



# AROUND THE RINGS

SPECIAL EDITION

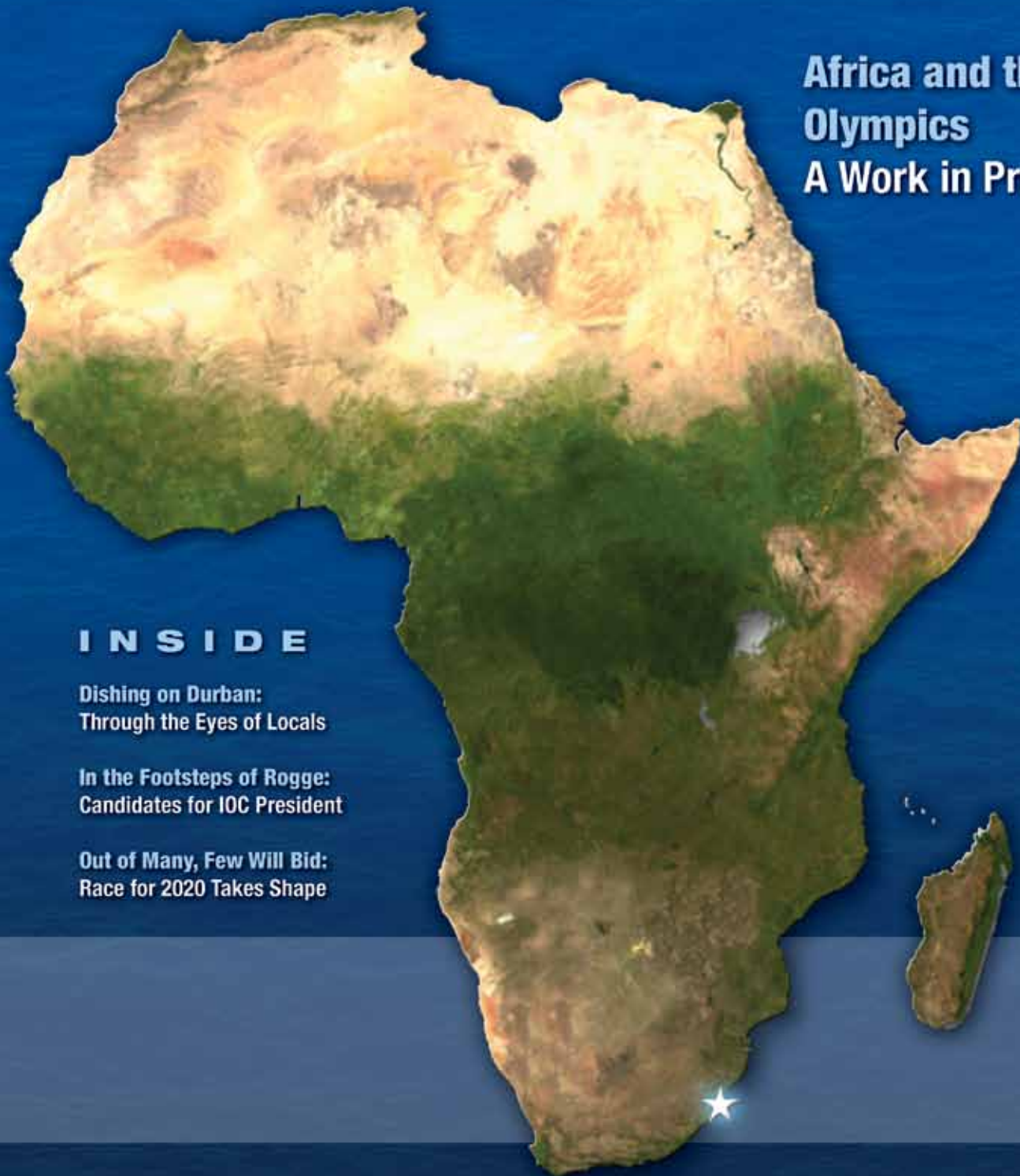
TWENTY YEARS AS THE OLYMPIC NEWS LEADER

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123rd IOC SESSION

JULY 2011

## Africa and the Olympics A Work in Progress



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## A Note from the Publisher and the Editor

This time next year, the 123rd IOC Session will be a distant memory. All eyes will be on London. The city will be draped in the Look of the Games and the Olympic torch will be within days of lighting the cauldron at the stadium.

Sheila Scott Hula, *Publisher* and Ed Hula, *Editor*

*We can't wait.*

*Around the Rings* will be on the scene until the Olympic Flame is extinguished on Aug. 12, reporting on everything from test events to security to sponsorship to doping. We'll provide the same in-depth news and analysis that our readers have depended on for the last 20 years – and we'll do it across all our platforms: website, messaging, mobile app, and of course, print.

Of course, *Around the Rings* will report on many other events in the meantime.

The Pan American Games in Guadalajara this October will give a preview of next year's Olympic hopefuls. Then there's the ANOC General Assembly, set for next April in Moscow, and of course SportAccord in Quebec City in May.

Also look for our reports from the IAAF Championships in Daegu, South Korea, and the UCI Road

World Championships in Denmark – and that's just for starters.

But as we look ahead to the coming year, we can look back with satisfaction on *ATR's* growth and accomplishments in the years since the newsletter began in 1992.

In fact, it was 10 years ago this month that *ATR* published its first full-color special edition magazine for the 112th IOC Session in Moscow. The big stories then were the selection of the 2008 Summer Games host and the election of a new IOC president.

This time, the focus is on the IOC vote for the host of the 2018 Winter Olympic Games, and we'd like to salute the three bid teams. All have run highly professional campaigns, and all have been a pleasure to work with. We look forward to covering whichever city wins – and we hope the others will continue their involvement in the Olympic Movement.

We would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our readers – without you, there would be no *Around the Rings*. Of course, we also appreciate our sponsors. Their support has enabled us to make quantum leaps forward

in the quality of our product. Please let them know that you have seen their messages – and that you appreciate their support for *ATR*, as well.

*On to 2012!*



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# Africa Faces Challenges, Opportunity

For the first time since 1938, an IOC Session is taking place in Africa. In the nearly 75 years since that meeting in Cairo, much has changed on the continent for the Olympic Movement.

Written by Edward Hula III



▲ ANOCA president Lassana Palenfo. (Getty Images)

World Cup 2010. African Olympic champions. Talk of Olympic Games in Africa.

And while progress is enormous, so are challenges. Poverty, disease, civil strife and political battles over sport are immutable factors that Olympic and sports leaders across Africa are dealing with every day.

“It would be difficult to generalize the needs of National Olympic Committees in Africa, just as it would be to quantify them since they each have their internal realities and peculiarities,” says Lassana Palenfo, president of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa.

“Nevertheless, in a near-global point of view, our NOCs mostly need resources (financial, material, technical

and training) that will enable them to develop, and that is what my team and I have been working towards helping them achieve.”

ANOCA, for its part, assists the NOCs in becoming self-sustaining and able to support athletes. Palenfo says he believes the NOCs have become stronger in his six-year tenure as ANOCA chief.

“We work towards strengthening relationships between NOCs and government/political authorities as well as the legal and organizational base with the aim of improving the management of the African sports movement,” he writes in an email to *Around the Rings*.

There is evidence for Africa’s ascension in sport just in the past decade. At the Athens Summer Games, nine African countries won 37 medals, seven of them gold. And at Beijing 2008, 12 countries won 40 medals, including 13 gold.

Palenfo says the formation of a sports division for the African Union will help ensure the upper echelons of government in Africa have their attention on sport.

## Attacks on the Autonomy of Sport

But too much attention from government in the form of political interference in the business of the NOCs is often an issue in Africa. Ghana, for example, is suspended by the IOC until resolution of conflicts between sports leaders and government. In Gambia, there have been disputes over who is

in charge of the NOC and what say the government should have.

The Olympic Charter mandates that NOCs must be free from government interference. But that sometimes doesn’t play out, especially when sports ministries routinely pay for Olympic teams to head to the Games and other sporting events.

Palenfo says while the government funding is vital, NOCs need independent resources to preserve their autonomy.

