

Arete

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Winter 2008



IOAPA Beijing 2008 reunion

by Marko Levovnik, IOAPA Country Representative Officer



"If a man hasn't discovered something that he would die for, he isn't fit to live."

Martin Luther King Jr.
(1929-1968)

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The Games of the XXIX Olympiad were in the far off capital of the Republic of China - Beijing, the IOAPA, with President Héctor Argüelles at the head, decided to organize the traditional reunion.

These have been organized for more than 12 years at both summer and winter Olympic Games. The reunion took place in the lecture hall of Beijing High School Number 4, a model school of the Chinese Education system. The IOAPA president organized the meeting in cooperation with the Pierre de Coubertin Committee, which facilitated the contact with the High School # 4. Invitations were sent a couple of months earlier with excellent feedback. Approximately 50 IOA past participants and IOAPA members replied so the expectations were big.

On the day of reunion, Hector and I brought refreshments and food and made the room look friendlier. Mr. Guopeng Shi, professor of the High School #4, was a big help.

People arrived and the old IOA spirit reemerged. Familiar faces, old friends and new people met each other. Be-

tween 40 to 50 people, from all over the world attended and it was nice to see all of those active individuals smiling and having fun. We could truly say that the world was very small. People were exchanging stories and Olympic impressions. After a while, the President of the IOAPA gave the opening speech and a warm welcome in the name of the IOAPA. Then we took a group photo, of course with a lot of smiles and fun. After the "formal meeting," most went to a nice traditional Chinese restaurant for dinner. I think we all were amazed with the delicious and tasteful Chinese food – even though some of us were already there for 14 days or more. Afterward we went to downtown Beijing for a drink. The whole evening was fantastic!

These meetings at the Olympic Games, are very beneficial. On the one hand, you see all your old friends from Olympia, and on the other, you meet many new people that make your friendship network even bigger, which is very important for many of us. All I can say – Let's keep the spirit moving on!



IOAPA
Reunion
participants
at Beijing
High School
#4, Lecture
Hall.

Eighth International Session for Educators and Official of Higher Institutes of Physical Education July 10th-17th, 2008



By Geoffrey Kohe (New Zealand) & Marko Levovnik (Slovenia)

Special Topic: Youth Olympic Games – Children and Sport
International Olympic Academy, Olympia, Greece



The topic for this biennial symposium was 'Youth Olympic Games -- Children and Sport.' The opening ceremony included memorial addresses about the founder of the modern Olympic Games, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, and the founders of the IOA, Carl Diem and Ioannis Ketseas. Over the course of four days keynote lectures were presented by Dr. Don Anthony (Former President of the British Olympic Academy), Dr. Ivan Klementjevs (Olympic Medallist, Member of the Latvian Parliament, and Latvian Olympic Committee), Professor Luc Silance (University of Brussels, Belgium), Professor Marc Maes (University of Ghent, Belgium), Mr. Rob Koehler (Director of Education and Programme Development, WADA), Mr. Claude-Louis Gallien (Vice President of the French Olympic Committee), and Professor Shamseldin Abdin (International University of Africa, Sudan). Short presentations were given by 32 of the 75 delegates on a wide range of topics, including Olympic education initiatives, youth elite sport, critical pedagogy, sport technologies, sport-for-all programmes, and museums and historiography. Presentations were given in Greek, English, or French.

Delegates were divided into small discussion groups. Each group was chaired by one of the guest lecturers or by a former academy participant. Over two days each of the five discussion groups (plus one franco-phone group), selected and then debated three questions pertaining to the special topic. For example, are the youth Olympic Games necessary? What is the role of marketing at the Youth Olympic Games? And, how is Coubertin's vision reflected and manifested at the Youth Olympics, particularly concerning the educational and cultural programmes? The groups contained people from diverse backgrounds and, not surprisingly, precipitated some very lively debate and at times some savvy diplomacy. While all group questions varied, the conclusions they reached after the three discussion sessions were all interestingly very similar. In general, all expressed concern about the current model of the Youth Olympic Games. Among the issues were:

- Promoting participation above results
- Encouraging critical educational programmes to promote social values as distinct from Olympic rhetoric, and
- Protecting the Youth Games from the exploitative practices that have undermined the traditional modern Games.

