

# Arete

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Winter 2007



See page 3 for the results of the Logo Competition

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## Two Years in the Desert Alastair Cameron (AUS)



Had you asked me in mid-2004 where I would be for the next two years I would probably have replied “Australia” because that was really where I was headed with a small deviation to Athens to work for the Australian Olympic team at the 2004 Olympic Games.

Then as fate would have it I met the guy who was to change my direction for the next two years. The Director of Ceremonies and Cultural Events made me an offer that was hard to refuse. Two years living and working in the Middle East on the upcoming 15<sup>th</sup> Asian Games (December 1-15, 2006) in Doha, Qatar. When was I ever going to have that opportunity again? So I seized it with both hands.

Four months later I found myself flying into Doha. The view from the airplane window was interesting—nothing, nothing, nothing—then all of a sudden some buildings and we had landed. Interesting landscape I thought to myself as I prepared to get off the plane. The next shock for me was the temperature as I got off the plane. It was quite warm and this was winter! That was only a prelude of what was to come. Summers in that part of the world are brutally hot, up to 50C many days. I survived two of them okay though.

I consider myself a pretty well traveled person, having lived in many parts of the world, but not the Middle East. It takes a bit to get used to. I guess the first thing that comes to mind is the dress. Men in

white, women in black, everywhere you look. Not many suits here! And Toyota 4WDS everywhere!

Qatar is a liberal Muslim country in the sense that you can get alcohol, ladies do not have to cover themselves, Muslim or Western, although the majority of Muslim women do. Women can drive and vote as well. It is ruled by the Emir who has the country's future clearly in his sights as he moves it forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Qatar is now the largest exporter of Natural Gas in the world. His progressive approach lead to a successful bid for the 15<sup>th</sup> Asian Games to be held in December 2006. It has a population of around 800,000 people, 75% of whom are expatriate workers.

I settled in fairly quickly though and got to the task at hand, organizing the Doha 2006 Asian Games Youth Camp. It was a team of one which grew to two within a couple of days with the arrival of a local guy who was there to assist me. We quickly got into the job and moved along at a reasonable rate for the next two years. The team expanded, we recruited both local and international staff who could provide a range of experiences that we needed to put together the Youth Camp program and operations. I ended up with a team consisting of folks from Qatar, Australia, Colombia, Lebanon, Canada, Iraq and the Philippines. We lucked out with a magnificent location as well, the recently built ASPIRE Sports Academy

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jeremy Cross (GBR)



Welcome to this latest edition of Arete, IOAPA's newsletter. As always it is really great to read your news from around the Olympic world – very many thanks for your contributions.

It has been just over a year now since Mr. Minos Kyriakou succeeded Dr. Nikos Filaretos as the President of the IOA. In the Autumn of last year we invited the new President to become an honorary IOAPA member and I am pleased to report the following reply from Mr. Giannis Psarelis, the IOA Director, on behalf of the President:

*"We would like to thank you for the great honor to nominate our president Mr. Minos X. KYRIAKOU as an Honorary Member of the IOAPA, an invitation, which he gladly accepts.*

*We understand that you work hard enough in order to maintain the contact among participants of previous IOA Sessions, an effort for which we congratulate you wholeheartedly. We believe it is a great opportunity for all the participants to strengthen the bond with the International Olympic Academy, but most of all, to contribute considerably to the promotion of the Olympic spirit and ideas to their countries.*

*We are sure that our collaboration will continue in the future and that it will bring about fruitful results".*

I am very aware that we need to keep you all updated on the status of the planned 2007 IOAPA Session. In communication with the IOA, we have again been offered some days at the Academy after the Main Session from the 3<sup>rd</sup> July. However, we have yet to confirm the prices and finishing dates with the IOA so we keep you informed as soon as we can confirm any further information.

Thank you once again for your contributions . I hope you all enjoy reading this issue of Arete!

Warmest wishes,

*Jeremy Cross*

If you have any thoughts, comments or feedback on how to improve the organisation contact me at

[jeremy@ioapa.org](mailto:jeremy@ioapa.org)

## Website News Héctor Argüelles (ESP)



Dear IOAPA members,

In order to continue receiving all IOAPA communications through the Mailgroup, please remember to notify any change in your e-mail address at [hector@ioapa.org](mailto:hector@ioapa.org)

As usual, I would like to encourage you to visit periodically our website at [www.ioapa.org](http://www.ioapa.org) In the next weeks more new contents and updates will be available.