“It is this lack of resources that has always been at the root of conflicts between NOCs and governments in Africa,” he says.

ANOCA assists where able, funding teams to travel to the Olympics and other regional sporting competitions as well as to training and educational seminars throughout the world.

Moroccan sport minister Moncef Belkhatay says he welcomes the involvement of ANOCA and its relations with governments across the continent.

“Our relationship with ANOCA is fantastic,” he tells *ATR*. “When I arrived 20 months ago, ANOCA asked me to organize the first African Youth Olympic Games in Morocco. It was a great success.”

And while African NOCs may need more autonomy from their governments, those same governments will likely have to continue their support of the NOCs.

“I think the key element today is to build trust. When trust is there, things flow freely and easily,” he says.

“We should have a spirit which is to be of service to the Olympic committees. [That] doesn’t mean being involved with management, but developing a partnership for the citizens and mainly at the territory level.”

Morocco is leading the way on this front, he says, with the ministry forming hundreds of “social sport clubs” in neighborhoods throughout the country.

The ministry took up the task last year and hopes to have 1,000 clubs up and running by 2016.

Currently 25 are built, 75 are under construction and the ministry is working hand-in-hand with the Moroccan Olympic Committee to build more and impact more lives, Belkhatay says.

He calls the program a “great success” and says sports and the Olympic Movement have now made the lives of citizens better, not only through sport but also by offering employment opportunities related to the clubs.

Belkhatay says this model can be spread throughout Africa, and some in the Olympic world are taking note of this goal.



▲ Moroccan sport minister Moncef Belkhatay. (Getty Images)





◀ Gambian IOC member Beatrice Allen. (ATR)

▲ Olympic training center in Zambia. (ATR)

He made a presentation on the project at last year's Peace and Sport forum, organized by IOC member Prince Albert of Monaco, and will address the 2011 forum in Monaco on the program's success.

Still, Belkhaty notes, with all the other problems faced by African nations, sport can sometimes be forgotten. In Morocco, as well as the rest of the continent, governments are often most concerned with delivering essential needs to their communities and not with developing sport.

Regardless of the challenges, Belkhaty says he has a 20-year sports plan for Morocco that includes a bid for the Olympic Games.

### Developing Sport, NOCs

IOC member from Gambia Beatrice Allen says she hopes the IOC will become more proactive in encouraging the rest of the Olympic Movement to support Olympism throughout her continent.

"When the IOC institutes a

policy, it is a policy of the Olympic Movement," Allen tells *ATR*. "It goes on to the international federations to promote it to the NOCs. But so far this is football and to some extent athletics in a very significant way with much impact."

Fellow Gambian Abdoulie Touray, also head of the national cycling federation, says the biggest problem facing sports is that most are left fighting for scraps of resources.

Most, that is, except one.

"The issue is that number one sport is football, number two is football and number three is football," Touray tells *ATR*.

"FIFA has done great in terms of the spread of football on the continent," he said, adding that its constant monitoring and promotion of talent "is something that other federations are yet to do."

But Allen singles out FIFA for its work promoting female administrators throughout Africa.

She also points out the positive work of the IOC in that effort too. She

says the IOC has made a concerted effort to select female administrators to join its ranks. Since Allen won election in 2006, two other African women have entered the IOC – Lydia Nsekera from Burundi in 2009 and Dagmawit Girmay Berhane from Ethiopia in 2010. In total, 16 Africans serve on the IOC.

The IOC is likewise concerned about sport development, says Allen. She cites the new Olympic training center built in Zambia as one example.

"[The center] is an investment the IOC has made in Africa for the betterment of Africa. It is a modern sport facility, with every sporting facility you need in every sport."

But it's not enough to build the center and leave, Allen says.

She wants the IOC to continue monitoring the center to see how it's used and where improvements can be made.

While many problems and societal ills may plague the continent, Allen sees a way to rise up.

"The Olympics, the IOC can be a beacon of hope for Africa," she says. ■

# Durban Through the Eyes of a Local

It's winter here in South Africa – hope you packed your swimwear!

By Lindsay Slogrove

Perched on the edge of the Indian Ocean, Durban is a year-round holiday destination with one of the best winter climates in the world as well as a vibrant sports, arts and tourism culture.

It really is the warmest place to be, as espoused in the city's 2010 FIFA World Cup slogan.

Durban's average winter temperature hovers around 20 degrees Celsius, and only when an occasional cold front sweeps up from the wet and wintry Cape does the air turn chilly. Durbanites shiver when the temperature drops below 16 degrees C.

Most of its citizens are blessed with a quality of life recently found to be

over the city. Its graceful 96 meter-high arch is home to the world's highest swing (a Guinness record is in the pipeline) and the SkyCar, which

runs on the arch, offers 360-degree views of the city.

Just alongside Moses Mabhida is Kings Park Stadium, home to the Sharks rugby team. With a strong Springbok representation, the squad is one of the tops in the country and in the Super Rugby series, a competition also involving teams from New Zealand and Australia.

The Shark Tank is renowned in rugby-playing nations as the place to be after games: the smell of braaing (barbecuing) meat wafts over the stadium as fans make a night of supporting their team. The Dolphins

horseracing event, the Vodacom Durban July, attracts the rich, famous and sometimes utterly tasteless from around the country. While a big-money day for building reputations on the race track, it's also known as a fashion extravaganza. Because of the mild temperatures during the day, human flesh is often flashed as fashionistas face off to be the most outrageously – or expensively – dressed.

In another nod to the warm winter weather, skin is also on show at the beach as Durban hosts the biggest surfing competition in the country, the Mr Price Pro.

The beachfront was given a facelift for the World Cup, and that legacy is something every Durbanite or visitor can enjoy. The promenade stretches the length of the city, winding along the beaches.



One of the three yacht clubs that make their home in Durban. (Peter Bendheim)



Durban's beach front on a winter's day. (Marilyn Bernard)

the best in the country – even though other cities scored higher in the earning stakes.

Durban was the favorite to be named as South Africa's bid city for the 2020 Olympic Games until its hopes were dashed when the South African government declined to commit to the cause.

Long promoted as the sports capital of the country, Durban has world-class facilities in the precinct around Moses Mabhida Stadium, a white beacon built for the World Cup and visible from all

are the provincial cricket team, also with a strong fan base, while soccer is represented by the Golden Arrows and AmaZulu.

The world's greatest ultra-marathon, the Comrades Marathon, is run between the city and the provincial capital of Pietermaritzburg, starting from each city in alternate years. About 19,000 runners from all over the world line up at the start to take on the hilly 90km route, lined with people cheering and running alongside for brief spells to try to inspire any who need the support.

In July, South Africa's biggest

Sportspeople and keep-fit enthusiasts have beautiful views and fresh ocean air as they run, walk or cycle from the world-class aquarium and water park uShaka Marine World to the art deco Suncoast Casino. uShaka plays an important role in ocean conservancy, runs dolphin shows and offers the brave a chance to dive with sharks.

The arts are also well-represented with theaters, galleries and museums dotting the city.

Any appetite can be sated at the many and varied restaurants Durban has on offer. Visitors should make a point

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## Durban Eyes of a Local

continued from page 8

to visit the Roma revolving restaurant, boasting incredible views from the port and central business district to the surrounding hills of the well-to-do suburbs of the Berea.

Another culinary adventure is the Bunny Chow. Invented in Durban as a meal for the poor, it's a quarter- or half-loaf of bread with the soft center scooped out and filled with curry, another provincial specialty. The curry can be simple beans, mutton or a top-of-the-range prawn creation. You need to lose your dignity for this meal because it's eaten with your fingers, using the bread as a "spoon". Get plenty of napkins!

Durban is the busiest harbor in Africa, and a boat trip on the bay or offshore is essential. The Millennium

Tower, a landmark on the Bluff that houses the port control offices, is also visible for miles, and most locals "speak" the "language" of the harbor. The ever-present horns, lights and buoys of ships all tell a story of safe channels, ship entries, exits and movements.

Three yacht clubs use the bay as their base, so it's common to see yachts of all sizes racing or cruising along.