All the recommendations put forth, and the entire works of the session, were forwarded to the International Olympic Committee and to the Youth Olympic Games organisers. The hope is that given the calibre of participants at the conference, and our shared concern for youth, that the work of the session is not only taken on board, but also utilised. The full works of the all the sessions were also published by the IOA. The publications form an extensive and important body of scholarship that exists to preserve and promote Olympic studies and encourage future scholars, hopefully towards more critical perspectives and more rigorous understandings of the Olympic movement. The symposium ended as it had begun with closing addresses, the presentation of participant diplomas, gift giving, and the Olympic anthem. Every participant of the symposium also became eligible to join the International Olympic Academy Participants Association (IOAPA).

Given New Zealand's long attendance at academy sessions and the country's reputation for Olympic education initiatives it is my hope to re-establish an IOAPA network comparable to that of successful overseas ventures. It was a privilege to attend the symposium, and encouraging to meet such a diverse array of academics that comprise an integral part of the Olympic movement. I am hopeful that critique will continue to be welcomed and fostered within what is a particularly unique academic climate.

The President's Message

Dear IOAPA members,

I hope this message finds you all well and succeeding in your personal endeavours.

This summer of 2008 has surely filled us with many new Olympic moments. The inspiring athletic performances seen in Beijing will be difficult to forget. Definitely, the Beijing Games have also set also new highs in organization standards.

IOAPA organised its traditional Olympic Games reunion and as usual was a great opportunity to meet old friends, get to know new ones, and have a relaxed conversation on diverse aspects of the Games. You can find more on the IOAPA meeting in this issue of Arete.

Also during the summer, the four traditional IOA Sessions took place. We were very happy to hear from the IOA Dean Dr. Kostas Georgiadis that all sessions have been of high quality and have enjoyed great engagement from all the participants. The evaluation the IOA makes of all the Sessions has shown this new highs. This is specially rewarding after the very sad moments that the IOA experienced in August 2007, when the fires occurring throughout Greece struck the IOA facilities in Olympia.

The 48th IOA Session for Young Participants had many remarkable moments. The participants showed real passion for the Olympic ideals and a record number of them registered as new IOAPA members. Worth to mention too is the foundation of AOAPA, the African Olympic Academy Participants Association. The African participants of the Session got together and agreed to start the Association whose goals go inline with those of the IOAPA. This will help IOAPA reach to more people and more effectively in Africa. From the IOAPA Executive Committee we will support as much as we can the works of AOAPA.

In these pages, you can find the dates for all IOA sessions 2009. Although, we are waiting for final confirmation we can already provisionally announce the tentative dates of the IOAPA Session 2009. In principle, the IOAPA Session will take place from 24th to 30th June at the IOA premises in Olympia. We will notice you as soon as they are final, although we do not expect any change. The Session will mark the 20th anniversary of the Association. We very much hope to meet a good number of you in Olympia. From the IOAPA Executive Committee we will do our best to organise for you a great Olympic education week.

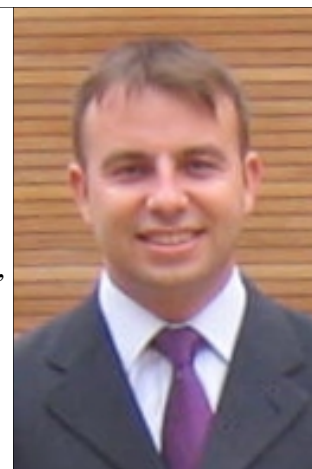
We are glad to say that we have initiated contacts with Vancouver 2010 and most probably, we will be able to provide with volunteer possibilities to the IOAPA membership.

