

# The Starting Line

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## President's Column

By some calculations, the remaining days of 2000 mark the “true” end of the millennium. Whether this December marks the conclusion of a thousand years, a hundred or only one, this is still a good time for taking stock and completing a reckoning.

In earlier writings, I have emphasized a distinction between “co-operative” and “assertive” advocacy. In co-operative forms, for example, mainstream sport leaders would seek numbers of competent, energetic new women for leadership posts and might turn to WSI to aid in a quest to recruit such women. Unfortunately, there are still too few requests and opportunities for such co-operation.

Assertive advocacy is that form in which law, economic power, boycott, or the force of moral/ethical principle is employed to gain change or concession. The simple act of the IOC's advancing targets for the inclusion of women in leadership is a two-fold gain: it indicates notice of the relative absence of women and the importance of growing inclusivity in the years ahead. This was a result of assertive advocacy. There were, and are, those who are opposed to affirmative efforts to expand the role of women in leadership and power. There is much left to do in the world of women's involvement in sport and physical activity. The needs extend from issues of the elite athlete to the severe deprivations of food, time and health basics among the poorest girls and women of the developing nations. WSI has a looming challenge to broker a linkage of the expertise and dedication of our total membership to the research/training/advocacy needs of the world's women and girls. Won't you please contact us TODAY? Let someone know what you want to do with a tithe of your time during the next year. We want to keep the pressure on.

*Carole Oglesby*

## IOC Takes a Further Step Toward Gender Equality

After a public outcry, the invitation to the representatives of the Taliban regime to attend the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympic Games was withdrawn. The Taliban are not yet recognized as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, however they are recognized internationally for their harsh discrimination against women. Afghanistan does not allow women to play any sport, let alone participate in the Olympic Games.

With the support of Atlanta-Sydney + three young Afghani athletes were able to travel to Sydney at the time of the Sydney Olympics with the aim of meeting with the IOC. The three young athletes, two women and a man, and the delegates from Atlanta-Sydney +, Linda Weil- Curiel and Annie Sugier were able to arrange a meeting with the IOC. At

that meeting the young athletes explained the impact of regimes which use sport as a form of social control on women and detailed the struggle girls and women in Afghanistan have to participate in sport and to train and develop their skills sufficiently to compete equally in international events.

An agreement between the IOC and Atlanta -Sydney + was drawn up. The agreement recognizes the personal courage of these three athletes and has offers to assist them. The IOC also reasserts that it is aware of the way in which the sports movement in Afghanistan does not comply with the values expressed in the Olympic Charter - a recognition which takes the IOC one step closer to addressing the 1995 proposal of the IOC Executive Board that:

*“The Olympic Charter will be amended to take into account the need to keep equality for men and women”*

This proposal was adopted by the 105<sup>th</sup> IOC Session held in Atlanta, July 1996, ensuring that the IOC Charter is implemented with respect to its specified inclusions regarding equality for all men and women in the Olympics.

**The Charter which recognises the IOC as the ‘supreme authority of the Olympic Movement’ also states that:**

*“Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on the grounds of race, religion, politics, sex or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement”.*

It is recognised that over the past 4 years the IOC has made substantial and laudable attempts to work towards gender equality within its own structures and in the National Olympic Committees and International Federations. Removing discrimination on the basis of gender is important in all areas of the Olympic movement, in accordance with the Olympic Charter.

It is also recognised, as President Samaranch pointed out in his address to the World Conference on Women and Sport, Lausanne 1996: ‘Sport, whether for competition or simply for enjoyment, has become a powerful social force with major effects on the structure of our society. But the problems of low participation by women in sport is fundamentally linked to the social challenges which they face, and therefore cannot be solved by the Olympic movement alone’

We must surely all do our part to ensure that women are treated equally and that women’s rights are understood as human rights. It is acknowledged that the IOC cannot do this alone and it cannot tell governments how they should or should not treat their female citizens. However, there are approximately 20 countries which are members of the Olympic Movement and which prohibit women from participating in mixed sport at all levels, in the Olympic Games and in other international competition.

It is therefore important that the IOC do what it can, in keeping with the spirit of Olympism and in accordance with the Olympic Charter, to ensure that no country which discriminates on the basis of sex, no matter what its justification, participates in the Olympic Games .

