine the topics and got to discuss them good, but the depth was reached outside the sessions, in the park, walking to Zorbas, on a morning jog or just on the porch outside the rooms. This was truly amazing, and I have never before learned so much about so many different cultures and people as I did the days we had at the academy. The topic of the 54th Olympic academy was respect for diversity, for me the whole experience was to learn about diversity. I could see that we have different means, different strategies, and different motivations, but in some sense we strive to reach the same goals; to give kids, youth and adults, joy with sport. Just plain and simple enjoyment of doing a sport-activity alone or together. This was a revelation for me.



Aaah.. I have so much more I want to tell you, cause not everything has been about sport, it has been about learning, teaching and interacting. Imagine that after seventeen days I now have friends in almost one hundred countries. Amazing. I have learned about the French hospitality, Latin American temper and the greeting procedure of the Japanese people and so much more, endless much more. I have learned that boundaries just are reasons for getting to know new people, learning and climbing over them together, finding new boundaries, learning to climb and progress, and the keyword for it all is togetherness. **Togetherness.**



Thank you for the togetherness, dear participants.

Ketil A. S. Husøy

Ketil was the obvious social leader and covered a lot of the epic social scene at the YP session, so I will focus a bit more on the boring intellectual aspects.

Respect for Diversity was the theme of the 54th International Olympic Academy's Young Participants Session. Besides being one of the Olympic values, respect for diversity is a worldwide theme at the moment and felt very relevant to talk about in the lecture hall and in casual conversation.

People that have been to the Olympic Games in any role— as either a spectator, volunteer, support staffer, or athlete— know that there are many special and unique experiences and things to see. Highlights are always the athletic performances that seem inhuman, infrastructure that is a marvel, and logistics that are so complex it could not possibly work but still happens seamlessly. But the one thing that everyone always notices is how happy everyone is. How people can gather from across the globe, forget political conflict or agendas, and see the good that everyone can offer. The Olympics prove that peace can exist and is worth the hope and the fight for a better world.

Diversity holds a power that is largely untapped and underutilized. With diversity comes creativity and innovation. Experiencing diversity holds the key to well-rounded knowledge and understanding. Respecting diversity is a mature and peaceful outlook on life. The more ideas and experiences that can be brought forward, whether in sport or business or medicine or any other field, the greater chance we have at advancing society.

In the essay I submitted as part of my application to get to go to IOA, I talked about how growing up in sport taught me about respecting diversity without even trying. Wherever the sport took me there were others who did the sport whom may have been categorized as “different” in most situations, but because we had sport in common, in my mind we were always the same. I didn’t notice diversity was commonly viewed as a

bad thing because there was always something to bring our differences together. Sport is a powerful tool in teaching respect and the benefits that diversity brings. A focus on promoting and allowing sport around the world is one of the best ways we can get this difficult message to spread. To give others the chance to grow up with the notion that diversity is not a negative term, much like I was able to in sport, is an opportunity we cannot look past.



The IOA experience was much like an Olympic experience. It allowed youth from the entire world to share their unique stories and experiences in an effort to form greater understanding and knowledge for all. It gave us an opportunity to use diversity as the powerful tool it is to make decisions and suggestions on topics that are difficult to talk about and analyze. It also gave us endless vacation opportunities for the rest of our lives, as we will all try to rekindle the amazing friendships that were formed in just two weeks! I am so thankful to have experienced the IOA's Young Participants Session and gain new perspective on what I can do, along with my fellow participants, to influence my community, nation, and world to always strive for better.

Stacey Cook



54th International Session for Young Participants
15-29 June 2014 - Ancient Olympia

I.O.A celebrates Olympic Values: Respect for Diversity with participants "selfies"

The "How Good is your #selfie Game" contest
#IOA|ARTS|YPS

By: Georgia Boukla (GRE) & Troy Venetsanos (USA)



This project was hosted by the International Olympic Academy in Ancient Olympia. It was introduced as part of the arts activities for the 54th Young Participant Session in June 2014.

Every year the arts program is working on facilitating flexible ways to initiate ideas that can be applicable to more people in order to encourage participation in a way that is democratic and approachable to all.

Based on this year's topic on "Olympic Values: Respect for Diversity" the arts team proposed the "How Good is your #selfie Game" contest as an independent project to run along side art workshops and activities during the session.