At the IOAPA Executive Committee, we are working in all those initiatives above and in a number of others, specially the new website that will see the light in the coming months. You will hear from us through the Mailgroup and here in the Arete pages. In the meanwhile, I will be very happy to receive any input from you about services that we could provide to you, so we can better help you out with your involvement in the Olympic Movement.

All the best

Héctor Argüelles

Héctor Argüelles
IOAPA President
hector@ioapa.org



URGENT ~ IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP NEWS!!!!!!**Renewal of your IOAPA membership**

If your IOAPA membership is expiring you should have receive an email about the renewal in January. We have received a lot of renewals, but would still like to send out a reminder in this Areté. If you still need to renew your membership you can do so using the form at: http://www.ioapa.org/doc/IOAPA_Renewal_Form.doc

As an IOAPA member, you will stay updated on the IOAPA actions through the **e-mail group** and the **Areté Newsletter**. In the coming months a completely **new IOAPA website** will be available giving the IOAPA the chance to develop further its network possibilities. The website will include information and services accessible to the IOAPA members only.

We hope to see you at our bi-annual **IOAPA conference in Olympia**. In 2009 will be our 10th Session and we will celebrate IOAPA's 20th Anniversary. For people that need support to get there it will be possible to apply for funding through the **Hans van Haute fund**. If your financial situation makes it difficult to get to the sessions we advise you to apply for support. On the other hand, if you have the opportunity you can donate money to the Hans van Haute fund and help others get to the IOAPA conference.

The IOAPA has recently strengthened its relations with its natural partners: the **International Olympic Academy** and the **International Olympic Committee**. And has also established close contact with the **International Pierre de Coubertin Committee** and the **International Society of Olympic Historians**. This will raise very soon many opportunities for the better involvement of IOAPA members in the Olympic Movement.

To continue accessing to all IOAPA benefits, please use the renewal form. Your IOAPA membership will be extended for two years, or even better choose lifetime renewal for unlimited membership.

By renewing you membership you will continue to contribute to the IOAPA vision!

Yours in Olympism,

Vigdis Vatshaug

IOAPA Secretary

Postgraduate Research Grant Programme, developed by the IOC Olympic Studies Centre

The IOC Olympic Studies Centre (OSC) / Information Management Department has created an annual programme of grants intended for young researchers engaged in scholarly research on the Olympic Movement, its history and ideals, and the impact of the Olympic Games on the various aspects of contemporary society and culture.

The explanatory document and application form is available at the following web address: <http://www.olympic.org>, in the "Education / Olympic Studies Centre" section or at:

http://www.ioapa.org/doc/IOC_Postgraduate_Research_Grant_Programme_2009.pdf

Thank you,

Nuria Puig

Head of Universities Relations
Information Management Department

EFFECTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC ACADEMY TO SPREAD OLYMPIC EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY IN ATHENS/OLYMPIA, 47th INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC ACADEMY SESSION FOR YOUNG PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Metin Arğan , Muge Akyildiz, Erkan AkinAnadolu
University Physical Education and Sport Faculty, Eskisehir/TURKEY



The aim of this study was to expose the effects of International Olympic Academy for spreading out the olympic education using the qualitative research method. In this study 47th International Young Participants Olympic Academy is taken as a case study. To reach this aim; opinions of the 170 participants from 97 countries who give the direct support to the 47th International Young Participants Olympic Academy in Olympia-Greece were sent an inquiry which includes 13 questions. At the end of one month, 37 participants from 29 countries answered the questions which applied to their thoughts, experiences and profits after the end of this organization and also is wanted to learn how these participants transfer the olympic education “that must be adopt as a life philosophy” to the real life.

