

100 Years of the
International Gymnastics Federation
1881-1981



100 years of the International Gymnastics Federation, 1881-1981

(Essay on the development and the evolution of gymnastics within an international federation).

By

Andre Huguenin (Switzerland) Assistant of the FIG.

English Translation by
Beatrice M. Unger

Edited by
Frank L. Bare

Synopsis

1. Foreword by the secretary general of the FIG	1
2. Introduction	2
3. General history.	
Chapter 1: Gymnastics, games, athletic exercises, physical education, sports	9
Chapter 2: Prehistory, physical exercises and evolution	11
Chapter 3: The Antiquity	13
Chapter 4: The Middle Ages and the Renaissance	20
Chapter 5: The Age of Enlightenment and the Revolution	22
Chapter 6: Toward the Foundation	25
Chapter 7: The Foundation of the International Gymnastics Federation	31
Chapter 8: The Heroic Stage: 1896-1920	35
Chapter 9: The First Post-War Years. The International Gymnastics Federation. (1920-1939)	43
Chapter 10: A Tragic Interruption: 1939-1946	48
Chapter 11: The Post-war Years: a New World. (1946-1952)	50
Chapter 12: The Era of Strictly Sportive Gymnastics (1952-1964)	53
Chapter 13: The Leap Forward: The Modern Federation (1965-1976)	62
Chapter 14: Sport-spectacle and Mass-media. (1977)	70
Chapter 15: In Conclusion. Toward the Future.	73
4. The Official World Competitions of the FIG	
World Championships of Artistic Gymnastics	75
The Olympic Games and the FIG	94
Artistic Gymnastics for Women	102
Modern Rhythmic Gymnastics and Sportive Rhythmic Gymnastics	108
World Cup of Artistic Gymnastics	114
5. Statutes and Reglements	116

6. Evaluation, Competitions, and Technical Considerations	120
7. Congress of the FIG	124
8. Presidents and Secretaries of the FIG	125
9. Affiliation Dates of the Federations	136
10. Partial Bibliography and List of the Results of the FIG	137

FOREWORD

The International Gymnastics Federation celebrates its centennial in cheerfulness and confidence and I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to thank all the friends who have encouraged and supported me during my term as secretary-general of the FIG.

The FIG was established in 1881. No official event took place for its 25th anniversary, however, in 1931 the 50th anniversary was organized in a majestic way in Paris with a competition called, the World Championships. In 1956, Olympic year and end of the quadrennial, there is no record of a special event to celebrate the 75 years of the FIG.

In 1971, year of the 90th anniversary, a commemorative dinner was offered by the Spanish Federation. It was then decided to properly celebrate the centennial of the FIG which would occur in 1981.

Directives were given to me by the Executive Committee during the meeting in October, 1979.

Previously, the Executive Committee had asked the assistant of the FIG, Mr. Andre Huguenin (Switzerland) to write a historical account. I was pleased, knowing his qualifications as an author, gymnastic editor and his historical and technical competence in this matter. He worked for three years gathering important information.

The detailed work reflects a true image of our federation. Moreover, and thanks to extensive research, the historical account itself can double as an essay to be used as reference for studies and theses on gymnastics and gymnastics institutions. This publication will thus have a practical and functional purpose. We are very pleased.

Max Bangerter
Secretary-general of the FIG.

INTRODUCTION

Antwerp, Liege and Brussels, three Belgian cities, are in this order, “cribs” of the national Belgian and the international gymnastic movement.

We traveled to them in the hope of discovering—or rediscovering—certain traces and causes or deep explanation for the birth of our Federation in these sites rather than elsewhere. Of course, in a century things have changed and it would be useless, if not absurd, to try to find or reconstruct that which no longer exists.

However, the particular atmosphere and the deep calling of these cities can still be felt by the careful observer and history, ancient or recent, can help us even more. The “founding-father” of the FEG (European Gymnastics Federation, later the FIG) Nicolas J. Cuperus was a citizen of Antwerp, the gigantic port on the River Scheldt, the door to the world, commercial and industrial metropolis but also and especially the great city of the arts, the residence of the famous painter, Rubens.

No doubt such an environment open to the trends of the big, the dynamic and cosmopolitan but also by compensation the generous, artistic, even idealistic, could only influence the vocation of a comfortable bourgeois as Cuperus seemed to be. Antwerp was, and still is, a gigantic commercial traffic port, with commerce of all kinds, the fantastic fortunes of international business, and also the Flemish art in all its forms, generous, opulent, earthy, singing love for life and the humanities. Antwerp, the inhuman with the sirens of the port moaning in the fog, but Antwerp, the queen triumphant in her museums, libraries, parks, and stadiums. In our eyes, Pierre-Paul Rubens symbolized a harmonious beauty in the worship of the human body. But Rubens was also an “established” genius in the almost functional comfort of his marvelous little palace where it must have been easy to live and meditate and also be productive in the best conditions. Cuperus worked and wrote in Antwerp where, we imagine, the best means of printing and distribution were available. (His written work as a technician and advertiser was, we will see later, enormous). For generations, if not centuries, the Plantin-Moretus* and their descendants had acquired an international reputation for the publication of religious, laic, didactic, and literature work.

Balance in the art of living must have been a major rule in Antwerp: Cuperus rested and meditated in the Moorland of Kalmhout, close to the Dutch border. His property was called “Heirust,” which meant peace of the moorland in the *Printers.

house of the dunes. There he invited his friends and shared his ideal of physical and friendly activities without competition. It is there that at the beginning of the century, he invited Charles Cazalet, president of the French Federation who wanted to promote international competitions. Cuperus the idealist seemed to have defended his point of view eagerly, but as a man from Antwerp, pragmatic and open to the realities of the world, he yielded to the ideas of the initiator of our international competitions.

Cuperus Street, in Antwerp, is not a major avenue. But the Cuperus monument reflecting the tastes of the era (1928) could not be better located. What an enchantment to enter on an autumn day the oasis of greenery of Nachtergalenpark, almost at the center of the city. Under the foliage of century old oaks, statue of Cuperus observes the walkers in the alleys, the birds in the trees, the running joggers, and also the athletes from the adjoining stadium. His rustic domain is close to Middelheim where are exposed, always in open air, the works of the illustrious Maillol, Bourdelle, and even Rodin's powerful Balzac. Could Cuperus the Thinker, the Creator wish for a more prestigious neighborhood? The city of Antwerp, grateful, had his merits engraved on his monument.



Nicolas J. Cuperus
President & Founder of the F.I.G.



Monument of Cuperus





University of Liege

If the “great plan” was thought of and detailed in Antwerp, its realization took place in Liege. The Belgian and the International Federations were born in the Walloon industrial city. It was always during national competitions with guests that ideas from strong personalities were realized because these men could meet in favorable conditions. One could thus think that chance allowed Liege to become the founding-city of the FEG (European Gymnastics Federation). In light of the fact, Liege did not—and still does not—have the international radiance of Antwerp or Brussels. Liege did not know the effervescence of ideas and the creative spirit of Antwerp. Liege is the heavy industry, the tentacular factories as were the coal mines of the last century. (So real that one was reconstructed in the Museum of Walloon Life.) Liege is alive with industrial activities, the bustle is great in this city of long bridges and large suburbs: Pont du Commerce, Pont des Arches, the famous overpasses, the diversion of the River Meuse made to the River Ourthe to slow its flow, the quay of Maestricht with its beautiful 18th century houses and hotels; the heart of the city swarms with a hard working population which had to feel the need for relaxation and

"recreation." The beautiful Museum of Walloon Life proves the importance of folklore, festivals, and games in the last century. It would be difficult to try to find traces of these feelings outside the museum, in the modern city.

However, one aspect of the city of Liege pleased us: the importance given to the University. Although new buildings have been erected "outside the walls," the university remains in the heart of the city, in the historical center where the second meeting of the FEG was held, 15 years after its creation in 1896, date of the real start of the activities. We like the fact that the outline for an international federation—later multi-racial—was made in a center of education for youths of all races.

Finally—and end of the Belgian trip—one has to recall the prestigious setting of the Grand-Place in Brussels. The "master building" of this incomparable baroque and gothic architecture is City Hall with its shooting steeple of pure gothic style. It is here that in 1897 the third international meeting (or congress), during which the constitution was approved and the first board was



Hotel de Ville-Brussels

named, was held. Considerable time passed during which only the basic idea was maintained. One could not have chosen a better setting for the start of an international federation.

But more than a return to geographical sources, to talk of gymnastics and of the International Federation demands a return to historical sources, to a vast documentation, to archives and to the precious testimonies of gymnastic friends who, before us, devoted themselves to this task. It would have been useless to reject the past under the pretext of compiling everything in a new document and to introduce events and people in a fashionable sociological perspective. At this point, we cannot acknowledge all the sources and testimonies. We do it throughout the book and the most important ones are mentioned in a list at the end.

However, we have to pay a special tribute to the late Dr. Miroslav Klinger from Prague, honorary member of the FIG, former member of the CTM (Men's Technical Committee) who described the first 40 years of the federation. This great Czech voice provides valuable evidence. His interpretation allows us to make comparisons with contemporary editors. It is to our advantage that we often refer to Dr. Klinger.

We cannot forget the multiple testimonies of the late Pierre Hentges, Senior, and Charles Thoeni. These artists informed, interested, and even charmed us with their numerous brochures, essays, and articles spanning decades. Finally, we have to mention our friends Arthur Gander and Max Bangerter who, in spite of their administrative and technical commitments, were always interested in the past, the evolution and the future of the FIG. Everything involving the Federation mattered to Arthur Gander whom we consider as the best informed. Max Bangerter, punctual editor of the FIG Bulletin since the 60's, is an inexhaustible source of precise information.

On the women's side, we acknowledge the contributions of Mrs. Valerie Nagy of Budapest, honorary member of the FIG, former president of the CTF (Women's Technical Committee) and "active," intelligent witness of the beginning of competitions in the 30's. We cannot forget Mrs. Berthe Villancher from Bourg, France, honorary member and former president of the CTF whose analysis and commentaries written in a magnificent style, grace many Bulletins. Finally, Mrs. Andreina Gotta from Rome, president of the CT/GRS (Technical Committee/Sportive Rhythmic Gymnastics) who also provided valuable information.

The federations most concerned—in particular Belgium and Luxembourg—sent information. We thank them and mention them in the text. Unfortunately, other federations did not answer our request for information or were not able to gather documents perhaps lost forever. The younger federations who made the effort to send information which did not figure in this work will understand that the history of the FIG—on a small scale—could not include the history of all the affiliated federations.

We gathered material from numerous and varied sources, from various countries and federations, from people and gymnasts committed to different concepts and mentalities. What we state is verifiable in the official documents of the FIG or in the printed works mentioned in the bibliography at the end of this essay.

This unpretentious historical account: "The 100 years of the International Gymnastics Federation, 1881-1981 (Essay on the development and the evolution of gymnastics within an international federation)" was written with the goal to better understand and situate the steps and actions of the people who first cleared the way and then consolidated and developed an activity with an ideal capable to unite them in their love for sports and gymnastics in spite of differences thought as being insuperable.

The author is a citizen of a small country located at the heart of Europe and—shall we say—at the heart of the question: Switzerland, seat of the permanent secretariat, the administration and the archives of the FIG, a country with old gymnastic traditions and a recognized political neutrality. However—and we state it loudly—we love gymnastics, the gymnasts and the International Gymnastics Federation.

It is exclusively with these friendly feelings that we wrote these lines.

Andre Huguenin.

GENERAL HISTORY

Chapter 1.

Gymnastics, games, athletic exercises, physical education and sports. A few definitions and an attempt to classify the terms.

Gymnastics, our concern and our great pride. When did it appear? Can we at the time of the centennial of the oldest sportive international Federation go back through the centuries and lay claim on an activity which seems lost in ancient, if not prehistoric times? Can we, who have become experts, boast to be the direct heirs of the first men performing physical exercises? And finally, do we have the right to choose the wording of a title in this order and give it a chronological value?

We talked to experts in etymology who gave us some definitions which seem to justify our audacity in taking these steps.

The word "gymnastics", "gymnasium", "agonist", "athletic", or "gymnic", "palaestra", and so on are known by the Greeks of the highest Antiquity. The word gymnastics is derived from *Gymnos* (naked) because to be able to perform the exercises, one undressed and only kept a short tunic. (The gymnete, from *gymnes* was the lightly armed soldier.).

The gymnasium, in Greek *gymnasion* was the public school or place for physical exercises. The term is derived from *gymnazo*, to perform gymnic games. The expression *gymnazein to soma tois ponos* found in Isocrate means "to train the body by work". *Gymnazo* or *gymnazo* thus literally means to train in the gymnasium (Plato). By analogy, the expression can also mean exercises in general to shape the spirit by the practice of virtues. It is certainly with this meaning that *Gymnasion* became in Germany and Switzerland the term used to describe establishments of higher education. The word *Lycee*, used in France is perhaps more appropriate.

The word athlete from the Greek *athleo* (to fight) exclusively meant the fighters in public games who competed for the awards given to the winner of physical exercises. At the beginning, even the most noble families competed for these awards. But later, the lure of the prizes gave birth to a class of people who became professional athletes. A distinction was then made between athletes and agonists. The latter were common citizens who trained in gymnastics to increase their physical strength so as to improve their fighting skills. The word athlete exclusively meant individuals competing for awards in the five competitions: racing, wrestling, the pugilism, the pentathlon, and the pancrace. The location where the athletes trained was the *palaestra* and the exercises were directed by a *gymnasiarc*. (From this the similarity between gymnastics and athletics.).

In a wider sense, the word *palaestra*: place where one trains, particularly a school (used with this meaning by Xenophon and Plutarc) comes from the Greek *palaistra*, from *palaio*, literally and figuratively: to fight. Let us mention that the root of this word, *palaia*, alludes to the ancient, the old. One recognizes here the idea of the old man fighting to keep in shape; later the word changed recalling the exercise itself. (The Italian word *Palestra* is translated as *gymnasium*.).

Thus, first there was *gymnastics* meaning the art of making man stronger, more agile, more skillful and at the same time more intelligent by submitting him from childhood on, to a long, progressive series of exercises. If some considered gymnastics only in the frame of war (Sparta), others added to this goal a higher ideal. Besides physical strength, they decided to develop not only physical beauty but also the intellectual power and grace. Finally, the doctors of Antiquity often used gymnastics as a cure for illness.

Then came the *games* meaning ball games. (Bas-relief in the National Museum of Athens, 510 B.C.) or the ball games (*pelota*) played by the pre-Columbian civilizations of Mexico and at the same times, the *athletic exercises* in the stadium appeared.

Finally, in modern time, *physical education* was rediscovered and in contemporary times came *sports*. (Sports: old French word taken from the English language.)

With these definitions, we hope to be better understood.

Chapter 2.

Prehistory, physical exercises, and evolution.

When and in which circumstances were physical exercises—in fact gymnastics—born? Surely, and as Dr. Klinger (Czechoslovakia) emphasizes it in his masterful essay on the history of the FIG, they were born from the physical activities of the hunter (and we would add, the soldier).

Professor Louis Burgener, Swiss expert of the history of physical education wonders if it is possible to find traces of physical exercises and education in prehistory.

We quote: "As soon as they become more intricate, arms and tools require a more or less conscious training. The use of a bow, a javelin, and even a club in life is deciding circumstances cannot be conceived without previous training by the adults and the adolescents. As soon as they pass a certain manly initiation rite, they can begin training, often under the supervision of elders. These group exercises, especially in the presence of spectators, young girls and women, create a competitive atmosphere which, as simple as it may be stimulates the participants. These competitions or games are not improvised, soon they require an organization, judges, awards, and a tradition. In short, one can see that intricate arms and tools, activities such as horse riding and swimming require training, "preparatory exercises", competitions and games whose social prestige is ever increasing.

But we believe that the need for pure and simple relaxation, for "recreation" in its true meaning appeared at the same time or immediately after these limitations imposed by social roles. Games are the most significant form of recreation. In all types of games, one finds a common characteristic: games present something useless and free. Their *performance* causes a pleasing stimulation. Even though this need to play is more apparent in complex societies than in elementary ones, we are convinced it appeared early in prehistory.

Some social functions of games and physical activities can already be outlined. Very early certainly, societies were shaped on game sites and stadiums either on opposite sides or by cooperation. From this we have our gatherings of gymnasts performing similar exercises, gatherings which certain leaders exploit to develop a community feeling.*

The step from a collective event to a pure spectacle is a sign of the evolution towards specialization which concerns us especially and which we recognize as essential in our modern society.

Before we deal with the actual history of the FIG, we will attempt to concisely describe the evolution of physical activities throughout history, we will then deal with the leisure society of the future.

*Note: A few testimonies from the Encyclopedie de la Pleiade. "Games and Sports".

Myths and Games came from various *animisms* (spirits in natural forces). (Charles Beart)

All religions had *ceremonies* with spectacle and games. (id)

Sports and theater came from the desacrilization of these ceremonies. (id)

But games are not the *residu* of former "serious" activities. It is presented as a *similar*, independent activity opposed to the movements and decisions of everyday life. (Roger Caillois)

Ludus—joy and training, cultural fecundity (self-discipline etc.) (id)

A *civilization* who loses the spirit of games declines. (George Gusdorf)

Chapter 3.

The Antiquity.

Here, we truly enter the enchanted era—perhaps never equaled—of physical activities and all their aspects. The documents are numerous. The ruins, the monuments, the art work inform us in such a way that we can truly agree with Dr. Burgener when he writes: "Exercises and physical games, hygiene and education acquired an importance which they will not recover until centuries have passed".

The Greek Spirit and Games.

We apologize, but we feel we should extrapolate, all the other historical periods being less significant to our evolution. We believe that by doing this we do not miss the point of this essay.

The professor and hellenist, Andre Bonnard (University of Lausanne) provides some striking short-cuts on the Greek people, religion, gods, art, literature, and philosophy. New meanings and dimensions of physical activities appear. Let us summarize:

"No Greek miracle" but a circumstantial explanation of certain elements (Climate, earth, sea, etc.). The Greeks pursue the *progress* of humanity. Starting point and subject: *Man*. (the world and humanity in *harmony*.) At the beginning, there is man's *weakness*, maleficent *powers* the antagonistic *Other*.

The peasants' gods are: Demeter, Dionysos, Artemis.

Nature is roaring Zeus.

The gods of the sea are: the Cyclops (volcanoes), but also Charybde and Scylla or Poseidon, all with terrible furies.

Then the "enchanted" is defeated, the gods become more human. Zeus becomes familiar and Apollo appears. And it is the great epic of the happy gods, festivals and games. These gods, first amoral, become more just, more human because man had defeated the "obstacles" (all meanings.)

In spite of the small amount of originals, Greek sculpture was eloquent. The sculptor took young men (couros) from gymnasiums and molded gods in the shapes of athletes. One can see *the gift of man to the god: beautiful bodies*. The moving sculpture was created. For instance, Miron's discobole (450 B.C.) has all the gestures of the action.

In Sparta, Castor and Pollux were god-athletes. They chose the heroic life.

Pindare, the poet of the aristocrats, sang the sportive victories and the freedom and dignity that man acquired by possessing his own body. He emphasized sportive values by a strong will and relentless moral and physical asceticism. But in a moment of lucidity, he wrote: "without the poet's songs, all vertu dies in silence." With his odes to the winners, Pindare was perhaps the

forerunner of sportive propaganda.

And finally, *Plato*, the first philosopher, placed gymnastics and music among the aristocratic disciplines. Moral nobility was reached through the arts and sports.

Concrete testimonies.

One has to go back a long way in time to find truly extraordinary documents. "Apparatus gymnastics, a discipline as old as the world." said a great traveler and editor in Geneva, our late friend, John Chevalier.

The discoveries to be made at the archeological Museum of Heraklion (Crete) are enormous. There we discovered the truest origins of the first gymnastic and acrobatic exercises.

Nicolas Plato, the Greek erudite was emphatic, the women were beautiful with many jewels, the men educated and elegant, although no taller than 5 feet. *Physical exercises helped acquire muscular strength.* Hygiene was important: bathroom (Tylissos), massages, ointments, etc. For the spiritual: "lustral baths" for purification.

Without any recognized gymnasiums, more than a thousand years before the Olympic Games, (2700 to 1400 B.C.) the great King Minos and his peers had already given a nobility seal to physical exercises.

All public feasts (with religious connotations) included tauromachian games heightened—and it is their true character—by athletic and acrobatic demonstrations.

Religion honored the celestial, earthly and chthonian (caves, etc.) powers, and also symbols: birds (sky), wild animals (earth), snake, beetles (underground life), the double-hatchet, the wishing-horns, the disk, the solar wheel, the crescent, and so on. The bull was the symbol of primordial power. (the male).

Games with bulls were organized to honor the mother-goddess, the root of all life and fecundity. Women played an important role in public life. They participated in dangerous athletic demonstrations and in hunting expeditions (they are pictured on the large Cnossos frescos, recognizable in white.)

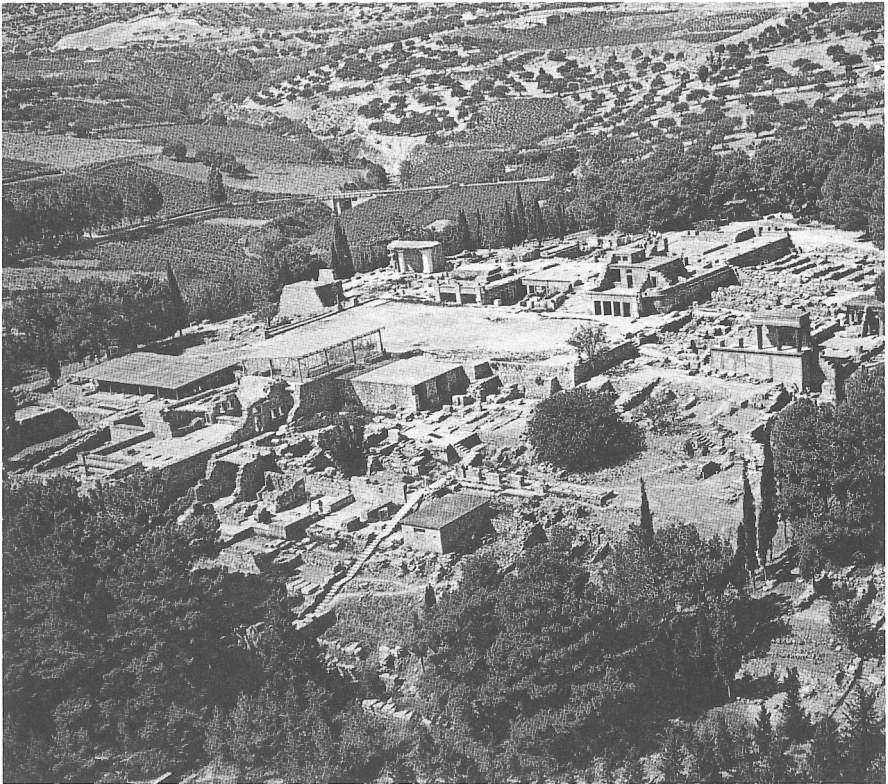
The first rear somersault in history.

The famous "Ivory acrobat" (originally a grouping of gold and ivory) was perched on a bull's horns. The guide said: "the only thing left is the body of a young athlete shown at the instant when with a backward and upward kick of the feet he is ready to perform the jump". The great ability with which the artist seizes the unique instant when all the limbs of the body are uncoiling proves his perfect knowledge of the movement.