All women and men who cherish liberty and respect the human rights of all people encourage the IOC to move to amend and implement the Olympic Charter with respect to gender equality in all areas of the Olympic Movement - most particularly in ensuring that no country is allowed to continue to prevent its female citizens from participation in the Olympic Games, if it wishes to belong to the Olympic Movement .

### **Papua New Guinea - National Action Plan for Women and Sport**

With the strong support of Sir John Dawanincura, Secretary General of the Papua New Guinea Sports Federation and of the Papua New Guinea National Olympic Committee, a national Committee to develop sport and physical activity for girls and women in Papua New Guinea has been formed. The Committee is chaired by Ms. Veitu Diro and includes a group of experienced women who hold official positions in sports such as soccer, netball, cricket etc. The Committee has already secured a substantial sponsorship from Goodman Fielder International to assist it with its planning and its activities.

The Women in Sport Committee was keen to take a strategic approach to sports development for women in Papua New Guinea. One of the first tasks was therefore to hold a national workshop to develop a National Action Plan. The Workshop was attended by women from all over PNG and was addressed in a strong and proactive speech by the wife of the Prime Minister, Lady Roslyn Morauta.

Libby Darlison, a Board member of WSI and member of the IOC Working Group on Women and Sport, was invited to facilitate the workshop and to assist with the development of the Plan. The theme of the Workshop was 'Working in Partnership' and participants, including those from government and non government organisations, education, the media, attorney general's etc. worked non stop over two days. At the conclusion of the Workshop, a first draft of the National Plan had been prepared.

The draft Plan contains a snapshot of the global status of women in sport and key international initiatives, the status of women in sport in Papua New Guinea, the key issues for women in sport in PNG, and strategies to address these issues. Each strategy contains expected outcomes and a time-frame for completion. The Draft Plan will now be made available for national consultation and further input with the final Plan to be presented to the National Sports Federation, the National Olympic Committee, the PNG Sports Commission, and the Government, for endorsement and action.

Like most developing societies PNG is greatly in need of resources such as facilities, finance etc., however the Committee realises that one of its main challenges will be overcoming the traditional cultural attitudes which have restricted the participation of girls and women at all levels in sport and physical activity. The Committee is aware that

they will need to draw on all available resources to assist with this task. All those who attended the workshop indicated their commitment to working in partnership, (in accordance with the Workshop theme) , with men and with all key stakeholders across government and the NGO sector to achieve the Plan's objectives - we wish them luck!!!!

## **WORLD INDIGENOUS NATION SPORT DEVELOPMENT**

One of the most important developments of the last decade within the Olympic Movement is that of the "World Indigenous Nations Sport (WINSPO). Girls and women's involvement in WINSPO is equal to that of boys and men in sport participation opportunities, coaching and administration. J. Wilton (Willie) Littlechild, President of WIN Sports, Inc and Cara Currie, Vice President, agree that with females composing 53-56% of indigenous groups, the interests of females must be taken fully into account.

In the history of the Olympic Games, the relationship of sport and culture acknowledged to be clear, consistent and important. Recently, in the modern Games, the sporting aspect has tended to overshadow the cultural but the World Indigenous Games may be a potent antidote to this imbalance. The cultural and spiritual aspects of the Indigenous Games is pronounced. The sporting segments of the Games include both contemporary and traditional forms. Contemporary are as follows: basketball, soccer, track and field, boxing, wrestling, baseball/softball, volleyball and swimming. Traditional forms include archery, canoe, equestrian, lacrosse, tae kwan do and even log-rolling. It is important to note that girls and women participate in all activities, both contemporary and traditional.

When the Indigenous Games are held, the cultural activities are wide and varied. These may range from story and legend-telling to dance, theatre, humor tales, and extensive crafts/arts marketing and displays.

WINSPO is also committed to extensive training and certification of top-flight resource people for indigenous sport development. Every coach and administrator, working with World Indigenous Games, has been certified through a program which features both sound knowledge/techniques and cultural relevancy. Since 1993, two training per year have been held by WINSPO at the home office in Hobbema, Alberta, Canada. An "Aboriginal Training Manual" has been developed and is available through WINSPO.

As far as the Games are concerned, four regional events have been held in N. America, the last including over 8,000 participants, who also shared the stage with Special Olympians. The next event in North .America is scheduled for December 2003.

The WINSPO movement is also committed to top quality physical education for its youth. Last year, for example, 640 chiefs of Canadian Indigenous Nations approved the Berlin Agenda for Quality Physical Education.