The results of the 37 participants’ answers and comments turned into main themes with the qualitative research method.. These themes showed us; participants express that Olympism mentality and Olympic education should play core role in whole Olympic Games. Because, olympism mentality establishes the fundamental principles, ethics and values that contribute towards the ideologies and foundations upon which the organisation establishes itself. The integration of such a mentality provides an understanding about the nature and intent of the Olympic Games, emphasizes peaceful behaviour and international understanding.

Furthermore, it is seemed that International Olympic Academy have an important positive contribution to the participants in two ways; sharing the idea of olympic values, olympic education, olympism philosophy, olympic spirit and getting deep information about the history of the Olympic Games, on the other hand it gives the opportunity to understand of the culture and lifestyle of numerous countries that were reflected in the individual experiences and ideas concerning the focus point of the Olympism.

Moreover, it is seemed that International Olympic Academy have an important positive contribution for increasing sports culture, professionalism, multiculturalism, universality and fair play. The inclusiveness of the sports, all group activities, social evenings, discussion groups with the people from all over the world make it a place of universal and multicultural participation.

The research, conducted to show the importance of Olympic Education in the world in terms of generalizing the Olympism notion, is vital because it makes significant contributions to the Olympic Education studies that come in the future.

The All-Russia Scientific-Practical Conference with International Participation “On the way to the XXII Olympic and XI Paralympic Winter Games” in Krasnodar

TAMARA ZAPPATERRA (ITA)

In 2014 in Sochi, on the Black Sea in the Russian Federation, will hold the XXII Olympic and XI Paralympic Winter Games. Russia is already enthusiastically preparing as I noted recently during a trip to the region. From 29-30 October 2008, the All-Russia Scientific-Practical Conference with International Participation, “On the way to the XXII Olympic and XI Paralympic winter Games,” was held at the Kuban State University of Physical Education, Sport and Tourism in Krasnodar. The conference was of a high scientific-cultural level with a great number of lecturers and participants. The themes of the papers of the approximately 70 lecturers concerned actual problems of Olympism, the Olympic movement, the Olympic Games, Olympic education, theoretical, methodical, medical, biological, economical, psychological aspects of sport training, Olympic reserve preparation, the Paralympic movement and its problems in modern society, sport for all, and information technologies in sport.

I received an invitation to take part as a lecturer by Denis Kruzhkov, professor of Kuban State University and Secretary General of the Olympic Academy of the South of Russia, and Nataly Arzamastseva, chief Coordinator of the same Academy whom I met in Olympia at 48th IOA Session for Young Participants. I thank both for this experience, for friendship and for the Russian people’s extraordinary hospitality.

I accepted the invitation with pleasure and presented a paper on the “Evolvement of disability culture, inclusion and Paralympic movement in Italy”. The inclusion of disabled people is in fact my topic as a researcher and professor in Special Education at University of Florence. My paper covered the following concepts:

The 20th century has marked the rise of a scientific approach to disability with the elaboration of an epistemological framework for the investigation of difficulties internationally. Medical and scientific studies have unveiled the correct origin of much organic- and/or genetic-based pathology and tossed aside for good certain prejudicial explanations that lacked any scientific support. What is important to underline is that a handicap is a dynamic concept that concerns a given moment in one person’s functionality and his/her degree of social participation.

At the same time, psychological and pedagogic studies render an image of the disabled person that goes beyond the common perception of limit, obstacle and suffering. Next to undeniable struggles, each disabled person also has enormous potential. It is here that the educational effort has to be directed with interventions aimed at developing human and personal expression potentialities that rely in each disabled person. This is the starting point to enhance a new culture of disability.

Last year in Italy, we celebrated the 30-year anniversary of the inclusion of disabled children into every school. It was in 1977 that we abolished the so-called “differential classes” and late special schools and established a single inclusion model for children with disabilities, that of common classes in every grade of school as well as in university institutions. This inclusion has generated a rethinking of the education and social systems from both a semantic and institutional viewpoint. This debate developed mostly around school and childcare involves emerging issues with regard to the working inclusion, the right to leisure and free time - in other words, the search for an adult identity for the disabled individual. It is within this enlarged prospect for special pedagogical studies that we can incorporate and investigate the educational and social meaning of sport activities and the significance and purpose of the Paralympic movement as an educational and social phenomenon.