Located right on the harbor's edge, Wilson's Wharf has a range of restaurants at which you can enjoy a meal while watching the boating world go by.

The city has grown tremendously over the last decade, with industry spreading inland and the iDube Tradeport in the north – near the new King Shaka International Airport – planned to create an industrial and

transport hub. Commerce has also mushroomed, with large new business centers created to the north.

With this expansion, people have flocked to the city for jobs, and Durban now faces the challenge of providing more homes, schools, healthcare, utilities and security to its newfound inhabitants. The playground of Africa used to suffer from what was called "Natal Fever" – a laid-back malaise that meant everything could be put off until tomorrow.

Durban's found the cure for that and is now a vibrant, growing city that is grabbing today to make tomorrow even better. ■

*– Lindsay Slogrove is the assistant editor of the Daily News, a provincial daily newspaper based in Durban.*

An inland view of the city with the International Convention Center and Hilton Hotel in the center. (Peter Bendheim)





# Sam Ramsamy Dishes on Durban

I have a special bias for Durban because that's where I was born. But what is most special, not only for Durban, not only for South Africa, but for Africa is that in the IOC's 117-year history, there's only been one other IOC Session in Africa (Cairo in 1938). So Durban has a special significance, a historical significance.

I know Durban very well, and I will certainly ensure that Durban gets very, very good exposure.

Now what are the aspects of that exposure?

– Sam Ramsamy is an IOC member from South Africa, a FINA vice president and a Durban native.



- The climate in July is very congenial, and IOC members are not going to be cluttered with too much clothing.
- I learned my swimming on the beaches and on the surf of Durban, and I personally swim every day of the year. I've told everybody please bring your swimming costumes here.
- We've got some wonderful game reserves not very far away. People want to see the big five (lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard and rhino), and that's about two hours' drive from Durban. We're taking the IOC's accompanying guests on an all-day trip there.
- We have traditional dancing called Zulu dancing, and we will put on a show, hopefully even in the opening ceremony.
- We've got a very good aquarium, one of the best in the world. There is a restaurant in the aquarium setup where from your dining table you can see the sharks and other big fish moving about.
- The first people of Indian origin to arrive in South Africa arrived in Durban, and we are taking guests to the memorial of Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi spent 20 years of his early life in South Africa, and everyone accepts that is where Gandhi learned his politics.
- People can do snorkeling or diving with the sharks in special cages in Durban. We can do that.
- Of course, we've got an excellent sea view.
- Everything is exaggerated in significance because Prince Albert is marrying a South African girl, and he's giving a reception for IOC members and some close guests along the northern coast of Durban on July 7, and I can't go into details about the arrangements. That again is a great attraction.



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## Hello and Goodbye: Three Nominees to Replace Six Outgoing IOC Members



Photo: IOC/R. Juilliant

A federation leader, a National Olympic Committee chief and a gold medalist who already served as an IOC member are the nominees to join the committee.

Written by Edward Hula III

International Canoe Federation president Jose Perurena, Argentine Olympic Committee president Gerardo Werthein and Barbara Kendall of New Zealand were nominated by the IOC Executive Board on April 6.

The three candidates must be approved by IOC membership in Durban.

Kendall, 44, competed at the Barcelona, Atlanta, Sydney, Athens and Beijing Olympics in windsurfing. She won gold in 1992, a silver four years later and a bronze at the Sydney Games. Following the 2004 Olympics, she replaced Australian swim queen Susie O'Neill upon her resignation from the Athletes Commission. Kendall was appointed to the position as runner-up for the Oceania spot on the commission. She served until 2010, when her term ended. She was nominated in the category of active athlete.

Perurena canoed for Spain at the 1968 Olympics and was elected ICF president in 2008. He was nominated by virtue of heading an international federation, meaning his term will end when he leaves the ICF presidency.

Werthein assumed the helm of the Argentine Olympic Committee in 2009. He is the 18th AOC president and would be the 10th IOC member from Argentina. A veterinarian by profession, he also runs a telecommunications firm headquartered in Buenos Aires. He will be a co-opted member, allowing him to serve until age 70. He worked with Team Argentina at four Olympics, served as chef de mission at the Beijing Games and participated in multiple regional

games, leading the national equestrian federation.

It's unlikely any of the three candidates will not join the ranks of the IOC this week. A near-unanimous number of nominees are voted in.

### "Apprenticeship" Over

Kendall tells *Around the Rings* her time on the Athletes Commission from 2005 to 2008 allowed her to learn the ropes of the IOC.

"During that time I was an active athlete and produced my second child, so for me my time as a member was a difficult one as I had very little time to serve the movement," she said in an email.

"The time as a member was my apprenticeship, as it took me all this time to try and understand (and I still have a lot to learn) how things work in the sporting world outside the field of play."

While a member of the commission, she served on the executive boards of the New Zealand Olympic Committee and Oceania National Olympic Committees as well as on the World Anti-Doping Agency's athletes commission, spearheading several outreach programs throughout the region.

One of those, an athlete career program, is now going global, she told *ATR*.

Some of her other projects involved efforts to stop the spread of HIV, promote environmental sustainability and fight doping.

Kendall added her work with athletes commissions is to ensure they remain "active and relevant" – she's increased the number of Oceania NOCs with commissions from four to 10. "Becoming a member is such an honor to be able to continue this work that I am so passionate about for the athletes, women and our people in Oceania," she said.



According to Kendall, she now spends “over 90 days a year” on Olympic-related work.

## Next Step for Canoe Chief

Perurena says he has now reached “the pinnacle” of the sporting world with his nomination.

“Having been an athlete, a sport event organizer and an official, the pinnacle after being an Olympian is to be president of the sport I love so much and to be a representative of the IOC,” he told *ATR*.

“I had a very broad smile when I heard the good news that I was nominated.”

Should he be elected, Perurena says he will be able to give back to the IOC, adding that the organization “has given me the opportunity to experience so much.

“I really believe in supporting the world’s athletes and finding ways to promote sport through new media and channels that can benefit the whole Olympic family.”

With votes on the Olympic program looming for 2020 and beyond, Perurena is confident of canoeing’s continuing presence at the Summer Games. Being an IOC member won’t hurt the sport’s Olympic survival, either.

“Canoeing has a healthy TV audience at the Olympic Games ranking in the middle of all the sports,” he said. “What is important for canoeing is to ensure we have media coverage and athlete personalities between the Olympic Games. Being an IOC member will allow me to discuss some of the issues that face [international sport federations] directly with other IOC members, and I look forward to this.”

## Privilege to be Nominated

Speaking to *ATR*, Werthein says he is “humbled and honored” by his nomination, adding “this is something that is very very important.”

One of his biggest accomplishments as NOC president, he said, was a recent law passed in Argentina whereby one percent of the revenue from mobile phone sales goes to funding the country’s Olympians.

“This is pretty nice. Now we have some independent funding that will allow us to grow sport in the country.”

## Outgoing Members

Japan is about to lose its two IOC members to retirement. They are among a group of high-profile members stepping down at year’s end as they hit age limits, too.

Both Chiharu Igaya and Shun-ichiro Okano turn 80 this year, mandatory retirement age for members elected after 1976 but before 2000.

Igaya, who in 1956 became the first Asian athlete to medal in alpine events at the Winter Olympics, was elected to the IOC in 1982. Okano joined in 1990 after a long career in football, first as a player and then as an administrator. He coached the Japanese team at the 1964 Tokyo Games and won a bronze medal in 1968 as a team member.

Other IOC members retiring in 2011 include: Phil Coles, Australia, who turns 80. He has served since 1982.

Arne Ljungqvist, Sweden, chair of the IOC Medical Commission, who turns 80. An IOC member since 1994, he also serves as the IOC’s representative on the World Anti-Doping Agency’s executive and foundation boards.

Lassana Palenfo, Cote d’Ivoire, who turns 70. He became an IOC member in 2000.

Antun Vrdoljak, Croatia, who turns 80 in June. He joined the IOC in 1995.