Warm regards,

*Héctor Argüelles* - [hector@ioapa.org](mailto:hector@ioapa.org)

### 4th IOAPA Winter Session

Dear IOAPA members,

Unfortunately, the 4th IOAPA Winter Session that would have taken place this year had to be cancelled. We just received 11 applications before the deadline, which was not even close to the minimum of 20 participants needed to organize the event. However, we will try to organize the next IOAPA Winter Session in the upcoming 2008 winter season!

With only 11 participants we did not have strong arguments to secure more sponsors or to negotiate further support from the Austrian Olympic Academy and therefore we had to make this decision.

It was also sad for us, but we hope that you will understand.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

All best wishes and happy 2007!

Axel Bammer - [axel@ioapa.org](mailto:axel@ioapa.org)

# IOAPA Logo Competition . . . The Winners Are . . .

Dear IOAPA friends!

The IOAPA Executive Board is proud to present you herewith the three winners of the IOAPA Logo competition! Seventy eight IOAPA members from 36 different countries voted on the best 11 logos of the final round (70 logos were sent to the marketing officer). That means that approximately 20% of all IOAPA members participated in this competition. The winning logos and their designers are introduced below. We all hope that you like your decision! As advertised the winners will receive free IOAPA membership (1<sup>st</sup> place, 10 years; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 6 years and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 4 years).

Thanks again for your participation and contribution in this competition!

Axel Bammer



**First place: Bulent Bulut (TUR)**



**Second place: Sara Levin (USA)**



**Third place: Reza Kareem (SRI)**

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**([www.aspire.qa](http://www.aspire.qa))** which had fabulous facilities and was located alongside the Asian Games stadium. Life is good when you can walk to Opening Ceremony!

Our lifestyle in Qatar was very good for the most part. Work hours were from 7.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. and we worked Sunday to Thursday, Friday being the religious holiday observed by Muslims in the region. We had access to great sports facilities including golf, a variety of football codes, squash, tennis and swimming. There were also opportunities to go Scuba diving, desert camping and quad bike riding. No shortage of leisure time activities, and at night there were a small number of clubs and bars that one could frequent. My favorite pastime was running a weekly trivia or quiz night at one of the local expat bars for 18 months.

Working on regional Games is similar but different to working on an Olympic Games. The rules and regulations, not to mention the sports, are a bit different from the Olympic Games. As an example there are no qualification rules for team sports, so any one of the 45 competing countries can send a team to compete at the Games. This led to a number of challenges for the organizing committee, not the least being not knowing how many athletes and officials would be turning up until virtually the last minute. It also meant that the competition schedule was revised frequently as we made allowance for increasing numbers of teams. A big issue when you have a fixed number of beds in the Athletes Village. Then there were some interesting sports. Some of course are endemic to the region, for example kabbadi, wushu and sepaktakraw. But there were also some others that I feel do not belong at this level of competition such as chess, tenpin bowling and cue sports. The organizing committee had one of the most experienced teams ever put together working on it. There were people who had worked at one or more Olympic or Commonwealth Games going back as far as Lillehammer in 1994. The biggest number were the Australians from Sydney, Melbourne and Games in between, with over 200 in the organizing committee and another 600 with the ceremonies producer. There were a good number of Greeks from Athens 2004 and a smattering of Italians and others from Torino 2006.

Organizing the Youth Camp was always going to be an interesting proposition. There had never been such an international Youth Camp held in the Middle East prior to this and certainly none that had both boys and girls at it. So we had no real local experience to draw from but we needed the cultural understanding and knowledge to make it a uniquely Qatari experience. We included things like a dhow (fishing boat) trip, a visit to a private museum with one of the largest collections of Arab artifacts in the world and an overnight desert camping trip complete with camel rides and sand tobogganing. We combined this with a Games experience that included attending the Opening Ceremony, four sports events and a village visit to their team headquarters in the Athletes Village. On top of all this we added in the cross-cultural and sports activities that help the young participants gain a great understanding of each other's cultures and send them home with a wider global perspective.

Of course none of this is achievable without some help during the actual operation at Games time and we must find appropriate volunteer leaders to assist in carrying out our plans. A big part of Qatar's desire to hold these Games was so that the local people would learn from the experts that were brought in to assist in organizing the Games as a whole. Working side by side and learning as they went. The Youth Camp is no different. We wanted to leave a legacy behind so that future programs could be run in Qatar, long after the Games and its itinerant workers had moved on. So I called upon some friends to come and help me out. People who had previous experience at Olympic Youth Camps, people with other Olympic program experience, people who could pass on the legacy. I was very fortunate to have help from a couple of IOAPA friends who came to be part of this group effort. Jeremy Cross, Héctor Argüelles and María Zapata Vila were three folks who answered the call. A number of others indicated their willingness but were unable to make it in the end due to work commitments. Without the help of these three and eight other dedicated international volunteers it would have been more challenging than it was. I take this opportunity to thank them again most sincerely for their contribution.