A peculiar parallelism can be traced between the life and actions of Sir Ludwig Guttmann, father of the Paralympics and two Italian scholars, Adriano Milani Comparetti, prominent figure in the field of children’s brain paralysis rehabilitation and Antonio Maglio, father of the Italian Paralympic Movement. Physicians Guttmann and Maglio had a belief in the therapeutic value of sport in common. Both also believed that “sportherapy” is the most natural form of reeducation, able to improve concentration, motion coordination, and muscular strength and movement performances. Most importantly, they both realized that the disciplined use of sports raises recreational and competitive values and awake the will of the disabled well beyond what traditional physiotherapy methods could do. It was not by chance that “Spirit in

(Continued from page 6)

motion” was chosen as the motto of the Paralympic movement. Comparisons between Guttman and Comparetti concern more properly social and socializing aspects of movement and rehabilitative practice. Comparetti coined the term “social rehabilitation” indicating all the positive aspects of motion, also outside of the clinical environment, in every aspect of the disabled person’s life. In that regard, we know that Guttman insisted on the importance of sport as social reintegration and on the need for a deeper social and cultural understanding between typical individuals and people with disabilities.

What is the state of the art of the Italian Paralympic movement? President Pancalli’s point of view that there is much more to be done for Italy does not yet show a disability sport culture as other countries have. Families with a disabled child do not think of sport as a way for rehabilitation and socialization. So according to current CIP (Italian Paralympic Committee) guidelines, sport has to become a strategic value among national social policies. The school system is particularly responsive to these issues: the Ministry of Public Education in Italy and CIP have stipulated an agreement for the realization of the “Sport in School” project aimed at properly informing and introducing children with disabilities to potential sport activities. The goal is to increase the number of physical activity hours and to implement appropriate facilities, spaces, structures and tools. School needs all the mentioned support as the primary educational agency that has the task of promoting a new sport culture.

The media must also properly address Handisport’s public image. With the presence of media images of full integration, dynamism, and full social participation, as the ones offered by Oscar Pistorius and Natalie Du Toit, we could induce in the public the idea that disability transcends the singular individual, that diversity is a distinguishing trait of the human genre and is embedded in the human being. In conclusion, I will make mine the words that Candido Cannavò, respected Italian journalist, uses for the Paralympic phenomenon: “I didn’t dare to imagine that Paralympics would take off so well to become today the most advanced beacon of cultural growth in the world.”



The presentation of my paper at Conference in auditorium of Kuban State Physical Education, Sport and Tourism University, 161 Budennogo Street, Krasnodar (Russia).

Free time at Conference. In the picture: Nataly Arzamastseva, Chief Coordinator of Olympic Academy of the South of Russia and member IOAPA; Professor Gayk Alexanyants, Vice-Rector on Science Affairs at Kuban State Physical Education, Sport and Tourism University, member of the organizing committee of Conference; Tamara Zappaterra, Philipp Soldatenkov, members IOAPA.



BEIJING OLYMPIC GAMES 2008: Hong Kong Equestrian Events

By Elizabeth Hanley (USA)

On the 15 ½-hour trip from Chicago to Hong Kong, my friend Cara and I attempted to sleep but it was difficult. When we saw the lights of Hong Kong at midnight on Tuesday 12 August, we were delighted but exhausted. By the time we were finally in our hotel in Kowloon at 0100 we had missed our first night of competition entirely. We were up at 0530 watching the BBC news. Michael Phelps had just won his third gold medal, and the men's gymnastics team from China garnered gold, apparently with ease. The view from our 15th floor room was awesome!