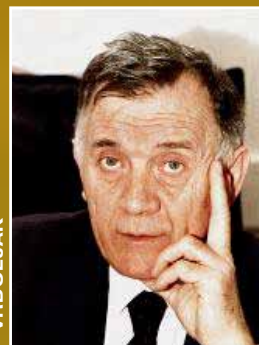
## Nomination Secrecy

Nominations are done in secret and the process is so esoteric, nominees don’t even know they are nominated.

Werthein told *ATR*: “Your call to the NOC was the news. My secretary said ‘Congratulations’ and I said ‘How did you know?’” ■



LJUNGVIST



VRDOLJAK

WERTHEIN



KENDALL



OKANO AND IGAYA



PALENFO



COLES



PERURENA

# Presidential Race Still Forming

While the end is coming for the IOC presidency of Jacques Rogge, possible contenders to succeed him in 2013 are keeping a low profile.

Written by Ed Hula

The circumstances are much like the election in 2001 that put Rogge into power: while four candidates eventually sought the presidency, the field wasn't set until just months before the vote.

But as far off as two years before the 2001 presidential election, a favorite had emerged – Jacques Rogge.

And just as then, two years out from 2013, there's a favorite – Thomas Bach of Germany.

Bach has a resume that puts him in pole position. Fencing gold medalist in 1976. IOC member since 1991. Service on the Executive Board dating back to 1996. President of

For members concerned about geography, Carrion's candidacy would present the chance to shift the leadership of the IOC to the Americas. The previous three presidents have been Europeans.

But with all eight of the prior IOC presidents men, will 2013 open the door for a woman to succeed Rogge?

U.S. IOC member Anita De Frantz, who finished well out of the running in the 2001 election, says she is not interested in another presidential bid.

That would leave two other women with significant IOC experience as possible contenders in 2013. But neither Gunilla Lindberg of Sweden nor Nawal El Moutawakel of Morocco has yet professed an interest in running.

Lindberg is the more senior of the two, a member since 1996 and a veteran of two terms on the IOC Executive Board. The secretary general of the Swedish Olympic Committee since 1989, Lindberg became secretary general of the Association of National Olympic Committees in 2004,



the German Olympic Sports Confederation. A lawyer by profession.

Bach is also the right age. He'll be 59 when the IOC chooses its new president in Sept. 2013, able to serve for a full 12-year cycle. Under IOC rules, Bach doesn't need to retire from the IOC until age 80.

But discretion, part of Bach's reputation as an IOC member, is keeping any ambitions he might have in check for now. His involvement as a leader in Munich's bid for the 2018 Winter Olympics is another reason to keep mum on a presidential bid. And Bach, in an interview with *Around the Rings* late last year, said he didn't think IOC members would talk about the race until after the London Olympics.

That may be true. Even on background, IOC members were reluctant to comment much for this story.

One of those members says "leadership" will be the most important factor to be considered when the vote arrives.

Bach's impressive background aside, other IOC members are expected to put their names forward as a successor to Rogge.

Richard Carrion of Puerto Rico would be one of them, already confiding his desire among colleagues. Now 58, Carrion has been an IOC member since 1990 and an Executive Board member since 2004. Responsible for TV negotiations in the U.S., Carrion was instrumental in the record \$4.382 billion deal struck with NBC/Comcast for broadcast rights through the 2020 Olympics.

a post that takes her to Olympic meetings around the world. This year she chaired the IOC Evaluation Commission for the 2018 Winter Olympics. She's 64 and can serve on the IOC until age 80.

El Moutawakel, 49, is the first woman from the Arab world to win a gold medal in athletics, in the 400m hurdles at Los Angeles in 1984. An IOC member since 1998, she has served as Minister of Youth and Sports in Morocco. Currently a member of the Executive Board, El Moutawakel led the IOC Evaluation Commissions for the 2012 and 2016 Olympics and now chairs the Coordination Commission for Rio de Janeiro. Her IOC retirement age is 80.

Sergey Bubka, the great pole-vaulter and IOC member from Ukraine, might be presidential material in 2013 – unless his ambition to lead the International Association of Athletics Federations proves greater. He is also president of the Ukrainian NOC and chair of the new IOC Entourage Commission. Bubka is 47 and can serve on the IOC until age 70. He joined the IOC in 1999.

If the next IOC president is to come from Asia, two candidates are possible. One is Ser Miang Ng of Singapore, an ambassador. An IOC vice president, Ng was elected to the IOC in 1998. He's 62 and doesn't retire until age 80.

Also an IOC vice president, Zaiqing Yu of China could be a candidate in 2013. But because he was elected to the IOC in 2000, the retirement age of 70 applies. He would be 62 in 2013, limiting him to an eight-year term as president. ■





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## See You in September

Three years after the close of the 2008 Games, the Olympic spirit is once again bound for Beijing.

Written by Elayna Rose

Organized by the Beijing Olympic City Development Association, the 14th World Conference on Sport for All will be staged Sept. 20 to 23 at the China National Convention Center. Created in 1983 by the IOC, Sport for All is built on the Olympic ideal that sport is a human right meant to be enjoyed by all and aims to foster a worldwide interest in regular physical activity.

To ensure that Sport for All maintains a tangible impact, part of the conference will focus on evaluating progress made since the 2010 edition in Jyväskylä, Finland. Last year's declaration called on national Olympic committees, sports clubs and federations to work with individual communities in implementing programs that encourage regular physical activity and nutritious diets.

According to IOC Executive Board member from South Africa Sam Ramsamy, the 2010 conference featured a highly productive but largely academic environment whereas this year's edition will center on the practical implementation of Sport for All programs.

Ramsamy, who is in his first year as Sport for All chairman, looks to bring active participation to the 2011 conference. He will engage attendees in their host city by expanding their study of sport to events outside the Convention Center. Interspersed throughout the normal agenda of sessions and panel discussions are public sport performances and daily group exercises. Each morning, seasoned instructors will lead conference goers in shadow boxing, a martial art that originated in China. Participants will spend the rest of their "free" time touring Beijing landmarks, including venues left over from the Summer Games.

Among the scheduled speakers are IOC president Jacques Rogge, SportAccord president Hein Verbruggen and Beijing 2008 bid ambassador Jackie Chan as well as IOC members Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr. of Spain, Rita Subowo of Indonesia and Ramsamy himself.

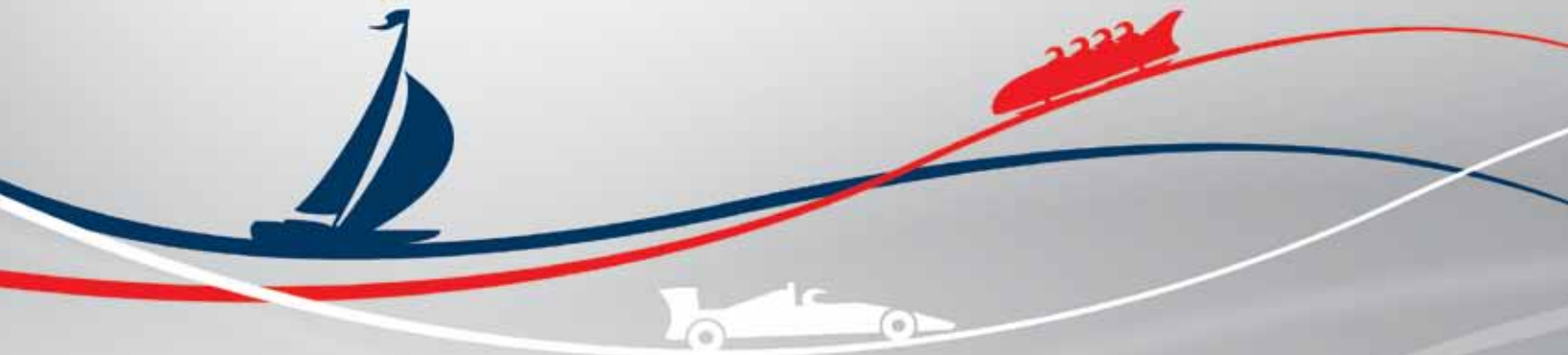
Also invited to speak are International Ski Federation secretary general Sarah Lewis, International Aquatics Federation executive director Cornel Marculescu and International Basketball Federation secretary general Patrick Baumann, also an IOC member from Switzerland. ■

China National Convention Center functioned as the Main Press Centre and International Broadcasting Centre as well as the venue for fencing and pistol shooting during the 2008 Olympics.