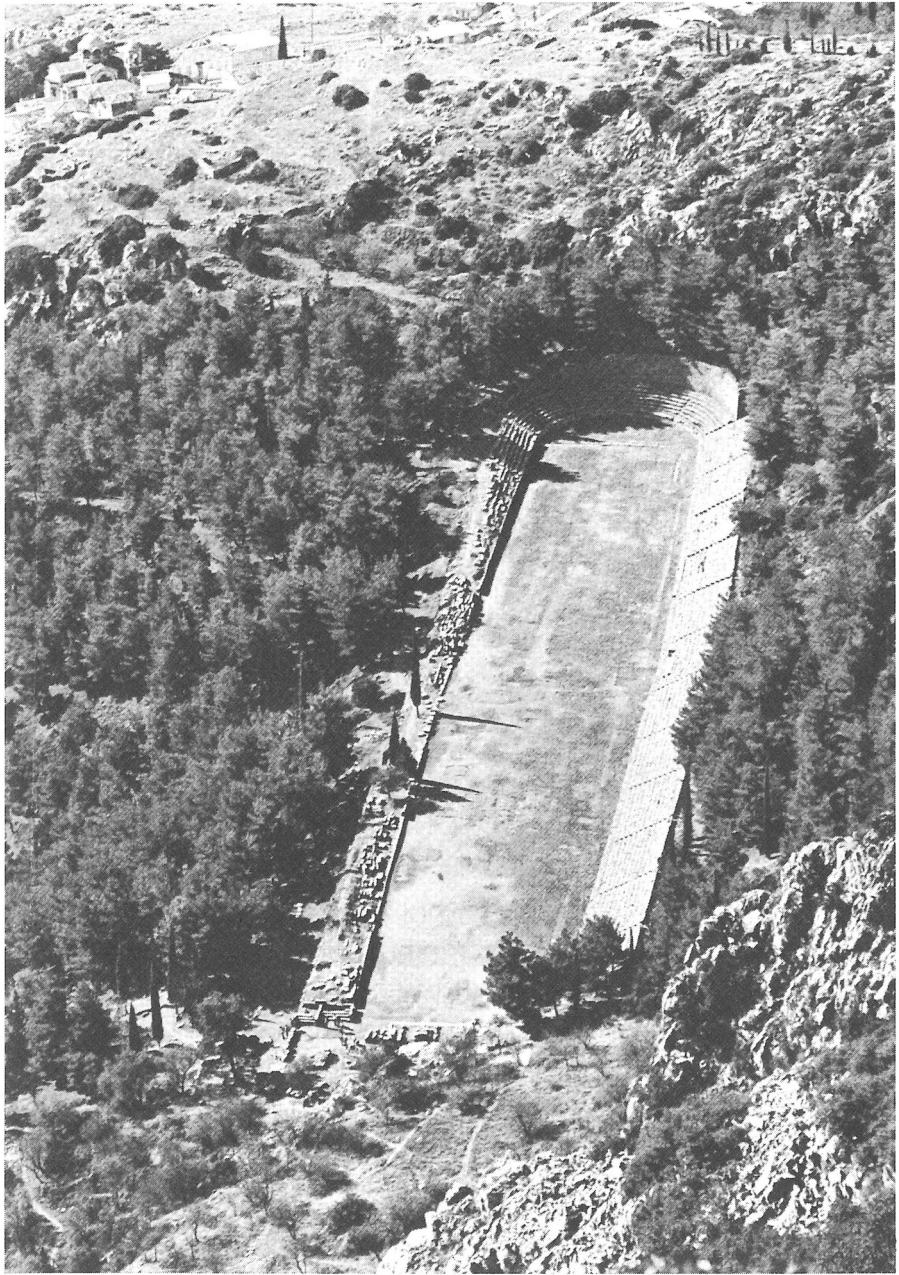
The first picture of acrobats.

These frescos are just as famous. "The vault above the bull where the terrible strength of the beast and the supple agility of the gymnast-acrobat blend extraordinarily in a remarkable composition. The bull dashed forward and the acrobat jumps above the horns on its back and then on the ground." The forward salto was perfectly executed some sixteen centuries before

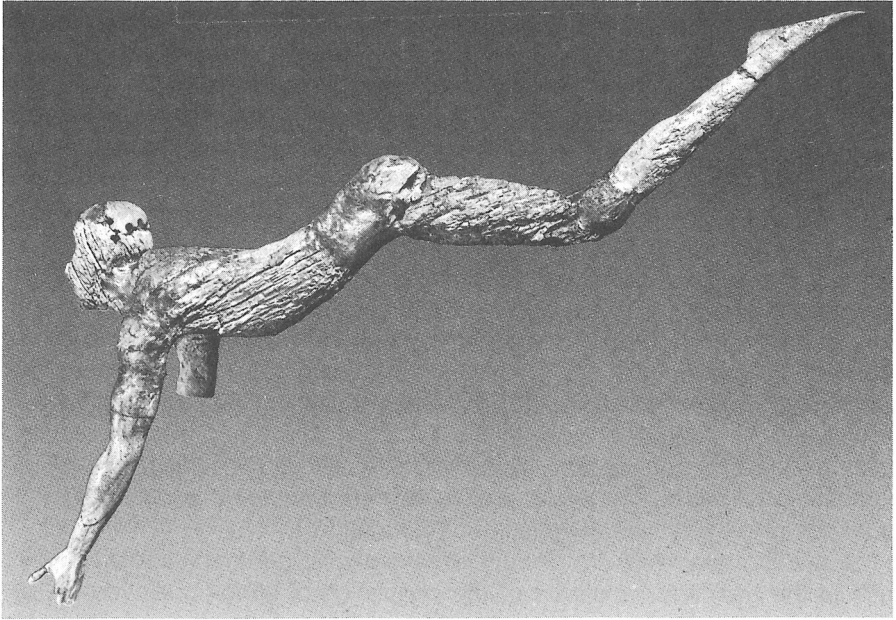
Christ. (The risks are great, some vases show acrobats coiled around the horns, seemingly injured.)



Aerial view of the Palace of Knossos. The complexity of its luxurious architecture is characteristic of the “neo-palatial” period during which the palace was constructed.



Stadium of Delphi



Acrobat in Ivory



Toreador Fresco

Possible explanation?

Pure acrobatic demonstration or cult? Like everything concerning Minos, the answer is hypothetical. On one side, there is the acrobat offering himself—in a possibly bloodless sacrifice—to the divinity, the same way other faithfuls would offer their oil vases and the seeds of future harvest; on the other side, some unexpected and perplexing documents lead us to believe that perhaps the gymnast and the acrobat had a specific role to play.

Another example: the royal sword from the Millia palace belonging to the king's acrobat: during feasts and banquets, this individual would execute dangerous vaults above the top of the vertical sword. In modern terminology, we would say backward walk-over. (The acrobat is also shown in an arched position on the gold pommel of the sword, position which reminds us of Olga Korbut on the beam.)

This discovery contradicts the generally accepted interpretation of an exclusively cultural act. Thus in Minos' time, gymnasts and acrobats could have had a purely lay vocation. This civilization whose refinement moved us more than anything else past or future—even the monumental and the tragic—could not ignore physical exercises and education.

The athletic games of the ancient Greeks awoke general interest but the feats of the gymnasts-acrobats of the civilization of Minos are even more significant of the history of our sportive specialty.

It is interesting to discover that the origins of the horse-vault and modern floor exercises are to be found in the magnificent and mysterious civilization of Minos in Crete.

Movement cult and classic testimonies.

Later, the continental Greece, all people participated in the cult of the movement. This can be observed on many statues of the era.

For instance the marvelous "laconic runner" (Vatican Museum), slender, light, the right breast unveiled and seeming to soar on the runway. (470 B.C.)

At the same time, movement also symbolized the passage from life to death. We are thinking of the famous diver at the grave of Posidonia (Paestrum). This example of Greek painting seems to give one of the most daring signification to the physical activity myth.

Another famous masterpiece has to be mentioned, The Aurige of Delphes, the coachman surviving to commemorate the victory at the Pythic games. The abundance of a heroic strength and the need of action is more apparent than the thrill of victory.

The young athlete crowning himself, from a stele of Sounion dating of the same period moved us too. Art, plastic, and physical beauty even in its archaic expression.*

Several sportive scenes (wrestling, pancrace, pugilat) are visible on the beautiful Attic ceramics of the 6th century B.C. They present athletes making libations (connected spiritual exercises). They are the forerunners of the athletic statuettes of the classic era at the Louvre.

Finally, in Athens, we dreamed in front of the amphoras which were filled with oil for the winners. They present flowing red graphics on a black background (wrestling and pancrace) worthy of the most modern drawings. Still in Athens, the Odeon theater on the Agora which was transformed into a gymnasium: curious evolution.

The Panathenaic games preceded the circus games. At the Museum of the Acropolis, we observed a relief presenting a chariot race during which the drivers jumped off: sensation, sportive decadence, always present.

The stadium will become a *Roman arena*. Thermal baths and amphitheaters will be more appealing to the Romans than gymnasiums. We will not say more.

We will come back to the gymnastic and athletic Antiquity when we talk of the Olympic Games.

The Greco-Latin or Egyptian or even Oriental antiquity cannot claim exclusive originality in this matter. For instance, we know that the pre-Columbian Indians of Mexico played a certain *ball game* (pelota), ancestor of soccer, which had a religious meaning more tragic than the Greek manifestations. The competition took the shape of a fatal draw: the leader of the defeated team sacrificed himself because defeat meant condemnation of the gods. Thus as in Cnossos, ritual or cultural exercises. Also found in the Mayan civilization of Chichen Itza: steam baths, meaning purification rites. (as in Delphes.)

These extraordinary cultural phenomena, apparently lost in time and space, prove how much man—called primitive—fully lived his condition of physical and psychic being in a balanced harmony which will disappear with man's first victories against nature and the "obstacles". And unfortunately, the spiritual supremacy of Christianity will contribute to the regression of movement and body.

The great lesson of the Antiquity: divine power was never considered isolated from movement.

*Note: Let us not forget the Pythie from Delphes recommended a simple crown as an award. (Bernard Gillet-The Pleiade) For instance, the custom of giving a laurel crown to the best gymnasts is still known in Switzerland.

Chapter 4.

The Middle Ages and the Renaissance

Regression and Safeguard.

Dr. Klinger was very hard towards the Church which would have “erected its flag on the ruins of the Antiquity”, causing the decline of physical exercises since the body was considered as housing Satan. For the humble people, the motto was simple: “Oro et Labora”. (Pray and work).

This pre-emptory judgment must be shaded. It is a fact that physical activities are submitted to the “long night of the Middle Ages” and the lower class is reduced to participate in country festivals and regional fairs where some games are played: the “crosse” (hitting a ball with a stick), the “soule” (similar to soccer), and tennis. According to Professor Burgener, it is impossible to find physical exercises and sports in the Middle Ages. However, the nobility was intensely engaged in physical activities with tournaments, jousting games and duels of all sorts. Everyday, one trained with arms. The medieval society is rough and violent. Even the peasant used his club and in the evening, the bourgeois is armed.*

But what about the Church? During the Barbarian invasions, she partly saved the Roman civilization (the Antiquity). Even partial, this civilization will inspire Bishops of the Church who will “create a new civilization of which the great convents will become the prestigious centers.” (Dr. Burgener.) Without a doubt, besides the convents and the churches, *monasteries* contain rich libraries in which copiers, writers, thinkers, theologians and philosophers, men of science and erudites who safeguard the ancient heritage. (Pindare and his odes included.) They reconsider the “wisdom of nations” in the light of their human faith. Of course, certain Fathers disapproved even of hygiene but other Fathers of the Church accepted the necessity of physical exercises for health reasons indispensable to Christian life. (Exercises, lacking rational training in the convent schools.)

We believe that the lack of physical activity in the Middle Ages is due to a cultural phenomenon more than to an exaggerated influence of the Church.

Note: Jean Queval is emphatic (Encyc. de la Pleiade): “Between the Greeks and the 19th century English (Victorians), there is no sport.”

The promises of the Renaissance.

Dr. Klinger notes that humanities were born in Europe after the fall of Bizance (Istanbul) (1453). But he observes immediately that this humanism fell into a sterile scholastic conventionalism and it's only conquest was to prepare favorable grounds for cultural and religious reforms.

The practice of physical exercises, "claimed" by the humanists of the era, is not a matter of fact. For which reasons? Wars, Reformation, CounterReformation, religious questions? Simpler in our eyes, the problem reflects the antagonism of the social classes. It can be stated that until the 19th century, only the nobility and the high bourgeoisie practiced regular physical exercises. The French *Rabelais* (1494-1553) who advocated the noble arts be reached by, perhaps training and "initiation games"-for instance, trapeze-and which must result in a complete education still submitted to academic to knowledge. Also *Moutaigne* (1533-1592) for whom physical exercises complete (and replace a little) medicine, but they are limited to the likings of the nobility. (racing, wrestling, but also dancing, hunting, horse-riding and the arms.)

And still, in the 17th century, schools, "only those accepting children from the nobility or high bourgeoisie, taught physical education useful to social and military life". (Dr. Burgener). Exercises are for leisure, hygiene and *gentee/ classes*. It is a question of education and prestige."

But what of the people? In Switzerland as in other countries, even the Catholic and the Reformed Churches were concerned about public morals, they encouraged diversions and physical exercises but fought abuses. (Desecration of Sundays, idleness, drunkenness and betting.) Exercises are, among others: racing, jumping, rock throwing, fencing, wrestling and even swimming.

***Note:** Games are luxury activities involving leisure. Who is hungry does not play. (Roger Caillois, *Encyc. de la Pleiade*.)

Chapter 5.

The Age of Enlightenment and the Revolution.

So many capital letters, famous men and immortal works. Unfortunately, we are convinced that the great theoretical works of those writers, thinkers, pedagogues or philosophers only guided a very limited elite. Who at the time had read Rabelais, Montaigne, Voltaire and Rousseau? Exclusively nobles and bourgeois, "enlightened" in the sense of the 18th century.

The people (perhaps in spite of themselves) fought interminable wars in Italy and elsewhere, and the essential ideas of the Renaissance involving the way of life and the most materialistic details of their civilization reached them first of all through personal contacts. Dr. Klinger was then right when he wrote that the 17th and 18th centuries created the preliminary conditions for physical exercises. We are tempted to say "re-created" by a return to ancient sources. One can say that the future "educators" listened to the "enlightened" voices and the potential pupils were better motivated.

The Great Voices.

Who are these voices? Let us omit Voltaire in spite of: "the body is the temple of the spirit" and so on. Great formulas are insufficient: generous, but too vague.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) is a typical example of this 18th century with its great utopia, its soaring of the heart, its desires to recreate life, possible contradictions, but at the same time a healthy return to nature by reacting against pure reason.

The 18th century and Rousseau were eager for mind speculations and they rethought all problems by letting the forefathers' heritage develop.

The 18th century was also technical development and the time of erudites wanting to know and explain everything. It was also the golden age for critical minds questioning everything: Men, beliefs, institutions. It was also the era for the broadcasting of the mind's conquests: The Enlightenment.

But-often forgotten-behind this radiant facade, there is a working and often miserable population. This social class longing for changes will only come very late to the ideas of the Revolution and physical exercises. (Rousseau among others, introduced these in his literature).

The French Revolution would be "bourgeoise" and so would be the first gymnastic movements.

But more precisely, what do we owe Rousseau?

Rousseau and Pestalozzi: Two great complementary initiators.

Our essay leads us to the conviction that the works, the ideas, and the brightness of these two men are complementary. The citizen of Geneva (which was not in Switzerland at the time) and the Germanic Swiss defined and

practically opened all the doors for the authors of methods, technicians and practitioners who will soon appear throughout Europe.

One can be trite about Rousseau and recall known concepts: physical education which prepares and completes intellectual and moral education, return to nature, hygiene as preventive medicine, gymnastics: "the most important part of education" etc.

One can also-as we have done-take the work itself and discover aspects touching more directly and in a troubling manner, our particular problems.

In his "Lettre a Monsieur d'Alembert" J.J. Rousseau situated the era and the morals to be changed. He rose against spectacles, weakness, the exaggerated cult of woman but glorified manly strength. He was for Sparta and against Athens. He wrote: "Our academic exercises are child's play compared to ancient gymnastics...". He advocated gatherings and festivals in open air. "...that all see and like himself in others so that they will be more united." Some concepts concerning us appear clear and bright:

-Competition:

like the games of ancient Greece, let us create "spectacles, public awards...". Based on the example of military prizes, why would we not create other awards for gymnastics, wrestling, racing, disc throwing, and various physical exercises?" Or, even better, in "Considerations sur le gouvernement de Pologne", Rousseau notes the exemplary value of competitions. The youth will play "together and in public" because they need to be "accustomed early to rules, equality, friendship, competitions, the eyes of their peers and to the desire for public approval."

-The spectacle sports:

We read on the same page of "Considerations..." : "...to make these games attractive to the public by organizing them with apparatus and in such a way that they become a spectacle. It is then to be presumed that all honest people and all good citizens will make it their duty and pleasure to assist."

But of course, J.J. Rousseau could not predict the new problems created by competitions.

-Education, total value:

In "Emile ou de l'Education" in book II we read: "All who have reflected on the way of life of the elders, credit gymnastic exercises with the strength of body and soul which distinguished them most noticeably from the moderns."

-The education of the senses:

Rousseau, very modern, advocates the exercises of the senses, "conscious" and thorough gymnastics. Does he not already foretell the actual psycho-somatic tendencies of a more deliberate physical activity? "To train the senses, is not only to use them, it is to learn how to feel: for we only know how to touch, see and listen as we have been taught."

-Formation of countenance, posture:

What modern tendencies in this avantgarde "posture" gymnastics which he advocated when he wrote (even though there is no coherent theory or manual on this subject): "...that he (Emile) learn to take all the steps which help the evolution of the body, to maintain, in all situations, a comfortable and strong posture...that he always find his balance;...that all his movements and gestures be organized...He has to feel good or bad in the way he steps down and the way his leg supports his body."

-Early education:

The great writer truly surprises us here. In "Emile..." he notes that usage creates the organ, that the child has arms and hands but no dexterity in his hands and neither does an untrained man. Children can excell in all areas. What caution in certain tendencies that we would try to fight when we read; "Only experience can teach us to take advantage of ourselves, and this experience is the true study that we must put into practice." What is being advocated is feasible. And it is common to observe skillful children with the same dexterity than a man. They can be seen in almost all fairs, tumbling, jumping, and dancing on ropes.

From doctrine to practice: Pestalozzi.

Jean-Henri Pestalozzi (1746-1827) is the first educator to practice, in his Institute, Rousseau's postulates. Truly and as Dr. Klinger (Cz.) wrote, he was the first author of a systematic method of physical education. *Pestalozzi conceived elementary gymnastics and articular exercises.* He foresaw the latter in function of an immediate application in nature, everyday life or professional life. But Pestalozzi, eager, generous if not quite utopic, will be soon misunderstood, even betrayed by his closest associates and his teachings and methods will be argued and disputed. It is not known exactly what is due to him. But in any case, Pestalozzi established the principles of elementary gymnastics and his influence will be felt for a long time in numerous schools of various countries. (Erudites of the whole world still come to meditate on his grave.)

But the bell had tolled for the great "masters of gymnastics" who call themselves disciples of Pestalozzi.

At the national level, the French Revolution attempted to realize what educators as Pestalozzi suggested. We only have reports, projects or plans brilliantly presented by the likes of Talleyrand, Condorcet, or Robespierre.

The empire of Napoleon I will only maintain military exercises.

Chapter 6.

Towards the Foundation

The great “masters of gymnastics”.

At this time of the evolution, Dr. Burgener-already mentioned several times-asks a capital question: “Why did the masters of gymnastics then increase the amount of “articular” and “compulsory exercises?” For instance, he notes that these overabundant articular exercises turned pupils into puppets. Various limitations imposed on these pioneers render acceptable answers: small rooms, little apparatus, few hours and teachers. The system was established but supported, completed, and broadened by methods similar to those of Basedow, Guts-Muts, Ling, Spiess, Eiselen, etc., and by the *gymnastic society*. This primitive system resulted in freer, more natural and harmonious gymnastics. Curiously, these masters were opposed to the introduction of games and sports which corresponded, nevertheless, to the principles of Rousseau and Pestalozzi.

Indeed, these “great masters” often asserted themselves by opposition. Who were they?

First of all, Frederic-Louis Jahn (1778-1852), follower of the philosopher Fichte (“Dissertations on the German Nation”) was the first to appreciate the national importance of gymnastics and turned it in a means for the renaissance of the German patriotic feeling. (Dr. Klinger). By putting to use Pestalozzi’s principles, he urged the German youth to practice gymnastics; he wanted to restore its heroic ideal, its inclination for effort, risk, voluntary obedience, and the feel for ancient national traditions. Jahn invented and perfected apparatus which developed strength, dexterity and boldness. (With his friend Eiselen in 1816, he published his fundamental work. “Die Deutsche Turnkunst” in which they first talked of bars and pommel horse.) The words: turnen, Turner, Turnplatz, Turnkunst, invented by Jahn, became true gymnastic technical terms. Truthful to his race, Jahn developed the German Turner societies (Turnvereine) following Napoleon’s wars. Germany innovated and acquired a taste for mass demonstrations. (6000 gymnasts at the first festival organized in Berlin in 1861.) At one time, these societies were even forbidden and Jahn was imprisoned by orders of the king.”

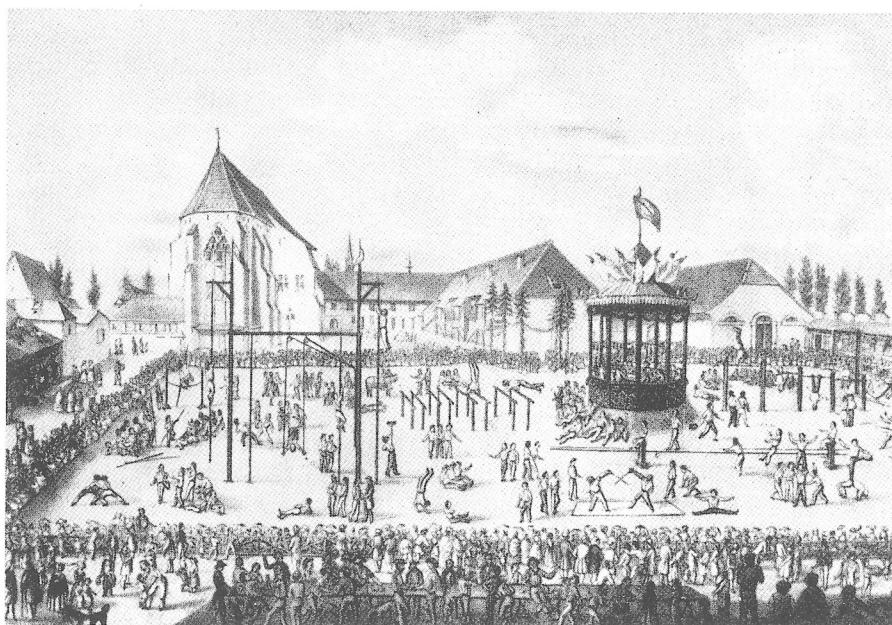
The example given by Jahn and events considered as “revolutionary” had an influence in various European countries. The “father of gymnastics” would incontestably be the catalyzer in those liberal and student centers which would create the gymnastic societies.

We have already mentioned *Jean-Bernard Basedow* (1724-1790), a pioneer in his Filantropium established in 1774. Then his associate *Guts-Muts* (1759-

1839), true grandfather of gymnastics (*Gymnastik für die Jugend*) and pioneer of women's gymnastics. But these two men were rather turned towards realistic gymnastics.

In 1816, *Phocion Clias* (1782-1854) lived in Berne, a military man, pure and tough but who had a great influence in Switzerland and France. His book "*Anfangsgründe der Gymnastik oder Turnkunst*" has to be considered as the forerunner of artistic gymnastics in Switzerland (...even with apparatus such as harsh bars to strengthen hands, ladders, rope ladders, triangles, etc.). Clias created exercises appropriate for all, graceful for the young girls, strong and full of dexterity for men. Lacking true followers and in spite of his merits, Clias will be forgotten.

Adolf Spiess, almost contemporary, was the founder of *group apparatus gymnastics*. He will adapt the new tendencies of scholastic gymnastics. He is wrongly associated-according to us-with Jahn's system.



Gymnastics 1848-Bale, Switzerland

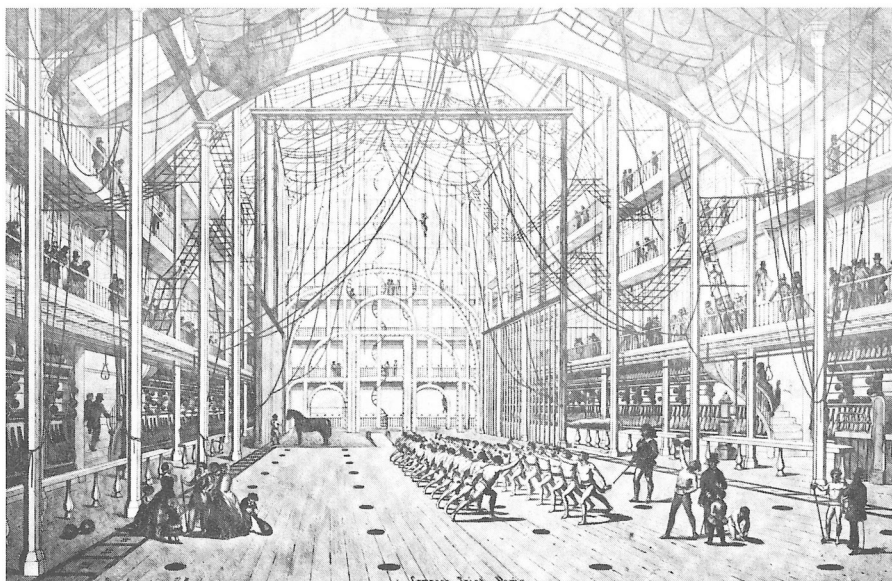
***NOTE:**

Concerning Jahn (the Turnvater), Mr. F.K. Mathys, director of the Swiss museum of sports in Bale, notes that he is the first ever to "bring out" gymnastics from the numerous educational institutes which were popular since the middle of the 18th century. The new educational methods of gymnastics, born from the enthusiasm of the pedagogues of

the Age of Enlightenment, would not have known such expansion without him. (He organized the first setting for gymnastics in Berlin June 17, 1811).