The idea was to initiate an ongoing community source and a #selfie awareness experiential event in a fun environment. Participants were able to explore their own identity and perception of it, through interaction with a diverse group of people they just met from around the world.

Historically, the allure of #selfie or self portraiture is not new. The first known #selfie was taken by Robert Cornelius in 1839, which is also one of the first photographs ever taken of a person. That led to photographic self portraiture becoming a more widespread technique as cameras were getting popular and updated.

In this day of technology good times, the concept of a #selfie or group self-taken photographs called #superselfies is the new trend. The wide range of constantly updated devices and ease of access to internet that can get you instantly connected to friends and families has made #selfies particularly popular with young people. They started to gain wider popularity over time with many celebrities posting #selfies on social media for their followers. President Barack Obama made headlines when he was snapped taking a #selfie with Danish Prime Minister H. Thorning-Schmidt and British Prime Minister D. Cameron at the FNB Stadium during Nelson Mandela's memorial celebration. Selfies are also taken beyond earth by astronauts and machines using a more indirect method for #spaceselfies and the list goes on. By the end of 2012 the term had become so popular that it was announced as being the word of the year.

It was in the same year the word ‘selfie’ was included in the online version of the Oxford English Dictionary.

The appeal of #selfie comes from how easy they are to create and share instantly on social media. They are popular regardless of gender, age, nationality, political or religious views, social and disability status or sexual orientation. So what better place to celebrate #selfie than at the academy which brings together individuals from various backgrounds to interact and share ideas and skills essential to create an atmosphere of cultural acceptance, friendship and collaboration.

The aim of the ‘How Good is your #selfie Game’ project was to stimulate an understanding of diversity as a concept and challenge the idea of the #selfie as a creative medium in order to bring together different experiences and perceptions that could spur innovation and fun.

In February 2014 during Sochi Winter Olympics, Twitter users uploaded selfies in unusual situations using hashtags like #selfiegame and #selfieolympics. Later this year, in June during Soccer World Cup, Shakira urged fans to show their support by taking a ‘flag-based selfie’ and sharing them on Instagram using the hashtag #daretodream.

At the same time in Ancient Olympia, the 54th Young Participant Session was sharing ‘selfies’ on the Facebook group IOA 2014 page for the ‘How good is your #selfie Game’ contest with the hashtag #IWasThere. These selfies were taken by participants throughout the session using their mobile phones and, in some cases, more sophisticated cameras. While selfies are usually intended to be informal, personal snapshots, some of the submissions were quite the opposite. For example, Stacey Cook – an American Olympic skier and participant at the Sochi Winter Olympics – was able to take a ‘super-selfie’ at the conclusion of her presentation in front of the entire group of participants. This shot earned the most ‘likes’ on the official Facebook page for the session (found [here](#)), which equated to the most votes and earned Stacey a prize: a disposable camera.



[The winning “How Good is Your #selfie?” Contest Submission from Stacey Cook \(USA\)](#)

This contest was an effective way to engage the group both with each other and with the official social media of the IOA Arts Program:

Facebook: I.O.A. | ARTS | YPS

Twitter: @IOAARTS

Beyond the contest itself, these photo submissions served as a catalyst for discussion between current participants, previous participants and other members of the Olympic family. By commenting on the photos posted on these channels and even posting new photos in response, a series of informal chats started and continue to take place today.

Georgia Boukla

Artist, IOA | YPS Arts coordinator

Troy Venechanos

IOAMA5, IOA | YPS coordinator



The winner of the competition, Stacey Cook, with her new camera!

IOA Directors Session 2014: Experiences & Reflections by Gustavo Soares Marcos (Portugal)



This year, 2014, Portugal's National Olympic Academy board, of which I'm a proud member, entrusted me with a very honorable mission: to represent the institution (and therefore Portugal) at the IOA's 12th Annual Session for NOA directors and NOC officials, which took place from May 11 to 18 in Olympia, Greece.

Since childhood, Olympism has been an important and steady presence in my life and even if I never managed to be a world-class athlete, Coubertin's philosophy has inspired me many times to fight and overcome many different challenges.

So, as you can imagine, the prospect of meeting people engaged with Olympism, from all over the world, brought me great satisfaction and excitement, but also responsibility.