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## Specialist in Sports Logistics opens Facility in Lausanne's “House of International Sports”

**Conceptum Sport Logistics with extended international logistics network**

**Frankfurt/Lausanne, June, 15th. 2011** – With moving into the “Maison du Sport International” – the house of international sports – in Lausanne, all represented international sport federations can use special logistics services by Conceptum Sport Logistics at first hand. Numerous international sport associations and some chosen companies offer a strong platform for international competitive sports at the shores of Lake Geneva. With the specialization in sports logistics, the location in the Olympic town of Lausanne is a valuable addition for Conceptum's managing director Sebastian Stahl: “As many international federations are located in Lausanne also a lot of the transport challenges for sport equipment such as bobsleigh are organized and managed from here. Our transport experts are now as close as a logistic solution can be”, the Conceptum-boss says.

The Swiss sports expert and long-term press relations officer of the International Federation of all national Bobsleigh and Skeleton Federations and Organizations FIBT, Ms. Leta Joos, accepted the assignment as relationship manager for Conceptum Sport Logistics in Switzerland. She knows about the sportsmanship Conceptum stands for: “Competitions such as Olympic Games or other tournaments are a massive challenge in terms of logistics. Less companies offer such passion as Conceptum does – this is an enormous backup for the athletes”, says Leta Joos. Conceptum Sport Logistics is present in over 15 countries, and more than 100 partners cooperate worldwide.

“Backing the athletes – this is our everyday challenge. It is a tough job to handle someone's own motivation, to keep up with training, and – on top of all – looking for the transport of the equipment. We take over this challenge, and the athlete can concentrate on the primary goal: winning”, outlines managing director Stahl. In Germany Conceptum is located at the most important logistic spots: Munich, Frankfurt and Hamburg, international offices are in important centers of sports such as Calgary or Ottawa and many other strategic locations. “The formalities require strict surveillance and a dedicated team. Sending a bobsleigh around the world means to send a good – and customs are just one intermediate mission of this odyssey”, Sebastian Stahl explains.



# Out of Many, Few Will Bid: Candidates for 2020

The race for the 2020 Olympics will soon take shape, both because the IOC demands haste and because its 2018 decision will weigh heavily on future bid plans.

The 2018 host city will be chosen July 6.  
The next round of bidding begins the following day.

Written by Matthew Grayson



▲  
Rome (Getty Images)

## BIDDING

**Italy:** Rome is the only city so far to formally declare its candidacy for 2020. IOC vice president Mario Pescante heads the bid, and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi promises full government support. The 1960 host city lost to Athens 2004 in 1997 in its attempt at a second Summer Games. With a head start on the field and South Africa out of the running, Rome 2020 is in pole position.

## DEPENDS ON 2018

**Japan:** The Japanese Olympic Committee insists plans are still alive after the triple-blow dealt by the March 11 earthquake, tsunami and ongoing nuclear emergency. With Hiroshima dissolving its bid committee in late May, it's up

to Tokyo should the city choose to follow its failed 2016 run. That decision hinges both on the support of newly re-elected mayor Shintaro Ishihara and on the July 6 vote, because a PyeongChang win for 2018 likely would rule out another Asian country winning 2020. Whether the national government will endorse an Olympic bid while grappling with the realities and costs of rebuilding after the recent disasters also remains to be seen. Look for an announcement to coincide with the JOC's centennial celebration on July 16.

**France:** Sport minister Chantal Jouanno expects France to vie for 2020 if, and only if, Annecy misses out on 2018. She declined to single out any candidate cities but insisted her country's next Olympic bid would not get a late start like Annecy did this time around. Paris hosted in 1900 and 1924 but campaigned unsuccessfully for the 1992, 2008 and 2012 Games. After losing out to London in embarrassing fashion, the French capital set its sights on 2024 – the centennial of the last Paris Olympics – but is likely to move quickly in the case of an Annecy defeat.

**Spain:** Whether Alberto Ruiz Gallardon's recent re-election signals another bid from Madrid is not yet known. He was mayor for the city's 2012 and 2016 runs, but his challenger was also involved in the campaigns. With the mayoral election out of the way but city council backing not yet secure, Spanish sports leaders are waiting until after Wednesday's vote to decide. Should a European city win the 2018 race, 2024 is the likelier bet for Madrid.

**South Korea:** Seoul hosted the Games in 1988, but Busan wants the honor this time around. The South Korean port city staged the 2002 Asian Games, an event in some ways as complex as the Olympics. A bid for 2020 hinges entirely on the fate of PyeongChang in the race for 2018. Expect Busan to keep quiet at least until Wednesday's vote – its past ambitions only added confusion to PyeongChang's failed campaigns for 2010 and 2014.

**Portugal:** Lisbon may try for 2020 after passing on 2016. Portugal paired with Spain for its failed 2018 FIFA World Cup campaign but will have to fly solo with the IOC. A bid in 2024 seems a likelier bet should Annecy or Munich nab the 2018 Winter Games. In the event of a PyeongChang win, Portugal may encounter stiff competition for 2020 from elsewhere in Europe.

## TO BE DETERMINED

**India:** Many predicted last year's Commonwealth Games would be a stepping stone to 2020. Then the spotlight arrived,

**July 6** – IOC members elect 2018 host here in Durban

**Sept. 1** – Applicant city nominations due from NOCs

**November** – IOC holds information seminar for 2020 applicants

**Feb. 15, 2012** – Application files and guarantee letters due to IOC

**May 2012** – IOC EB shortlists candidate cities

**Jan. 7, 2013** – Bid books due to IOC

**June 2013** – IOC Evaluation Commission issues report following bid inspections

**Sept. 7, 2013** – IOC members vote in Buenos Aires, Argentina





Madrid (Getty Images)



Nairobi (Getty Images)

and so too did allegations of shoddy construction, graft and financial mismanagement. As the organizing committee struggles to sort out its finances, the Indian Olympic Association is distancing itself from ousted chief organizer – and IOA president – Suresh Kalmadi. The tortured road to Delhi 2010 likely proved too rough to allow for a 2020 Olympic bid.

**Morocco:** Expect a bid from Casablanca in 2020, 2024 or 2028, says Moroccan sport minister Moncef Belkhatat. His pronouncement came March 19 at the closing gala for CISA, the African International Sports Convention, and was the first time he publicly espoused a bid from the North African country. With the deadline to apply for 2020 less than two months away, his Olympic vision is likely to be a dream deferred. The terrorist bombing of a Marrakesh café in late April certainly won't help Casablanca's cause.

**Middle East:** Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha all want to stage the Middle East's first Olympic Games. It's doubtful Doha will try for 2020 with Qatar's World Cup just two years away. Dubai is the likelier candidate from UAE despite the city's current credit crunch. All three would require an IOC exemption to beat the blistering summer heat and stage competition outside the normal Games period of July 15 to August 31, a concession not afforded Doha's failed 2016 bid.

**Turkey:** With a June 12 general election out of the way, the Turkish government is now expected to decide whether to pursue either the 2020 Olympics or European soccer finals. Though not a Middle East city, Istanbul would be the first host from a Muslim country. The ancient Byzantine capital bid for the 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012 Olympics but sat the 2016 race out. Unlike with past campaigns, Turkey is keeping uncharacteristically quiet this time around.

**Azerbaijan:** Baku is building an Olympic Stadium atop a former oil field as the centerpiece of a 2020 bid. The city also campaigned for 2016 but did not advance past the applicant stage, in part due to its lack of a showcase stadium. At the time, its existence was merely a proposal and the oil field had yet to be reclaimed. Current construction plans indicate that won't be the case this time around.

**Russia:** St. Petersburg's governor has eyes for 2020 or 2024, but Russia's NOC has yet to commit. A bid would

likely get the backing of Vladimir Putin, a native of St. Petersburg and Sochi 2014 devotee. Moscow hosted the Summer Olympics in 1980 but lost out to London in 2012. With the Winter Games in 2014 and FIFA World Cup in 2018, Russia is on a roll, and 2020 would only continue the trend.

