

The Starting Line

The *WomenSport International* Newsletter

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(NOTE: This is not the entire newsletter, but most of its contents)



From the Exec's Desk

Libby Darlison,

Our latest issue of the *Starting Line* is our biggest yet and is bound to have something for everyone. We focus our spotlight on Asia, report on the work of the European Women and Sport group, on the formation of a national women's sports organisation in Latin America, on leadership workshops in Oceania, on the upcoming pre-Olympic Congress in Dallas, and on the progress of our International Task Forces.

As more of our members become involved in promoting women and sport in various ways in their corners of the world and then report back on those activities, and as we continue to answer requests to provide speakers for conferences and seminars in various countries, we have come closer to achieving our goal of strengthening global networks between women in sport and physical activity and facilitating the exchange of information between organisations and individuals in different countries.

We would welcome any suggestions from members as to how we might further improve the Newsletter. As always, we welcome information from your corner of the world that we can include in the Newsletter.

1995/96 has already proven to be an important year for women in sport internationally. Both the UN 4th World Conference for Women held in Beijing last year, and the initiatives recently announced by the International Olympic Committee hold the potential for considerable positive change and expansion of opportunities for women in sport nationally and internationally.

While the initiatives taken by the IOC are clearly directed towards achieving gender equality in international sport and the Olympic movement, those taken by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) do not seem, at first glance, to have much relevance for those of us involved in sport and physical activity.

On closer examination this proves not to be so. Representation of women in the media, empowerment of women, particularly through their inclusion in decision making, the education of girls and women, and women's health were all central to the post Beijing discussions at the CSW 40 meeting in New York in March. Each of these topics was also an 'Area of Concern' in the Platform for Action originally agreed to at Beijing, and each

has direct implications for girls' and women's involvement in sport and physical activity at all levels.

It is important for women's sports organisations to be aware of the great amount of post-Beijing follow up work being conducted by the UN, by governments and by women in NGOs to expand and maintain their links with government and private sector institutions, and with other women's organisations, in order to develop strategies for implementing common policies and principles, to work together to achieve common goals, to better understand the role and the importance of international treaties and covenants which have an impact on women and sport, to gain and exchange ideas and information, and to ensure that as many women as possible understand the importance of sport and physical activity to all aspects of their lives.

It is particularly important for those of us in non-government organisations to maintain strong national and international networks. By working together we can build on the important and influential gains made by NGOs at the UN Conference. Over the next year **WSI** will continue to provide regular reports on the actions being taken to implement the Platform for Action and on the significance of those actions for those of us involved in sport and physical activity

. **Thank you** to all those who have continued to support the work **WSI** is doing by taking out membership subscriptions. A strong membership is important not only for financial reasons but because it gives us a vibrant and representative voice when working for change in the international and national sporting arenas. Please keep up the support and encourage others to do the same.



IOC Appoints Working Group on Women and Sport

In September 1994, the Olympic Centennial Congress was held in Paris. At that Congress there was a call for greater involvement of women in the Olympic movement - a call which was reflected in the Congress recommendations. Following the Congress, a Study Commission was established which made several recommendations, one of which was the establishment of a permanent IOC body to make proposals with a view to breaking down prejudices against women and the barriers which have held back their progress in the areas of sport and Olympism.

As a result of this recommendation, the IOC recently established the Working Group on Women and Sport. The Working Group held its first meeting at IOC headquarters in Lausanne on March 9, 1996.

WSI Executive Director Elizabeth Darlison was appointed to the IOC Working Group on Women and Sport, the full membership of which is listed below:

Chair: Anita Defranz(f) (Executive Board International Olympic Committee)

IOC members:

Reynaldo Gonzalez Lopez (m) (General Secretary Cuban Olympic Committee).