On the other hand the same author emphasized the character of the German democrat, convinced but very idealistic. Which would lead Jahn to attitudes and positions which influenced his followers and submitted him to ridicule, misunderstanding, even the hostility of the regime. (Let us recall that he was imprisoned following crime committed by a student close to him.)

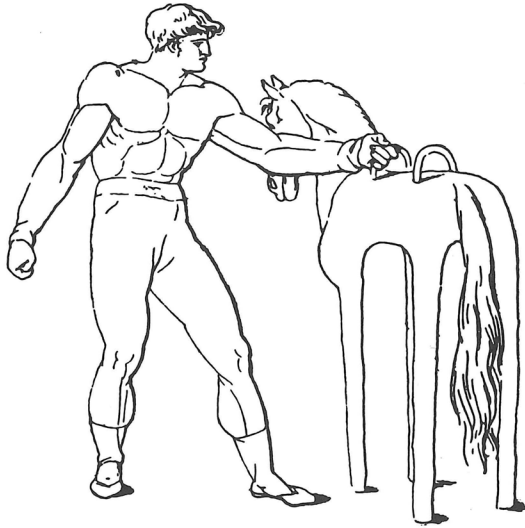
Jahn was rehabilitated in 1840 and even Goethe siding with the skeptic's advocated the "compensatory" practice of physical exercises.



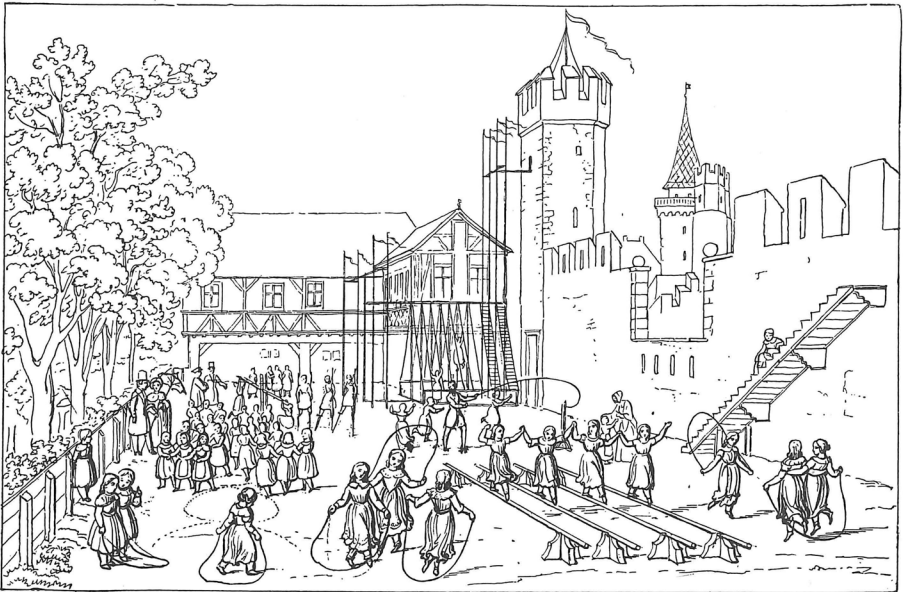
The Great Triat Gymnasium-Paris

In France, *Francisco Amoros* (1770-1848), of Spanish origins, has to be mentioned. This colonel and high official became a French citizen in 1816 and his influence reached the 20th century. Following Pestalozzi, Amoros will establish his own Institute, very military, with "various apparatus, brisk movements, songs, and spectacular developments." (Dr. Burgener). The famous *Ecole de Joinville* will be founded on June 22, 1852, close to Paris; it will be directed, at first, by two eager followers of Amoros.

In France, almost the whole century will be dominated by Amoros and the *Ecole de Joinville* which educated military trainers but, which, at the same time, prepared for the ulterior evolution in the army and schools as also in adults and adolescents. There will even be a war of methods with *George Demeny* (1850-1917), opposed to the Swedish method, to sports and games, *Herbert*, the naturist and doctor *Philippe Tissie*, the French Ling.*



Side Horse of 1816



Women's Gymnastics in 1845 at Bale, Switzerland

A master by himself: Ling

The Swedish poet *Per Henrik Ling* (1776-1839) founder of "Swedish gymnastics" (known by all), would arouse passions, controversies and polemics which, today, seem rather vain. Ling had enthusiastic followers and tenacious opponents in almost all countries. "The Swedish system, completed by open air, games and a few "sports" was opposed to Jahn-Spiess' system with its abundant compulsory exercises, the apparatus work and the unhealthy closed rooms." (Dr. Burgener)

More than the influential gymnasts of Germany and France or Switzerland, known doctors supported Ling's claims.

Once more, today the quarrel seems artificial and unfounded. We mention Spiess' reproductions in 1845 with open air exercises on ladders, vertical, horizontal or oblique bars, if not on...Swedish benches. What remains of the controversy?

***NOTE:** We will talk again of the various French tendencies.

But the various methods merged, finally. The Ling system provided an essential contribution by its constant adaptation to the evolution and needs, to physical education and to the development of highly competitive sports requiring a specific musculature. Finally, this system also introduced medical and dietetic considerations.

The gymnastic societies.

Our international federation was developed on a democratic base. Thanks to the great "masters", their followers, and the first "technicians", gymnastics took its roots in the first half of the 19th century, in most of the European countries and also in Canada.

For example, Basedow "was the initiator of philanthropical ideas and physical education in Russia under the reign of Catherine II." (Dr. Klinger). Gymnastics were introduced in 1828 in Denmark, thanks to Guts-Muts and also Ling.

At the same time, Jahn's followers-liberal Swiss or German refugees towards 1820 or after the 1848 revolutions, formed the *gymnastic societies*.

In the Austrian Empire, closely linked to the German nation, the importance of gymnastics would be recognized early and, particularly after 1848.

In France, Amoros' influence would be completed by various attempts and after 1860 men's gymnastics asserted itself in the Eastern part of the country.

Thus, the general movement rose above its foundation. (We will return to the development of gymnastics in the Benelux in the next chapter on the foundation of the FIG.)

National unions and federations.

Very early, the gymnastic societies would feel the necessity to be united in national organizations (unions, federations, even simple associations.)

In Switzerland, in 1832, the various branches were joined in the Federal Society of Gymnastics. This first federation was rather an association of Cantonal (State) groups very independent, reflecting the federal particularities of Switzerland. For the young liberals or students from the Swiss Confederation,

this meant the practice of exercises in which Jahn's and Spiess' tendencies were dominant, and a meeting in cantonal and federal manifestations to fraternize and be closely united in an ideal of liberal regeneration. In Switzerland, the Federal Society will grow considerably and will greet, from the beginning, numerous refugees coming from other countries in Europe.

The formation of the next national federation had to wait until 1860. Why? The exploration is perhaps hazardous and incomplete. But, by analogy, with the Swiss example, we are tempted to see in these first European gymnasts, young, dynamic men, filled with an ideal of fraternity, liberty, and human progress. However, up to the middle of the century, the political and social realities were still trying for the masses. Misery remained the rule. 1830 and 1848 did not change the workers' situation. The movement continued throughout regimes, dictatorships, constitutional monarchies and republics. Starting in 1850, life improved slowly. Public education spreads and with it a more human life. It would be easier for the common man to become a gymnast and to practice physical exercises.

Dr. Klinger made an interesting list of the federations born at that time: "The "Deutsche Turnschaft" was created in 1860 in Germany. the Belgian gymnasts established the Belgian Gymnastics Federation (later Royal) in 1865. In Poland, the "Zwiazok towarzystw gimnastycznych" is created in 1867. A year later, in 1868, in Holland, the "Netherlands Gymnastik-Vorband" (later Koninklijk Netherlands...) In 1873, the French gymnasts were united in the "union des societes de gymnastique de France." 1885 started the activities of the "Magyar Orszagos Torna Szovetseg" in Hungary. The "Federazione Ginnastica Italiana" became the center of gymnastics in 1887 in Italy. In England, which can be considered as the source of the modern sport and where gymnastics was introduced by Elias, the gymnasts were organized in the "Amateur Gymnastic Association", in 1888. The "Ceska (later the Ceskoslovenska) Obec Sokolska" was established in 1889 in Bohemia. The "Norges-Turn-og Idrætsforbund": was born in 1898 in Norway. Bulgarian gymnastics were also represented in 1898 by the "Junak". In 1899, two groups were established: "Union des Societes Luxembourgeoises de Gymnastique" and "Dansk Gymnastik Forbund." Following the creation of Sokols in Bohemia, the southern Slavs started to practice gymnastics: The Slavones since 1863, the Croates since 1874, the Serbes since 1882. The "Jugoslovenski Sokolski Savez" (later the Sokol Kraljeviny Jugoslavie) was created after World War I when the Slavs of the South, scattered in Austria-Hungary, Serbia and Montenegro, gathered in the single state."

The Canadian Federation whose activity grew throughout the century has to be mentioned.

Thus, the stage has been set for the foundation of the FIG itself.

Chapter 7.

The foundation of the International Gymnastics Federation

One man, one idea.

Large countries, great “masters” would stimulate the development of gymnastics, nevertheless, the outline of an international organization—at first European—would start in a small country whose gymnastic tradition was not exceptional. How to explain this phenomenon?

As it often happens in similar circumstances, there was a meeting of an idea and a strong personality: the president of the Belgian Federation, *Nicolas J. Cuperus*. Who was this founding president of the F.I.G.? He was born in 1842 and was less than 40 years old at the time which concerns us. It can also be said that he was in his prime in this 19th century when Balzac situated women’s maturity at 30 and old age at 50. Nicolas J. Cuperus presided over the international federation for 43 years until 1924 when he was named honorary president. He died in 1928 and the gymnasts who knew him are becoming very rare. But this record presidency, which will never be equalled, left everlasting traces which allow us to approach very carefully this exceptional personality. What do his contemporaries and successive historians have to say?

A competent and devoted man with a *rare tenacity* for the realization of his concepts. Or more: relentless enthusiasm and true passion. Great organizer and idealist. But also clear-headed and realistic when he wrote in 1897: “My idea is always the same, and I look forward to the time when competitions will be unnecessary, the gymnasts receiving the exact equivalent in health, strength, agility, and endurance as the only award for their effort. But since, so far, no federation thought it useful to replace competitions by festivals, I have to yield and take men and things as they are.” Arthur Gander added competently: “The idea that Nicolas Cuperus had of gymnastics was not based on the international Olympic sport.” And Pierre Hentges can correctly note that there is presently a competition of which Cuperus dreamed: the Gymnaestrada, event without scores. Finally, there are certain tendencies in rhythmic gymnastics, excluding the high level of performance, within the modern international federation. Cuperus’ ideal is not as exaggerated as some would like to believe.

Indeed, a personality rather complicated and difficult to clearly describe, which made Dr. Klinger say: “Indeed, there were a few complications at the first meeting, but with his agility (sic) M. Cuperus prepared the road for other meetings.”

The physical appearance perhaps better explains the man: A sober posture, almost ascetic and unaffected in his dishevelled beard and hair. But a rigid

posture, a little “Napoleon” with a hand hidden in the vest. The look is hard, almost fierce, the forehead high and clear: open but strong.*

Nicolas J. Cuperus and his work.

Thanks to the Belgian authors, C. Ardouillie and R. Moreau, we were able to gather precise and chronological information illustrating the personality and immense work of Nicolas J. Cuperus, this “benefactor of humanity” as they rightly called him:

1873: first issue of VOLKSHEIL, under the direction of Mr. N.J. Cuperus (Flemish, then Flemish-French organ of the Belgian Federation.)

1876: Writer of a French-Flemish terminology for optional exercises.

1877: Convention on the teaching of gymnastics in societies and schools.

1978: adoption of a terminology concerning group exercises. Mr. N.J. Cuperus is appointed president of the Belgian Federation.

His great friend (and rival), Charles Cazalet, president of the French Federation grasped his noble ideal when he said during the same ceremony: “Cuperus relentlessly preached the holy crusade in favor of understanding among gymnasts and it would have been given to him to assist to the brilliant success of this noble cause and as Moses, to see the promised land in the horizon...”.

1881: Liege-international convention (Foundation of the FEG)

1885: “Essay on a French and Dutch gymnastic terminology.”

1886: Congress of Dutch terminology. Report by Mr. Cuperus.

1887: Congress of French terminology.

Excellent participation: among others, Mr. G. Demeny, delegate from the Ministry of Public Education in France. Mr. Marc Senglet, famous Swiss professor of gymnastics. Chairman: Mr. Cuperus, whose terminology is adopted by Congress. “It is necessary to use common, but perfectly defined, words.”

His activities “at the top” did not prevent him from being dedicated to the development of regional gymnastics. He was the author of the first program of studies for trainers and directors which was used without modifications until after W.W. I.

On the other hand, as early as 1864, Cuperus stimulated the creation of many clubs and gymnastics societies in his northern region.

One will be able to say that with and after the pioneers such as Isenbaert and Happel, he created an enormous work regarding physical as well as social and patriotic (school and army) education.

It is thus under the leadership of such a man that on July 23, 1881, will be created the Bureau of the European Gymnastics Federation (FEG).

***NOTE:**

Direct testimonies on Cuperus are rare. There are, nevertheless, some speeches which attest to his most particular qualities and character traits. (even if these were given in favorable circumstances for the party involved.) In 1903, during the first competition in Antwerp, the Belgian honorary president can introduce him in these terms:

"N.J. Cuperus was the first to develop a federal spirit...he is a writer and an erudite. Did he not construct a practical closet for apparatus and establish a terminology in at least two languages?..."

He is a strong and courteous polemicist, terrible adversary of false ideas and untiring demolisher of incorrect quotations..."

Moment and nature of the foundation.

According to Robert Bruch, writer from Luxembourg, gymnastics in the Benelux had, as its "underground sources", cult and folklore (carnival games, etc.). Then and since, the French Revolution, "second inexhaustible source since its beginnings, its strength and its hopes: Freedom, supreme principle of modern humanism..." (Note the names of the oldest federation: Freedom, the Free, Fraternity, the Fraternal, etc.).

The first publication from The Benelux appeared after the congress in Vienna in 1815. *At that time, Antwerp was the center of organization of gymnastics in the Netherlands. Isenbaert, Happel and most of all Cuperus developed from this city the rebellious and progressive spirits of gymnasts.* The work was developed in the three Benelux countries by professor *Charles Euler*, born in 1809 in Treves and called to Luxembourg in 1847.

As we said, the liberal movements of the years 1830 to 1848 were favorable to the birth of gymnastic groups. The first *Societe de gymnastique et d'Armes* was created in Antwerp after the enactment of the Belgian constitution in 1830. Luxembourg enacted its first liberal constitution in 1848 and the first gymnastic branch appeared in 1849.

If we now know Cuperus better, we cannot forget Isenbaert and Happel, mentioned above.

Professor *Joseph Isenbaert* was the son of a merchant in Antwerp who was initiated to German gymnastics during his studies at the University of Bonn. In 1863, J. Isenbaert joined *Albert Happel*, a daring man who successfully taught physical education (on his initiative a first group for women will be established in Antwerp). Later, Happel emigrated to the United States where he created a similar association. He died in Hollywood in 1944.

Such men multiplied their efforts in favor of physical exercises and societies. The impulse of the *Societe Liegeoise* resulted in the foundation of the Belgian Federation in 1865 (which became the Royal Federation in 1925).

Thus, Antwerp was the crib of Belgian gymnastics, and Liege, the crib of the Belgian Federation and the FEG.

It is also known that towards the end of the 19th century, representatives of neighboring unions or federations were invited for collective gymnastics events. (In Switzerland, federal gymnastic festivals were held since 1832 with the participation of foreign gymnasts.)

The federal festival of the Belgian Gymnastics Federation was held in Liege in 1881. Nicolas Cuperus, who was then president, invited several European unions or federations in a letter dated June 1, 1881, sent from Anvers-Adrimont. He wrote: "...We would be pleased if your society was represented by a

delegate responsible for *special task*. The festival will be held in Liege which is easily accessible, being in the center.

(Note: Cuperus probably considered the countries neighboring Belgium.) *We consider that it would be useful to join different European gymnastics federations.*

The international meeting was held on July 23, 1881, in the building of the Gymnastic Society in Liege. The following countries attended this meeting which can be considered as the historic moment of the foundation of the FEG: The society of French gymnasts represented by Mr. Sansboeuf, The Dutch Union represented by Mr. Ch. F. Kok, Belgium, represented by Mr. Cuperus and Mr. Lobet (Wallons) and Mr. Vandehoren (Flemish).

The Swiss and the German gymnasts were not represented.

The new international organization was named Bureau of the European Gymnastics Federations. (This name was modified according to Dr. Scheiner's proposal in the first meeting after W.W. I. On April 17, 1921, in Brussels, the word European was replaced with "International".)

The founders adopted the principles of the first international convention concerning:

1. The exchange of documents and publications.
2. Reglementation on mutual invitations.
3. Organization of competitions.
4. The exclusion of professional gymnasts.
5. The non-recognition of federations with a political or religious goal.

The Belgian, French, and Dutch delegates wanted to create a *study group* and a *community of interests*, no more.*

***NOTE:** See the foreword and first competition in the chapter dealing with official competitions.

Europe, at the time, with its impassioned nationalisms was not favorable to the development of ideas with an international goal. Only a few idealists such as Cuperus pursued the utopia of an international union by writing, by maintaining ties, by contracting progressive spirits and by attempting to convince skeptics, first of all "the Swiss gymnasts and the German Turner." But, disillusioned, Dr. Klinger noted: "The European Federation was born but it was not active." He asks questions, sees inexplicable complications when, very simply, Cuperus encountered for instance, the extraordinary national feelings of the German Empire and the fears of the Swiss Confederation more neutral than even facing its neighbor whose unity was very recent...*

In these conditions, the second meeting was held 15 years later.

***NOTE:** A Prussian diplomat, Constantin Frantz (1817-1891) considered the political union of the countries of central Europe but also observed that the unity of the state was opposed to federalism.

Chapter 8.

The heroic stage, 1896-1920

1896

The second meeting (one cannot yet talk of a Congress, even though, it is so designated in the official list) was held once more in Liege, in the University Palace, at the opportunity of the 23rd Festival of Belgian Gymnasts. Great Britain had joined the three original members. (Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Norway did not participate; Cuperus pursued his recruiting activity.)

After an interruption of fifteen years, merely three days were used to detail and write once more, the convention. But, important matter, the election of a two member board took place. Mr. Cuperus president and Mr. Wachmar, (France), secretary.

Dr. Klinger adds: "It is not incorrect to consider that these elections were a compromise between France which was a gymnastic power and small Belgium which had the rights of the initiator." (Cuperus published the Agreement in eight languages in the first issue of the Directory of the European Federation in 1898. By 1901, it was in nine languages.)

1897

The 3rd international assembly was held in Brussels. (Note that these first meetings were held during national or federal manifestations.)

Besides the usual delegates, the representatives from the Czech Sokols which joined the FEG and those from Sweden were present.

The final board was named with, as a new member, Mr. Muller (Netherlands), treasurer.

A name appears for the first time: *Charles Cazalet* (France) (1858-1933). As Nicolas J. Cuperus did, he marked the FEG with his strong personality. President of the Union des Societes' de Gymnastique de France from 1896-1931, vice-president of the International Federation from 1910-1924, president from 1924 to 1933, Charles Cazalet was, first of all, the *initiator of international competitions*.

During these "international meetings"—future congress—the meeting of ideas resulted in excellent decisions advantageous to the cause.

As early as 1897-1898, Cazalet considered that it would be useful to have a meeting of the best gymnasts in the world, advocating "international competitions" between teams from various national unions. At first, Cazalet did not receive any response.

At that time, the FEG counted 100,000 members. Germany refused a third invitation. Moreover, she submitted the convention to public criticism, saying

that Germany alone had 500,000 members (the Deutsche Turnerschaft declared that the international convention included federations with political tendencies and that some participants were too interested in the awards). The position of the Swiss gymnasts will be explained later.

1899

An important international meeting, not mentioned in the official list, was held in Ghent, Belgium.

In the meantime, and to prove the realism of his idea, Mr. Cazalet and his federation had organized an international competition within the framework of the festival of the Union of French gymnasts. Under the direction of Cuperus, using his seniority rights, and with the assistance of referees from Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy, Bohemia, and the military school of Joinville (Amoros influence), the competitions had a formal but conclusive aspect.

Consequently, Cazalet's proposal to organize an international competition every year was definitely adopted.

Canada, the first country outside of Europe belonging to the FEG, did not have any major role in spite of its affiliation in 1899.

1902

The president, Mr. Cuperus, published a report on the activities of the FEG. He gave a list of the board members in which there were no French, (since 1897 France did not recognize the Board.) (Quarrels involving the presidency.) Cazalet was present as a "guest". New members from Spain, Italy, Luxembourg and Hungary were mentioned.

1903

The concept of international competitions made its way and it was fully realized in Antwerp in the year 1903.

Cazalet, Cuperus and Muller will be the promoters of the competitions of the International Gymnastics Federation; in 1934 these became the World Championships of artistic gymnastics.

Mr. Arthur Gander, honorary president of the FIG can write: "Taking as a base, the development of the competitions, almost all the history of the Federation can be followed..."

Advice which we followed by writing the chapter on the official competitions. This allows us to briefly describe the general history of the FIG. (We ask the reader interested in more technical information to refer to the chapter on competitions.)

The fifth meeting (or fourth, according to the official list made by Mr. Dalban, who chose to ignore the meeting in Ghent in 1899) paid a tribute to Cuperus, who had presided over the Belgian Federation for 25 years. Moreover, for the first time, this was an exhibition dealing with physical education. It was limited to diagrams on the activities of the European and Belgian Federations. It was fortunately completed by exhibition from the Czech Sokol, organized by Dr.

Scheiner with gymnastic books and photographs of gymnastic halls, competitions, participants, etc.

At this point, Dr. Klinger allowed himself to draw up the first balance sheet. He wrote: "22 years after the foundation of the European Gymnastics Federation, one can observe that its activities were limited to the presence of the president at the assembly of affiliated federations. Meetings were irregular, held during a manifestation. Results were discussed. The decision taken in Ghent to meet every three years was not respected. *Everything went through the hands of the president who organized matters according to his possibilities and convenience.*

1906

The 6th meeting (officially the 5th Congress) was called during the Federal Festival of Swiss Gymnasts in Bern (July 15-16).

Switzerland did not belong to the Federation but maintained close ties with its neighbors. The attitude of the Swiss gymnasts was surprising; they had had, from the beginning, a great influence, fully recognized by all the European gymnasts.

Very early, within their federal society, the Swiss had separated artistic gymnastics (Kunstturnen in 1862), gymnastics with national games (Nationalturnen), and sportive gymnastics of foreign origins.

They fought to maintain competitive artistic gymnastics. At the start, they considered international competitions as almost a farce (pure athletics, swimming, etc.). These are the reasons for the Swiss indifference.

In Bern, the Czech Sokols proposed the creation of a technical commission.

Thanks to Cuperus, the representatives of the Deutsche Turnerschaft attended the meeting as guests. It seems that the presence of these representatives, Mr. Ruhl and Mr. Atzrodt, explains the organization of the next international competition held by the Czech Sokols in 1907. Indeed, according to some articles, the Germans tried to dissuade the non-slavic nations from participating in the competitions in Prague. But they sent incognito or official observers.

Important observation: for the first time, technical questions ceased to be the exclusive domain of the president, Cuperus, and the Belgian technical experts who were his advisors.

