

Arete

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NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC ACADEMY
PARTICIPANTS ASSOCIATION



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President's Message

By: Hector Arguelles (Spain)



Dear Members,

The IOAPA is looking ahead to this new year and to have you engaged in as many IOAPA activities as possible.

The IOA will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2011. As you know, in 1961 the first participants of the International Olympic Academy gathered by the Alpheous river in ancient Olympia for the 1st International Session for Young Participants. Since then the IOA has grown to be the reference in Olympic Education worldwide.

All of us have been privileged enough to take part in the IOA sessions. We should remain grateful to that privilege and spread the knowledge and the experiences acquired while at the IOA.

The IOA is planning to publish a book that will include 50 different perspectives from people that have been involved with the IOA over its 50 years of existence. I have been honoured to be selected as one of those 50 people. Although the IOA idea is to provide 50 different personal perspectives, I am aware that my election is in good part as representative of the IOAPA. Therefore, I would be happy to receive any opinion that you might want to share on how the IOA has impact your life or on the role of the IOA in society.

In July, IOAPA will be organizing its 12th IOAPA Session and we are expecting to see many of you again in Olympia. The dates are from 10th to 16th July. The IOAPA Executive Committee is working on a very attractive program for the Session. It will integrate Olympic education, culture, sports and social events

I leave you with one more great edition of Arete that IOAPA Newsletter Editor, Anne Warner, has put together for you. Highlights include participation of IOAPA members in the German Olympic Academy and in the 1st Youth Olympic Games in Singapore. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Best wishes,

Hector Arguelles

The IOA Experience

By: Angie Murphy (USA)

The 50th International Olympic Academy Session for Young Participants was truly the best experience of my life. Past participants told me it would be life changing but I could never have imagined how much I would take away from the session and what a positive impact it would have on me.

From the very moment I arrived in Athens and boarded the bus with fellow participants I immediately began meeting amazing individuals each with their own unique lively personality. From the first few days in Athens and the Opening Ceremonies on the hill of the Pnyx, to the time we arrived in Olympia, I knew it was going to be an unforgettable two week session. Each day was more exciting than the previous as I continued to meet new people from all over the world and I was completely immersed in learning the most I could about each person's countries and cultures.

Upon arriving in Olympia and participating in the official opening ceremony of the 50th IOA session, we attended daily lectures on topics such as "Sport as a Tool for Conflict Resolution" to the "Youth Olympic Games as a Vehicle for World Peace" to "Restoration and Recovery through Sport" and the "Olympic Games and the Idea of Truce and Peace." I learned an immense amount about each topic and it was evident how much passion each person had for the Olympic Movement as we were so eager to learn from the lecturers on how we could demonstrate the power that Olympism has and make a difference in our own countries. The daily small group meetings were a highlight of the session for me as I had a great group of individuals in my group who very were willing to share their opinions, ideas and insight into various topics that we

choose from the lectures and would discuss solutions and future programs that could be implemented to promote peace and Olympism. Each of our small group members got to know each other very well and we had very in depth discussions that were beneficial in outlining how we could personally make a difference when we returned to our own countries to spread the principles of Olympism.

Outside of the lectures and small group meetings, there were daily sporting activities that everyone could participate in of volleyball, basketball, tennis, football or table tennis. It was truly amazing to see everyone come together and participate in each sport in the spirit of Olympism. The social evenings that were held gave each country an opportunity to display their own uniqueness as we saw traditional songs and dances performed as well as cultural games were played to represent the pride and joy of each country. Other activities such as the torch relay to Olympic track and field day to the morning hike to the top of Mount Cronion and the grand finale Art Happening evening were the most memorable moments at the Academy for me as each person displayed their talents in a different and unique way. Everyone came together in each of the activities and participated with pride while representing their country but united as one and I could really feel the power of the Olympic spirit within everyone.

50th Session for Young Participants

By: Jens Christoph Peck
(Germany)

March 29th, 2010 – my cell phone rings!

Usually, you would not call that a very memorable moment in someone's life. This time it was one of those moments you remember months later what you did, where you were and what you felt, which explains (in some parts) which experiences and emotions I am connecting with the adventure of the "International Olympic Academy".

It was the phone call of Dr Andreas Höfer, Director of the German Olympic Academy. He told me that I was one of the three German delegates chosen to go to Olympia in June. To answer the questions mentioned above: I was on my way over to the campus of Bayreuth University, discussing with some friends about the upcoming final exams and not really realizing which consequences this call would have.