Mario Pescante (m) (President Italian National Olympic Committee)

Borislav Stankovic (m) (Secretary General IFB-Basketball)

Yuri Titov (m) (President/FIG-Gymnastics)

Mustapha Larfoui (m) (PresidentFINA-Swimming)

Fekrou Kidane Head(m) (International Cooperation Department IOC)

Francoise Zweifel (f)(Secretary General IOC)

Representatives of IFS:

Lu Shengrong (f) (China/President IBF-Badminton)

Representatives of NOCs:

Gunilla Lindberg: (f) (Secretary General Swedish Olympic Committee)

Austin Woods(m) Secretary General Bermudan Olympic Committee

Individual Members:

Grisel Damgaard (f)(Monte Carlo/ Association of International Sports Federations)

Elizabeth Darlison (f) (Executive Director WomenSport International)

Michael Fennell (m)(President/Jamaica Olympic Association, CGF)

Elizabeth Ferris (f)(Chairperson Olympians of GB and NI)

Yang-Soon Han (f) (Korean Olympic Committee)

Nawal El Moutawakel-Bennis(f) (Executive C'ttee. IAAF/ Moroccan Olympic C'ttee)

Recommendations of the Working Group

At its first meeting the Working Group addressed ways in which women's opportunities and roles in the Olympic Movement can be expanded including the following initiatives:

1. Endorsing the recommendations of the IOC Executive Board by ensuring that National Olympic Committees, International Federations, National Federations and the sports organisations belonging to the Olympic movement immediately establish the goal of increasing the numbers of women in their decision making structures to the level of 10% by December 31st 1999 and 20% by December 31st 2005.
2. Amending the Olympic Charter to take into account the need to keep equality of opportunity between men and women.
3. Increasing the numbers of IOC members who are women, doubling the number by the year 2000.
4. Supporting the inclusion of more women's sports disciplines and events on the programme of the Games.
5. Increasing the numbers of women who serve on IOC Commissions, recommending the appointment of women when they are not nominated by the IFs or NOCs.
6. Making certain that Solidarity courses include women as instructors and participants and requesting that IFS appoint women as instructors.
7. Using Solidarity funds as incentive for increased numbers of women athletes in developing countries.
8. Keeping the issue of women's inclusion on the agenda of all IOC meetings.
9. Having the Olympic Study Centre commission studies on the role of women in sports; for example, as treated by the electronic print media and other institutions.

10. Examine the language used in IOC publications to describe female athletes.
11. Undertake more collaborative projects.
12. Continue to include exhibitions in the Olympic Museum that celebrate the success and contribution of women to the world of sport.
13. Encourage Organising Committees of the Olympic Games (OCOGS) to schedule competitions so that equal prominence will be given to women.
14. Create incentives for each IF, national federation and NOC to develop women as coaches and administrators.

The IOC, and particularly the work done by Chair Anita Defranz, is to be congratulated for establishing the Working Group on Women and Sport and for taking the initiative to work towards gender equality at the international and national level by ensuring that opportunities for women in all areas of sport will be expanded.

While this is a positive, and indeed a huge step forward for women, it is also a first step and much work will need to be done to ensure that the recommendations of the Working Group are adopted by the IOC and are translated into action. It is incumbent on all of us therefore to assist the IOC in achieving its goals by working wherever we can and in whatever ways we can both internationally and nationally to ensure that these opportunities for women in sport are realised.

IOC Runs leadership Courses for Women in Sport

Recently the Executive Board of the IOC recommended that the number of positions for women in national Olympic Committees, international sports federations (IFs) and all organisations in the Olympic Movement be increased. The IOC is aware that in order to reach the goal of having more women as leaders and decision makers in international and national sport there will need to be special measures taken to ensure that women have the appropriate skills and expertise to occupy these positions when elected.

With this in mind the IOC is considering piloting a series of Leadership Workshops for women in sport in the developing world. Many women in developing countries, because of a combination of lack of resources and traditional attitudes and practices, have not had the opportunity to develop leadership and management skills, in addition they do not have a network which will teach them the skills and attributes necessary in leadership positions. As opportunities expand and efforts are made by international and national bodies to reach the IOC goal, women will need to be 'skilled up' and ready to take up positions as they become available.

The first IOC Leadership Workshop will be held in the Oceania region in May this year. Twenty women selected by the National Olympic Committees of the Oceania area will attend the three day Workshop which will cover a wide range of topics including Leadership Skills, Strategic and Planning Skills, Sports Management, and International Documentation.

WSI is assisting the IOC with these workshops which are based on the 'train the trainer' approach so that those attending the Workshop will have enough information and guidance to run their own workshops for women in their sports organisations.