1907

The 6th Congress (or 7th meeting) was held in Prague. (18 people represented seven countries).

Croatia was admitted in the FEG.

Cuperus submitted the proposal to eliminate competitions because of the high cost of their organization. The French were opposed to it. A compromise was reached by asking the organizers to pay all costs. This decision was immediately enacted and the Czech Sokols were requested to pay 3,000 SF to the FEG.

It is interesting to note how the people of the era were open and tolerant in spite of apparent national hesitencies.

For instance, Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, each had four national unions which were ordinary members of the FEG. During this same congress the French president, Mr. Cazalet, made a proposal to admit the gymnastic societies of Alsace-Lorraine. The president, Cuperus, noted that this was a delicate matter, in 1907 these territories were part of Germany. The Deutsche Turnerschaft mentioned that the gymnastic Union of Alsace-Lorraine was independent and there were no problems. The latter was then admitted into the FEG. (After W.W. I, this Union became a regional society within the French Federation.)

At the same time, a German gymnast wrote that the goals of the FEG were noble and idealistic, even though the existence of the FEG would be short because it was theoretical and lacking solid foundations.

Had it been true, we would not have been here to celebrate the centennial of the FIG.

1908

The Union of French Gymnasts celebrated its 35th anniversary November 19-23, 1908. The European Federation took this opportunity to hold its 7th Congress in Paris at the Sorbonne (famous university). (Noble union of mind and muscle, perhaps a deeper meaning of gymnastics.)

An important resolution was adopted during this meeting: The International Olympic Committee had invited the FEG to participate in the Olympic Games, it was decided that an eventual competition would be organized according to the rules of the International Federation and under its direction (...even if there were no strict rules yet).

It is interesting to note the membership of the Federation in 1908 which is located in Antwerp (Mr. Cuperus' residence):

Belgium	215 societies	17,500 members
Union of the Czech Sokols (Ceska obec sokolska)	749 societies	60,307 members
Union of the Croatian Sokols (Hrvatski Sokolsi Savez)	103 societies	10,235 members
Union of the Slavic Sokols (Slovenska Sokolska Zvesa)	42 societies	4,014 members
Denmark	23 societies	300 members
France	1,076 societies	300,000 members
Great Britain (4 federations)	200 societies	60,000 members
Romania	21 societies	300 members
Italy	192 societies	30,175 members
Luxembourg	20 societies	1,375 members
Hungary	57 societies	10,000 members
Netherlands	223 societies	17,430 members



The Sorbonne, Paris



Louis Pasteur Institute-The Sorbonne

Norway	125 societies	800 members
Sweden	35 societies	2,000 members

Canada: no precise information except a paramilitary activity in 1870 and clubs or private institutions until the 20th century.

(NOTE that Switzerland with 762 societies and more than 60,000 members as also the 750,000 members of the Deutsche Turnerschaft did not belong to the FEG.)

1909

The 8th Congress took place at the same time as the international competition in Luxembourg, July 31, 1909.

The decision to organize competitions every three years was only respected at the Congress of Bern in 1906. Since then, to be polite, one answered every year the invitation of a federation who organized its festival and who wanted to make it more attractive by inviting the European Federation to meetings where ceremonies and official visits were more important than work. It was "la Belle Epoque".

1911

The 9th Congress (10th meeting) took place in Turin, Italy.

The important fact was the presence of a representative of the International Olympic Committee, a Swede, and Mr. Schmuck from Darmstadt, chairman of the German Turnerschaft, present because the Olympic Games were to normally occur in Berlin in 1916. The representative of the IOC formally proposed the fusion of the Olympic competition and the FEG competition to form a great international gymnastic event. In spite of a favorable reception, no decision was taken. (One has to wait for the first years after W.W. I.)

(It is now understood that the gymnastic competition at the Olympic Games were under the exclusive jurisdiction of the IOC, which decided all procedures.)

1912

The gymnastic competition of the Olympic Games in Stockholm was organized under the direction of the International Olympic Committee and at the same time, with the support of the European Federation. (This competition was not different from the ones held in Athens 1896, Paris 1900, Sain-Louis 1904, and London 1908. We will mention this again in the chapter on the Olympic Games.)

1913

The 10th Congress of the European Federation, the last before W.W. I., took place during the 40th anniversary of the Union of the gymnastic Societies of France, on November 17, 1913 in Paris. Celebrations took up all the free time and one was contented to discuss the competition results (see chapter on competitions).

...And the Great War, 1914-1918, swept the world, annihilating sportive games and the hopes aroused by a young and generous international cooperation.

It is tempting to end at this point the first era of the existence of the Federation, a period which we call "heroic." However, 1920 is more adequate for various reasons. For instance, the Olympic Games in Antwerp in 1920 were not different in their program and scoring as those held in Athens in 1896.

Recovery was slow and hard after the world conflict and there were no questions of evolution before contacts were re-established. (A first meeting took place in Prague). Then, and this is important, the Federation would at that time reach its world dimension and take its actual name. Some conclusions can be drawn from this step. Since its foundation, the European Federation faced difficulties caused by certain vague circumstances. At the head of this international organization was the citizen of a small country. But this man was gifted with an exceptional temperment and deeply influenced with his strong personality, all the activities of the Federation which was his creation. France-powerful in gymnastics-suffered from this situation. (It is only necessary to recall that in 1896 France did not recognize the elected board, even though Mr. Cazalet was a guest, invited by Cuperus at the meetings.) It is also necessary to recall that the French president, Mr. Cazalet—another strong personality—was the initiator and the most active architect of international competitions..opposing Cuperus' strongest convictions. This created a kind of personal antagonism within the international organization and explains the ambiguity we often noted during that era.

"But that is not all," states Dr. Klinger, who seems to have been offended by the partiality of the "Roman nations" against the Czechs and the Slavs. He is hard towards the light Latin spirit. (He mentions the many changes in the program and exercises and the errors in the scoring favoring the "Latin" nations to the disadvantage of the Czechs.) Without entering into details, we can deduce that an international federation, recently established and lacking contemporary examples, needed to find its orientation and an internal balance for a harmonious coexistence of races, mentalities, cultures, languages, and temperaments.

In this summary, it is necessary to mention the fortunate evolution of the Deutsche Turnerschaft towards the European Federation. After the first contacts in 1906 in Bern, in 1913 Germany prepared for membership in the FEG, hesitantly and only because the IOC had promised to award Germany the organization of the Olympic Games in 1916. Dr. Klinger remarks that Mr. Cuperus was "very anxious to have the Deutsche Turnerschafter under his hat."

Chapter 9.

The first post-war years The International Gymnastics Federation (1920-1939)

1920

The Olympic Games took place in Antwerp, Belgium. They were preceded by world sportive games organized for the soldiers of the various armies of 1914-18, on the initiative of the American General Pershing. The idea to return to the O.G. surfaced in Germany and Sweden where the strongest partisans of the cooperation between the European Federation and the IOC were to be found. But Germany no longer was considered for the organization or even participation in the Olympic Games. Many wanted to participate in the Olympic Games but few were willing to assume all the responsibilities after such a long interruption.

Thus, when Belgium became interested in the Games, France supported her initiative, the country, having suffered much during the war, also needed international assistance. (It is also suggested that France thus stopped the ambitions of Great Britain and guaranteed the organization of the Games on the continent. A point in history to verify but which is not in the frame of our essay.)

Of course, Cuperus and his Belgian associates took all the initiatives without discussing them with the member Unions of the FEG. Gymnastics was integrated into the Olympic Games almost as "an accomplished fact". (In 1912, competitions took place under the quasi abusive leadership of the Federation. The official decision to alternate the traditional competitions with the olympic competition was taken years later).

In Antwerp, the rules and the composition of the competitions were the personal work of Cuperus and the Belgian technical delegate, Mr. Delaive, who contributed to some degree. Besides the team competition, the individual event of the traditional competition was also held. (see special chapter of O.G.) Protests arose which caused a quick study on a new reglementation.

There were no official meetings at the O.G. in Antwerp. Contacts were limited to friendly conversations between the leaders of the various affiliated Unions. The German question was embarrassing. Even excluded from the O.G., it was known that Germany would ask for admission. The IOC resolved this difficult question for the European Federation by stating that the "Germans were not worthy of participating in the Olympic Games in 1924".

A landmark in the development of the European Federation had been crossed. One attempted to end a long period of hesitation and experimentation

in the field of competitions. Indeed, the FEG had to correct its mistakes of youth, but it also was submitted to the advanced age of many leaders.

A certain French and Italian dominance was apparent and the rivalry with the Czechs (Sokols) went on.

Great gymnastic nations still abstained: Switzerland (joined in 1933), Germany (1934), Austria (1947). The explanations are various: activity more educative than competitive, association types within the country (Switzerland), distrust, the open and happy characteristics of Scandinavian gymnastics and so on.

1921

The 11th Congress took place in Brussels on April 17, 1921. President Cuperus announced that rules for competitions had been discussed during the Olympic Congress held in Lausanne.

A relementation, which can be called modern, was adopted: one single team of 8 members per nation with compulsory and optional exercises on the 4 apparatus, vaulting-horse and a climb of 8 m on smooth rope.

A new wind was blowing and gymnastics grew in countries like Poland, Switzerland, Finland, Denmark, and the USA.

The Americans, wishing to belong to the only international organization of this type, joined the European Gymnastics Federation.

This situation justified Dr. Scheiner's intervention suggesting the new name, *International Gymnastics Federation* (F.I.G.).

The new FIG counted 16 affiliated members.

The delegates also gave the organization of the next competition (7th) to the new state of Yugoslavia at the opportunity of its federal festival (Yugoslovenski vsesokolski zlet) in Ljubljana in 1922.

1923-1924

The 12th and 13th Congress in November 1923 and July 1924, were held in Paris.

During 1924, the founding president, Mr. N.J. Cuperus, resigned (he had been president of the Federation for 43 years, an absolute record).

1926

Mr. A. Kayser, Secretary General for 20 years, died on March 6, 1926.

At the 14th Congress, preceeding the 8th competition (May 22 and 23) Cuperus was named honorary president for his unequalled merits.

Charles Cazalet, France, became president; Dr. Scheiner (Cz.) vice-president; Fr. Blonart, Belgium, Secretary; Alphonse Hugenin, Switzerland, Treasurer (although Switzerland was not yet member of the FIG.); Jean Dalbanne, Paris, became secretary to the president.

1928

The 15th Congress was held in Amsterdam on July 6th and confirmed the location and dates for the 9th competition in Luxembourg in 1930. Technical questions were discussed, almost exclusively (see chapter on the competitions).

A few days later, on July 13, 1928, the father of the FIG died, an extraordinary personality in the world of sports, his loss was deeply felt in the whole Federation.

1930

Mr. Charles Cazalet, Cuperus' successor, suggested at the 16th Congress in Luxembourg to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the FIG in Paris in 1931.

This manifestation had to include besides the quadriennial cycle of the FIG, a competition organized by the French Federation in the frame of its 35th federal festival. There were objections and discussions and principle agreements; finally it was agreed to use "World Championships" to designate the international competitions of the FIG.

1931 The 50th anniversary.

With the support of the president of the French Republic, the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the FIG was celebrated in Paris.

The 17th Congress, called for this occasion dealt essentially with formal ceremonies and the reorganization of the technical committee, which we will mention again later.

A special competition for the Jubilee (World Championships) is mentioned in the chapter on the competitions.

Concerning the anniversary in 1931, one can read: "The International Gymnastics Federation, oldest of the international sportive associations, continued, with confidence, its evolution along the road traced in 1881, towards a common ideal...".

1932

The 18th Congress took place in Prague on July 4th and 5th.

The reorganization of the technical committee, started at the meetings in Luxembourg, 1930, and in Paris, 1931, was finally accomplished by the nomination of the Executive Commission (the future MTC), which from now on was responsible for all technical questions. This commission included: Alphonse Huguenin (Switzerland), president; Dr. Miroslav Klinger (Cz) and Georges Paillot (France), vice-president; Pierre Hentges (Luxembourg), secretary; Mario Correas (Italy), Jean Krizmanich (Hungary) and Jose de Wallens (Belgium) all members.

The FIG was thus structured in a more rational way and broadened the international representation of its technical staff.

Another decision which marked the evolution and progress was the organization of artistic gymnastic championships for women. The first official competition was included in the 10th competition (or World Championships), organized in Hungary in 1934.

The Olympic Games took place in Los Angeles (USA) from the 10th to the 12th of July. The gymnastic event only counted 5 national teams and 24 gymnasts. This weak participation, due to distance and the world economic crisis, did not prevent the meeting for the 19th Congress.

In the summer of 1932, the FIG deplored the death of its vice-president, Dr. Scheiner; then on January 19th, 1933, the death of Mr. Charles Cazalet, president and initiator of international competitions. The death of president Cazalet meant the end of an era. The loss of this last pioneer who devoted himself totally and touched all the activities of the FIG would provoke a new orientation for leadership. A total reorganization of the Executive Committee was necessary.

1933

These changes were made at the 20th Congress in Lausanne, April 11 and 12, 1933. Count Adam Zamoyski (Poland) was elected president; Count Goblet d'Alviella (Belgium) and Mario Cappelli (Italy) vice-presidents; Hubert Clement (Luxembourg), secretary; Vladimir Muller (Czechoslovakia), treasurer; Alphonse Heguenin (Switzerland), president-delegate of the Technical Committee; Jean Dalbanne (Paris) secretary to the president.

At the same Congress, the technical committee named three of its members: Hentges, Krizmanich and Sommer to form with Countess Jadwiga Zamoyska as president, a special commission to establish reglements for the first gymnastic competition for women.

The direction and scoring for this competition were given to women and since then, gymnastics for women is ruled by an independent women's commission (CTF) whose first president was Mrs. Zamoyska (the official start of women's artistic gymnastics is considered to occur at this point, even if there were other more or less experimental competitions and O.G. in Amsterdam. We analyze this matter in another chapter with the help of Mrs. Valerie Nagy and others.)

The new president-as Arthur Gander recalls-had the satisfaction to greet Switzerland, Finland, and Denmark in the International Federation (the latter especially set on rhythmic gymnastics).

The affiliation of Germany occurred in 1934, the Germans were asked to organize the gymnastic event at the Olympic Games two years later.

So, in 1933-1934 the FIG truly reached its international level. A solid, more structured organization was established, and the nations who later came to promote gymnastics would be easily incorporated.

1934

The 21st Congress was held in Budapest for the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Gymnastics Federation.

The request for affiliation by Germany created some difficulties. The vote was positive.

1935-1936

In view of competition in general and World Championships in particular, a new technical reglement, established by the Executive Commission was adopted at the 22nd and 23rd Congress in Brussels (1935) and Berlin (1936). For twenty years, this reglement ruled over gymnastic competitions which will have

difficulties to free themselves of varying, if not divergent, tendencies. Very briefly, the main disposition:

1. *Technical program*

- a). Artistic part: one compulsory and one optional exercise in the six "classical" events.
- b). Athletic part: three events to be determined among the following: 100 mrvm, weight lifting, high, long, and pole jumps, swimming (Rope climbing was definitely eliminated).

2. *Repetition of the compulsory exercise was allowed*

3. *Jury*

Three judges for each event of the artistic part who could not consult with each other (average of the three scores whose difference would not exceed 1 point).

A first ruling concerning a permanent *list of official judges of the FIG* was adopted at the 1936 Congress and the list was issued in December of the same year.

1938

At the 24th Congress in Prague, Charles Thoeni (Switzerland) became Secretary general of the FIG, replacing Mr. Clement, resigning for health reasons.

At the same session, the organization of the next championships in 1942 was given to Switzerland. Unfortunately, says Pierre Hentges Sr. the cycle of our friendly journeys was once more brutally interrupted at the cataclysm of World War II: *The 12th Competition will occur 10 years later.*

Chapter 10.

A tragic interruption: 1939-1946

The outbreak of the war allows us to pause and draw a second balance sheet.

Japanese gymnasts came to the Olympic Games in 1932 in Los Angeles. (Among them, Mr. Takashi Kondo, member of the executive committee of the FIG). Japan, as no other Asian country, was not a member of the FIG.

Since 1934 in Budapest, the gymnasts competed in a "mixed" competition (artistic and athletic) which continued, almost unchanged, until 1950.

Since 1936 in Berlin, the gymnastic program of the Olympic Games remained unchanged (12 "Classic" events).

After World War II one observed the uncontested predominance of the Swiss, German, and Czech gymnasts. (French and Italians before W.W. I.)

Artistic gymnastics for women asserted itself slowly. Uneven bars were introduced, they were still considered as parallel bars rather than a kind of double high bar. These were encouraging beginnings even if the clothes of the French girls from Alger surprised a few spectators.

But war would brutally arrest the growth which international gymnastics had started, thanks to its solid structures and its more specific program of activities. The worst could be feared and, of course, in a world catastrophe where the philosophical, political and sociological forms of thought and action would be totally disrupted, one could fear the complete destruction of the work of 50 years.

Fortunately luck-or hazard-waited. In the heart of the general turmoil, at the heart of Europe, a small but gymnastically important country was miraculously spared: Switzerland. And even better, since 1938, Charles Thoeni (Geneva) was secretary of the FIG. This loyal, faithful and courageous man maintained, almost alone and in the indifference around him, the great concept of the International Federation.

We knew very well this simple man, cordial and warm, perfect (autodidact) in oral and written form, but with a tenacity and will rarely seen in a man with friendly and courteous manners. This Germanic Swiss, hard towards himself and open towards others would develop his talents in the spirit of Geneva, the city with predestined International importance.

It comes as no surprise then that the FIG "found itself again" rather quickly in Geneva in 1946, thanks to the realistic and effective actions of Charles Thoeni.

He soon became a great man in the international Federation and his prestige, his experience, his linguistic knowledge turned him often-in the

delicate postwar years-into a judge or referee solving with rather authoritarian diplomacy, the various sportive problems or even others.

The FIG owes a lot to the former honorary president who died March 26, 1973 at the age of 87.

Chapter 11.

The post-war: a new world (1946-1952).

1946-1949

Less than one year after the war and thanks to the initiative of Charles Thoeni, the FIG recovered from six or seven years of inactivity. Unfortunately, the world had changed; new morals, conceptions, doctrines and opinions, conceived by new men had spread. Many gymnasts had disappeared or were dead, victims of events and the war, starting with the president of the FIG, Count Adam Zamoyski (Poland) who died in 1939.

The gathering in Geneva was humble. Little by little an international federation with an effective and recognized action was reconstructed. For now, let us give the word to the admirable author, Pierre Hentges Sr., who recalls the main events of the post-war years: "After World War II, the Central Bureau of the FIG called the 25th Congress in Geneva on April 23-24, 1946. Nineteen federations were invited, only eight were represented, five others excused themselves and six did not answer.

During the Congress, the three directing committees were reconstructed as follows:

Central Bureau (Direction Committee): Count Goblet d'Aviella (Belgium) as president succeeding Count Adam Zamoyski (Poland) who died in 1939, Colonel Pierre Lecocq (France) became 1st vice-president, Charles Thoeni (Switzerland) secretary and Vladimir Muller (Czechoslovakia) treasurer. Until 1950, year of the 12th competition, the Bureau was completed with the nomination of Mr. Moore-USA and Mr. Sommer-Netherlands as 2nd and 3rd vice-presidents. The women's technical committee was formed two months later with Mrs. Provaznikova (Czechoslovakia) as president, Miss Taylor (G.B.) vice-president and Mrs. Trouette (France) secretary. During the following four years, the women's committee was completed by Mrs. Buddeusova—Prague, Herpich—Hungary, Nasmark—Sweden, Orka—Finland, Vandermost—Netherlands, Vilancher—France and Hess—Switzerland.

Men's Technical Committee: Alphonse Heguenin (Switzerland) president, Dr. Miroslav Klinger (Czechoslovakia) and Claude Lapalu (France) vice-presidents. Pierre Hentges (Luxembourg) directed the gymnastics competition at the Olympic Games in London 1948, and in 1949 chaired the technical meetings at the Congress of London. Unfortunately, he became unable to continue to work in the FIG. The presidency went to Claude Lapalu but he also abstained from the competition of 1950 for health reasons.

Ernest Maurer (Switzerland) replaced him at the competition and followed him as president.”

In 1947 the 26th Congress was held in Paris and Iran was admitted into the FIG as the first Asian country.

As mentioned earlier, the 27th and 28th Congress took place in London in 1948 (Olympic Games) and in Stockholm in 1949 in the frame of the majestic festivities of the Lingiade to which many federations sent demonstration teams.

The new Code of Points was introduced following the decisions approved at these two congresses. From now on it was the base for a more or less unified evaluation.

Another important matter, the 28th Congress in Stockholm decided that the technical program of the World Championships would include 12 events of artistic gymnastics on 6 classic apparatus, excluding all others. From now on, this competition was no different than the Olympic events.

It is to be added that for understandable practical reasons, these changes could not be effective in Bale in 1950. The athletic events were abandoned in Rome in 1954.

The Congress also voted for the admission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and Bulgaria.

1950

The first post-war World Championships and the 29th Congress took place in Bale.

One has to recall that political problems arose. There was an evident struggle between the direct interests of gymnastics and the FIG and strictly political considerations.

For instance, the admissions of the Sarre and Japan caused political discussions. (Affiliation to the UN and so on). The first visa problems also appeared. The exclusion of Spain was requested.

At the Championships themselves, the absences of Hungary and Czechoslovakia were deplored. The Swiss organizers regretted it.

The absence of 3 Czech members of the executive committee and technical committee, caused by their government was noted.

Mr. Charles Thoeni cries out in the very first Bulletin: “Outside of all political and religious consideration, the FIG has to continue to work for the well-being of physical education of young people throughout the world. To those wanting to lead us into domains where gymnastics has no business, we oppose an energetic “stop”.”

The federation was not wealthy: the funds first transferred to Switzerland amounted to 3605 SF.

But the decision to organize the Gymnastraeda in 1953 had been taken.

1951

The 30th Congress had a prestigious setting and benefited of the Italian enthusiasm which surpassed itself for the Festival of the renewal of gymnastics.



Alphonse Huguenin
First Technical President of the F.I.G.

The opening ceremonies took place in the splendor of the immense "Salone dei Duecento" of the Palazzo Vecchio, marvel of the Italian renaissance and glory of the city of Florence. In these sites of high culture, Count Goblet d'Alviella, president of the FIG had the following inspired thought: "Gymnastics is an art of a high moral level."

The general assembly was held in the famous "Salone bianco" of the Palazzo Pitti. The FIG had received its nobility seals.

But the debates remained reasonable.

The "Deutsche Turnerbund" recreated in 1950 in federal Germany was *temporarily* admitted (as were the Sarre and Japan) until its political status was resolved.

The gymnastic branch of the "Deutsche Sportausschuss" (German Democratic Republic) was not admitted in the FIG and the problem would be discussed during the following years.

Mr. Ernst Maurer (Switzerland) was appointed new technical president and the decision was taken to locate the secretariat and the "treasury" at Mr. Thoeni's residence in Geneva.

Mr. J.H.F. Sommer (Netherlands member of the E.C.) talked for the first time of "Gymnaestrada" involving the large demonstrations in 1953. (The word gymnaestrada comes from the words "gymnastics" and "estrada"-upper level. Others say "gymnastics" and "strada"-road.)

Chapter 12.

The era of strictly sportive gymnastics (1952-1964)

We have reached the contemporary era of the International Gymnastics Federation. Many events of all kinds will be very briefly mentioned.

1952

An Olympic year. The 31st Congress took place in July at the Superior School of Commerce in Helsinki.

One deplored the death of Miss Winifred Taylor, president of the Technical Commission of Women.

Besides the president and the secretary-general-treasurer, five members of the E.C. were appointed (until now only 3) (also three vice-presidents).

Mrs. Orko (Finland) was elected president of the Women's Technical Committee.

The president Ernst Maurer (Switzerland) and Mr. Mironov (USSR) were elected in the Men's Technical Committee (still called technical executive commission).

Rather confusing discussions concerning the affiliation of the GDR (the position of the IOC is not very clear).

The concept of musical accompaniment for women's floor exercise was rejected.

In that year, the FIG numbered 36 affiliated federations over all continents (except Australia).

1953

Starting that year, the Bulletin of the FIG was regularly published.

Fourteen countries with 60 groups registered for the first gymnaestrada, July 15 to 19 in Rotterdam. (More or less 3000 participating gymnasts, of which 1500 are Scandinavian). Goals and reasons: the value of gymnastics in the frame of physical education.