#### LONGSHOTS TO BID

**Canada:** The Canadian Olympic Committee intends to bid again soon and thinks Toronto is long overdue. The Ontario capital fell short for the 1996 and 2008 Games and hasn't staged a major international sporting event since the 1976 Summer Paralympics (the 1976 Olympics were held in Montreal). Hosting the 2015 Pan American Games should help Canada's cause, as should the success of Vancouver 2010. The more noise Quebec City makes about 2022, however, the less likely Canada will try for 2020.

**Egypt:** The president of the Egyptian Olympic Committee called for a bid from Cairo in December during the NOC's centennial celebrations. IOC president Jacques Rogge was in attendance then and reiterated his long-held desire to bring the Olympics to Africa. With South Africa out of the picture, Cairo seems a logical candidate for the continent's first Summer Games. In the wake of January's revolution, 2020 may prove too soon, as least for the Egyptian capital.

**Australia:** It's Brisbane's turn to bid after Melbourne hosted in 1956 and Sydney in 2000. The Queensland capital finished third in the race for 1992 and has its sights set on 2020, 2024 or 2028. Brisbane is also pushing for a World Expo in 2020 to coincide with a potential Summer Games. Whether historic flooding in December and January will dampen the city's Olympic enthusiasm remains to be seen.

**Kenya:** The withdrawal of South Africa could well open the door for other African cities to seize the day. Kenya's prime minister is planning exactly that, calling for a 2020 bid from Nairobi back in March. No other country in Africa has won more Olympic medals, his argument goes, so no other country should host the Games before his own. Whether Morocco and Egypt will heed his logic is a different story. ■

# Test Events, Ticket Sales Dominate London's Final Leg

The velodrome has been used before but will be officially tested in February. (Getty Images)

Organizers of the London Olympics celebrate a year-to-go July 27 – then it's back to work. Testing venues and selling tickets top their agenda, with these key milestones looming

Compiled by Mark Bisson

2012

**July 4 to 6** – Equestrian International Invitational (2012 Test Event); Greenwich Park

**July 20 to 24** – Volleyball International (2012 Test Event); London

**July 27** – One year to Games

**July 28 to 31** – Canoe Slalom International Invitational (2012 Test Event); Broxbourne

**Aug. 4 to 7** – FISA World Rowing Junior Championships (2012 Test Event); Eton Dorney

**Aug. 8 to 14** – World Badminton Championships (2012 Test Event); London

**Aug. 16 to 21** – Men's Basketball International Invitational (2012 Test Event); London

**Aug. 29** – One year to go until Paralympic Games begin

**Sept. 8** – International Paralympic Day

**Sept. 9 to 30** – Paralympic Games tickets go on sale

**Autumn** – First Games volunteers announced

**Oct. 7** – BT British Olympic Ball; London

**October** – London 2012 Festival tickets go on sale

**October/November** – IOC Coordination Commission visit

**Nov. 24 to 27** – Boxing International Invitational (2012 Test Event); London

**Nov. 24 to 27** – Table Tennis International Invitational (2012 Test Event); London

**Dec. 3 to 4** – Judo International Invitational (2012 Test Event); London

**Winter** – Remaining tickets go on sale



LOCOG chair Sebastian Coe and sprint legend Frank Fredericks laid London Olympic Stadium's final piece of turf during a March visit from the IOC Coordination Commission for 2012. (Getty Images)

2012

**Feb. 17 to 19** – Cycling World Cup Classic (2012 Test Event); London

**April 18** – 100 days to go to the start of the Olympic Games

**Spring** – IOC Coordination Commission final visit

**May 18** – Start of Olympic Torch Relay

**May 21** – 100 days to go to the start of the Paralympic Games

**June 21** – Start of London 2012 Festival

**July 27** – Olympic Games begin

**August 29** – Paralympic Games begin



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# No Slowing Down for Sochi

Sochi 2014's "big build" is the major focus for organizers of Russia's first Winter Games, but the host city has plenty else to keep it busy as well, including these key milestones over the next 18 months

Compiled by Mark Bisson



▲ Bolshoi Ice Palace is a key component of the "big build" needed for these Games. (Sochi 2014)



Construction on Sochi's figure-skating and short-track center is shown in this photo dated June 7. (Sochi 2014) ▲

**SEPT. 22** – Sochi stages a community marathon and youth cycling event in honor of World Car-Free Day, an event organized annually to promote environmental awareness as well as alternate methods of transportation.

**OCTOBER** – Volunteer training camp opens at 26 colleges and universities across Russia selected in December to spearhead Sochi's recruitment program, the most ambitious in Olympic history.

**OCTOBER/NOVEMBER** – The IOC Coordination Commission makes its sixth visit. Chief among the priorities recently identified for organizers by the 13-member delegation include training the Olympic workforce, finalizing a staff relocation plan, ensuring smooth Games-time transport and mobilizing the

Biathlon and cross-country skiing share this complex. (Sochi 2014)

hospitality industry to transform Sochi into a year-round tourist destination.

**NOV. 23 TO 24** – Hosting the European Olympic Committees general assembly gives Sochi a chance to showcase the progress made since winning the Winter Games in 2007.

**DECEMBER** – Representatives from both worldwide Olympic partners and Sochi 2014 general partners will stop by the Black Sea resort for an annual update on key areas such as Games delivery, sponsorship activation and marketing opportunities in the Russian market.

**DECEMBER 2011 TO SEPTEMBER 2013** – Sochi's busy schedule of test events resumes. A total of 74 competitions – five of them world championships – are expected to draw 5,000 athletes and 250,000 spectators over the next two-and-a-half years.

**JANUARY 2012** – Volunteer selection begins. Roughly 25,000 Russians eventually will be recruited to aid with all aspects of the Games.

**SPRING 2012** – The IOC Coordination Commission comes to town again, this time for its seventh visit.

**JULY 27 TO AUG. 12** – Games-goers get a taste of winter at the London Summer Olympics. So-called Sochi World will include an interactive visitor experience and hospitality pavilion as well as a bespoke ice rink installed in front of the iconic Marble Arch.

**DECEMBER 2012** – Chief organizer Dmitry Chernyshenko pledges construction on all competition venues will be complete by the end of 2012 to ensure two full seasons of test events. ■



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XI Paralympic Winter Games of 2014 in Sochi



# Upcoming Youth Olympic Games – Challenges for Organizers, Visions for IOC

The Youth Olympic Games have a clear role within the Olympic Movement. That's the word according to Essar Gabriel, the IOC's head of the Youth Olympic Games.

Written by Edward Hula III



▲ Essar Gabriel at the Singapore Youth Olympic Games. (ATR)

Gabriel spoke with *Around the Rings* in May, just after a whirlwind tour of his next two host cities: Innsbruck and Nanjing.

With one YOG under its belt – and one more soon to take place – the IOC is more cognizant of what needs to be done this time around.

“We’re basically looking further at where does the Youth Olympic Games fit,” Gabriel told *ATR*.

“Yes, the YOG is an event of the highest level with a Culture and Education Program, but they have a dual nature. The idea is that they are a platform or, if you prefer, a catalyst, including all the stakeholders to encourage them to engage further the youth of the world.”

Through the years, Gabriel says, the IOC has had to change its focus on the YOG.

“We have tried to shift from a vision into a conceptual phase and reached out to have partners on board.

“Along that road what we’ve picked, what we’ve taken and what our stakeholders have told us is that certainly this is well-born. And our understanding is better, and it will continue beyond the two firsts.”

## Innsbruck 2012

The next Olympic Games will, in fact, take place in Innsbruck, not London.

The Austrian ski haven will host the first Winter Youth Olympic Games – what Gabriel calls “the second first” – from Jan. 13 to 22 of next year.

Don’t expect the Winter YOG to be a smaller version of the Olympics, Gabriel says.

Qualifications aren’t complete, but the number of athletes is pegged at a little more than 1,000. Between 70 and 80 countries – “like the Olympics but perhaps more” – will compete.