Oddly enough, I had been in Olympia just one year before, while touring Greece's archaeological wonders as a tourist. The famous western Peloponnesian valley was an obvious landmark on the list and I clearly wanted to see and feel all those things I had read about. On that occasion, I even had the chance to visit the IOA premises, which are located not far from the Ancient Olympic Stadium.

As I wandered the magnificent, but still empty place (at the time, that year's Sessions had not yet taken place) I asked myself how would it feel to be there during an annual meeting: sharing thoughts, actions, causes and hopes, experiencing first hand Coubertin's dream of human development and world peace first-hand. How far was I from imagining that in just one year I would finally get my answer!

As I recalled those thoughts, my sense of responsibility grew. It was not just a matter of how well I could represent my country. It was, above all, the question of what could I bring to make my participation worthwhile for the Academy and for the Olympic Movement as a whole.

Since I can remember myself I've always been in love with experiencing new cultures and peoples. The diversity of all people and cultural richness has a powerfully seductive effect on me and what a great feeling I experienced in Greece! Meeting people from all over the world was an overwhelming experience and a very personal one that for sure made me a better person.

During our stay we exchanged gifts, shared common causes and beliefs in a better future and learned what Olympism really is about. Regardless of age, creed, race, origin or political views, during that week we all were disciples of hope. Hope for a better world, where Olympism is the right tool to foster peace and to drive each one of us to do better than we ever thought we were able to. Right there, in the place where Coubertin's Heart lives for eternity!

We also had some formidable lectures and group discussions. A lot is still to be done to improve the Olympic Movement. Personally I think we need to bring Olympism to the human level, letting people know the Olympic Ideals are a powerful inspirational tool, aimed at improving human beings and the relations between diverse people and cultures, and not exclusively a top athlete's philosophy!



We can all use the power of Olympism to stay on the right track. At least it was what I felt and is what I'm bringing home with me. Focusing in education, I believe each one of us can do something, no matter the size, to bring Coubertin's dream even more alive!

During the last morning, as I concluded the speech on behalf of all the participants (after being appointed the day before), the audience met my words in high appraisal, thanking me for that inspirational speech. You could ask me if I felt something like an ego boost or national pride. None of that! In fact I felt humble, for the confidence entrusted, and relieved, as I had been able to give my best thank you to everyone there, knowing that without them I would surely be a lesser man!

1st European Games, Baku 2015

by Tolis Matsaridis (GRE)



There are many multisport events around the world other than the Olympic Games: the Pan-American, the Asian, the Islamic Solidarity Games and many others. What is interesting is that, despite Europe being a dominant player in sport, both in organizing and winning any kind of events, there has never been a European Games. That was an intention for many years, until the year 2012, when the hospitable country of Azerbaijan gained the honour and the responsibility to host the first European Games.

The European Games will take place from the 12th to the 28th of June in 2015 and there will be 19 sports in total: 16 Olympic and three non-Olympic sports. Nine of the events will offer qualification opportunities for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. More than 6.000 athletes are expected whilst thousands of volunteers, local and international spectators will help create a unique atmosphere. The organization's standards are high since the 1st European Games will be a model for the future.

The workforce is both local and international. The experienced staff will provide the know-how and the experience whilst the younger ones will bring their enthusiasm and freshness in the organization. Above all, that will be a part of the legacy for Azerbaijan.

I am here in Baku for one month and every day is more exciting than the previous one. The three weeks training at the Games Academy has already finished and what is noteworthy is how much more a part of the organization I feel at the moment. The training focused on enhancing some of our personal and professional skills such as public speaking, presenting, team work and leadership skills. At the same time we were given the guidelines, the vision, the mission and the rules of the organizations in order to be aligned and productive from "day one".

The international environment is always a challenge but for BEGOC it is a great opportunity. An opportunity to create something new and unique, a privilege to combine views and perspectives from around the world through the “local filters” and to deliver the exceptional 1st European Games.

I find myself here more than inspired and excited, offering my best to the organization every single day. The environment is exceptionally positive, providing us the opportunity to focus on day-to-day tasks. It is a challenge since usually the hosting cities (for Olympic Games) have seven years to prepare whilst Baku has just 30 months. The challenge was not only accepted but created a “boomerang effect” making all of us even more motivated and enthusiastic.