According to news articles, the first Gymnaestrada was a revelation because it brought gymnastics to everybody's level.

The Congress in Rotterdam welcomed the Gymnastics Federation of Uruguay but rejected once more the GDR's request.

There were still women's group exercises, but the vote was in favor of compulsory floor exercise with music.

Olympic matter: first discussions concerning the double medals which can be obtained by competing in one single competition. Traditions had to be protected. An Olympic commission proposed to reduce participation in the O.G. by eliminating "artificial" team competitions based on individual results (gymnastics, fencing, cycling and so on).

The president of the IOC, Mr. Avery Brundage made a few remarks concerning the scoring of competitions. Mr. Charles Thoeni suggested that new instruction courses be organized.

An interesting innovation: appearance of a vaulting spring board. (Reuther)

1954

Strong plea from Mr. Charles Thoeni against the IOC and the idea to "reduce" team competitions. He was satisfied, for these competitions are maintained in the program.

The World Championships in Rome: were a great festival with parades, receptions, music and fireworks.

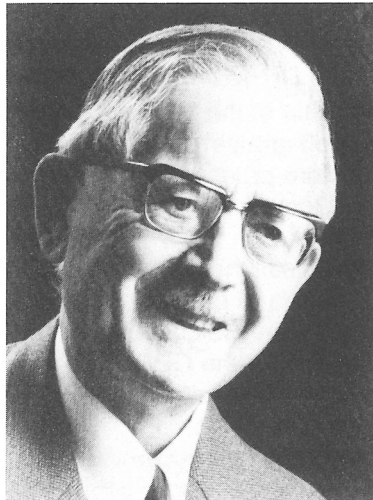
A report by Mr. Hentges concerning the *form and dimensions of apparatus* was discussed and detailed.

In the commissions, one stumbled over the *terminology*. Unbelievable: it is decided to review the work of Cuperus.

The 33rd Congress in Rome voted on the admission of the Australian Gymnastic Union and noted the resignation of Ernst Maurer, president of the CTM. Mr. Maurer was named honorary president of the CTM. Mr. Pierre Hentges replaced him and Arthur Gander was elected member of the executive technical commission.

The congress (with 17 votes) decided to include the Gymnaestrada in the program of the activities of the FIG (every 4 years). A reglement, of Dutch inspiration, was adopted. The principle of a *European Cup* was voted in. The organization of the second gymnaestrada was given to Yugoslavia.

The German ladies decided to no longer compete because of the acrobatic and ballet tendencies. Mrs. Orko, president of the CTF agreed with this position.



Pierre Hentges
Former President of the M.T.C.

1955

The Bulletin goes from being duplicated to being formally printed. After three years, its role is defined:

- a) minutes
- b) official communication (elimination of the newsletters and brochures)
- c) fighting device (sic)
- d) propaganda and exchange of ideas.

The rules on the European Championships (called European Cup) were enacted.

Easter Sunday and Monday, 1953, in Frankfurt, (GFR): First European Cup with 10,000 spectators. (see results in official folder of the FIG).

The 34th Congress was held in Paris. Teams were composed of six gymnasts (previously eight).

The People's Republic of China, South Korea, and the German Democratic Republic still do not receive the majority of 2/3, needed to be admitted into the FIG. (The political and territorial consequences of W.W. II are still apparent.)

The creation of a European Cup for women was considered.

Sweden gave up the organization of the World Championships in 1958. USSR agreed to host them.

1956

A new Olympic year, ten years after the new beginning in 1946. The end of the legislature also marked the 75th anniversary of the FIG.

One already talked of "inflation" of international competitions (the DTB and Charles Thoeni).

The first announcements, in *three languages* were published in the Bulletin.

35th Congress of the FIG in Vienna: Charles Thoeni became president, Mrs. Berthe Villancher, president of the CTF and Pierre Hentges Sr., president of the CTM.

The Sarre joined the DTB.

The People's Republic of China was admitted into the FIG with 17 for, five against and on invalid vote.

Since there were no other candidates, Mr. Thoeni temporarily continued to act as secretary-general-treasurer.

The Olympic Games took place in December in Melbourne. The officially designated representative of the FIG was Pierre Hentges, president of the CTM.

Death of Maurice Regnier (France) member of the Executive Technical Commission at the age of 47.

1957

Death, in February, of the Count Goblet d'Aviella, former president of the FIG. Noble Belgian personality who was dedicated to the cause of gymnastics even if his dedication developed late in life. At the same time, Roy E. Moore, vice-president of the FIG and true pioneer of gymnastics in the USA died.

The first Women's World Cup took place in Bucarest (Rum.) Triumph of the Soviet gymnast, Latinina, but there were few participants: 19 gymnasts representing 10 countries.

The 36th Congress was held in Zagreb (Yu) during the 2nd gymnaestrada. Mr. Guido Ginnani was elected vice-president of the executive committee of the FIG replacing Mr. Moore. Mr. Takashi Kondo (Japan) was elected member of the Executive Committee and Mr. Rudolf Spieth (GFR) replaced Mr. Maurice Regnier in the technical committee.

After seven requests, the GDR was admitted into the FIG.

The possibility of a World Championship for juniors was considered.

Unfounded and malicious critiques were made concerning the judging in Melbourne. The creation of a *list of international judges* was decided. On the technical level, the decision was reached to introduce *finals on each apparatus* (6 best optional and compulsory exercises), in the *technical reglement*.

In spite of the absence of many nations, the Gymnaestrada, this "road to gymnastics" as it is named, is quite successful. (14 countries were represented). Mr. Thoeni disapproved of the highly specialized demonstrations of the institutes and universities compared to the basic activities. There was no candidature for the 3rd gymnaestrada.



Mr. Roy E. Morre, USA
Vice-President of the F.I.G.

1958

New threat from the IOC to reduce each team from six to five gymnasts with four "ranking" Strong reaction from the Executive Committee who questioned the participation in the Olympic Games. Because of the unanimous protests of the Congress, a memo was sent to the International Olympic Committee.

A FIG medal was made for gymnasts obtaining 90% of the points at the World Championships and the Olympic Games. (The first medals were given at the World Championships of Moscow in 1958.)

The 37th Congress was held in Moscow from July 1-5, 1958. Four new federations were admitted (see special list.)

A few innovations for women's gymnastics:

- a) compulsory and optional floor exercises with *music*
- b) apparatus finals for the best gymnasts
- c) elimination of group exercises.

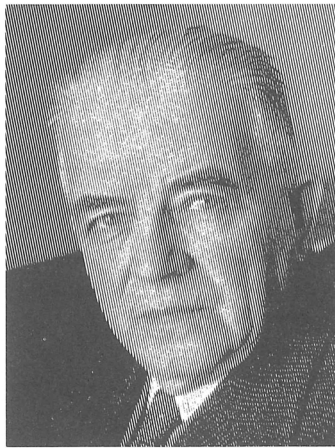
French became the official language and German, English, and Russian, the "usual" languages in the Congress and meetings of the FIG.

Following the gymnastic demonstration of the Gymnaestrada, the creation of a sub-commission for modern gymnastics was considered.

Some have doubts on the choice of Caracalla as the site for the gymnastics competition at the Olympic Games of Rome 1960.



Ms. Berthe Villancher
President Women's Technical Committee
1956-1972



Mr. Charles Thoeni
President of the F.I.G. 1956-1966

1959

Publication of the reglement, including the official list of international judges.

The IOC withdrew the decision to reduce the teams from six to five gymnasts.

The great Spanish gymnast, Joachim Blume, 25 years old, was killed with other Spanish team members in a plane accident between Barcelona and Madrid. He had been European champion in Paris in 1957 and was a very promising gymnast.

A very suggestive evaluation from Mrs. Berthe Villancher concerning the new techniques in women's gymnastics during the 2nd European Cup in Cracovia: "Astakhova and Manina give us the beautiful sight of pure, lively and expressive silhouettes in all their attitudes."

The 35th Congress met in October in Copenhagen. On the proposal by federal Germany, the FIG reconized the "spring board" as an educational, recreational, and sportive gymnastic apparatus. As regards competitions, it left it up to the individual federations.

Four new federations were admitted. Central Africa requested the annulment of its admission it 1958.

Publication of a "Primer of gymnastic terminology", official publication of the FIG and work of a commission presided by Pierre Hentges Sr. for ten years. The book contained a "grammatical terminology" and an anthology of conventional terms. The linguistics are exemplary but the practical usage seems harder.

1960

Death on May 11, 1960 of Professor Dr. Albert Debeyre, president of the French Federation and member of the Executive Committee of the FIG. He was 83 years old.

The 39th Congress was held in Rome (Olympic Games) (35 countries are represented).

Start of new mandates: Mr. J.H.F. Sommer, vice-president of the FIG resigned, followed by Dr. Klinger and Dr. Pustisek in the CTM. They are replaced by Mr. George Gulack (USA) and Mr. Albert Zellekens (GFR) (new treasurer) in the Executive Committee.

Mr. Max Bangerter (Switzerland) will act as secretary without belonging to the E.C.

No changes in the CTF.

For the 3rd Gymnaestrada in Stuttgart in July 1961, a physical education Congress was organized with its principal subject: "The rythmic principle in gymnastics."

1961

The International Gymnastics Federation was 80 years old. Even though its beginnings were humble, it now holds as members 49 countries from all continents. The president Thoeni briefly recalled the evolution of our movement and the goal of the FIG which is to stimulate and strengthen

friendship between gymnasts of all countries in a spirit of absolute political and religious neutrality. (Ten years later, this absolute neutrality will be replaced by the concept of non-discrimination.)

Problems arose concerning the replacement of gymnasts at the Olympic Games and concerning press articles talking of "scandal in gymnastics" because one gymnast won four gold medals at the Games in Rome. A long and continuing controversy.

In the year 1961, there were three manifestations, one of them on a large scale: the Gymnaestrada; and one Congress, enough to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the FIG (European Championships for men and women).

The Gymnaestrada, a great world festival of gymnastics, as it was called, gathered 9000 gymnasts, men, women, adolescents and children, not counting the numerous spectators from various countries. It was held in Stuttgart, July 26-30.

Mrs. Villancher believed that the Gymnaestrada would be propaganda for gymnastics called modern which still searches its orientation. However, various opinions were expressed concerning the necessity to regulate the style of the presentation and the organization (a problem which will often surface).

The 40th Congress took place in Stuttgart. The proposal from the USSR requesting to give the sportive federations all technical responsibility for their respective sports in the Olympic Games was accepted.

Unfortunately, the Congress was tarnished by the quarrel involving the flags of the German states and the withdrawal from the Gymnaestrada of the GDR and USSR gymnasts.

The problems with the IOC are solved. (Teams with seven registered and six participating gymnasts and no reduction in the number of medals).

1962

Thanks to a few federations, (GFR, USA, USSR, and Sweden) the new edition of the Code of Points can be printed in four, even five languages, the FIG taking care of the French version. However, there were doubts that the sale of these copies would be profitable. (The future will prove the contrary).

Mr. N. Popov, vice-president of the FIG, presented an interesting project for World Championships for juniors. Opinions were divided. A research of the federations resulted in contradictory observations.

The women discussed if modern gymnastics (today rhythmic sportive) had to stay purely demonstrative or if they could become competitive.

The 41st Congress was held in Prague at the same time as the World Championships and the centennial of physical education in Prague.

The Congress decided to organize trial competitions for modern gymnastics (USSR and Hungary).

Pre-Olympic competitions took place in 1962 and 1963 in view of the Olympic Games being in Tokyo in 1964.

Mrs. Berthe Villancher, president of the Women's Technical Commission was promoted to assistant director of the Association of Scholastic and University sports in France.

1963

The Gymnaestrada (1965) in Vienna was being organized. Demonstrations with the best world gymnasts were considered.

Following the incidents at the World Championships in Prague during the finals at the parallel bars, for the first time there was talk of improving the evaluation of the originality of the composition and the virtuosity in the execution by fixing a "normal ceiling" for the scores below 10 points (A. Gander proposal).

During the 4th European Cup for Women in April in Paris, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria were absent to protest the viction of the GDR who did not receive the necessary visas issued with the agreement of the Interallied Police Bureau of West Berlin.

The 42nd Congress took place in Belgrade with the 5th European Championships for men just a few days before the terrible earthquake which destroyed part of Yugoslavia.

The new and complete Code of Points was approved.

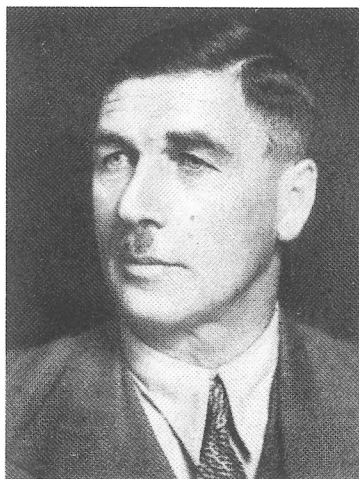
The concept of absolute *racial neutrality* was added to article four of the statutes.

The next Congress would be in Venice because Tokyo (Olympic Games 1964) was too distant.

The 1st international individual competition of modern gymnastics was organized December 7-8 in Budapest.

Death at the end of December of Mr. Ernst Maurer (Switzerland) honorary president of the technical committee and president of the CTM from 1950-1954.

A new federation, not recognized by the FIG, was formed in the United States.



Ernest Maurer
Honorary President-M.T.C.

1964

The Congress was not held in Venice but in Zurich.

Dance? Gymnastics? Apparatus exercises or floor exercises with portable apparatus? Modern gymnastics is successful but finds it difficult to reach its definitive form.

Summer University Games were organized in Budapest under the new Universiade 1965-World Games of the FISU, they included gymnastic events for women and men. (Other similar competitions will be organized in the future.)

The first international course for judges followed the 43rd Congress in Zurich. (53 judges' brevets for men and 12 for women.)

At the Congress, re-defining of art. Four of the statutes were approved; it forbids, within the FIG, any discrimination towards a country for political, religious, and racial motives. The new art. Four does not prevent strong opposition against the admission of Taiwan (Formosa) (admitted with just the necessary 2/3 of the votes). The delegation from the People's Republic of China leaves the room after submitting its resignation. (For Peking, Taiwan-the island of Formosa-is a Chinese province. The problem will remain for many years.)

Sports and politics: the issue of visas prevents many countries from organizing international sportive events.

The very competent Pierre Hentges, Sr. technical president, resigned after an exceptional career span of 42 years.

Mr. Arthur Gander (Switzerland) became president of the Men's Executive Commission (later the CTM). Muratov (USSR), Teraesvirta (Finland), and Pierre Hentges, Jr. (Luxembourg) replaced Mironov (USSR) and Lahtinen (Finland). A new technical team was formed.

In the Executive Committee, Charles Thoeni was re-elected president, Max Bangerter remained as his secretary.

Mr. Clergerie (France), sole candidate, was appointed treasurer of the FIG. Mr. Mario Gotta (Italy) was appointed member of the Executive Committee in replacement of Mr. Guido Ginani who withdrew for health reasons.

Portugal, which was to organize the World Championships 1966, withdrew its candidacy, the organization of these championships was given to the German Federal Republic.

The modern gymnastic competition, 1965, will be called "World Championships of modern gymnastics" (Prague). The suitability of the terms "modern gymnastics" and the choice of "apparatus" (Ball, ring, rope, ribbon, club) was already determined.

Chapter 13

The forward leap: The modern federation (1965-1976)

1965

First steps: a symposium was organized in the frame of the Gymnaestrada in Vienna; it dealt with the technical organization, artistic gymnastics in the federation, educational and formative points of view, the relationship between the federation and the schools and educators of the member federations, the questions of staff and finances, relations with other sports and so on.

Mr. A. Gander suggested measures to shorten the length of the competitions, to detail instruction material and to organize technical symposiums (trainers, technicians, and so on.)

A new brochure dealing with the question of competition apparatus was issued at the end of March 1965.

A complete system for intercontinental and continental judges' courses was set up with "observers" throughout the world.

The fourth Gymnaestrada gathered 15,000 gymnasts from 31 countries and many spectators. It took place with enthusiasm and joy. One feared it was becoming too large.

The 44th Congress preceded the Gymnaestrada. A proposal from the USSR to create the title of "World Class Gymnast" for participants obtaining 90% of the possible points at the World Championships and Olympic Games was accepted. (Since 1958, the FIG emblem is given to these same gymnasts.)

Difficulties appeared concerning the national colors, flags and anthems of the German states for the World Championships in 1966 in Dortmund. The statutes and regulations were modified to eliminate the elements involved.

On modern gymnastics: the opinions were divided and made the orientation of this new discipline very difficult (choreography, theatrical aspects, dislocations, acrobatics).

1966

The president, Charles Thoeni, celebrated his 80th birthday on February 15. The secretary, Max Bangerter, mentioned that such great activity at an advanced age is quite rare. The latter also emphasized the firmness of the president in the defense of the rights of the FIG. (On an olympic point of view: safeguard of the team competition) and his constant efforts to maintain equality and tolerance within the FIG.

A first outline for a calendar of international events was published in the Bulletin. (Realization of a Belgian proposal.)

The delegates of modern gymnastics met periodically with the women's executive commission to deal with technical questions. The first judges' courses were also organized (Nymburk, Cz.). The 2nd World Championships of modern gymnastics took place in Prague in December, 1965 (33 gymnasts from 12 countries). "Lively, joyful, spontaneous, natural gymnastics, seeming to rush out of music" which arose the enthusiasm and a "passionate dialogue" between the technicians and the delegates during a *symposium on methods* after the manifestation. This sport, totally feminine, reaches all: girls, young women, and women without restrictions.

The agenda of the 45th Congress in Dortmund (World Championships) contained a major point, *the election of a president*. Indeed, on March 25, 1966, *Charles Thoeni resigned for health and age reasons*. For 27 years, he was a member of the Executive Committee, 10 years as secretary-general and 10 years as president. His withdrawal will necessitate the re-organization of the office of the *Secretariat general*.

In the "gymnaste Luxembourgeois" and the FIG Bulletin, Pierre Hentges, Sr. paid a magnificent tribute to Charles Thoeni.

In his report to the Congress, Arthur Gander mentioned that three events between Japan and Europe were organized in 1965 and that from now on the Code of Points would be translated in seven languages. Moreover, a specialized German periodical, "Olympische Turnkunst" was published in two languages (German and French). (Unfortunately, this interesting publication will disappear in the 70's.)

A study commission for the modification of the Gymnaestrada Reglement was appointed (members of the Executive Committee and Technical Committee and former organizers).

Mr. Arthur Gander, president of the Men's Technical Commission, was elected president of the FIG. He so pluralized the two presidencies. Charles Thoeni was named honorary president of the International Gymnastics Federation.

Mr. Max Bangarter was appointed Secretary general by a proposal of the Executive Committee. A new administrative era began.

1967

The new Bulletin—blue cover with a world map and the FIG emblem—was issued for the first time. It intended to be more concise in the minutes of the meetings, to publish a calendar of international events and to open pages to the administrative and technical leaders to deal with common interests. It is published four times per year and is written by Max Bangarter in a very competent way.

The list of those obtaining the special FIG emblem (90% of the points) was published for the first time.

A first commission for the revision of the statutes was appointed.

Mr. Paavo Teraesvirta, member of the technical committee since 1964, died at the age of 54.

The 46th Congress was held in Varsovie at the same time as the first international course for trainers.

New financial resources were considered and submitted to Congress (raising of the fees, special fees for modern gymnastics, and so on). The main measures were adopted.

A miniature cup was given to the six former winners of the European Cup.

1968

The words "Men's Technical Committee" (CTM) and "Women's Technical Committee" (CTF) are used. The new acronyms imposed themselves rapidly.

The 47th Congress took place in Rome and was preceded by an intercontinental judges' course for men.

In his annual report, president Gander mentioned the work accomplished: new and voluminous Code of Points, Reglement for international competitions and for judges, Reglement of the Gymnaestrada, preparation and sportive weeks in Mexico, Universiade in Tokyo, judges' course in Cuba. With these examples, one sees that the international dimension of the FIG is a reality.

Problems of the statutes: a study commission composed of two members of the Executive Committee and the five representatives of the federations were appointed. (Switzerland, USSR, Denmark, Belgium and France). Its task was long and hard.

Arthur Gander was re-elected president of the Executive Committee which does not change much. Mr. Radovanovic (Yugoslavia) became a treasurer and Mr. Zerbato (Luxembourg) member of the committee.

Mrs. Berger (GDR) and Mrs. Matlochova (Czechoslovakia) enter in the CTF and Mr. Tuomo Jalantie (Finland) and K.H. Zschocke (GDR) in the CTM. (Pierre Hentges, Jr. becomes assistant of the CTM).

The Bulletin of September 1968 was published entirely in two languages—French and English.

1969

The first symposium for coaches was held in Macolin (Switzerland) from March 19th-23rd. Participation of 50 representatives from 22 federations, six members of the CTM, five speakers and five translators.

Main subjects:

- a) optional exercises and their future perspectives.
- b) principles and laws of biokinetics.
- c) ethics and sports.

The city of Bale (Switzerland) was the location for the Gymnaestrada and the Congress.

The men's technical assembly increased the validity of compulsory exercises to four years.

Mr. Boris Chaklin (USSR) replaced Mr. Valentin Muratov in the CTM, the latter resigning for professional reasons.

The Catalan Federation organized a commemorative competition for the 10th anniversary of the death of the great gymnast Joachim Blume. With the

agreement of the Spanish Federation, the Catalan Federation intends to organize this competition every year in Barcelona.

The 5th Gymnaestrada in Bale was a great success and full of promises for *educational and mass gymnastics* thanks to the advantageous location, the perfect organization, a concrete reglement based on experiences and also the ideal climate. The success is such that in the future only the best exercises will be chosen.

Because of the entry visas denied to South Africa, "prechampionships" in Ljubljana were almost a failure and no longer had the official support of the FIG which, nevertheless, left freedom of action to the federations.

1970

Death at the age of 66 of Mr. Erich Riederberger, active president of the GDR federation.

The age for male and females gymnasts at the World Championships was set at 14 years. On the other hand, for the first time an average score of 7.5 for participation in the championships was mentioned.

The Bulletin would now contain technical articles.

The first two articles—Dr. G. Hruby, Cz., on the problems of biokinetics—kinematics with diagrams and Mrs. Kathe Wiesenberger, Aut, on "modern gymnastics"—were published in Bulletin 2.

Death of Jean de Jong, president of the Dutch federation.

The first intercontinental course for male trainers took place in Rome on July 11-16, 1970. Twenty-four participants from four continents were represented. Well-known experts directed the course.

The 49th Congress was held in Ljubljana at the same time as the World Championships.

For the first time, the members of the authorities of the FIG wore a uniform.

A small FIG acknowledgement plate was created.

A conflict still opposed two American federations: the AAU and the USGF. Finally, the USGF was recognized as the sole representative of the USA. Sportively, the AAU delegate yielded.

A proposal from the USSR asking the IOC to recognize "modern gymnastics" as an olympic sport was accepted. An interesting study from A. Gander on optional exercises and the evolution of large competitions was published in the Bulletin. (True technical balance sheet of the post-war.)

In the study, A. Gander already denounced certain "forms of movements not appropriate, unesthetic, even ridiculous" but very acrobatic and risky in optional exercises. The tendency would continue to grow.

1971

A first international calendar containing almost exclusively international events and national championships was published in the Bulletin. The results of the main international events with detailed scoring were also published. (First meet: USA-USSR at Penn. State University.) The information in the Bulletin grows, but—according to Mr. Gander and other leaders—the readers are still

rare. The official results, since 1948, of the World Committee, Olympic Gymnastics, and Executive Committee are gathered in a file, initiative of Max Bangerter, Secretary-general.

The 50th Congress, coinciding with the 90th anniversary of the FIG, was held in Madrid. Forty-one federations were represented and the Spanish Federation offered a commemorative dinner to the members of the authorities and the delegates.

1972

Olympic year and end of the legislature. The 51st Congress was held in Munich and preceded the Olympic Games whose memories, at the same time grand and tragic, are still present in all minds.

In his report, President Gander noted that the qualification system for the participation to the Games is not easy to follow. The qualifications were imposed by new IOC requirements involving team competitions and the necessity—to control the awarding of medals—to set up new format of competition (the actual Competition 2).

Mr. Gander and Mr. Bangerter were re-elected. Mr. Kondo, Thoresson and Titov will be vice-presidents of the Executive Committee. Mr. Fernandez (Spain), Spieth (GFR) and Bare (USA) members of the CE.