But this changed just a couple of weeks later when I got an invitation letter to the official preparation weekend in Frankfurt in which I got to know the other two German delegates, Anne and Laurie. During this weekend all of us had to give a presentation about an Olympic-related topic – so we were quite well prepared



for the discussions in Ancient Olympia.

The three of us were brought to the Metropolitan Hotel where we enjoyed our first two days of IOA experience. During the Welcome Day the roof-deck pool was crowded by IOA participants and phrases like "where are you from" and "nice to meet you" which were heard all over the place. Anyway, when you saw the blue lanyards of the IOA accreditation badge (downtown, in the hotel, at the beach,...) you could expect amazing introduction scenes.

During the next day we enjoyed visiting the Acropolis and the 1896 Olympic Stadium. In the evening the official Opening Ceremony took place at Mount Pnyx where we got to know the formal and festive setting of an IOA session for the first time. The mainly very affective but also a little long-winded procedure was for many of us the first highlight of the IOA because some of us realized the relevance and importance of such a session very clearly. Professor Gangas closed the ceremony by saying "the night is young" and the celebrations continued to the hotel with a huge first party including the very first Master degree graduates of the IOA.

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The next morning we were going to Olympia on a six-hour bus ride. Without doubt there will not be any session like ours anymore. Firstly, we had the honour to be the 50th anniversary class. Secondly, we did not stop at Delphi during our bus ride to Olympia. And finally, and most depressingly, the local pool at the Academy contained no water due to financial problems in Greece. Unfortunately our proposal on how to solve the

The 14 days were flying by – on the one hand due to the tight schedule and on the other hand because of the many multifaceted and incredible experiences we were able to undergo. After the diplomas were handed out on the last day in the Academy and the last Social Evening took place most of the participants came home from Zorbas long after 2am, and some of us were starting to think that it could possibly be over soon – this amazing experience to participate in the 50th IOA-Session for Young Participants.

After nearly everybody was reducing their sleep deficit during the six-hour bus-ride back to the Hotel in Athens we tried to stick together for the rest of the remaining time. One of the most memorable moments was the final dinner - not just because we had to choose of a large variety of meals after two weeks of Academy-cuisine. It took place in exactly the same room where we had our first meal together

Our Session's main topic was "Olympism as a platform for peace". To prove this thesis I would like to quote two of my IOA-friends from Mexico and Sudan: "If Sport can bring the world together for two weeks every four years, why shouldn't it bring together the world for fifty-two weeks every year?" (Oliver Alvarez) and "If someone doubts that Olympism can take small steps to a more peaceful society, just show them the group picture of this session and tell them: "These guys are the living proof!" (Hamada Youssif).

The International Olympic Academy has two main tasks from my point of view. Besides the theoretical knowledge transfer of the principles of the Olympic move-



ment the IOA is about the bringing together of people from all over the world with different cultural, religious or ethnical backgrounds for two weeks at the birthplace of Olympism. In this light every one of us resolved to keep in touch with each other. Of course, in some cases it will not work but others can develop to life-long friendships. By the way, I wrote this report while I was in Strasbourg where I was visiting the French participants Karine Teow and Aurélie Morandin as well as Emily Tuffin from Great Britain.

I am more than happy and thankful that I received that phone call on March 29th which gave me the chance to be part of this amazing experience. Thank you!



er two weeks before – as strangers while talking about rudimentary personal information. Now we were sitting here as a community of friends whose conversations were waving all over the room.

VII Olympic Seminar of the German Olympic Academy By: Carolin Bischof (Germany)

This seminar was my highlight of the year 2010. I was so happy that I had the opportunity to go back to IOA again, this time as part of the organising team of the German Olympic Academy (DOA).



It was already the 7th time that the German Olympic Academy organised an Olympic Seminar. On the 17th September I flew to Athens with my colleague Tobias Knoch where we prepared everything for the arrival of the almost 100 students and professors from 11 universities from all over Germany. The following day, we toured Athens including the Panathenaic Stadium and the Acropolis, guided by two experts from the Sport University Cologne (Prof. Dr. Manfred Lämmer) and the University of Münster (Emanuel Hübner). The evening was spent at the Plaka. On Sunday, we saw Isthmos, Korinth and Epidavros and arrived in Tolo in the late afternoon in a nice hotel with a stunning view on the ocean. After dinner we went to one of my favourite cities in Greece: Nafplion. Monday morning started early as the programme was pretty tight. My boss, Achim Bueble, my colleague, Tobias, and I drove straight to Olympia while the students and professors went to another sightseeing tour in Nemea and Mykene.