Mapping Survey of Women in Leadership Positions.

One of the clear themes to emerge from the UN 4th World Conference on Women was that women's autonomy and empowerment is essential to improving their life situation. An integral part of that process is the full and equal participation of women in decision making process at all levels. Nowhere is this situation more relevant than in sport where women are greatly underrepresented, especially in leadership positions in national and international organisations.

Although there is some data already available with respect to the numbers of women in leadership positions at the international and national levels it remains incomplete. What we do know however confirms women's under-representation and supports the efforts already being undertaken to assist more women to assume leadership positions. For example:

- 7 of the 104 members of the International Olympic Committee are women
- All but 1 of the 27 Chairs of IOC Commissions are male and many Commissions have no female members at all
- Of the 34 International Federations represented in the Olympic program, 2 have female Presidents and 2 have female Secretaries General
- Of all the recognised IFs, only netball (an all female sport) has a female President and Secretary General. 2 others have female Secretaries General
- Of the 196 National Olympic Committees, 5 have female Presidents and 12 have female Secretaries General.

There is little reason to suggest that this picture is not reflected in other areas of sport (e.g., in coaching or at other levels of the decision making process). Indeed in those countries where data is available such as Canada and Australia, both of which have national gender equality strategies for sport, a similar under-representation of women in leadership positions occurs.

While the IOC has already collected data relevant to the organisations with which it is affiliated, and has initiated various moves to improve opportunities for women in those organisations, a more comprehensive national mapping exercise needs to be carried out to assess whether the situation as reported in Australia and Canada reflects that of other countries. With this information at hand a far clearer and more comprehensive picture of the representation, or under-representation of women in leadership positions in sport will be available. It will also mean that it will be possible, for those interested in doing so, to work with and support those organisations which are attempting to increase leadership opportunities for women, and to encourage those which have few or no women in leadership positions to begin to work towards greater gender equality.

WomenSport International has begun to collect and collate national data on the numbers of women in leadership positions in various areas of sport. Although this is a large undertaking and will take some time to complete we believe it will provide invaluable information which will assist greatly in developing strategies to further advance the development of women in sport at the national and international level.



From Around the Globe

First Asian Conference on Women and Sport

The first Asian Women and Sport Conference was held in the Philippines in March this year. The Conference was co-hosted by The Philippines Sports Commission and ICHPER-SD under the auspices of **WSI** Board member Commissioner Ma. Josefina V. Bauzon and Dr. Darlene Kluka Chair of the Women's Commission of ICHPER-SD.

Speakers at the Conference came from New Zealand, Nigeria, Australia, USA and the Philippines and presented papers on topics such as Towards Gender Equality, the History of Sports Medicine Amongst Female Athletes, Women and Aging, Women's Empowerment and its Role in Nation Building, and Women and Sport: Past, Present and Future.

In addition to these addresses there were several interest groups which discussed a range of topics relevant to women and sport. Country reports were presented by representatives from Hongkong, Japan, Singapore, Islamic Countries, Vietnam, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan and the Philippines.

Other activities associated with the Conference included a 5km run, traditional dances and music, the launch of the Sports and Recreational Programme at the Women's Correctional Centre, and the Awards Night for distinguished Filipino women achievers in Sport.

The Conference celebrated International Women's Day and on that day **WSI** Executive Director Elizabeth Darlison accompanied Commissioner Bauzon and approximately 500 representatives of all of the major women's organisations in the Philippines to a meeting with the Philippines President, His Excellency Fidel V Ramos. At this meeting Commissioner Bauzon was one of six women who gave formal presentations to the President - the first time that women and sport have been given equal prominence with other important women's issues such as unemployment, poverty, rural improvement, the girl child, and education.

The Conference was a great success and it is planned to make it an annual event in Asia. Next year's conference will be co-hosted by **WSI**. For Further information contact Commissioner Ma. Josefina V. Bauzon, Philippines Sports Commission, 3rd Floor, Rizal

Memorial sports Complex, Pablo Ocampo Sr.St., Malate M.M. Philippines. Ph (63-2) 521 8927, Fax (63-2) 521 3414.