Changes in the technical committees: Mr. Ivan Invacevic became president. Mr. Gonzales (Spain) and Kaneko (Japan) new members of the CTM. In the CTF, resignation of Mrs. Berthe Villancher who was re-elected to the presidency. Her strong personality, her technical competence and her vast knowledge marked women's gymnastics. Mrs. Villancher was a member of the authorities from 1948 to 1972, 16 years as president of the CTF and member of the executive committee. Mrs. Valerie Nagy (Hungary) was elected president and Mrs. Ulla Berg (Sweden) member of the CTF. There were no changes in the commission for rhythmic modern gymnastics presided by Mrs. Andreina Gotta (Italy).

Mrs. Villancher, Mr. Nicolai Popov (USSR) and George Gulack (USA), devoted members of the Executive Committee, were named honorary members of the FIG.

1973

The first propaganda tour of the FIG in Brazil took place from May 14 to 26. Under the leadership of Max Bangerter, Secretary-general, and with the efficient help of Siegfried Fischer, from the Brazilian Federation, 14 girls and 16 boys would know a triumphal success in Rio de Janeiro (2 demonstrations), Porto Alegre (2 dem.) Sao Paulo, Brasilia and Belo Horizonte. (The tour would be repeated in 1977 with the same success.)

Death on May 26 of Charles Thoeni, honorary president of the FIG, at the age of 87.

On May 1, 1973, the permanent secretariat of the FIG opened in Lyss (Switzerland). Thanks to practical equipment and to the administrative knowledge of the secretary-general, Mr. Max Bangerter, the FIG finally found its "home".

The IOC denied the request concerning the recognition of modern gymnastics as an Olympic sport. (Main reason: The FIG is already represented by a feminine sport at the Games.)

The first symposium for male judges was held in Madrid from September 2 to 5 with 49 participants from 26 federations, seven members of the CTM and two members of the Executive Committee. All material relating to scoring was reviewed and would offer a working base for the new Code of Points which will be edited in 1975.

The 52nd Congress was held in Rotterdam and preceded the World Championships of rhythmic gymnastics.

1974

The Executive Committee withdrew the organization of the World Championships of artistic gymnastics from Bulgaria and gave them to the GFR (Munich). Reason: The Bulgarian Federation cannot give the guarantees stipulated in art. 34 of the statutes. (Reglements of the FIG, entry visas and so on.)

The Executive Committee withdrew the Congress from Tunisia for similar reasons (visas denied to South Africa and Israel). (No ordinary Congress in 1974).

A commission for the revision of the statutes was appointed. (Members of the FIG and federations: total of seven).

In July, the extraordinary congress in Montreux gathered the record of 51 of the 67 federations affiliated to the FIG. By 26 votes for, 24 against and one abstention, the organization of the 18th World Championships was definitely given to the city of Varna (Bulgaria) where it took place October 20-27, 1974. President Gander observed that the statutes were not respected but he yielded to the majority and asked everyone to start working in a sportive spirit. (The violation of the statutes was flagrant: denial of entry visas for South Africa).

As far as competitions are involved, let us mention the appearance and development of numerous and new international events. (New York, London, Paris, Euro-competitions in Wiesbaden, South Africa, Bucarest, Moscow, Tokyo, and so on.)

1975

The 53rd Congress took place in Bern (Switzerland) at the opportunity of the European Championships for men.

At the opening assembly, president Gander warned the leaders not to let "artistic gymnastics regress into pure acrobatics with health or even life risks." Certain observations made at the World Championships in Varna justified the remarks of the president (faulty positions, deficient execution, "dismounts" on the back or the knees).

Pierre Hentges, Jr. was appointed honorary member of the FIG.

Sportive rhythmic gymnastics was officially accepted as a designation (the term "modern" is dropped) and the former commission became an official technical committee.

The main subject of discussions in the Congress was the qualification system for the Olympic Games in Montreal, which remained unsatisfactory.

The new Code of Points was presented in Thonon-les-Bains (France) during an intercontinental course for male and female judges.

As great successes, we mention the 6th Gymnaestrada in Berlin (in spite of the absence of the gymnasts from Eastern Europe) and the 1st World Cup in October in London. The Gymnaestrada—the last in the first century of the FIG—became the calling card of world gymnastics for all levels, ages and sex. Its future organization, however, poses certain problems of fundamental options and general organization.

1976

Death, at the age of 85, of Mr. Pierre Hentges.

His technical competence, his long career, his extraordinary archives, his linguistic knowledge, his sense of history and his marvelous gift for the written word made him a great man of the FIG, rich in experience and an inexhaustible source of reference.

1976 was also an Olympic year, marking the end of legislature.

Serious difficulties arose concerning the qualification for the Olympic Games. The system was perhaps good but it was wrongly applied. Doubts appeared, and a true inflation of scores followed which resulted in a new selection in which everyone had the same conditions.

In May, trials were organized in Hamburg for the women and in Wiesbaden-Ingelheim (GFR) for the men. The results practically confirmed the previous rankings.

The general assembly at the Congress of Montreal is to be remembered, without a doubt, as one of the most perturbed ones in history of the FIG.

First of all, the statutes detailed, discussed, postponed, and reconsidered for years were finally submitted by the special commission who intended to close the matter and to have the proposals accepted as such. Nothing very new, only the relinquishment of the terms "total neutrality" in favor of "political, religious and racial non-discrimination." Most of the delegates seemed to have missed this new and important orientation.

Ivan Ivancevic (Yugoslavia) who resigned was replaced by Alex Lylo (Czechoslovakia) as president of the CTM. Sandor Urvari (Hungary) becomes a member and Kaneko and Chakhlin, vice presidents.

On the women's side, Mrs. Ellen Berger (GDR) replaced Mrs. Valerie Nagy as president, Mrs. Fentsahm (Netherlands), Letheren (Canada) and Fie (USA) are the new technicians. A more "intercontinental" CTF full of promise is formed.

In the CTF/GRS, Mrs. Gotta remained as president and Mrs. Chichmanova (Bulgaria), Rinaldi (France) and Koop (Canada) were the new members.

But the struggle for the presidency of the FIG was strong. Finally, Mr. Yuri Titov (USSR) was elected by 27 votes against 24 for A. Gander, current president. Mr. Burette (France), Vieru (Romania), Hadjiev (Bulgaria), Whiteley (G.B.), Spieth (GFR), and Bare (USA) became members of the Executive

Committee (C.E.). The secretary general, Max Bangerter was unanimously re-elected.

All the outgoing members were appointed honorary members: Klas Thoreson (Stockholm), Mario Gotta (Rome), Ivan Ivancevic (Sombir), Valerie Nagy (Budapest), Taissia Demedenko (Moscow), Kathe Wiesenberger (Vienna), Henriette Abad (Budapest), Ivanka Tchakarova (Madrid) and Suzanne Urzinicok (Berlin).

A proposal submitted by Mr. Fernandez from the Executive Committee was greeted with applause: the title of the honorary president of the FIG was given to Mr. Arthur Gander.

Member of the FIG since 1954, Mr. Gander's work is enormous. We mention it throughout the brochure, we quote him constantly, we recall, throughout the chapters, his work and the fact that he is practically at the base of all the initiatives of this efa.

Chapter 14

Sport-spectacle and mass-media (1977)

1977

Mass media or media: this fashionable expression, according to "Grevisse", designates communications and informations conceived as a very large broadcasting system, by various technical methods, audio-visual and others (press, radio, television, propaganda).

No doubt this definition characterizes the evolution of the FIG in the aftermath of the immense success of the Olympic Games in Montreal. No doubt that the main results of the Games on the American continent are a tremendous impulse of certain forms of gymnastics promoted to sport-spectacle for large audiences. (Women's gymnastics especially, "Comaneci phenomenon," very young gymnasts but, still, clear progress of gymnastics on the American continent).

Powerful American television stations submit rather extraordinary contracts and a large international advertising company offers its services to promote our activities on a modern base and in a prospective view. The new resources would allow consideration of a "federation policy" quite more ambitious in several domains.

The new Executive Committee is responsible for the success of the delicate negotiations with the commercial firms and tries to convince the national federations which fear losing what the FIG stands to gain as a whole.

The Congress of Rome, 1977, is dominated by these preoccupations, but the Executive Committee is allowed to continue the negotiations.

We truly believe that the movement is irreversible and that high level competition will continue in this direction.

In 1977, the second tour in Brazil was organized, (2nd Festival International de Ginastica Olimpica) and was a great success. (75,000 spectators for eight demonstrations.)

Important decision: the World Championships of artistic gymnastics will take place every 2 years. They will become the qualification competitions for the Olympic Games.

New competition: The European Championships for Juniors, first time in Milan, 1978.

Also, a controversial technical Reglement is approved.

1978

On March 16, a tragic plane accident decimated the GRS team from Bulgaria and also touched the authorities of the FIG. In a moving speech, Mrs. Gotta mentioned the enthusiasm and the constant work of Mrs. Juliette

Chichmanova. A tribute was also paid to the memories of Mrs. Snejana Varbanova-Michaydova, pianist, Mrs. Roimania Stephanova, famous coach, Mrs. Sevdalina Popova, judge, and the gymnasts Valentina Kirilova and Albena Petrova, members of the national team. Sympathy messages are sent from the whole world.

Mr. Nicolai Mironov (USSR), honorary member of the FIG and former member of the CTM, died in August.

The 56th Congress was held in Strasbourg before the World Championships of Artistic Gymnastics.

According to the report by president Titov, a contract was signed with ABC television.

The new revenues will be used for the needs of the FIG as reserve funds, for aid to the organizers of international manifestations and for the development of gymnastics in the world.

The main event at the Congress of Strasbourg, was the re-admission of the People's Republic of China. 39 votes positive against seven negative, but certain delegates cannot agree with the exclusion of Taiwan. (Taiwan left the room in protest.)

The olympic limitation rules are confirmed for the World Championships of Artistic Gymnastics: three gymnasts per country for Competition II and two gymnasts for Competition III.

The creation of regional unions in the frame of the FIG is mentioned. Their activity could be beneficial.

In this perspective, some ten countries from Western Europe requested the creation of a new technical committee which would deal with the general gymnastics and the Gymnaestrada. Without officially accepting the proposal, the general assembly decided to create an extended commission for the organization of the Gymnaestrada. By a proposal from Portugal, a commission dealing with problems of development could also be created.

The last Congress that we mention here is perhaps among the hardest, the longest, and the most depressing because of its atmosphere. But from the hard work of men, hope can rise.

1979

The very first days of 1979 are saddened by the death of George Whiteley after a long and terrible illness. He was a member of the Executive Committee.

And coincidence, or fate, at the time we finish this general history, the word of the death of the one who allowed us, in great part, to describe the first 40 years reaches us. Dr. Miroslav Klinger (Czechoslovakia), honorary member of the FIG and former member of the CTM died in Prague on February 10 at the age of 87.

In the introduction, we mentioned his great merits. His critical sense of history, his knowledge, his large documentation, his precise and meticulous work were for us a bright example.

The FIG owes a lot to Dr. Klinger.

Chapter 15

In conclusion. Towards the future

The International Gymnastics Federation (FIG), founded in 1881 in Leige (Belgium) today (1979) numbers 77 national federations. The FIG is the oldest international sports federation.

Indeed, the founding president, Nicolas J. Cuperus—a strong personality from Antwerp—and a few friends from Belgium, France and the Netherlands, carried out a “good concept” which was only truly concertized at the turn of the century with the affiliation of 18 European and Canadian Federations.

President Cuperus invited his friends, the French Cazalet and the Dutch Muller, to his house in the Moorland, to determine the rules and the prescriptions for the organization of international competitions.

The first “event” took place in Antwerp in 1903. For the young federation, it was an important step. (Benelux, France, Norway, Italy, and Hungary).

The first events were not true gymnastics competitions, they included athletic if not folkloric exercises. (Vaults, rock-throwing, weight-lifting, rope-climbing, races, swimming disciplines which changed from event to event.)

This era was ended in 1931 in Paris, where the organization of true World Championships was considered. These World Championships took place in 1934 in Budapest where gymnasts competed in 15 areas. For the first time, female gymnasts from five countries competed in team competitions.

Gymnasts from the USA competed in the Olympic Games 1948 in London. At the start of the second post-war era, the FIG numbered 29 federations from four continents and in 1950 the decision was taken to limit the World Championships to a program of pure gymnastics.

Soviet and Japanese gymnasts were present in 1952 at the Olympic Games in Helsinki. According to Arthur Gander’s expression, the era of “strictly sportive gymnastics” started. The precision and the confidence of the Soviets, the virtuosity of the Japanese would mark a new step in the development of and give new dimension to the FIG.

The concrete signs of the evolution were new competitions, improvement and standardization of the apparatus, more adequate scoring with difficulty parts rated A, B, and C.

The first Gymnaestrada was organized in Rotterdam in 1953. According to J.H.F. Sommer, the vice-president of the FIG, the event would eventually be integrated in the regular activities.

On the initiative of the German Albert Zellekens, the first European Cup (or European Championship) took place in Frankfort (GFR) in 1955.



Dr. Miroslav Klinger
Honorary member of the F.I.G.



It has to be added that 1954 (World Championships in Rome) marked—with the retreat of the Swiss to 3rd place—the beginning of the Soviet-Japanese supremacy. (Irremediable breach in the spirit, methods, scientific education, training between the “big ones” and the rest of the world.)

The duel between the USSR and Japan continues still. Japan remains loyal to its beautiful, dynamic and technical gymnastics, and the USSR adds to its precision the virtues of a new style.

The years 1956 to 1976 saw the detailing of regulations in all sectors: norms and dimensions of apparatus (brochure in 1956 followed by five supplements), introduction of a unified scoring system with, as early as 1968, the new concept of risk, originality, and virtuosity, technical regulations and others (three kinds of competitions, olympic problems and so on).

The first World Championships of sportive rhythmic gymnastics were held in Budapest in 1953. They would take place every two years. After a long period of hesitations, the sport would finally find its own direction, full of attractiveness, definitely favorable to women's gymnastics.

Finally in 1975, the World Cup (men and women) was the last great event to be created with perhaps, propaganda tour of the best world gymnasts, in Brazil.

And the FIG reaches its centennial, experiencing a new movement where sport-spectacle and mass-media together with mass gymnastics create some problems.

After one century, did the FIG accomplish its mission? Is its existence—threatened, it is said—still justified? Year after year, loyal gymnasts, sincere men, become doubtful and predict the end of international competitions, the Olympic Games and international institutions. Nevertheless, year after year competitions take place and gymnasts from the whole world, increasing in number, meet more and more often. History is there to clarify and prove the fragility of men's judgments. We perhaps reached the goal that we had in mind when we wrote the history of the FIG if we could show that the “serious and unsolvable problems” of today are no worse, no simpler than those experienced by former generations. In spite of years of failure and apparent inactivity, Nicolas Cuperus and his friends never doubted; in an atmosphere of general nationalisms, unfavorable to an international cause, against all and everything, they maintained a futuristic idea. These European pioneers grasped the needs of the era: exchange of information, reciprocal invitations, organization of competitions and so on, and they tried modestly, painfully, and even sometimes clumsily to achieve their goals. But always fighting for their beliefs.

Today, the International Gymnastics Federation lives and acts on a world level. All the activities and all the sports have to be considered at this level. The FIG cannot fail in its mission at a time when humanity, if not our civilization is in danger. Gymnastics is a sport, but also an art, a way of life, a cultural act, even a philosophical conception. Gymnastics, as all sports, is a modern sociological

phenomenon which—if well managed—can result in the accomplishment and the salvation of youth, and perhaps even nations.

But let us not dwell on inevitable deviations, on direction errors often abusive. Once more a great scientist, Dr. Krastev (Bulgaria) can state: "There is no justification in the point of view of sportive medicine, to deprive the Olympic Games of sovereign gymnasts as asserted as Nadia Comaneci or Cornelia Ender and many others who at the mere age of 13-14 awoke the enthusiasm of the sportive world."

And does not competition—so often negatively judged—have its constructive values, as said the education magazine "Contact:" "the young sportsman has all the roles, observes, reacts, adapts himself, he burns with a thousand excitements, discovers other, assumes the formidable training of physical pain. Victory is not essential, the game is. It provides a permanent evaluation, requires generosity in the physical commitment".

On a summer evening in Montreal, perhaps more than anywhere else, we felt the quasi religious fervor of the 17,000 spectators massed in the Forum (same name as used in the Roman civilization) and we understood, then, that Cuperus saw right and great.

4. The official World Competitions of the FIG The World Championships of artistic gymnastics

Foreword

In the general history, we quoted Arthur Gander: "By using as a base the competitions, one could almost follow the whole history of Federation."

Not exaggerated. We could consult a very rare document from the Belgian Federation: Album of the XXVII Belgian Federal Festival of Gymnastics, Antwerp, August 14-18, 1903. (on the first page, we added: "and of the first gymnastic event for it is truly the first public manifestation of what we call the European Gymnastics Federation for reasons of simplification and historical perspective.")

However, in the year 1903, in this particular document, there is no mention of the year 1881 and the foundation of the FEG. And still, the hero of the year, the festival and the event is no other than the great N.J. Cuperus whose 25th anniversary as president of the Belgian Federation is grandly celebrated.

We do not believe that at that time, the national federations felt like members of an international organization. All the documents of the era mention the Bureau of European Gymnastics Federations and the meeting of delegates from these federations. (All the historians talked of the FEG for simplification.)

In his "Notice on the origin and the history of the World Championships of Gymnastics"—which we quote frequently—Pierre Hentges, Sr. was of the same opinion and talked about Mr. N.J. Cuperus, founding president of the Bureau of the European Gymnastics Federations. He wrote: "on the memorable day of September 14, 1902, Mr. N.J. Cuperus, Belgium, founding president of the Bureau of the European Gymnastics Federations had invited to

his property of Heirust (Rest in the Moorland), close to the Belgo-Dutch border, his two friends, Mr. Charles Cazalet, France and Karl Muller, Netherlands, to discuss the common interests of the gymnasts." Each of these men was president of his national federation. It was then decided that, "the time had come to accept the Cazalet proposal concerning an international event."

It is this date and this meeting of friends—of which we are fortunate to have a picture—that mark the real start of the international activity.

September 14, 1902: from hoped for to concrete perspectives. Let us give the word to the great historian, Pierre Hentges:

1st Championship 1903

Took place in Antwerp at the opportunity of the 27th Belgian Federal Festival, from August 14 to 18, 1903.

Four nations participated: Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands—Italy, Norway, and Hungary were registered but had to withdraw for technical difficulties. The event took place at the "Velodrome du Sud." It seems important to let today's gymnasts know some regulatory dispositions and the results of the first event.

The teams were composed of nine gymnasts who competed in all events. There was only one team score, established on the total of the points obtained by all members of the team. (Individual scores were introduced in 1922, first for all around events, then also for apparatus. The finals exist only since 1958.) The program contained the following 26 events: a) six free hand compulsory exercises, simultaneously executed but scored individually. b) 12 apparatus exercises: two compulsory and one optional on the pommel horse and one vault. c) three athletic exercises: racing, high jump, weight lifting.

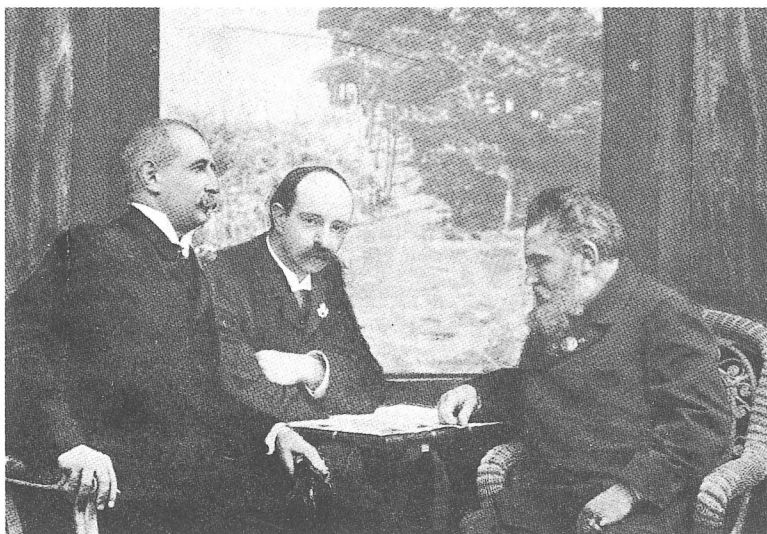
The scoring: a) for optional exercises, five points per gymnast and per exercise. (Behavior of the team: two points.) b) For apparatus, five points per gymnast and per exercise, plus one point for walking up to and one point for leaving the apparatus. c) Athletic exercises: high jump with run, hard board, optional mount but correctness of the take off, the mount, the flight and dismount: 10 points for 1.75 m. with gradual deduction to a minimum of one point for 1.20 m. 150 m. race with 10 points for 18 sec.

We complete the clear and precise accounts of Pierre Hentges Sr., with remarks, observations or interesting reflections from Dr. Klinger's magnificent historical account. Certain points are more human, amusing or ironical, meaning they better reveal the mentality, reactions, and trends of the era.

Thus, concerning the first official event, Dr. Klinger wrote: "...The Italian team came, but after observing the absolute superiority of the French, the Italians chose to watch the competition as spectators...The tradition of choosing optional exercises among those in the host nation festival remained until W.W. I...It is interesting to note that the French were coached by

an Algerian. This situation was maintained until the Olympic Games of Antwerp in 1920.”

We will add that the first event was preceded on August 14 by the fourth official meeting (really the fifth) of the delegates from the federations.



14 September 1902 at Heirust



Members of the IV Reunion
European Gymnastics Federations

The meeting was very short: one hour and fifteen minutes to deal with competition problems: age of the gymnasts, alphabetical order for parades, receptions, speeches, scoring according to the number of gymnasts or the value of the performance and, the only important problem, it seems, the continuation of international gymnastic events and the eventual designation of future organizers. (Each federation had only one vote but could be represented by an unlimited number of delegates.)

Practically all the proposals were left up to the federations. The principle of events was approved by six votes for, one against (Netherlands).

But, nothing was sacrificed for the festivities which marked the Antwerp days. Nocturnal receptions in the magnificent City Hall on the Grand Place and so on.

There were concerts, historical reports, exhibitions, international and federal competitions, and the N.J. Cuperus manifestation honoring his 25 years as president of the Belgian Federation.

There were speeches from the foreign guests, gift presentations, diplomas, statues, commemorative medals, telegrams from the Belgian king and Mr. Emile Loubet, president of the French Republic who had given the medal of "chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur" to Mr. Cuperus.

There were brightly colored parades and banquets in the true Flemish tradition. A warmer and friendlier atmosphere could not be expected for the first international manifestation.

2nd Championship 1905

After the encouraging success of the first attempt, it was decided to organize a second competition in 1905 and thus to inaugurate a biennial periodicity. The event took place in Bordeaux, Charles Cazalet's city, on the occasion of the 31st Federal Festival of France, on April 22 and 23. Once more all the affiliated federations were invited, but only the same four participated in the event. Moreover, the competition almost did not occur because the four federations disagreed on a question of apparatus: Rings, mobile or immobile apparatus. Similar difficulties appeared in Antwerp concerning optional exercises. Finally, for the sake of friendship, a compromise, as wise as simple, was reached by eliminating the apparatus in question. There were then only three apparatus. The group series only containing five exercises, the total of events was reduced to 17."

Dr. Klinger adds ironically:

"This time, the president of the European Federation respected the decision taken in Ghent to organize international meetings every three years (administrative sessions); he did not call an international meeting in Bordeaux, which upset the French. The French festivals were then held two years after the last meeting. There were some contentions between France, a great gymnastic power, and small Belgium."

3rd Championship 1907

Even though N.J. Cuperus still wished for demonstrative and non-competitive gymnastics, the 3rd competition took place in Prague on June 30, 1907 within the context of the 5th Czech. Federal Festival of Gymnastics. (Sokols)

But the president still observed that it would be erroneous to “totally abandon the idea so generous and noble to let gymnasts from various countries compete on the *Pacific field of physical redemption*”.

“The organizers had the satisfaction of registering the participation of six teams: the Czech Sokols, the Slovenes Sokols and Hungary joined the three old ones, Belgium, France, and Luxembourg (the Netherlands withdrew.)

The technical program was similar to the one in Bordeaux: Five group optional exercises from the Sokols Festival; six apparatus exercises, one compulsory and one optional at the parallel bars, high bar, and horse.