That determination and devotion will allow us to make the Games a success, create a future model for the next European Games and create a long lasting legacy for the Land of Fire, Azerbaijan. Baku is waiting for all of you. We are making history. “Be yourself a part of it.”



Modern Pentathlon, celebration of sport, youth and joy: Belarusian Olympic Academy Activities on International Olympic Day

by Anfisa Kasyanova (Belarus)



First of all, let me introduce the new Belarusian Olympic Academy Team: Chairman – Irina Guslistova, Director – Vitaly Ablam, his deputy – Natalia Apanchuk and number of volunteers interested in the Olympic movement and Olympic education activities. These people started to work together in early 2014 and have already presented to the local and international audience the reformed and innovative directions of their future work. Being part of the recent Olympic education initiative dedicated to International Olympic Day, I am happy to share with you some organizational details of the event.



BOA Chairman Irina Guslistova, BOA Director Vitaly Ablam, BOA Deputy Director Natalia Apanchuk



On International Olympic day (June 23) the Belarusian Olympic Academy in collaboration with the Belarusian Federation of Modern Pentathlon (BFMP) and with the support of the European Confederation of Modern Pentathlon (ECMP), organized the Olympic education event “MOVE. LEARN. DISCOVER” in Minsk.

The idea of Olympic education activities as part of international sport competitions (not only as part of the Youth Olympic Games) has always been under discussion by Olympic educators. This time both parties – BOA and ECMP– came up with a concrete proposal to make it happen. The event had two main goals: 1) introduce children to the sport of Modern Pentathlon and the Olympic values, 2) bring Olympic spirit to the competitions and celebrate Olympic Day altogether.

Modern Pentathlon being a core sport of the Olympic movement is an excellent basis for Olympic education activities. The idea of “MOVE. LEARN. DISCOVER” action is to try all five sports (fencing, swimming, horse riding, shooting and running) in one day and get familiar with Olympic values through practicing these five sports.



The young girls and boys dressed in colourful Olympic day t-shirts and caps spent the entire day competing in this Modern Pentathlon Mixed Relay. They had unique opportunities to test their skills in swimming and running MOVEMENTS, to LEARN Olympic values: EXCELLENCE – by observing and performing fencing; FRIENDSHIP – while participating at athletes’ greeting parade in the morning and standing next to the award podium and close to the winners and medallists in the evening; RESPECT – in contact, for many of them for the first time, with horses. Finally, each participant had fun, excitement and joy DISCOVERING laser pistol shooting. Throughout the day kids were cheering not only for Belarusian athletes but also for competitors from all countries doing it in their own languages (cheering phrases were prepared and printed on paper for children in advance).



The special contribution for the children's memorization of the International Olympic Day was done by the UIPM technical delegates Corine Bouzou and Dmitry Menshikov, who during the day were performing judges' roles for children activities.

Everyone was happy and satisfied with this Olympic and Modern Pentathlon celebration. Throughout the day cameramen and photographers accompanied our group and a short [video](#) as well as a photo archive was created. Bright and inspirational memories will stay with them until the next Olympic education event!

Anfisa Kasyanova,
Member of Belarusian Olympic Academy

P.S. The project implementation wouldn't be possible without the assistance of the Belarusian NOC.



News and opportunities!

IOA dynamically present in the Nanjing YOG

Following a 12-day celebration of youth and sport, the 2nd Youth Olympic Games ended on August 28 after a gala Closing Ceremony at the Nanjing Olympic Sports Centre Stadium. The Youth Olympic Flame was extinguished and the Games were declared closed by IOC President Thomas BACH (GER) – who had the highest praise for the event. "The organisation of these Games was perfectly flawless," he said.

The IOA, as well as the IOTC (International Olympic Truce Center) had a significant presence at the 2nd Youth Olympic Games "Nanjing 2014". The IOA participated with its interactive educational programme "Discovering the Olympic Movement and its values", conducted jointly with the International Olympic Truce Centre in the Culture and Education Programme. The IOA operated a booth in the Olympic Village which gave young athletes participating in the Games a chance to learn through interactive educational activities about the history of the Olympic Games from Antiquity till the modern Olympic Games.