After a wonderful international buffet our scheduled half-day tour of Hong Kong began at 0900. We travelled to Victoria Peak, the Jockey Club Equestrian Museum, and Repulse Bay. It was a brief, but appreciated, tour of Hong Kong. At 1700 we were off to our Welcome Dinner at the Harbour Plaza Hotel before it was off to the evening events. The equestrian venue at Sha Tin is lovely; it changed its look for dressage and for the jumping events. Our first night of dressage included 24 competitors. I learned more about dressage from Cara than I ever thought I could, what to look for, and how to keep score, etc.

The next day we purchased our Octopus card (the travel card for the MTR train and other forms of public transportation) and set out for a day of exploring, since all the events were held at night to help the horses endure the hot and steamy Hong Kong weather. The ferry from Kowloon to Hong Kong Island was a pleasant 30-minute ride.

In the dressage team finals that night, Germany won gold, Netherlands silver, and Denmark bronze. The next night we enjoyed the jumping competition - exciting and never a boring moment. We also figured out that, since Hong Kong is hot and humid, the favorite pastime for the seven million residents is going to the air-conditioned malls and shopping every day. The next day we picked up our tickets and were off to the team jumping finals. The USA had a jump-off with Canada for gold. The U.S. won gold, Canada silver, and Norway* the bronze.

On Tuesday August 19 we were up at 0845 for breakfast and decided to head to Aberdeen to see the boat people and the famous jumbo floating restaurant. The boat that we rented, with an old woman for captain, was perfect; she gave us an hour tour all around the channel and it was fascinating the entire time.

Wednesday August 20th was our day with an IOA (International Olympic Academy) friend from 1997, Sze Sze, who was in my dance workshop at the IOA. She teaches Physical Education at Hong Kong Baptist University in Kowloon. Sze Sze met us late morning and took us to Stanley Market, a place we probably would not have found without her. It is on the water and was a lovely, quiet place to watch small sailboats and sailboarders, stroll through the various market stalls, and enjoy a relaxing outdoor lunch. Later, she took us to Soho. Exhausted by then, we thoroughly enjoyed our dinner at one of Sze Sze's favorite restaurants.

The finals of the individual jumping competition on Thursday made for another excellent night. We left a bit early when light rain, the beginning of typhoon Nuri, began. When we arrived at the hotel we found that our Friday flight changed to Saturday since Nuri was now up to category 8.

We arose early on Saturday and were off to the airport by 1100. Never have I seen such chaos at an airport. It looked like millions of people everywhere without many people to help. After securing our boarding passes we met at the gate and waited for our plane to take off, but the fact that it did not take off until after 1800 came as no surprise. That meant we would miss our connection in Chicago, which we did and had to spend the night there. We arrived home late Sunday morning. It was a wonderful Hong Kong Olympic experience, even with the delays to and from that part of the world. The best part was seeing the Olympic Spirit in action: fair play, good sportsmanship, and everyone cheering for each competitor during the equestrian events!

**(EDITOR'S NOTE: Norwegian rider, Tony Andre Hansen, was stripped of his Olympic bronze medal in team jumping after his horse tested positive for a banned drug at the Beijing Games. Hansen was disqualified by the International Equestrian Federation. The Norwegian team, which won bronze, relinquished the bronze medal to the 4th place Swiss team by order of the IOC.)*

IOAPA ON-LINE GROUPS

We would like to inform you that we have created two internet/network **IOAPA** groups. The first one is formed on the network called "Facebook", which is one of the most popular social networks at this time, and the second group is formed on "LinkedIn" network which is one of the most common professional networks in the world.

Through the creation of **IOAPA** groups in "Facebook" and "LinkedIn", we will try to facilitate the professional networking (LinkedIn) and social networking (Facebook) of the **IOAPA** members. We will try to intensify the networking by promoting the use of powerful tools as "Facebook" and "LinkedIn" among **IOAPA** members. So **IOAPA** provides the groups inside above mentioned state of the art on-line tools so members can easily interact with each other taking advantage of all the features included in these advanced networking services.