Report from the European Women and Sport Group (EWS)

In accordance with the 1993 decision in Bratislava and confirmed by the European Sports Council (ESC) in 1995, the EWS has been established as a free standing body with permanent status. This has allowed the Group to increase its influence on organisations other than the ESC and to become an advisory body for various organisations rather than becoming involved in policy implementation and programme delivery. The EWS has therefore become a small and efficient Group co-ordinating the work of women and sport in Europe. **The aims of the EWS are to:**

- encourage and support the continued implementation of the Oslo 1991, Bratislava 1993 and ESC Conference recommendations;
- monitor the progress made by the ESC, member countries and European sports organisations towards gender equality in sport;
- facilitate biennial conference on women and sport;
- represent and further the interests of women and sport through liaison with European agencies and organisations;

Operations of the EWS

Member countries of the ESC have been asked by the EWS to appoint a national contact who reports regularly on progress being made towards gender equality in her country. In order to provide a forum for networking between contact persons the EWS organises open annual meetings. The first open meeting was hosted by the Norwegian Confederation of Sports in 1995. The next meeting will be hosted by the Swedish Sports Federation, in connection with the European Conference on Women and Sport arranged in Stockholm in August 1996.

The EWS also arranges where possible to hold its meeting in conjunction with national seminars on women and sport. The first biennial conference on women and sport held by the EWS was in Brighton in 1994. The next will be held in Sweden from 22-25th August 1996 where the theme will be 'Women, Sport and Health'. This conference is intended to act as meeting place for and to forge links between researchers, trainers/coaches and sports leaders/decision makers, and to initiate discussions on how to use the results of research on women and sport.

European Women and Sport Group and the European Sports Council Last year the EWS put forward a series of recommendations which were adopted by the EWS. These included:

- Nominate a member of the ESC organising Committee to become a member of the EWS;
- Adopt the Brighton Declaration;

- Hold biennial Women and Sport conferences and endorse the proposal from the Greek Ministry of Culture to host the 1998 conference in Athens *and to the member countries;*
- Appoint a contact person to the EWS Group and provide this person with both financial and human support to carry out agreed tasks;
- Consider selecting both men and women to become representatives on ESC delegations, working groups and the ESC Executive Committee.

Columbia

Under the leadership of Clemencia Maya, a National Conference on Women and Sport was recently held in Columbia. The conference was well attended by a broad range of men and women including the Colombian National Olympic Committee, the National Sports Federation, elite athletes, sports medicine doctors, physical education and sports teachers, sports nutritionists, managers of the Colombian multi sports complexes, and the media including the first woman sports announcer.

The major outcome of the conference was to establish a national Association of Women and Sport governed by a Board which includes Clemencia Maya as President, a psychologist, an elite track star, a sports manager, and a medical doctor. The first decision of the newly formed Board was to meet with the Ministry of Education to discuss a plan for expanding opportunities for girls in sport and physical education.

At the request of IOC member Carol Anne Letheren **WSI** provided the keynote speaker, Chris Shelton who spoke about international initiatives in women and sport and the history of women in sport. Chris, a fluent Spanish speaker, was also named an honorary Board member.

Northern Ireland

In March this year a National Sports Seminar on Women and Sport was sponsored by The Sports Council for Northern Ireland. The main purpose of the Seminar, titled 'Clearing the Hurdles' was:

- to identify the barriers to women's participation in sport at all levels and to encourage their removal by positive planning for increased access and opportunities for women in sport through planning principles, career opportunities, education, and supportive policy (the four main topics of the Seminar);
- to launch the policy document on women and sport.

Australia

Through its special Sub-Committee on Women in Sport in Recreation, the National Committee of Australian Sports Ministers has developed the "Australian Women in Sport and Recreation Strategy - 1996 -2001". The Strategy is a nationally coordinated approach to improving sporting and recreational opportunities and is consistent with the principles in the Brighton Declaration (1994).

The document contains a strategic plan for each of its three main focus areas

- Participation
- Leadership and Training
- Excellence

and its three main themes

- Towards and beyond 2000
- The year of the Active Woman, 1997
- Mature aged Women

and addresses the barriers which inhibit greater involvement by women in sport at all levels.