And so now I have moved on to the Middle Kingdom to see what the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games holds for me and what part I can have in it. Safe to say that I will be doing some work with the Beijing 2008 Olympic Youth Camp, assisting them where I can to get them heading in the right direction to run a successful program. They will require experienced international volunteers but don't bombard me with requests yet please. I suggest you direct them through the IOAPA Board to either Héctor or Axel Bammer. They will coordinate any requests so that at the appropriate time we can present a united proposal to the BOCOG rather than everyone applying individually, less chance of your application getting lost or overlooked in what is going to be a very big Olympic Games.

I am always happy to hear from IOAPA friends of course and if you are passing through Beijing I would welcome the chance to spend some time with you.

*Alastair Cameron*

# What Have They Been Doing?

## News from IOAPA Members

Last May **Silvia B. Dalotto** (ARG) had the honor and responsibility to serve as director of the Pan-American Sport Organization (PASO) General Assembly organized by the Argentine Olympic Committee in Buenos Aires. The Assembly was attended by more than 350 members of the Olympic Family from the Western Hemisphere and beyond. Well done Silvia!

Silvia B. Dalotto is flanked by IOC President Jacques Rogge (right) and PASO President Mario Vazquez Raña (left) during a break at the May 2006 PASO General Assembly



**Yulia Bredneva** (UZB) worked at the press center at last year's WTA Tashkent Open. Yulia even translated for Sun Tiantian, the Chinese winner of the tournament, during the press conference held after the title match. Congratulations!



Yulia (left) poses with Sun Tiantian during the 2006 WTA Tashkent Open

**Leo Tsu (TPE)**, a faculty member at Da-Yeh University's Olympic Studies Center, has been instrumental in publishing two Olympic education books: *Olympic Education* (in Chinese, in co-operation with the British Olympic Association) and *How Well Do You Know the Games?* (in Chinese, in co-operation with the IOC Education Department).



**Elizabeth Hanley (USA)** and **John A. Lucas (USA)** presented papers at the 8th Symposium for Olympic Studies organized by The University of Western Ontario's International Center for Olympic Studies in October 2006.



Elizabeth and John (first and second at the left of the table) enjoy the Symposium's banquet with other participants

Several IOAPA members gathered in different capacities at the 2006 Asian Games held in Doha, Qatar from December 1-15. Below is a picture of the small IOAPA meeting.



From left to right: Holger Preuss (GER) and his wife, Alastair Cameron (AUS), Akiko Thompson (PHI), Héctor Argüelles (ESP) and Jeremy Cross (GBR) pose at the Doha 2006 Youth Camp run

**Eli Wolff** (USA) wed Jessica Honig on November 18 in Philadelphia and **Kishani Jayasinghe** (SRI) wed Kaveenga Wijayasekara on December 23 in Colombo. Congratulations dear friends and all best wishes!



**New job? New arrival in the family? Got an award? Participated in an Olympic-related event? Simply e-mail your news and notes to [crtorres@ioapa.org](mailto:crtorres@ioapa.org) and the editor will share your accomplishments in a future issue of Arete.**

## Did you know?

That the 5th World Forum on Sport, Education and Culture organized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games (BOCOG) in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was held from 22 to 24 October 2006 at the Beijing International Conference Centre.

The IOC's Executive Board has decided to maintain the events included for the first time in Turin (Speed Skating – Team Pursuit, Biathlon – Mass Start, Cross Country Skiing – Team Sprint, and Snowboard – Snowboard Cross) on the program of the Olympic Winter Games

That the 2007 Pan American Games will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 13 to 29 July. Organizers estimate that around 5500 athletes from 42 nations will take part in the Games.



That for the first time ever, in 2007 the Parapan American Games will take place immediately after and in the same city of the Pan American Games. The Parapan American Games Rio 2007 will be held from 12 to 19 August.

The sources of the information are the IOC and the Rio 2007 web pages:

[www.olympics.org](http://www.olympics.org)

[www.cob.org.br/pan2007](http://www.cob.org.br/pan2007)