In matters of gender equity, balanced life, ethical values, and commitment to active lifestyle as a necessity for healthy community, the mainstream has much to learn from the model of WINSPO.

## **MASKWACHEES DECLARATION**

*(pronounced: musk — wah — cheece)*

### **Preamble**

We, the delegates of the National Recreation Roundtable on Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples, held in Maskwachees, February 2000, are deeply committed to improving the health, wellness, cultural survival and quality of life of Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples, through physical activity, physical education, sport and recreation.

We affirm that the holistic concepts of Aboriginal cultures, given by the Creator and taught by the elders, promote balance through the integration of the physical, mental, emotional, and the spiritual growth of the individual.

We recognize that many social issues including poverty; health concerns such as type II diabetes, heart disease, and fetal alcohol syndrome; rates of incarceration; substance abuse; harassment and racism; and a sedentary lifestyle; have contributed to poor health and a low quality of life for many Aboriginal/Indigenous people.

- • We recognize Canada's endorsement of Article 3 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples<sup>[1]</sup>, and the recommendations from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples dealing with recreation, sport and active living.

### **Celebrating Marg McGregor!**

Marg McGregor has just made a career shift, from Executive Director of the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) to Executive Director of the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union (CIAU). In only seven and one-half years with CAAWS, Marg has made a truly significant contribution to the advancement of women and sport locally, nationally and globally.

Where did this all start. Actually, in 1992, a group of 11 Canadian women went to England, Norway and Sweden "to study policy development and program initiation of governments and non-government agencies to increase female participation in all forms of organized sport, particularly in sport leadership." (IPDP, 1992). Marg was one of the eleven and made herself known as "that woman in the white shorts." I remember Marg as being able to change, without being noticed, from warm weather clothing to those white shorts on the busiest of streets, even in the middle of Norway's National Day parade. Throughout the trip, Marg was being actively courted by Marion Lay, and the rest of us, to accept the position as Executive Director of CAAWS. I remember it being a difficult decision for Marg, one that required her to move to a much more direct advocacy position than she had held before. But, she was, and is, a brave woman. During her years with CAAWS, she managed an efficient organization. She put the organization on a better administrative base, developed a strong internal staff development program, and worked

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<sup>[1]</sup> Article 3 of the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples: Indigenous peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

to establish a firm and supportive network both inside Canada and abroad. At the end of her term, CAAWS is nationally and internationally recognized as a key player in the debates about girls and women and sport. This is in no small part due to Marg's personal vision for sport:

"I want an equitable system, one which acknowledges that the needs of girls and boys are different, that values these differences, and that strives to satisfy those differing needs." (Marg McGregor, 1992).

Along the way, Marg has remained the humanist and a caring person. She was always prepared to celebrate parties, birthdays and achievements of those around her with an original "rap". Those at CAAWS were always touched by Marg's creativity and thoughtfulness. It is a good thing that Marg has a sense of humour too. While attending a Canadian Olympic Association event, Marg volunteered to drive the elegant Barbara Ann Scott (Gold medal, figure skating, 1948). Marg was embarrassed to find the back seat of her car littered with crayons, cookie crumbs and candy wrappers from her two young daughters.

Marg had made a personal mark on our sport history. Here are but three examples. First, she was invited to speak at the first International Conference on Women and Sport in Brighton, England in 1994. She spoke eloquently about gender awareness, referring to various Canadian strategies and initiatives, and describing their effectiveness. Second, Marg was Co-chair of the Canadian Harassment and Abuse Collective which single-handedly brought the sport community together to make a collective and responsible response to the issues being played out in the media. Marg was instrumental in the rapid development of resources, a website and in raising awareness of these issues within the sport community. Third, in 1996, Marg received the rare honour of being recognized with an award as one of Canada's "Top 40 Under 40". This award recognizes excellence, vision and leadership, innovation, achievement and community involvement. Her true gift is being able to bring diverse people together to successfully work on an issue, a goal or a vision.

While Marg is leaving CAAWS, she is not leaving sport. Those of us in the women and sport movements can appreciate the enormity of her contribution and, Marg, you will be missed in direct proportion to that.