Arriving in the Academy was great, as usual, although this year and due to budget cuts there was no water in the pool. When I entered the cafeteria I was so happy to meet my friends Panos (IOA technician) and Dimitra (who was with me at the Post-graduate seminar 2008 and just started the IOA Master's with 30 other international students). Once everyone settled in their rooms (students in the dorms, professors and DOA-team upstairs) we started with the opening ceremony followed by a little



get-together.

From the next morning (when I was happy to hear the traditional wake up music, but some students were not and stuffed pillows into the speakers ;-)) until Friday



morning the academic programme started with a lecture series on Olympic topics by the professors and seminars prepared by the students at their home universities.

The presentations by both the professors and the students were very good. In some of the seminars the students were also involved in role plays, could try ancient sport



techniques or could create their own mascots and ideas for London 2012.

On Tuesday the students also participated in a get-together-parcours to get to know each other. The games were all organised by the students and professors from the University of Augsburg. Thursday afternoon we drove to the beach, because of the empty pool, but unfortunately it was raining. However, we made the best out of it and in the end it was a very nice afternoon.



On Friday afternoon we had our closing ceremony. When I heard the Olympic anthem I got teary-eyed. I couldn't believe that we were already leaving. Time at the IOA just flies too fast. Later that night we had the traditional social night with some great performances by the students followed by a party with DJ Panos until dawn.

The next morning we set out for Delphi. In Delphi, where the weather unfortunately was not too nice, we visited the ancient site and then we had free time to discover the little village until a last dinner together.

On our last day in Greece we had wonderful weather and after saying goodbye to everyone and assuring at least 20 reunions, my two colleagues and me drove to the ocean

(the route down through mountains is just stunning in early autumn) to spend a relaxing afternoon at the beach before flying home to cold Germany.

I just can say that it is always such a great experience to be at the IOA and from the feedback we got from the participants they think this too. I want to take the opportunity to thank the IOA staff for all their assistance and support during our stay at the IOA. You were great!! So, I hope to see many of you IOAPA-members at the 12th

IOAPA-Session next year!!!!

Volunteering for the First Youth Olympic Games in Singapore By: Carlo Farrugia (Malta)

The volunteering experiences in Athens 2004 and Torino 2006 were wonderful and therefore I decided to try my luck once again and apply as a volunteer for the first Youth Summer Olympic Games in Singapore.

The volunteering application process started in January 2009 and after various exchanges I was lucky enough to be chosen and assigned as a youth interpreter volunteer for English and Italian working at the Main Media Centre in Marina Bay in Singapore. The work entailed to follow the Italian and San Marino athletes and officials during their competitions in different sport venues spread all over the island of Singapore.

The first ever youth summer Olympic Games were a complete surprise for me since they were very different from the other volunteering experiences in the so called larger Olympic Games. There were about 5,000 officials and athletes participating in the games with about 20,000 volunteers coming mostly from Singapore's 4.5 million population. There were only 140 international volunteers from outside of Singapore. The games organisers provided us with accommodation within the Olympic Village which is a very large with an internationally recognised university with good living quarters. The Singapore Organising Committee did a wonderful job of organising the games that were different from the usual games with varied and mixed competitions like 3 on 3 basketball, mixed swimming relays, mixed teams coming from different continents and many other changes introduced in these games.

The Games also introduced many new concepts like the Cultural and Educational Programme for all athletes that was held



in the Village Centre. The young athletes participated enthusiastically and had the time of their lives. The competition amongst the countries was very competitive but in an atmosphere of friendship and solidarity.

Malta, my native country, is an even smaller island than Singapore, that also happens to be an ex-British Colony. This helped me to assimilate with the local volunteers. The trip to Singapore was long and tiring but once I arrived at the Olympic village in Singapore I got into the games spirit with well planned sessions that got us acquainted with the country, games, sports venues, transport facilities, eating facilities, accommodation facilities, etc. We were also chosen to participate in the opening and closing ceremonies that were simply fantastic.