Three athletic exercises—a total of 14 events—teams of six gymnasts without reserves.”

Remarks of Dr. Klinger:

“In an article, the magazine “DEUTSCHE TURNZEITUNG” 1907, dissuaded the non-slavic nations from participating in the international competitions in Prague, by saying the competitors could be threatened by violence. The goal of the article was to pressure the president of the European Federation into the renunciation of the Prague event. Nevertheless, the German Federation sent observers to Prague.”

Dr. Klinger also provides some very interesting technical considerations:

“Concerning the free exercises, the team members worked all together in five combinations of prescribed exercises...Then, an optional and compulsory exercise at the high bar and the parallel bars, one exercise at the pommel horse and one vault, legs stretched out laterally...Concerning the mixed jump (height and length), the rope was placed at the height of 100 cm. and the board was placed at the distance of 200 cm. It was taken further away 25 cm. at a time so that at the distance of 360 cm., 20 points could be obtained. The competition also contained two other disciplines: weight lifting 35 kg. and a 150 m. race. (20 lifts for 20 points and 18 seconds for 20 points). The evaluation was secret. The competitors did not know any results before the end of the competitions. They had to wear shoes with skin or rubber soles and could not take them off (sic.). Compulsory exercises had to be performed as prescribed and could not be reversed.”

Finally, some details on schedules:

“The competition started at 8 a.m.; it was interrupted at 11 a.m. because the athletes had to participate in a two-hour formal parade in the streets of Prague. At 1:00 p.m., the competition started again, but was once more interrupted by the formal manifestation with Sokols exercises. As soon as the competition started, some international judges were called for representation duties. That is why the competition lasted until late at night. . .”

4th Championship 1909

According to the 6th international meeting in Prague 1907, the 4th competition took place in Luxembourg on August 1, 1909 on the occasion of the 9th Federal Festival of Luxembourg.

Six federations participated, Italy replacing Hungary. The technical program contained 14 events: five optional exercises from the festival, one compulsory and one optional exercise at the high bar, the parallel bars and the rings, three athletic exercises.

Scoring: as before, except that the maximum for athletic events was reduced to 15 points."

(The former president of the technical committee, Pierre Hentges, Sr., who provided this information, had the honor to have his first contacts with the leaders and the gymnasts of the FEG. At this event he was among the youngest performers at the competition and won his "spurs" with 85.2% of the points.)

During the 4th event, the delegates from the federations met, as usual, to decide the location and the dates of the next competition and especially, to discuss the acquired experience for future competitions.

Very interesting and progressive: the proposal from Dr. Vanicek (Czech Sokols) favoring a uniform, constant regulation of the competitions. He suggested 12 events: parallel bars, high bar and pommel horse (compulsory and optional exercises), high jump and pole jump (above superposed ropes), long jump, two optional exercises chosen among those of the host's festival and a 100 m. race.

"Dr. Vanicek presumed that this way the competitions would be simpler, the events would take place normally, and the scoring would be more even, meaning more equitable, but the principle of "the complete gymnast" would be safeguarded.

(Some of his proposals were maintained for many years, namely those concerning the apparatus exercises. The new executive commission, formed in 1930, slowly made the amendments towards our actual dispositions. As far as athletic exercises were concerned, they kept changing constantly until their suppression in 1949). Mr. A. Kayser (Luxembourg) and Dr. Vanicek insisted on the importance of the creation of a permanent technical commission which would deal with the technical rules and regulations, the combinations of exercises, the nomination of the jury, the control of scoring . . . (The wish was often expressed but only realized 20 years later.)"

At the same meeting, S. Van Aken (Netherlands) submitted a project of reorganization of the competitions with 18 events including, among others, a distance race (1000 m.) a lateral high jump with "a lateral mount, called Scottish jump, the hand on the side opposed to the rope weighted down with a three kg. iron bar", the throwing of a three kg. iron bar, lifting of a 40 kg. bar, smooth rope, swimming and so on.

Pierre Hentges, Sr., concluded: "Although recognizing the basic good ideas of the argumentation, Mr. Van Aken's associates were, however, hesitant concerning the realization of a very complicated project."

Dr. Klinger's comments:

"The French had a certain advantage because the compulsory exercises of the international event were the same as those of the French Championships held the same year. But did not know what to say about the fact that the mixed high and long jumps were modified contrary to the dimensions determined in 1907 and without the knowledge of the technical commission. There were three basic high jumps: 1.20 m., 1.10 m., and 1.0., the board was fixed at the distance of 2 m. Then, still without knowledge of the commission, there was another change: the heights were raised to 140, 130, 120 c.m."

Dr. Klinger also recalls that the Italian Braglia executed a "giant circle from a handstand backwards to a handstand on the high bar". Movement that the Swiss called "Steinemann" from the Swiss gymnasts who performed the exercise at the Olympic Games in Amsterdam in 1848.

5th Championship 1911

The 5th competition took place in Turin on May 13, 1911 on the occasion of the 8th Italian Federal Festival of Gymnastics.

Eight federations sent teams: Belgium, the Croatian Sokols, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Romania, the Slovenes and the Czech Sokols. The teams were made up of six gymnasts. Scoring at the apparatus: 10 points for the exercise plus two points for walking up to and leaving the apparatus.

"The Czech Sokols had requested and were granted permission to use their own high bar from Prague. The apparatus was installed outside the gymnasium and the other federations could choose either one. This disposition was accepted by all involved.

(The situation was repeated for other events and the Olympic Games. As years went by, other federations did the same and brought high bars, rings, springboards, and mats. But as good as the disposition might have been, the situation resulted in inconveniences, congestion, and loss of time, even ill feelings if the apparatus was rejected by the organizers because it did not conform to the norms. The situation could not last and in 1949, the technical commission of the FIG determined that the organizers had to furnish the apparatus.)"

Dr. Klinger mentioned a few "curiosities" in the event: ". . . a Belgian athlete missed and dislocated his arm at the high bar. Immediately, the president of the jury, Mr. Cuperus, suggested that as an exception assistance could be given for exercises at the high bar. Then, an Italian gymnast sprained a finger while in the "L-support" at the parallel bars. He held the support, asked that his finger be reset, dismounted and requested repetition of the exercise."

The commentator also notes that discipline was weak in the European Federation; facts: the French and the Italians who did not complete the events went back to the dressing rooms saying they were exhausted. The president granted one hour to rest. As soon as the athletic competition began, it started to rain. A special meeting was called: should the competition continue, be annulled or postponed until the next day? (The same situation occurred in Luxembourg, 1930). Following tumultuous discussions, the decision was made to continue the competition regardless of the conditions. The last team jumped with the pole at 22:00 H. The judges lighted their chronometers and tables with candles.

6th Championship 1913

The organization was assumed by the "Union des Societes de Gymnastique de France", in Paris on November 16, 1913, on the occasion of its 40th anniversary.

Following the great success of previous competitions, many athletes were expected in Paris. However, there were unpredictable impediments, N.J. Cuperus mentioned, among others, the situation in the Balkans.

Six teams participated in the official opening ceremony: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Czech Sokols, and the Slovenes. The events took place in the "Japy" gymnasium, except the race, which was held on the Picpus Boulevard.

As usual, the optional exercises were performed in a group, but individually scored.

The 10th meeting of the International Federation took place before the competitions.

"Mr. Cazalet's wish to have the same Federation rules for the Olympic gymnastic event was unanimously adopted and would be presented at the Olympic Congress in Paris in June, 1914.

Then, hoping that the problems in the Balkans would be solved, the delegates decided to meet in Antwerp in 1915 for the 7th competition and hoped to see some 10 nations represented there. This meeting would not take place.

The technicians met again in the summer in Luxembourg and two months later war broke out.

The torn ties of our friendly competitions would only be mended after nine long years of war . . ."

Dr. Klinger had mitigated even negative impressions of the meetings and competitions in Paris, 1913. Indeed, it was still the "Belle Epoque", the evening of an era which would soon disappear forever, he noted: festivities took up all the free time.

The Czech Sokols were disadvantaged: they were not informed that the end of the ring exercises had been modified just before the competition. On the other hand, the pommel horse was raised from 120 to 140 cm. and the space between the pommels decreased from 45 to 42 cm. The Czechs had to revise the rhythm of the exercise. The competition took a "dramatic" character in the competition between the teams, the partiality of certain judges (which were named) and the fact that the "Latin countries" were favored.

The author also mentioned that the French team included four Algerians who were excellent in their passionate, impetuous execution, required by their master, Castiglioni, champion of France...One ran in high winds on a street covered with a layer of stones." and so on.

Then came the true "drama": 1914. Dr. Klinger, however, agrees that the "heroic time" for our competitions ends in 1920 at the Antwerp Olympic Games.

After the first World War.

7th Championship 1922

Following the war, 1914-1918, cultural and sportive international organizations had serious difficulties regrouping. But thanks to the calming and healing influence of time, it became possible to mend the ties of brotherhood. The first meeting (11th Congress of the FIG) took place in Brussels, April 17, 1921, under the presidency of N.J. Cuperus. It was noted that the pre-war plan to organize the 7th event in Antwerp on the occasion of the 37th Federal Belgian Festival had become unrealizable. On the proposal from Dr. Scheiner, Prague, the organization of the next competition was given to the new state of Yugoslavia and the competitions took place in Ljubljana on August 11-12, 1922 on the occasion of the First Federal Festival of the Yugoslav Sokols. Resulting from an agreement with the IOC in Lausanne in June, 1920, the Congress decided that competitions of the FIG would be held every four years, with a two year span from the Olympic Games: 1922, 1926 . . . It was also suggested that the name be changed from "European Federation" to "International Federation." Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia participated in the 7th competition.

For the first time the program ran for two days and swimming was included—August 11 was reserved for apparatus and floor exercises; the next day started with athletics, and the swimming competition followed in the sportive club of Ljubljana".

For the first time, an official individual score for the 15 events, but not for apparatus, was published.

(Our chronicler, Pierre Hentges, Sr. started his judging and international technician's career at this competition.)

8th Championship 1926

At the 12th and 13th Congress held in Paris on 11-2-23 and 7-19-1924, the French Federation agreed to organize the 8th Congress in conjunction with its federal festival in Lyon on May 22-23, 1926.

During the year 1924, the president N.J. Cuperus had to resign for age reasons. And on March 6, 1926, Mr. Kayser, general secretary for 20 years, died. At the 14th Congress, preceding the 8th competition, Cuperus was appointed honorary president for his unequalled merits; Charles Cazalet, France, became president; Dr. Scheiner, Czechoslovakia, vice-president; Fr. Blomart, Belgium, secretary; Alphonse Huguenin, Switzerland, treasurer; Jean Dalbanne, Paris, became secretary to the president.

Six federations were represented in the 8th competition: Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. Eleven nations were expected but Finland, Great Britain, Italy, Romania, and Switzerland could not participate, some of these withdrawing at the last moment. Far from being assimilated into apparatus gymnastics, optional exercises were more closely joined to group performance with the addition of a score for the group event."

Let us add that in 1923 a memorandum was submitted to a commission of technicians. It made provisions for the equivalence of floor exercises (exercises called "optional") with those of apparatus, thus to replace the group exercises of minor difficulty—but individually scored—with compulsory and optional artistic exercises, performed individually. (This disposition was introduced in 1930 in Luxembourg.)

9th Championship 1930

Once more, six teams were represented: Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia.

The competition took place in Lyon on July 12-14, 1930, according to the decisions of the Congress in Lyon on 8/2/1926 and Amsterdam on 8/6/1928."

The technical program had more modern characteristics. Group exercises were finally abandoned to be replaced by artistic gymnastics tending toward harmony, dynamism, strength, grace, and expression.

A recent development in cinematography was taken advantage of with the use of small cameras. In spite of many difficulties at first, the use of the films became generalized.

The 9th competition was darkened by inclement weather and the tragic death of the Yugoslav gymnast, Anton Malej, victim of an accident on the rings.

Competitions for the 50th anniversary of the FIG

There was a special manifestation between the 9th and the 10th official competitions.

Following "agreements, objections, and discussions" this manifestation was called "World Championships." The motive of this event was to properly celebrate the *50th anniversary of the FIG, founded in 1881*.

On the initiative of Charles Cazalet, president of the FIG and successor of N.J. Cuperus who died on July 12, 1928, the competition took place in Paris on *July 11-12, 1931*, in conjunction with the 35th Federal Festival of France.

The program and the regulations took into account the technical principles of the official competitions, but there was an individual ranking. The participants competed in 14 events, five of those being athletic.

A special disposition determined that the title of World Champion could only be given to the gymnast obtaining at least 60% of the points *in each of the 14 events*.

Forty-four gymnasts from 10 nations participated in the competition.

The World Champion title was given to the famous *Alois Hudec* (Czechoslovakia) who was the only one to obtain the required 60% in all 14 events. He was second, behind Savoleinen (Finland) in the overall rankings.

Hudec also won optional exercises and rings at the apparatus event; Pille (Hungary), Savoleinen and Hanggi (Switzerland) respectively took the parallel bars, high bar and vault.

Logically, the manifestation of the 50th anniversary of the FIG cannot be placed among the official competitions. Moreover, let us recall that the FIG still distinguished between affiliated and "recognized" federations which explains the presence of Switzerland.

10th World Championship 1934

At the 7th Congress of Lausanne, 1933, the technical committee appointed three of its members: Mr. Hentges, Krizmanich and Sommer to form, with Countess Jadwiga Zamoyska as president, a special commission to detail the regulations for the 1st competition of women's gymnastics. The commission fulfilled its duty in permanent contact with the organizing federation; the competition was directed and scored by women, and since then, women's gymnastics has been directed by an independent women's commission whose first president was Mrs. Zamoyska. Let us also note that since 1934 the word "competition" was first preceded, then replaced by "World Championships."

The 10th competition took place in Budapest on June 1-2, 1934, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Federation, the weather was beautiful and the stadium perfectly equipped. A record of 13 nations were represented for men's gymnastics. The teams included six to eight gymnasts and the ranking was based on the total of the points of the six best gymnasts."

11th World Championship 1938

The competition was held in the large stadium "Slet", in Prague. Eight teams competed, which was an unexpected regression. No doubt, the international political situation was to blame, but thanks to the spirit of understanding and the technical progress of the gymnasts, the competition was a great success.

As in 1934 in Budapest, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia dominated. The extraordinary performances and the prestigious scores of the Czechs Gadjos and Hudec, the ring expert and of the Swiss Mack and Reusch, each winning three or four apparatus events would not be forgotten. Also, the Swiss and the Czechs triumphed in the team and individual events.

12th World Championship 1950

"In spite of regrettable mishaps, absentees, and so on, the organization of the 12th competition in Bale in July 14-16, 1950, resulted in a great and encouraging success, thanks to the devoted and competent assistance of the Swiss. During the competition, the question of a second division for weaker countries, raised often for some 20 years, found its definite solution. From the beginning, there were two clearly different opinions. According to some, the 2nd division should have a limited program, as much in the amount as in the difficulty of the events; the others, wanting to maintain the development of gymnastics, demanded the same program and the same difficulties for all the participants but limited the teams or gave the opportunity to the federations to register one to three individual gymnasts.

In Bale, where the regulations provided for 2 divisions, there were no inscriptions in the second one, the first division (same program for all participants) included six full teams: Egypt, Finland, France, Italy, Switzerland, Yugoslavia; six other countries presented 12 gymnasts: Austria (3), Belgium (2), Denmark (2), Great Britain (1), Luxembourg (2), the Netherlands (2). This system, which was more appropriate, was maintained until now."

Switzerland did not suffer from the consequences of World War II, and easily asserted itself as much in team competition as individually and on the apparatus. Only Finland could threaten the Swiss supremacy and names such as Aaltonen, Huhtanen, or Rove were mixed with the Swiss Lehmann, Adatte, Eugster, Stalder, and Gebendinger. And also for the first time appeared names of gymnasts who would be mentioned for a long time: Figone (Italy), Stoffel (Luxembourg), Dot (France), Gunthard (Switzerland).

Gymnastics was truly at the dawn of the contemporary era.

13th World Championship 1954

The wording "World Championships" being now used exclusively, we will eliminate the word "competition" but we still deal with men's gymnastics.

The organization of the 13th World Championships was given to Italy at the 29th Congress (Bale, 1950). It took place in Rome from June 28 to July 1, 1954.

—Jury—scoring: the new Code of Points, introduced according to the decisions of the Congress in London, 1948, and Stockholm, 1949, was the foundation for the evaluation of the exercises. Consequently, the instructions to the jury before the competition became more precise and had the

characteristics of real courses of at least four half days with compulsory tests of evaluation: first step toward a superior qualification of international judges.

—The competition: took place in the beautiful stadium of the “Foro Italico.” Following the example of the Olympic Games in Helsinki, the organizers had placed the equipment on a podium which made the development of the competition much easier and gave more dimension to the gymnasts’ work.

—The days in Rome were due to a shining summer sun, very hot, necessitating an interruption of four to five hours. It was the last time that World Championships of Artistic Gymnastics would be held in open air. Indeed, experience proved that covered, spacious, modern arenas were more appropriate for large competitions.

—Participation: six complete teams of six to eight gymnasts. Seven other nations were represented by one to three gymnasts: South Africa (2), Spain (1), Iran (1), Romania (3), Sarre (2), Sweden (3), USA (1)—23 out of 37 affiliated federations were represented which proved the increasing activity in the FIG.

To the observations of our friend Pierre Hentges, Sr., one has to add that Rome, 1954, saw the first official participation of those who would soon become the super-greats: USSR and Japan.

An assertion so rapid and so complete had not been expected after the Olympic Games in Helsinki, 1952. The interest for gymnastics clearly moved from Central Europe to the Orient, and new names would show an absolutely fantastic technical evolution: Muratov, Tchoukarin, Chaquinian, Chakhlin, Azarian, and also Ono, Kono, Takemoto, and so on.

The old, traditional “gymnastic nations”: Switzerland, Germany, Czechoslovakia...had been surpassed.

14th World Championship 1958

“This World Championship whose organization had been given to the USSR and which took place in Moscow from July 6-10, 1958, marked another step in the history of our world journeys. Indeed, for the first time the World Championships, containing 12 events at the six classic apparatus, were held in a covered arena. (It was already the case at the Olympic Games). Also for the first time, teams were formed with five to six gymnasts and the team competitions took four days, alternating male and female teams, the 5th day was reserved for individual finals. The finals, whose system had been established in Zagreb, 1957, were inaugurated in Moscow and constitute, since then, the climax of a week of gymnastic art and bravery.”

The results prove that the USSR and Japan made a definite break from the other nations (in the order of 25 points). Boris Chakhlin (USSR) won four titles and the names of Yuri Titov (USSR) and Miroslav Cerar (Yugoslavia) appeared on the honor board.

15th World Championship 1962

“At three different times, the FIG had given the organization of the Championships to the Czech Federation: 1907, starting period in time of peace, the first “competitions”; 1938, period of international unrest; 1962, period of renewal and development. Three times also, Prague was the meeting place and, from July 3-8, 1962, the world gymnastic elite was once more greeted in the new sports Palace whose spacious arena, large seating capacity, offices and dressing rooms were harmoniously adapted to the most modern conceptions of sportive architecture.

The list of participants was longer than at the previous championships: 20 complete teams plus 14 individual gymnasts from South Africa (1), North Korea (3), Great Britain (2), Austria (1), Iran (3), Luxembourg (3), Romania (1).

Japan took its revenge on the USSR in the team ranking. China was represented for the first time and took 4th place. A new team, the German Democratic Republic, would also take honor ranks.

Yuri Titov triumphed in the all-around and the new names were: Endo, Yamashita, Aihara (all Japan), Krbec (Czechoslovakia) and Menichelli (Italy).

16th World Championship 1966

Unfortunately, the lively accounts of Pierre Hentges, Sr., end here. We allow ourselves to be more concise and to refer to the considerations of Mr. Hentges' successor at the head of the technical commission, Mr. Arthur Gander whose technical competence was never doubted. These considerations are valid for the evolution of gymnastics until today.

First of all, Arthur Gander situated a decisive turning point and an important increase of the performance level at the Olympic Games in Tokyo, 1964. New movements appeared: piked dismount with full turn (high bar), dismount layout with full turn (rings), double salto, uprise with stretched arms, etc.

The World Championships took place in Dortmund (GFR) 1966, and were marked by the consolidation rather than broadening of new elements.

Japan dominated but Mikhail Voronine (USSR) was the individual winner and Cerar (Yugoslavia), Nakayama (Japan), and Diamidov (USSR) were admired by many.

17th World Championship 1970

They took place in Ljubljana (Yugoslavia) in 1970. According to the technicians of the FIG it was a stagnating period, lasting since 1968—Olympic Games in Mexico where world artistic gymnastics had reached its peak and created a fantastic popular enthusiasm. The stagnation showed especially in the unfortunate monotony in the composition of exercises and in the dismounts from the various apparatus. Among others, Arthur Gander rejected the tendency towards the standardization of many exercises and advocated a return to movements, a little forgotten perhaps, but offering possibilities of a

high level performance in the perspective of (some superior parts in the Code of Points were no longer performed).

Ljubljana saw the supremacy of the Japanese who took the first three places in the individual competition with Eizo Kentmotzu experiencing his first success in front of Tsukahara and Nakayam. They also won five out of the six apparatus finals.

Only Mikhail Voronine and the very elegant Miroslav Cerar threatened the Japanese superiority.

18th World Championship 1974

Varna (Bulgaria) 1974, marked a new evolution. One tried to correct the tendency towards monotonous repetitions and "chain" dismounts. The new Soviet school with beautiful take offs and stretched arms was clearly apparent. But the search for originality happened often to the disadvantage of the performance and the stability of the "receptions". Triple saltos on the high bar ended dangerously on the back and double full turns combined with daring saltos on the floor worried more than one spectator. Tsukahara vaults and others, very risky, were not esthetic in their final phase. There were too many injuries and risks during these championships.

The Japanese won but less easily than in Ljubljana, 1970. (four points ahead of the USSR.) In the all-around, Shigeru Kasamatsu (Japan) won easily before Nicolai Andrianov (USSR) and Eizo Kenmotsu (Japan). But the margin was small (0.125 points) in the ranking of the 36 best gymnasts which occurred for the first time at the World Championships. At the apparatus finals, three medals for the Japanese (Kasamatsu and Kenmatsu) and the appearance of the great specialists: Zoltan Majyar (Hungary) on the pommel-horse, Nicolai Andrianov (USSR) and Dan Grecu (Romania) on rings, Eberhard Gienger (GFR) on high bar.

19th World Championship 1978

Before the World Championships in Strasbourg, our friend Arthur Gander, honorary president of the FIG, wrote that one would certainly see a promising duel for the lead. He was not mistaken since, unexpectedly, Japan still won, but with a very reduced margin (579.85 points against 578.95 points for USSR). Moreover, he predicted that unfortunately, the breach between the two great ones and the other nations would not be filled. The results prove it: eight points on the GDR in 3rd place, 10 points on the USA in 4th place, 13 points on Hungary in 6th place and ...23 points on France in 8th place. Reality surpassed the predictions.

He had explained that even though Japanese gymnastics, constructed and based on the precise study of the movement, retained its full value, the Soviet school had added to the precision, the great virtuosity of young, well-trained talents. The errors of Varna had disappeared in Montreal (Olympic Games) and one saw a new level of mastered difficulties: Andrianov's double salto

backward, stretched body (floor, rings, high bar), Kenmotsu's handstand, backward giant circle, handstand (Parallel bars), "Thomas flair", Thomas and Nikolai (floor, pommel horse), Deltchev's piked jump, full turn in suspension (high bar).

A breath of fresh air and health came from the other side of the Atlantic. The American gymnasts, Kurt Thomas and Bart Conner certainly personalized the great event of these championships with their great vitality and very modern technique.

Nicolai Andrianov (USSR) kept his Olympic title before Eizo Kenmotsu (Japan) and Alexandre Ditiatin (USSR) in the finals of the 36 best gymnasts. The Japanese won three individual medals and Kurt Thomas, USA, won a gold medal on floor exercises.

An unfortunate tendency was noted in Strasbourg, 1978: The negative influence of a noisy public, perhaps generous but not always moved by purely sportive motives.

20th World Championship 1979

Taking into account the new calendar of international manifestations and the selection procedure for the Olympic Games, the Championships took place in Fort Worth, USA in December, 1979. (For the first time on the American continent). They were qualifying competitions for the Olympic Games in Moscow, 1980.

(Time limits prevent us from saying more.)