It is the third time that the IOA has taken part in the educational programme of the Youth Olympic Games, following the 2010 Singapore Games and the 1st Winter Youth Olympic Games held in Innsbruck in 2012.

We're now looking forward to the next YOG in Lillehammer, Norway, in 2016.

Source: IOA website

A very eventful summer for the IOA!

With the 21st IOA international seminar for postgraduate students being in full swing (1-29 September) being in full swing, the IOA had a very busy summer, organizing a wide range of seminars and educational activities.

News and opportunities!

Four important Seminars by recognized Universities were organized this summer in Olympia. After the two annual Seminars of Georgetown University entitled “Olympism for Humanity Summit” and “Olympism for Humanity Praxis Summer Programme” (29/6–8/7), the IOA premises hosted from July 8–12 the third annual Symposium entitled “Sports, Society and Culture” organized by the IOA together with the Centre of Hellenic Studies of the Harvard University.

From July 12–23, the Navarino Network in cooperation with the University of Yale and St. Andrews organised for the third year the “Olympia Summer Academy” entitled “Conflicts and Political Violence”.

At the end of July a significant and ground-breaking seminar was hosted at the IOA in Olympia. The first **“IMAGINE PEACE” Youth Camp** was organized by the International Olympic Truce Centre, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, and in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Sports, Development and Peace, the British Council, the International Olympic Academy and the Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation.

More than 80 young men and women, from five continents, gathered from July 26–31 in Ancient Olympia to examine how the institution of the Olympic Truce and its values can form the basis for the creation of a perception of peaceful co-existence, based on the respect of differentiation, understanding, peaceful settlement of differences and social incorporation.

Another significant event was organized in Olympia in August. The **European Youth Seminar** was organized by the International Olympic Academy in cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan. It took place from August 4–11, having a European focus since delegates from all the European Olympic Committees participated. The aim of this event was to bring people together at the birthplace of the Olympic Games, who will afterwards attend the European Games of Baku 2015 in Azerbaijan.

Source: Website of the IOA

News and opportunities!

FOUR EUROPEAN NOCs share their experience on bidding for the Olympic Games

Following the launch of the IOC President Bach's Olympic Agenda 2020, four European NOCs (Austria, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland) have sprung into action.

Having participated in working groups for the Olympic Agenda 2020, these four NOCs have decided to make a further contribution on a theme they know inside out: bidding for an Olympic Games. The fruits of their work can be found in a jointly published paper entitled "Olympic Agenda 2020 - The Bid Experience" which details their involvement in bids and analyses why they ultimately failed.

Their conclusions centre around a lack of support from national and regional institutions. Their aim in publishing this document is to support and sustain the IOC in its efforts to ensure the Olympic brand retains its appeal, and to reinforce public interest in the Olympic Movement.

The document also analyses the bid conditions outlined by the IOC and suggests ways of responding to them.

The document can be downloaded from the websites of the relevant NOCs.

Source: EOC website

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News and opportunities!

TOKYO 2020 presents its project “Creating Tomorrow Together”

TOKYO 2020 presented its new project “Creating Tomorrow Together”, which aims to solicit ideas from Japan’s younger generation and gain a wide range of opinions and suggestions on how to deliver a superb Games and one that promotes the Olympic values to young people.

Sports Director Koji Murofushi acted as a guest teacher for fifth grade pupils at an elementary school in Tokyo where he explained the Olympic values and sought to inspire them to look forward to the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo in 2020. “We want to inspire the new generations with the Olympic spirit,” said the Athens 2004 Olympic hammer-throwing champion. “They are the future of our nation; that’s why we want them to be actively involved in our preparations.” Children across Japan will have the opportunity to contribute to the “Creating Tomorrow Together” project. They will write an essay during their summer holidays in which they will describe their dreams for 2020 and the future they want to build for Japan by the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The quest for ideas is not limited to Japan’s young people. Tokyo 2020 is also inviting similar essays and suggestions from a broader section of society and hopes to incorporate many of the ideas received, from both young and old, into its finalised vision for the Games.

On 15 July, the Organising Committee launched the dedicated website vision.tokyo2020.jp to invite contributions regarding what kind of Olympic and Paralympic Games the people of Japan would like to host.

Source: IOC website

News and opportunities!