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Another new aspect of the Games was the Chat with Champions that were extremely popular with the young athletes especially the ones held with Popov, Bubka and Isinbayeva. The interaction was great and the young athletes asked direct questions to the Olympic Champions who were ready to give their help and valuable advice to the young Olympians.

During my days off I made time to visit Singapore that is a nice country with the Marina Bay skyscrapers shaping the skyline. One also had to get used to the local food that was of a totally different nature to the normal European cuisine but still enjoyable, after some days.



Once again the Olympic movement gave me another opportunity for yet another unique experience that will remain with me for a long time. The Games were simply fantastic, the transport was precise, accommodation was cosy and the volunteers went out of their way to be of help to all the athletes and officials. It was also very nice to hold an IOAPA meeting at Clarkes Quay in Singapore with some IOAPA members that actually got a plane from the nearby countries to be able to participate and exchange their experiences. We were also honoured with the presence of the IOA Dean, Kostas Georgiadis, who joined us for the IOAPA reunion even though he was on a busy schedule during Games.

I love sports and I love the Olympic movement. I love being a volunteer at these events and I look forward to being of service once again in future editions of such sporting events. As IOAPA members each and every one of us has a lot to give during these events. We have the experience and above all the necessary knowledge to give a great service to the Olympic movement. Give it a shot and try to make it at the first youth winter games in Innsbruck 2012 or Summer Olympic games in London 2012. The experience that you will make will remain embedded in your heart for all your life since such events are once in a life-time opportunity that marks our life forever

Youth Olympic Day in Berlin

By: Carolin Bischof (Germany)

Since July 2010, I've been working for the German Olympic Academy (DOA) in Frankfurt. The first event I was going to with the DOA was the Youth Olympic Day in Berlin at the 24th July. It marked the first station of the torch relay for the Youth Olympics.

On the occasion of the Youth Olympic Day we also organised a reunion for the young athletes who participated in the German Olympic Youth Camp in Vancouver earlier this year. On Friday we met the Youth Camp participants and were invited to the inauguration of two new steles of the Olympic Games in Sydney and Salt Lake City, which had the names of the German medallist of these Games on them in front of the Berlin Olympic Stadium.



(high ropes course). The DOA also had a booth where we showed an exhibition of the Olympic history and visitors could participate in an Olympic quiz.

Later, the official show on the stage in front of the Brandenburger Tor started. Some Singaporean groups presented dances and songs and Dr. Thomas Bach (IOC Vice-President and head of the German Olympic Sport Confederation) and Mr. Ng (IOC member and president of the YOG OCOG) gave speeches. The highlight was the arrival of the German Youth Olympic team and, of course, the lighting of the Olympic flame. Afterwards, the flag bearers for the German team were presented and they were given the official flags by the flag bearers of Beijing 2008 Dirk Nowitzki and Vancouver 2010 André Lange. Dirk Nowitzki also received the IOC -Trophy presented by the German Youth Olympic Games ambassador Carolin Weber.

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After the ceremony we got an exclusive tour of the 1936 Olympic venue followed by a reception in the Jesse Owens lounge inside the stadium.

The next day, we went to the Pariser Platz, where the visitors of the Youth Olympic Day could improve their skills in different sports (lacrosse, beach football and handball, trampoline, etc.) or other activities



As our group had VIP-status, we were invited to a little boat trip with all the other VIPs of the events, e.g. Dr. Thomas Bach, Gunilla Lindberg, Dirk Nowitzki, Patrick Hickey (EOC president), André Lange, the YOG representatives. On the boat we had the chance to meet and talk to Dirk Nowitzki. It is really impressive how tall he actually is. ;-) A reception in the evening organised by the DOSB marked the end of a very impressive weekend.



Beautiful People By: Eli Wolf (USA)

this spirit

that connects us

lifts me up

I am overjoyed

a community

of peace and warmth

I am inspired

beautiful people

of Olympism

I love how we are

we believe and empower

we support and encourage

this spirit

that connects us

lifts me up

12TH IOAPA SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT!!!

IOAPA members, mark your calendars.
We would like to invite you to attend
the exciting IOAPA session this July.

JULY 10-16, 2011

Stay tuned for more information!

If you are interesting in
contributing to the IOAPA
newsletter we would love to
hear from you!

Please contact the newslet-
ter editor, Anne, at
anne@ioapa.org if you're
interested.