Gabriel recently returned from an inspection of Innsbruck impressed with the organization so far.

“The biggest part of the planning is finished,” he said, “and they are now in operations themselves.”

Evidence of that can be seen with Raiffeisen Bank, Innsbruck 2012’s first premium sponsor.

Communications and promotion of the YOG will also begin in earnest this September.

As for the event itself, “It will be as exciting as Singapore 2010, no doubt,” Gabriel said.

Seven disciplines will make their Olympic debut at Innsbruck: biathlon mixed relay, team figure skating, ice hockey skills challenge, luge team relay, ski halfpipe, snowboard slopestyle and women’s ski jumping.

## Future Improvements

Gabriel said the IOC compiled massive amounts of data from the Singapore YOG relating to all aspects of the Games. He, in turn, sat down with organizers from Singapore and Innsbruck as well as the umbrella sport federation groups at a strategic debriefing and determined everything is on track.

Nothing too major needs to be changed from Singapore going forward, he said.

“We are looking to optimize, not fix things.”

According to Gabriel, the balance is delicate between the Culture and Education Program and competition. At the Youth Olympic Village in Singapore, Olympians partook in activities to learn more about competing countries and to learn valuable life skills.

“We’re looking to optimize and ameliorate on a couple points, including continuing dialogue. On the Culture and Education Program side we got feedback from the coaches that they themselves would have liked to have had a CEP.”

Gabriel also said he hopes to continue the success of the YOG on the digital media front. More than 10 million clips of the Singapore YOG were downloaded or watched on YouTube. During the Games, the YOG’s YouTube channel was consistently one of the most popular in the world.

## Nanjing Next Summer Host

Nanjing hosts the next Summer YOG from August 14 to 26 of 2014.

While some have expressed concern about the YOG perhaps growing too large too quickly, Gabriel says the IOC is working to ensure that doesn’t happen.

The YOG are intended to be conducted on a smaller scale than the Olympics. Venues at the Nanjing Olympic Sports Center, the hub of the next summer YOG, dwarf many of Singapore’s larger arenas, which had trouble attracting full crowds.

Organizers of the upcoming Games, Gabriel says, are working for a balance to show “that small is beautiful”.

Gabriel stresses that the IOC is explicit with its wants for a YOG but that host cities may consider the legacy of the YOG and increase their own spending. That is acceptable, he said, as long as it is within reason.

“What then happens is that the organizing committee has the task and the responsibility but can also look at taking the legacy for themselves. Certainly on our requirements we are very documented with what we want. The rest is not what we are asking for.”

Both Singapore and Innsbruck have done this, Gabriel says, and have done so in a manner acceptable to the IOC.

Controversy erupted last year when the Singapore government announced hundreds of millions of dollars in additional YOG spending.

## Point of Pride

Gabriel – and the rest of the IOC team – harbor great pride in taking the YOG from dream to reality in just four years.

“It’s a great feeling,” he says.

“We’re as excited if not more” than when the Games were first introduced by IOC president Jacques Rogge. ■



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## Golf Readies Olympic Comeback

Golf is returning to the Olympic program for the first time since 1904. It's International Golf Federation executive director Antony Scanlon's job to keep the sport there.

Interview conducted by Matthew Grayson



IGF executive director Antony Scanlon updated the ANOC general assembly on Olympic golf preparations in Acapulco last October. (ATR)

**Around the Rings:** What must the IGF accomplish over the next five years in order to be ready for Rio 2016?

**Antony Scanlon:** Obviously, the first thing is to honor our commitments to the IOC, and one of those was to ensure that the top players will be participating. As you will recall during the bid, we had the support of all the top players – Tiger Woods, Annika Sorenstam, etcetera – and we still have that commitment from all the players, so we're confident that will happen.

**ATR:** Barring injury or a failure to qualify, which top players have so far expressed an interest in teeing off at Rio 2016?

**AS:** None of the athletes are going to be arrogant enough to assume that they're going to be there. What they hope to be is to be at the top of their game and able to compete at the Olympics.

Between now and Rio, you've got 20 opportunities to win a major, and there's only one opportunity to win an Olympic gold. I think that sort of scarcity of opportunity raises everyone's hopes and aspirations to compete at the Olympics.

**ATR:** Given the relative lack of popularity golf enjoys in South America as compared to North America, Europe or Japan, Rio probably isn't your first choice for a place to stage your return. How do you make the most of the opportunity given the host city at hand?

**AS:** You know what? I think it's a great choice, to be honest with you, because it's a great opportunity to grow the game. Currently in Rio, there are two 18-hole courses that are both private and a small 9-hole course which is public and has been very well used in a social program in terms of developing kids' golf and encouraging kids to turn up to school.

Hopefully, [Rio's] choice for the course will have a legacy component which will enable the course to have the opportunity to develop not only the grassroots but also the elite level. I think there's a great opportunity to develop the game.

**ATR:** What other challenges, organizationally and otherwise, must golf overcome to transition into an Olympic mainstay?

**AS:** [We must] provide an event which not only excites the players but also brings new people to the game. Especially in Brazil, you'll have people that have never gone to golf before seeing it live, so it's creating an experience for all those that will see the game for the first time at the Olympics since 1904 and providing the excitement and the enthusiasm that we want so people see that golf really does belong in the Olympic program and cements our position in the Olympic program. ■

## Rugby Thinks Big for Rio Return

Rugby and Rio de Janeiro don't usually go hand-in-hand. International Rugby Board chairman Bernard Lapasset wants to change that one *carioca* at a time.

Interview conducted by Matthew Grayson



IRB chairman Bernard Lapasset after rugby sevens was voted onto the Olympic program. (Getty Images)

**Around the Rings:** What sort of relationship does rugby enjoy with the organizing committee for 2016?

**Bernard Lapasset:** We work very closely with the Rio guys. Two delegates were in Wellington for the HSBC Sevens World Series in February to see exactly the way to organize this competition, and they were very impressed with the quality of the game.

Sevens is very, very great, and not just on the field. The atmosphere around the field and the enthusiasm of the fan is fantastic. We need a very strong organization in sevens, but at the same time, we need to put in place a strong organization for the fan. If we can mix the guys from Rio, the *cariocas* people, with the rugby fans, it will be a fantastic event in Rio.

**ATR:** Given the relative lack of popularity your sport enjoys in South America as

compared to Europe or Asia, Rio probably isn't your first choice for a place to play rugby's first Olympic tournament since 1924. How do you make the most of the opportunity given the host city at hand?

**BL:** We recently concluded a development program with the Brazil Rugby Union. It's very important that we grow the rugby game in Brazil. Now we have over 30,000 registered rugby players, and that number is

growing every day. Rugby now is a part of the sport culture, especially in the Sao Paulo region.

**ATR:** How hopeful are you that Maracana Stadium will be chosen as the Olympic rugby venue?

**BL:** [Rio] has a couple of stadia over 30,000. We are convinced a lot of fans will be traveling to Brazil, but we need to see exactly where we'll be seated. Another proposal to run this tournament is in Vasco da Gama stadium. That's a fantastic stadium, a very old stadium.

**ATR:** What can rugby do ahead of 2016 to ensure a successful return to the Games?

**BL:** That's crucial. We have organized a strategic program and decided with all unions how to manage rugby's growth around the world. To date, we have opened discussions with national Olympic committees around the world, and that's a very, very huge effort at the moment. For example, rugby is now being taught in schools in China, USA and Russia now that it is an Olympic sport. We are doing this in part through our \$78 million strategic investment program for the period 2009 through 2012. That's a huge financial investment that we have delivered in order to help the sport's developing nations and open the way for rugby sevens in new countries and new markets.

**ATR:** What will the qualification process look like for Rio?

**BL:** For the moment, the qualification process is in discussion with the IOC, and an announcement cannot be made before 2014. We want a system that has opportunities for all. We need to be sure that we run a large qualification process over a long period to ensure the possibility for all unions to participate. We will be ready in 2014, two years before, to be sure that we can manage the right process for the Olympics in 2016. ■





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## New Market, "New Blood" for Olympic Collectors Fair

Got any pins? The souvenirs of yesterday are the memorabilia of today, and thousands of items will be bought, sold, traded and treasured at the World Olympic Collectors Fair outside Chicago from August 3 to 7.