We have to emphasize also that Facebook group is open to all the past IOA participants/people or any other fan of such movement or thinking, meanwhile LinkedIn group is closed just for IOAPA members.

ABOUT FACEBOOK

Founded in February 2004, Facebook is a social utility that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and coworkers. The company develops technologies that facilitate the sharing of information through the social graph, the digital mapping of people's real-world social connections. People use Facebook to keep up with friends, upload an unlimited number of photos, share links and videos, and learn more about the people they meet. Anyone can sign up for Facebook and interact with the people they know in a trusted environment. Facebook is a part of millions of people's lives all around the world.

Link to the group: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=7205934228>

ABOUT LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is an online network of more than 20 million experienced professionals from around the world, representing 150 industries.

When you join, you create a profile that summarizes your professional accomplishments. Your profile helps you find and be found by former colleagues, clients, and partners. You can add more connections by inviting trusted contacts to join LinkedIn and connect to you. Your network consists of your connections, your connections' connections, and the people they know, linking you to thousands of qualified professionals.

Through your network you can:

- Find potential clients, service providers, subject experts, and partners who come recommended
- Be found for business opportunities
- Search for great jobs
- Discover inside connections that can help you land jobs and close deals
- Post and distribute job listings
- Find high-quality passive candidates

Get introduced to other professionals through the people you know
LinkedIn is free to join.

Link to the group: www.linkedin.com (sign in) – you have to find IOAPA group

Olympic regards,
Marko Levovnik
IOAPA Country Coordinator

Deadline for the next issue of Arete is 30 January 2009

Due to circumstances beyond our control this issue of Arete was delayed. However, we will resume our regular publication schedule with the next issue.

Please submit any personal information, photos, or articles by that date. The articles should not have been published previously in other publications. Articles should be approximately one page single spaced. If you have photos to accompany the article please send them as well. Send all submissions to the editor, Rusty Wilson, at:

rustywilson@ioapa.org or ruwilson@ix.netcom.com

IOA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION IN SPAIN

By **Gloria Castilla Lattke (Spain)**



I had a great time when the 1st IOA Spanish Participants' Congress was held in Madrid on October, 4th - 5th. It was a great honour, as well, to be the person who should write a summary about this meeting for our newsletter "Areté". I was very happy to be asked to do this.

The whole idea began when IOAPA president Héctor Argüelles sent information about the idea of organizing a large meeting for all former Spanish IOA participants. I answered him in June that I was willing to assist in the 1st IOA Spanish Participants' Congress since it was such a good idea! Héctor contacted all the "young and old" Spanish participants to see how many would like to attend such a congress. Around 55 people were interested in the event, not only from Spain, but since some of us work abroad, many also came from other countries.

This congress was supported by the Spanish Olympic Committee and its president, Mr. Alejandro Blanco Bravo and, of course, by the Spanish Olympic Academy (SOA) president, Mr. Conrado Durántez Corral, who has a long career dedicated to Olympism and the SOA.

On the first day, Saturday the 4th October, we listened to Mr Durántez speak on the "History and evolution of the Spanish Olympic Academy." We celebrated the 40th anniversary of the SOA on November 25th, the first NOA in the world!

Mr. Óscar del Ama, who is responsible for the Madrid 2016 candidature, informed us, with an incredible enthusiasm, about the plan to make Madrid a true Olympic city. Mr Emilio Fernández, university lecturer on mass media (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona) gave us a view of the Olympics and the role of the Internet. At the end of the day we had the opportunity to listen to Mr. Jaime Terry, teacher at primary and secondary school and University lecturer in Physical Education, about Olympic education and its universality. We also had time to ask the lecturers about these subjects.

As we do at the General Sessions in Olympia, we were divided into two groups to discuss how to improve the initiatives in Olympic education in our country. A lot of ideas came up and focused not only on the children and young people, but also on other groups such as parents, trainers, athletes and even some other initiatives related to the new technologies.