Sandra Kirby (WSI Task Force on Sexual Harassment and Abuse) and Karri Dawson (Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity)

## **Efforts Underway to Have Physical Activity and Sports Considered a Basic Human Right**

One of the major United Nations events this year was the June 2000 General Assembly Special Session devoted to the assessment of progress in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing PLATFORM FOR ACTION. Preparations

for this session, dubbed “Beijing+5”, began more than two years ago. At the heart of the process, governments of the UN member states filed reports of their progress through replies to a lengthy UN Questionnaire focusing on the many planks of the PFA and its 12 “themes”. Through a number of meetings both real and virtual over the last 18 months, the world’s women in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) filed their own reports and observations. These “Alternative”, or shadow, reports added to and sometimes corrected official statements.

It was anticipated that conservative, fundamentalist, and other regressive forces would be mounted to “turn back the clock” on the commitments of the PFA. The global women’s movement, including our own recently formed global women’s sport advocacy movement, was dedicated to moving the PFA forward, rather than tolerating any reversal of course. The WSI, and particularly Libby Darlison and Carole Oglesby, were engaged over the past 18 months lending direction and support to the international effort on behalf of women’s sport and physical activity.

Among the successes of the recently completed Beijing+5 effort were the following:

1. An advocacy electronic “team” was formed which spearheaded NGO-governmental liaisons in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region, Canada, England, Hungary, Japan, Palau, and the USA;
2. Each of the 12 themes of the PFA was featured in an “electronic forum” which ran for approximately three months. Interventions which lobbied for support and informed concerning sport and physical activity, were posted in the 3 thematic areas including planks on sport and physical activity (Health - Oglesby, Education - A. White and the Girl Child - Cameron);
3. Workshops were offered to UN representatives and NGO representatives on sport and physical activity benefits during the March 2000 “Preparatory Conference” (Older women - Oglesby and selected physicians and younger women in developing countries - WSI personnel);
4. Language pertaining to women’s sport and physical activity was designed for inclusion in the B+5 “Outcomes Document” by Libby Darlison. The language was endorsed officially by WSI, IAPESGW, IWG and ICSSPE, and submitted to the various UN bodies negotiating the B+5 documents as well as NGO Alternative Report Summaries;
5. The final “Outcome Document” contained one specific reference to women’s sport and physical activity and several references to “holistic, active lifestyle” in various health contexts.

In the final analysis, it is clear that there is much to be done, in the official UN system and in our sister general NGO community, in order to make explicit the importance to women of the basic human right to play, exercise and sport. WSI leadership and the participation of the global women’s sport and physical activity advocacy community, however, did play a role in the outcomes of the B+5 process. The “strategic bridges”,

linking women's sport/PA to the general women's movement, have been built and now must be increasingly utilized.

## ***Women and Sport South Africa (WASSA) Report***

*Ntambi Ravele, Chair, WASSA and Advisory Board WSI*

At a public hearing on the Boxing Control Amendment Bill, Ms. Ravele commended the government for respond

### ***No female shall take part in any tournament as a boxer or a wrestler.***

At the October 20, 2000 hearing, WASSA requested further changes in the bill that addressed issues specific to women. These include protective equipment, testing for pregnancy, adding female doctors to those who do physical tests of competitors, development of weight categories for women, as well as other issues such as number and length of rounds.

## ***IOC Pre-Olympic Congress***

A Symposium celebrating 100 years of women's participation in the Olympics and sponsored by IAPESGW, ISHPES and WSI was held in Brisbane, Australia, September 11th. Kari Fasting, Ph.D., WSI Vice-President, was awarded the IOC Social Science prize for the outstanding research presentation. A members reception was attended by 25 guests.

## **WSI Election Results**

The following WSI members representing countries around the globe have been elected to the Executive Committee and Advisory Board members:

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Dr. Angela Schneider, Secretary - Associate professor and Assistant Dean of Ethics and Equity, University of W. Ontario; silver medallist Olympian in rowing; Co-chair of Ethics sub-committee, IOC - WADA, [aschneid@julian.uwo.ca](mailto:aschneid@julian.uwo.ca)

### **ADVISORY BOARD**

Ms. Teopista Birungi - Founding President of the Uganda Sports Women's Association; Technical Committee of Uganda National Football Association, [naki@infocom.co.ug](mailto:naki@infocom.co.ug)

Ms. Elizabeth Darlison - Founding member of WSI; consultant and trainer in physical recreation, sport and health policy and advocacy in government and NGO sectors; member IOC Working Group on Women, [wsidarli@pnc.com.au](mailto:wsidarli@pnc.com.au)