IOAPA Conference 2015 — Next Summer

As you know, the IOAPA Conference will take place in Olympia next summer!! Participants will have the unique chance to enjoy the premises of the Academy once again, meet old « Olympic » friends and make new ones, engage in Olympic–and sport–related discussions, present their work on Olympic education activities and renew their Olympic spirit! In addition, a new Executive Board is to be elected, so motivated participants interested in keeping the network of past IOA participants alive will have the opportunity to run for a position in the IOAPA Board.

And most importantly, we will all have the chance to celebrate the 25 years of existence of IOAPA. We can't wait to welcome you to in Olympia next summer!

25 years of IOAPA!!



1989-2014

Upcoming Conferences

Disability sport: changing lives, changing perceptions?

Where: Coventry University, UK

When: 15–17 September 2014

Website: <http://www.icsspe.org/content/disability-sport-changing-lives-changing-perceptions-conference-2014>

About: Following on from the success of the first conference held in 2012 – Disability Sport: a vehicle for social change? – the Centre for International Business of Sport is hosting an international, interdisciplinary conference for academics and practitioners. This conference will focus on the use of disability sport as a tool for peace, development and social inclusion.

International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport Congress

Where: Doha, Qatar

When: 22–25 September 2014

Website: <http://www.2014ishpes.org/>

About: The 2014 ISHPES Seminar will be organized by the Qatar Olympic & Sports Museum in Doha, Qatar. The theme for the 2014 Congress is Global Perspectives on Sports and Physical Cultures: From Past to Present.

“Sport Matters” Conference

Where: Brisbane, Australia

When: 29 September–1 October 2014

Website: <http://www.sportmatters.org.au/conferences.php>

About: The 2nd “Inspire. Unite. Change.” Conference in 2014 will bring together outstanding sports leaders and development practitioners from around the world, to share and discuss sport for development and its impact in Australia and internationally.

Upcoming Conferences

37th International Symposium on Sports Sciences

Where: Sao Paulo, Brazil

When: 2–4 October 2014

Website: <http://www.simposiocelafiscs.org.br/>

About: The 37th International Symposium on Sports Sciences is considered one of the most important scientific events of sports sciences, exercise and physical activity area conducted in Brazil and Latin America. This year the conference will celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Center of Studies of the Physical Fitness Research Laboratory from Sao Caetano do Sul.

20th European Fair Play Movement congress and General Assembly

Where: Riga, Latvia

When: 8–11 October 2014

Website: <http://www.fairplayriga.lv/>

About: The organizers will be welcoming European Fair Play Movement members from more than 40 European countries, as well as representatives from NOCs and other sports organizations. Topics include: Fair Treatment of Sportsmen with Disabilities, Fair Communication in Sports, Fairness in Environment and Sports Infrastructure, and Fairness in the Sports Labor Market.

Move Congress 2014

Where: Italy, Rome

When: 22–25 October 2014

Website: <http://www.movecongress.com/2014-programme/>

About: Building on the successful, annual MOVE Congresses since 2009, an international network of speakers and delegates from a range of sectors will meet in Rome in October with a key common interest: to find innovative ways of engaging people in physical activity and grass-roots sport worldwide.

Upcoming Conferences

Transnational Body and Movement Cultures from a Gender Perspective

Where: Copenhagen, Denmark

When: 13–15 November 2014

Website: <http://nexs.ku.dk/english/research/units/human-social-sciences/gender/>

About: The conference will explore the multiple aspects of transnationalism in sport and movement cultures, as well as with the current state of gender research in different contexts and which take intersectionalities into account. A key issue raised by this concept in the context of sport relates to inequalities – with regard to gender, social background and ethnicity – that are connected to transnational migrations and influences.

Africa Women And Sport Consultative Meeting

Where: Botho University in Gaborone, Botswana

When: 21–22 November, 2014

Website: contact gmothibi@bnsco.co.bw or gmothibi@yahoo.com for more info

About: This meeting is a follow up to the Africa Meeting at the International Working Group on Women and Sport 2014 Conference, which provided an opportunity for African women in sport to strategically connect and take action towards remodeling the sports structure in Africa, dialogue on leadership and contextual governance issues. Since the IWG 2018 Conference will be held in Botswana, the November meeting will be held there to begin developing a formal structure to address women and sport issues in Africa.