On the second day, Sunday the 5th October, we had the pleasure to begin the day with Ms María de la Paz Palomino, humanist and 2004 young IOA participant, who introduced us in the subject "Women at the Olympics." from the ancient to the modern Olympic Games. Ms Beatriz García, researcher on sociology and lecturer at Liverpool University, showed us a panoramic through a hundred years of Olympic Games including its origins, evolution and future projection. It was a very detailed presentation work about the Olympic athletic and cultural programs over a period of 100-years. At the end of the day, Mr Carlos Torrecusa Maldonado, secondary school teacher, trainer and expert on Olympic education, presented his own book series with activities and fun exercises about the Olympic movement for children which has been published this year.

Afterward we all constituted the Spanish Olympic Alumni Association. After some proposals and reflections, we defined the different work groups and a good contact system to continue our job. You will hear of us later on!

My special thanks to Héctor Argüelles, who made a great effort as main link for the SOA and the alumni. I'm sure that organizing these days took up a lot of his time to make this dream come true.

The International Olympic Committee Olympic Studies Centre has created a newsletter. They can be accessed at the following websites. These will be valuable tools for us in our quest to spread Olympism and Olympic education and we urge you to check this site frequently.

http://www.ioapa.org/doc/OSC_Newsletter_2_September_2008

http://www.ioapa.org/doc/OSC_Newsletter_3_December_2008

Olympism Poster Campaign

by Eli A Wolff & Nathaniel L. Mills

The Center for the Study of Sport in Society and the Olympism Project launched a special campaign at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China.

The grassroots effort--lead by Olympians--aimed to inspire, motivate, and educate athletes in the Olympic Village through posters with quotations and images chronicling the people, history and ideas of Olympism and the Olympic Spirit.

The campaign's goal was to ensure that Olympic values were not lost in the midst of Olympic competition.

The Olympic Charter is clear: "The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity." - Fundamental Principles

Olympism takes on added relevance as the intersection of the Games and politics attracts global attention and awareness like few Games before. The Beijing Olympic Games were not only about the athletes and the spirit of international competition - One World, One Dream; they were also about bringing nations and cultures into dialog with one another in order to effect peaceful change in the world.

The Olympic Charter outlines the role of the IOC: "To cooperate with the competent public or private organizations and authorities in the endeavor to place sport at the service of humanity and thereby to promote peace."

Mindful of the IOC's mandate and the Olympic Spirit, Sport in Society and the Olympism Project delivered a new poster to Olympic delegations on each day of competition.

The posters encouraged athletes to succeed both on the playing field and off, simultaneously challenging them to think about what it means to be an Olympian today.

Today's Olympic athletes find themselves in a unique and prestigious position as the eyes of the world are upon them for seventeen days. The Olympism poster campaign inspired, motivated and challenged athletes to perform to the best of their ability, and to represent their respective countries--and humanity--with dignity and poise while amidst the flurry of political and social activism that inevitably attends the Games.

Center for the Study of Sport in Society: <http://www.sportinsociety.org>

Spirit of Olympism Announcement: <http://www.sportinsociety.org/news.php?nid=149>

Olympism Project Blog: <http://olympismproject.blogspot.com>

Olympism Project Facebook: <http://www.new.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4981544057&ref=ts>

IOA Sessions dates 2009

10th INTERNATIONAL SESSION FOR DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL OLYMPIC ACADEMIES:

Wednesday 6/5/2009- Wednesday 13/5/2009

12th INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR FOR SPORTS JOURNALISTS:

Tuesday 26/5/2009-Monday 1/6/2009

49th INTERNATIONAL SESSION FOR YOUNG PARTICIPANTS:

Wednesday 10/6/2009-Wednesday 24/6/2009

17th INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON OLYMPIC STUDIES FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS:

Wednesday 1/7/2009-Thursday 30/7/2009