Prof. Yvonne Harahousou - President Hellenic Women's Sport Association; Chair of the Commission on Aging of the World Leisure Organization; Assist. Prof. of Physical Education & Sport Science, Thrace University; harakabi@otonet.gr

Dr. Sandra Kirby - Membership Chair for WSI & a member of the Task Force on Sexual Harassment; Olympian in rowing; Assoc. Professor of sociology at the University of Winnipeg; kirby@uwinnipeg.ca

Ms. Zoila Palacio - a collegiate fencing champion at Brooklyn College; coaches the women's fencing team at Temple University; has a masters degree in exercise physiology; specializes in mentoring programs in mathematics and science for disadvantaged youth using the context of sport; zpalacio@unix.temple.edu

Ms. Ntambi Ravele - Co-ordinator of Women and Sport South Africa; international tennis umpire; Board member of South Africa Sport Commission and President of Netball South Africa; ravelen@techpta.ac.za

Dr. Don Sabo - Professor of sociology at D'Youville College in Buffalo NY; former Trustee of the Women's Sport Foundation, USA; prolific author and researcher on topics of gender and sport, feminism, men's health and sport; former President of N.American Society of Sport Sociology; sabo@acsu.buffalo.edu

Dr. Patricia Sangenis - Cardiovascular physician; Member of the IOC Medical Commission and Executive Board of FIMS; Member of ACSM Strategic Initiative for Women's Health; radio/TV personality in Argentina; psangenis@datamarkets.com.ar

Dr. Natalia Stambulova - Professor in Psychology at Lesgaft State Academy of Physical Education in St. Petersburg, Russia; former member of USSR figure skating team; Editorial Board of Journal of Sport and Exercise; stambuva@mail.wplus.net

Dr. Chin Sim Teoh - Sports physician and Deputy Medical Director of Chook Sports and Lifestyle Medicine Centre; Organizing Secretary of Singapore's first Women and Sport National Conference and first Secretary of Singapore's Women and Sport Working Group; member of the Medical Committee of the International Hockey Federation; csteoh@chook.com.sg

*WSI Member Publishes Book on Sexual Harassment in Sport*

Sandra Kirby, WSI Advisory Board member, and colleagues Lorraine Greaves and Olena Hankivsky have published, *The Dome of Silence: Sexual Harassment and Abuse in Sport*. This book examines sexual harassment and abuse in the sporting world, based on a survey of Canadian national team athletes. The authors assess how the imperatives underpinning sport such as competition, compulsory heterosexuality and patriotism affect athletes, coaches and parents. The authors of this book include a former Olympian, a health advocate and a policy analyst.

"The Dome of Silence uncovers the insidious abuse of power in sport by coaches and officials, and gives real nuts and bolts solutions to a practice that must simply end. Required reading for all athletes, parents and sport officials." (Laura Robinson, journalist and author). The book is available from Fernwood Books Ltd., Box 9409, Station A, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3K 5S3 (email fernwood@istar.ca).

Celia Brackenridge, Chair of the WSI Sexual Harassment Task Force, expects her book, "Spoilsports: Understanding and Preventing Sexual Exploitation in Sport", to be available in May 2001. The SHT Task Force hopes to meet in Greece next May and look into the possibilities of an international research agenda on sexual abuse and harassment in sport.

## **Review of Olympic Reforms: OATH (Olympian Advocates Together Honorably)**

Former and current Olympic athletes have joined academics and advocates of the Olympic movement to lobby for Olympic reform. Canadian Mark Tewksbury chairs the group which intends to publish in the spring of 2001 its review of the progress the IOC Ethics Commission has made toward reform.

Members of the IOC Commission include three IOC members and five independent members. It has met several times and while it has investigated a number of allegations against IOC members, it has not reprimanded nor disciplined anyone. Neither has it appointed the IOC Special Representative for Ethics who is expected to act in the future as the Olympic Ombudsperson. The IOC has created the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) which has both IOC and independent members. WADA has introduced out-of-competition testing and is working on developing a consistent standard for detection and sanctions. This is a relatively new agency and will have to demonstrate its independence, openness, and accountability to gain the confidence of the athletes and the public.

OATH will also be observing changes in the structure and governance of the IOC. While more athletes have been appointed to IOC committees and commissions, **no women were nominated by the national Olympic Committees or International Federations for membership on the IOC.**

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