Israel

In December last year a National Seminar on Women and Sport was held in Israel. The Seminar was held in conjunction with the meeting of the European Women and Sport Group and was sponsored by the Deputy Minister of Education, Culture and Sport and arranged in cooperation with the Sports Federation of Israel and the Olympic Committee of Israel.

Country Reports from Around the World

In addition to our brief ' Reports From Around the Globe' section we will be producing regular country reports from around the world, beginning with **Korea**. The purpose of this feature is to give our readers a feel for what is happening in other parts of the world, to compare and contrast similarities and differences, and to initiate contact and develop networks between individuals and organisations so that information and ideas may be exchanged.

As usual we welcome contributions from members. If you or your organisation is in a position to write a report (approximately one page) on what is happening in your country, including both possibilities and problems, please do so and forward it to "The Starting Line" C/O- WSI, PO. Box 227 Lawson, NSW, Australia 2783, Fax 61 47 876905, or e-mail [Libby Darlison](mailto:Libby.Darlison).

Women's Sport in Korea

Although Korea, under the umbrella of the Korean Sports Council (KSC), first established a Women and Sport Committee in 1953, that Committee was disbanded by the KSC in 1960.

Currently Korea has two women's sports organisations

- Korea Association of Physical Education and Sport for Women
- Women's Sports Association Korea

The Korea Association of Physical Education and Sport for Women (KAPESW) was first established in 1946; however its progress was hampered for many years because of the

Korean War. In 1969 the organisation was restructured and now consists of teachers from schools, colleges and universities. KAPESW's main activities are research, training for physical education teachers, running seminars and teaching sports activities.

The Women's Sports Association in Korea (WSAK) was established in 1981, and is composed mainly of retired international athletes. Despite facing many barriers Korean female athletes have been responsible for at least 50% of the international successes, in both medals and records, achieved by all Korean athletes. Despite this success, Korean sportswomen, mirroring an international pattern, have found it extremely difficult to move into decision making and managerial positions both in Korean sport and Korean society generally.

Despite a history of prejudice and discrimination against women, the situation in sport particularly has improved recently with the election in 1993 of IOC Vice President Dr UN-Yong Kim to the Presidencies of KSC and the Korean National Olympic Committee (KNOC). Dr Kim has been largely responsible for several important initiatives affecting Korean women in sport including:

- Increasing the involvement of women in sports organisations
- Sending female delegates to international meetings and competitions
- Actively developing and implementing policies which improve women's opportunities.

For further information contact:

Professor Dr. Yang-Soon Han
C/- Korean Olympic Committee
PO Box 1106
SEOUL, Korea

Global Issues for Women and Sport

WomenSport International will be presenting a symposium at the 1996 International Pre-Olympic Congress on Physical Activity, Sport, and Health in Dallas, Texas on July 13, 1996 from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. The Symposium will address several of the most pressing issues that affect female athletes around the world. Included in the afternoon session will be talks on *The Female Athlete Triad: An International Solution*, *Scientific and Ethical Issues of Gender Verification Tests*, *Sexual Harrassment of the Female Athlete*, *Drug Testing of Masters Athletes* and *An Interdisciplinary Approach to Women's Participation*. Among those participating are the following members of **WSI**: Wendy Ey, Australia; Celia Brackenridge, United Kingdom; Sandi Kirby, Canada; Elizabeth Darlison, Australia; Barbara Drinkwater, USA. Also invited are Arne Ljungvist, MD and Joe Leigh Simpson, MD who are members of IAAF, which voted to abolish the gender verification test for their athletes because of concerns about the reliability of the test and the damage suffered by the athlete through misinterpretation of the results.



Women's Professional Tennis Implements Rule Changes

The Women's Tennis Council has adopted and implemented most of the recommendations of the Tennis Age Eligibility Commission. The age for unrestricted play on the tour is now 18 with athletes 14-17 playing a restricted schedule. Physical examinations and educational requirements are mandatory, and evening play has been eliminated for young players. Coaches and agents must register with the Tour. Starting in 1997, parents and players will be required to attend a three day orientation program. An Athlete Assistance Program, utilizing on-site primary health care providers, who have received added training in counseling and referral, has been started. Benefits from these and other positive changes are already apparent as more young players are looking at college as an option. *Carol Otis, MD*