Written by Karen Rosen



The fair, now in its 17th edition, will be held for the first time in North America. Organizers expect 80 to 100 tables to be booked by Olympic collectors from more than 15 countries, including Russia, China and Australia.

"It's really the only place where you have everything together," says Markus Osterwalder, a collector from Switzerland. "Communication is much easier being there and holding something in your hands and getting a lot of information."

Next month's fair, hosted by the Olympin Collectors Club, will be held in conjunction with the National Sports Collectors Convention, which draws about 30,000 visitors annually.

The special "Olympic Pavilion" will be near the entrance of the show at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, Illinois. Organizers are hoping to attract new collectors to the hobby with this special setup.

"The people who come to these (general sports) shows are new blood and have the money to get into the good stuff," says Don Bigsby, president of Olympin, which has about 600 members worldwide.

Even diehard collectors say Olympic pin trading is more about the people you meet than the rarities you accumulate.



Photo by Markus Osterwalder

That includes winners' medals and torches costing thousands of dollars. Mascots, posters, participation medals, stamps, coins, programs, tickets, uniforms, game-used equipment and other items will also change hands.

The World Collectors Fair logo will be on a limited edition of 300 pins as well as on stamps.

IOC member Gerhard Heiberg, chairman of the Olympic philately, numismatic and memorabilia commission, has confirmed he will attend the fair.

The show will also have its own celebrity athlete. Dick Fosbury, the 1968 gold medalist in the high jump and president of the World Olympians Association, will sign autographs.

Other highlights include an auction and a dinner/reception where Olympic historian Bill Mallon will speak about the unusual aspects of the 1904 Olympics, which were moved from Chicago to St. Louis.

Osterwalder has attended all of the past fairs held in Europe and said he is interested to learn how the American market works, especially since most Olympic collectors live in the U.S.

Besides hoping to make new contacts and exchange knowledge, Osterwalder – like all true collectors – has an ultimate goal: "Find interesting stuff." ■

Torches, Winners Medals, Participation Medals, Posters, Diplomas... from 1896 to 2010

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# One Year to Euro 2012: Challenges Ahead for Poland and Ukraine

Poland and Ukraine face a race against time to finish venues and infrastructure ahead of the Euro 2012 football championships, UEFA's flagship competition. But officials from European football's governing body are taking a relaxed view of the situation.

Written by Mark Bisson, editor of World Football *INSIDER*

Two stadium projects in Ukraine are giving UEFA chiefs a headache. Kiev's 64,000-seat Olympic Stadium, billed as the showpiece venue of the tournament, and Lviv's 30,000-seat stadium were little more than construction sites when visited by *INSIDER* on a UEFA media tour of the country's four host cities in June.

UEFA officials tell *INSIDER* that Warsaw's 50,000-seat national stadium, venue for one of the semi-finals, is also two months behind schedule. Of the other three host venues in Poland, one is open and two are virtually finished. But additional concerns also arose in June over major delays in upgrades to the country's rundown transport infrastructure. Stamping out Polish hooliganism in time for Euro 2012 is another problem for UEFA and local organizers.

Euro 2012 is the biggest football and sporting event ever to be held in Eastern Europe.

For UEFA's Euro 2012 operations director Martin Kallen, it's the toughest assignment of the three previous European championships for which he has overseen preparations. But he is taking a relaxed view of the delay-hit building program in both nations, confident that they will deliver well ahead of time.

The Kiev venue is ambitiously scheduled to open by October.

Kallen admitted to *INSIDER* on the construction site of the downtown stadium that the cost of the stadium revamp has tripled, rocketing from initial estimates of \$150 million to \$500 million in just three years. About 2,000 workers are on-site working flat-out to finish the stadium to meet the revised deadline.

"I think it is challenging but I hope it is finished in October. There is still a lot of work to do. Every day is important but it is possible," he said.

Asked what would happen if there were any further slippage on the project – the stadium is scheduled to host a Ukraine v. Germany friendly on Nov. 11 – he said: "Then it is finished later and there is no match in November. But it would not be the end of the world."

### Infantino: "Our Doubts Have Been Wiped Out"

Eighteen months ago, UEFA president Michel Platini threatened to strip Ukraine of hosting rights due to the country's struggle to make progress on its venues. Preparations accelerated enough to convince Platini and colleagues to put their faith in Ukraine.

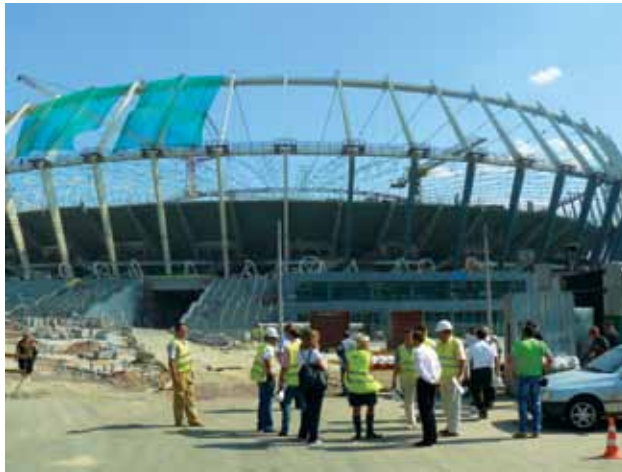
But in February a rebellion at the Football Federation of Ukraine, which sought to force out president Grigory Surkis, led to UEFA reinstating the threat to drop the country from tournament hosting.

Ukraine's president Viktor Yanukovych intervened to resolve the dispute.

UEFA general secretary Gianni Infantino put a brave face on Ukraine's problems at a year-to-go news conference in June. "The road has not always been easy to ride," Infantino conceded. "The project was a high risk back 18 months ago with some delays in development. But today with the commitment of the authorities and local organizing committee and FA our doubts have been wiped out."

Work on Lviv's stadium is also off pace, but Kallen again is not worrying about a few extra weeks being added to the building schedule. Kallen effectively admitted that the Nov. 15 date for a friendly international was in jeopardy. "It's not 100 percent impossible but we need to have no issues."

Ukraine's other host venues in Donetsk, the heart of Ukraine's coal mining region, and Kharkiv, the country's old capital, are already built. Shakhtar Donetsk, European Cup winners in 2009, have made the 51,500-capacity Donbass Arena their home since the summer of that year, and it's set to be one of the star turns at Euro 2012. Bankrolled by Shakhtar's billionaire owner Rinat Akhmetov, the club has cemented its reputation as an Eastern European powerhouse, while the glittering \$400 million venue would be the envy of any club in Western Europe.



It's hard to see how the renovation of Kiev's Olympic Stadium will be finished by its October deadline. (WFI)

### Pearl of Poland

Gdansk, Poznan, Warsaw and Wroclaw will welcome Euro 2012 fans next year. Last month, the UEFA media tour of Poland-Ukraine's host venues passed through the Polish capital and Wroclaw. Warsaw's \$729 million national stadium is the country's first retractable-roof venue. With a needle architectural motif at its center,

which will support giant video screens, it's a spectacular stadium and the jewel in the crown of the eight being used for Euro 2012.

The 58,000-capacity venue is designed to be multifunctional and will feature a modular pitch similar to Cardiff's Millennium Stadium that can be removed to host concerts and other non-football events.

Wroclaw's 42,700-seater is a much more somber design, resembling a "flat tire" on its side.

Transport infrastructure is Poland's biggest undertaking between now and the championships. Despite completion of road and railway schemes being off pace – made clear in a report from Poland's Supreme Audit Office (NIK) in June – UEFA is satisfied that those projects necessary for the tournament will be finished in time.

Kallen defended the co-hosts, admitting to *INSIDER* that some infrastructure projects would remain unfulfilled. "They are two countries which have never hosted such a big event. I am not worried," he said.

More than 12 million ticket requests were made for the tournament. "We are fully confident that Euro 2012 will be a success both in Poland and Ukraine," Infantino said. ■

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