The Olympic Flame

PROGRAMME

DES

JEUX OLYMPIQUES DE 1900

— PARIS —

Comité International des Jeux Olympiques:

Président. M. le Baron PIERRE DE COUBERTIN.		Paris.
MEMBRES: MM. Louis AMPHILLÉ	Londres. Stockholm. Athènes. Turin.	Berlin. Prague. Londres. Budapest. New-York. Vienne (Habsbourg). Concepcion del Uruguay (Rép. Argentine).
Le Comte BRUNETTA D'USSEAUX. Le Comte M. de BOUSIES Le Général de BOUTOWSKI E. CALLOT L. A. CUFF	Bruxelles. Saint-Petersbourg. Paris. Christ Church (N.-Zélande).	
	MM. le Docteur W. OESBLANDE. le Docteur JEH OUTH C. HERBERT P. KEMSY W. M. SLOANE Le Baron F. W. de TULLY J. B. ZUBIAUR	

Comité d'Organisation des Jeux Olympiques de 1900

Président: M. le Vicomte de la ROCHEFOUCAULD.		Paris.
Secrétaire général: M. Robert FOURNIER-SARLOVÈZE.		
MEMBRES: MM. le Comte PHILIPPE d'ALBACE. le Baron JEAN de BELLET (Lawn-Tennis). le C ^{te} A. de BRÉTEUIL de SAUVIGNY (Tir à l'arc). P. de BOULONGNE (Yachting). Géorges BOURDON (Sports athlétiques). BOUSSOD. le Duc de BISSAC. L. de BOURBON (Boxe). E. CAILLAT (Aviation). Charles CAMBEPFORT. le Baron de CARAYON LA TOUR.	MM. le Comte CHANDON de BRIALLES. le Marquis de CHASSELOUP-LAFRAT. M. DUBONNET (Aviation). H. DUPUYTREN, député. le Comte d'ESTERNO. le Baron Assolut de FLEURY. ALPHONSE GALLARD. le Comte A. de GÜEBBIANT (Yachting). Gaston HENNET. J. J. JUSSERAND. le Baron LA CAZE. le Baron LEBLANC (Polo).	MM. le Duc de LOHRE. Ferdinand MAILLET. le Comte P. de MAILLE (Vélocipédie). P. de NRUJVILLE. Auguste O'CONNOR (Course Paume). le Comte N. POTOCKI (Escrime). le Comte Jacques de FOURTALÈS (Golf). Ch. RICHEPUY (Longue Paume). André TOUTAIN. le Comte TURQUET de LA BOISSERIE. HAROLD de VILLENEUVE (Escrime).

N. B. — Les Noms des Commissaires sportifs sont précédés d'une astérisque. Les Commissaires pour la gymnastique, la natation, le football, etc., seront ultérieurement nommés.

Programme des Jeux

Sports athlétiques. — Courses à pied: 100 m., 400 m., 800 m., 1500 mètres (soumés plate), 110 mètres (soumés de haies).
Concours: Sauts en longueur et en hauteur (maque laq et high jump).
Saut à la perche (Pole vault).
Lancement du poids (Puting the weight) et du disque.
Pentathlon (Championnat général d'athlétisme) à épreuves: 100 ou 400 m., 800 ou 1500 mètres. — Saut en hauteur, en longueur ou à la perche. — Lancement du poids ou du disque.
Règlement de l'Union des Sociétés françaises des Sports Athlétiques.
Gymnastique. — Exercices individuels: Corde lisse en traction des bras. — Rétablissements divers à la barre fixe. — Mouvements aux anneaux. — Barres parallèles profondes. — Saut sur cheval. — Travail des poids.
Escrime. — Assauts de fleuret, de sabre et d'épée. — (Anstoun, Professeurs civils et militaires).
Assauts de boxe anglaise et de boxe française.
Assauts de canne et de baton.
Lutte: suisse et romaine.
Sports nautiques. — Yachting: Courses à la voile en rivière (Tablets au-dessus de 6 tonnes) — Courses à la voile en mer (Tablets de 80 tonnes).
Règlement du Cercle de la Voile de Paris et de l'Union des Yachts français.
Avion: Un rameur: 2000 mètres sans virage (Bélier).
Deux rameurs de pointe: 2400 mètres sans virage (Bétrigues).
Quatre rameurs » » » »
Huit rameurs » » » »

Natation: Courses de vitesse: 100 mètres.
fond et vitesse: 500 mètres.
fond: 1000 mètres.
Concours de plongeon et de sauvetage.
Water-Polo.
Vélocipédie. — Course de vitesse: 2000 m., sur piste, sans entraîneurs.
Course de fond: 400 kilomètres, sur piste, avec entraîneurs.
(L'entraînement mécanique sera prohibé.)
Courses de tandems: 2000 mètres, sur piste, sans entraîneurs.
Sport hippique. — Polo (*Règlement des Clubs de Hurlingham et Paris.*)
Jeux. — Foot-Ball (Rugby et Amateurs).
Océistes.
Golf (*Règlement de Saint-Andrews, modifié selon la nécessité locale.*)
Lawn-Tennis (simple et double).
Crogue.
Hockey.
Longue-Paume.
Courtie-Paume.
Alpinisme. — Un prix olympique sera décerné à l'auteur de l'ascension la plus remarquable accomplie sur un point quelconque du globe depuis la célébration des Jeux olympiques de 1896.
Tir à l'arc. — (Un règlement de concours est à l'étude).
Faldnago. — id.

N. B. — Conformément aux décisions fondamentales du Congrès International de 1894, les Concours olympiques sont réservés aux seuls amateurs répondant aux définitions adoptées par l'Union des Sports Athlétiques, l'Amateur Athletic Association d'Angleterre et les autres Sociétés d'Amateurs du monde.
Les concours sont tous des championnats.
Les dates et lieux des concours ainsi que les dates de clôture des engagements, bien que déjà fixés, seront publiés ultérieurement, le Comité d'organisation en réservant d'indéterminer, s'il y a lieu, quelques modifications dans cette partie du programme.
Les prix consistant en objets d'art, exclusivement.

Toutes les communications relatives aux Jeux olympiques de 1900, doivent être adressées:
47, Rue de Varennes — Paris.

Paris. — Imp. A. QUÉQUERON, RUE GABRIEL, 10.

AFFICHE INTÉRIEURE.

Program of the Olympic Games of Paris



Poster of the Olympic Games of Paris

Conclusions

The technician, Pierre Hentges, Sr., talented chronicler and narrator, drew clear and valid conclusions at the end of his retrospective on the World Championships of Artistic Gymnastics. He first pointed out "the progressive improvement of the technical conditioning of world competitions, proportionately to the acquired experience and the constant evolution of the gymnastic art." In his epilogue, he condensed the most important elements of the constant preoccupations of the leaders of the FIG and the evolution of these elements which can be summarized as follows:

The principle of "all-around" competition, desired by the initiators and never totally abandoned.

The jury, changing from one event to the other before reaching its actual form.

The scoring, the great difference of evaluation varying from one country to another. The evolution towards "a base for understanding with the means of concise conventions and rather vague instructions given at the last minute."

The judges' courses, which followed with evaluation tests, two or three days before the competition. The slow evolution towards a researched precision and unity, towards special courses with tests at the intercontinental, continental, and national levels, (System valid since 1964.)

Code of Points, logical result of a long evolution.

Compulsory exercises, first simple texts to which were added an analysis with instructions concerning the evaluation of the various parts. Then the documentary and instruction films.

The elimination of athletic exercises, to the advantage of Olympic level gymnastics and, without dropping the "all-around" principle, athletics as a means of physical conditioning.

The progressive reduction of team members.

The support of young federations or those not able to present complete teams. An often considered second division, then the solution of individual gymnasts. Not to lose contact with the best gymnasts to be able to follow the evolution.

The difficulty of compulsory exercises; on one hand "aid" to the weaker gymnasts but on the other hand, risk of "prejudice against the superiority of the best.": dilemma still present. Intermediate measure by suppressing the authorization to repeat these exercises.

Evaluation called "secret", the actions of the head judges can eliminate all negative influence of the gymnasts and spectators.

...And many other problems which constantly fed the various exchanges of our technicians, judges, trainers, and competitors.

We borrow this admirable conclusion from Pierre Hentges, Sr.: "The future will also hold problems, for times change and with them the aspects of private, social, and sportive life."

The Olympic Games and the F.I.G.

Introduction

At the beginning of the historical account, we alluded to the practice of sports in the Greek antiquity (without omitting ancient Egypt, we were convinced that our specific activity finds its origins in Greece or, rather, in Crete during King Minos' reign). We also emphasized the importance of sports in the customs, the life of the citizen and the city. Even though competitive gymnastics, as we understand it today, was not a classic Olympic discipline, the athletes training for the Games practiced it extensively in the gymnasiums.

We visited the old stadiums of Corinthia, Olympia, and Delphes. We admired the harmonious architecture, the perfect arrangements with starting lines and foot prints still visible on the stones. Finally, we reached the stadium in Athens where, on the initiative of Baron de Coubertin, the first Games of the modern era took place in 1896. It is not our intention to write the history of the Olympic Games, but to recall the contribution of gymnastics to these manifestations.

For understandable reasons, we cannot publish detailed results. There is specialized literature on the subject and the FIG secretariat sells files including all the results since 1948.

On the other hand, in the historical account under the years 1912 and 1920, we present the events which resulted in the official cooperation between the IOC and the FIG concerning gymnastic competitions at the Olympic Games.

Until 1912 (and even 1930), the competitions were exclusively organized by the International Olympic Committee who obviously reduced the competitions—four to six apparatus with compulsory and optional exercises. (In the Paris 1910, however, the competition, with its numerous events, already announced the future competitions of the FEG).

For more than 25 years, the International Federation seemed to ignore all Olympic or other manifestations. (Obvious influence of President Cuperus, who was opposed to the concept of competitions).

However, in 1912, Mr. Cuperus, understanding the irreversible evolution, solved the problems enthusiastically, as we recall elsewhere.

From then on, the Olympic Games became a prestigious competition of the FIG. They alternated with the World Championships and with the latter became the strong points of the FIG activity. In general, a good spirit of cooperation and good relations was established with the International Olympic Committee. Of course some difficulties arose periodically concerning the competitions, the program, women's gymnastics, the number of medals and so on.

In its struggle against gigantism, the IOC tried to reduce the events but the FIG wanted to have all activities recognized. (For instance, at the time these lines are written, sportive rhythmic gymnastics is not yet recognized as an Olympic discipline).

Without entering into details, we will recall the high points of gymnastics in the Olympic Games.

1896, Athens

According to statistics, officially there were no all-around gymnastic competitions at the first Olympic Games of the modern era.

However, national chronicles, (Switzerland in particular) clearly mention a gymnastic activity in Athens. Indeed, there were individual events on apparatus and vaulting horse with 18 gymnasts from five nations. Swiss, German, and Greek names are mentioned in the award list. Very unpretentious beginnings.

1900, Paris

Never, perhaps, did gymnastics have such a great role in the number of events: high bar, parallel bars, horse-vault, pommel horse, rings, floor exercises, long jump, rope climbing, mixed jump (length and height), pole jump, and weight lifting. It is noted that the French Federation was a power in the Olympic world.

There were no team competitions and the first six places of the individual events belonged to the French gymnasts. 136 gymnasts from six nations participated in this unique competition. (Women's competitions only appeared in 1928 in Amsterdam). Olympic Champion: Gustave Sandras—France.

1904, St. Louis (USA)

It was a typical American competition with the participation of European gymnasts, emigrated to the USA. The winner Julius Lenkart, was of Austrian origins and the list also mentioned German and Swiss names—three countires, 119 gymnasts participated. The competition included: high bar, parallel bars, horse vault, long and high jumps, 100 m. race, and weight throw.

A team competition of American cities took place as well as individual events on parallel bars, pommel horse, high bar, and rings—the winners were American.

1906, Athens

Ten years later, we are back in Athens. Until 1912—in fact until W.W. I—the Games were held every two years.

56 gymnasts from nine countries competed in individual events. (Competition almost modern, without floor exercises, but mixed jumps. Winner: Pierre Peyssac, France, followed by Albert Braglia, Italy).

A team competition gathered five nations. (The team members varied from eight to 20. The score average was used to determine the ranking). Norway won the event.

There were no apparatus individual events until 1924.

1908, London

There was a larger participation—97 gymnasts from 12 countries—in the individual events. Alberto Braglia began a series of victories for Italy which would continue until 1920 in Antwerp. (1924 and 1932 for team events.) The competition included four apparatus and a smooth rope.

Only eight nations, but 254 gymnasts entered the team competition. The team from Sweden who won had 38 gymnasts, and France in 4th place had 40 gymnasts. The average score had been dropped.

(The first medals for the winners appeared at this time.)

1912, Stockholm

These Games, as well as the ones in Antwerp, 1920, deserve a special mention as far as gymnastics is concerned.

We recall that in 1912, the FEG was granted the real but unofficial responsibility of organizing gymnastic competitions.

Alberto Braglia (Italy), once again won the individual events on four apparatus. There were only 44 gymnasts from nine countries.

The team competitions, with 10 nations competing, were rather curious. We quote the Belgian authors, C. Ardouillie and M. Moreau:

"In Stockholm, each team had one hour to compete. The teams included at the most 24 gymnasts; they performed one compulsory exercise on high bar, parallel bars, and pommel horse, then one optional exercise on one of the above-mentioned apparatus. Ranking of the five countries in the general competition:

1. Italy (16 gymnasts)
2. Hungary (16 gymnasts)
3. Great Britain
4. Luxembourg
5. Germany

The gymnastic program of these Games also provided for a competition between nations practicing Swedish gymnastics. Three countries competed:

1. Sweden
2. Denmark
3. Norway

A third competition took place: optional exercises and apparatus:

1. Norway
2. Finland
3. Denmark
4. Germany
5. Luxembourg

This organization would certainly not increase the prestige of gymnastics at the Olympic Games."

1920, Antwerp

In Cuperus' domain, the FEG and gymnastics could only be masters of their own destinies, which occurred with the competitions taking place under the exclusive leadership of the federation which would soon become the International Gymnastics Federation.

The Italian supremacy continued in the individual events with Giorgio Zanipori in first place before 43 gymnasts from nine countries (exactly as in Stockholm, 1912).

"The program of the competitions was, once again, revised. No compulsory exercises but apparatus: high bar, parallel bars, rings, optional exercises and a race. Teams of 16 to 24 gymnasts and three competitions:

1. German gymnastics: won by Italy (three countries)
2. Swedish gymnastics: won by Sweden (three countries)
3. Optional gymnastics: won by Denmark (two countries)."

(The Olympic oath was introduced in 1920.)

1924, Paris

A turning point in the history of the Olympic Games

The program also has a more logical aspect. Seven compulsory exercises: high bar, parallel bars, rings, pommel horse, lateral and transversal vaults, rope climbing with bent arms. Added to this was an optional exercise on each of the four apparatus mentioned and a score for the presentation of the gymnasts at the apparatus. (Score abolished in Amsterdam, 1928, and replaced by "general behavior" of the team.)

Until these Games, the teams varied in numbers and the members had the option to compete in the individual apparatus event. The exercises were chosen by the competitors.

Each team participated in a real team competition (group competition as is still performed in Switzerland, GFR, Benelux.) Only the apparatus was compulsory.

The Yugoslav, Leon Stukelj, won the new individual competition.

Nine teams competed, among which, for the first time, was Switzerland. Italy, for the 3rd time was the winner.

Finally, and after 20 years of interruption, there were individual events on parallel bars, horse vault, pommel horse, high bar, and rings with champions and medals. (The IOC had confirmed its right to choose the events but recognized the technical reglements of the International Federation.)

1928, Amsterdam

For the first time, female teams of 12 gymnasts competed. (Netherlands, Italy, Great Britain, Hungary) There were also optional apparatus, two transversal vaults and one optional exercise (floor). Italy won over the USA, Finland, Hungary, and Japan. Mr. Takoshi Kondo, whose career in the FIG would be commendable, competed with the Japanese team; as also did Mr. Gulack with the USA team. The Italian Neri lead the individual ranking. The Hungarian, I. Pelle, won several individual events.

1936, Berlin

The Olympic Games took an importance unknown until now. If one talks of "gigantism", the origins can be found here.

Gymnastics knew its first great success: 14 countries were represented and the quality and the progress of the performances were remarkable. The organization was imposing.

But one has to recall that the Games would be the first ones to know a political interference in sports.

It is obvious that Germany wished to impress its adversaries, even in sports. And Germany won.

In the all-around individual events, the German, Alfred Schwarzmann, asserted himself over 110 participants. The Germans and the Swiss shared the individual events. Great names were confirmed: The Czech, Alios Hudec, the German, Konrad Frey, the Finnish, A. Saarvala, the Swiss, Mack, Miez, and Reusch and so on.

Eight teams of eight female gymnasts competed in a rather complex competition: an optional group exercise and one exercise with apparatus judged as a whole, a compulsory and an optional on *uneven bars*, beam, and 2 lateral vaults.

Uneven bars were used for the first time in competition.

1948, London

Following W.W. II, London courageously organized the Olympic Games. Regarding the participation—16 countries, 123 gymnasts for men and 11 countries, 88 gymnasts for women—the success of the Games was greater than in Berlin. An official USA team competed outside the country for the first time, as did teams from Cuba, Egypt, Argentina, and Mexico.

We quote the honorary president of the FIG, Arthur Gander: “The first post-war international competition was held in London, in 1948. The performances were practically the same as those before the war...”

Negative remarks: Great chaos in the organization, as much from the organizers as the FIG authorities: quasi-total lack of competition requirements and evaluation; each nation brought their own apparatus resulting in inconveniences and so on...”

The circumstances forced the FIG authorities to reconsider the questions of scoring and standardization of equipment.

In the men’s team ranking, Finland beat Switzerland by 1.6 points (team of eight gymnasts competing in 12 events).

Czechoslovakia won on the women’s side (one exercise on the flying rings). (These were the last Games, for the women, with only an all-around team competition.)

(Important note: We no longer give general results for complete lists since 1948 are published by the FIG secretariat.)

1952, Helsinki

As it was stated, these Games had “human measurements”. *The small country of Finland, having suffered much from the war, made great efforts to be able to greet the athletes from a world which continued to grow. Soviets and Japanese officially competed for the first time. Arthur Gander wrote, “With the Soviets and the Japanese, Helsinki marked the beginning of the era of *strictly sportive gymnastics*.”

*Note: It was said in Helsinki: “We will be familiar with sports.”

Innovation: the competitions took place in a covered arena, of which Mr. Thoeni had disapproved during a IOC meeting in Vienna, 1951. He could not know, then, that this disposition, dictated by the lack of space, would be definitely adopted a few years later.

Another innovation: floor exercises were executed on a kind of “adjusted canvas.”

The results clearly show that the “traditional” countries were “threatened” by the newcomers.

Women's artistic gymnastics followed its own path starting with these Games: individual all-around, individual events on four apparatus and an optional group exercise with apparatus.

1956, Melbourne

We quote the president, Charles Thoeni: "As it was expected, given the distance and the expenses our federations had to incur for such a long journey, participation did not reach the level of Helsinki, 1952...Pierre Hentges, president of the MTC and Mrs. Villancher, president of the WTC mentioned that the competitions were satisfactory, thanks to the atmosphere among the leaders, judges, and gymnasts and also thanks to the measures taken by the Australian Gymnastic Federation.

(seven countries for men and nine countries for women sent complete teams. Counting the individual athletes, 74 men and 65 women competed).

Political events also hindered participation at the Games.

1960, Rome

The president, Charles Thoeni, did not conceal his enthusiasm: "...The Olympic Games in Rome, organized with a display of organizing power unknown until today and of which we will keep an unforgettable memory."

By visiting the monumental ruins of the arena of Caracalla, one can imagine what must have been the competitions which took place in a covered and specially equipped stadium at the center of the Roman city.

The Baths of Caracalla are surrounded by pines and cypresses and still are an island of peace in the inferno of the Roman traffic. It is almost the softness of Olympia with the soothing greenery on a background of stone constructions. Serenity calling for meditation emanates from this countryside in the city. Great idea to have located there sportive events going so far back in the history of men.

The organization was very good, even though the 5,000 seats were not sufficient for all the spectators. 28 countries sent 130 male gymnasts and as many women. The results confirm that Japan and the USSR took the lion's share for the men and the USSR and Eastern European countries for the women.

1964, Tokyo

The Olympic Games took place in Asia for the first time. The peak was thought to have been reached in Rome, but president Thoeni admitted: "We did not expect what we saw in Japan in 1964—we have never seen such a fantastic display, an organization so perfect."

The organization of the gymnastic events was perfect. "Everything was considered, nothing lacked." Thanks to personalities such as Takashi Kondo, Akitomo Kaneko, and Mrs. Yoshida, the development of the events could be compared to "the regularity of a well-tuned and oiled clock."

One regret: the arena was not spacious enough to receive all the spectators.

In spite of the distance and the absence of a few European teams, 130 male gymnasts from 30 countries, and 83 female gymnasts from 22 countries participated in the competitions.

Japan and the USSR were the definitive winners. (Status quo for the women.)

1968 Mexico City

Following a period where difficulties seemed insurmountable, positive results were reached.

An electronic installation for the transmission of scores and various other control equipment improved the aesthetic aspect of the events and contributed to the reduction of competition time and the judges' work. The participants were able to discover the glory of an ancient and prestigious civilization—very close, after all, to the ones we mentioned regarding the sportive origins. Olympic Mexico, almost a return to the sources.

The public success was fantastic: 15,000 seats filled for six days. The Mexican enthusiasm was unforgettable.

16 complete teams and 117 male gymnasts and 14 countries with 101 female gymnasts participated in the competitions. (Similar positions in the ranking, except for the triumph of Vera Caslavská, the great Czech gymnast).

One restraint: some national Olympic committees prevented the participation of their gymnasts in the Olympic Games by setting the qualification requirements too high, a frustrating point for the FIG.

1972, Munich

In spite of the tragedy which hit the Israeli athletes, the Games "were a great success for artistic gymnastics regarding performance, organization, and the affluence of the public." (A. Gander) The new competition II (individual finals of the 36 best) was introduced and in spite of heavy psycho-physical load on the competitors, it was approved.

"New elements and new connections were performed on all apparatus, in spite of a monotonous tendency in the mounts and dismounts" (Ivan Ivancevic, president of the MTC). This technician believes, however, that the new Olympic program is too heavy. (Up to 24 possible events for the three competitions and for one gymnast).

Similar impressions for the ladies, where Mrs. Berthe Villancher beautifully mentions—for the last time—the spectacular progression of floor and uneven bars: "audacity with a grace, precision, lightness which transform the most difficult exercises into a kind of aerial ballet between two running hands."

19 complete teams and one mixed team with 118 gymnasts from 23 federations for the women, 16 complete teams and three mixed groups with 114 male gymnasts participated in the gymnastic competitions of the Olympic Games.

The Japanese men won over the very daring USSR.

For the ladies, traditional superiority of the USSR (even though Karin Janz (DDR) asserted herself.)

1976, Montreal

In spite of "political fears" and a few "hesitations" at the beginning, the Games were an extraordinary success: 17,000 seats full for the 12 sessions. Beautiful atmosphere and real discovery, if not the new start, for gymnastics in many parts of the world, America could really promote gymnastics on a world level.

Mrs. Nadjeka Lekarska notes: "functional elements, truly beautiful architecture, point technique harmonizing in an indivisible whole, under the the only common goals of the humanitarian principle of the Olympics. The great value of Olympic competitions is undeniable and the athletes have a true human approach which inspires a great faith in the future."

And the performances? As the IOC still rejects the increase in the number of gymnasts and still refuses the recognition of sportive rhythmic gymnastics as an Olympic sport, woman triumphed—Nadia Comaneci was the star of the Olympic Games in Montreal.

Twelve teams and three individual groups with 90 men and 84 women participated in the competitions. The struggle was close between the two traditional greats, (Japan and USSR) but a few strong gymnasts from various countries asserted themselves. Stable positions for the women.

1980, Moscow

One year after Montreal the preparation work was started and everything predicted a good organization. The gymnastics events will take place from July 20-25, 1980 according to the usual program.

We cannot say more at this time.

FROM THE ORIGINS TO THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Women's artistic gymnastics

Thanks to a study made by Mrs. Valerie Nagy (Hungary), honorary member of the FIG and former president of the WTC, we can make a summary of women's artistic gymnastics. We thank this great Hungarian gymnast for the help she provided.

We will limit ourselves to the development and the evolution of women's gymnastics until the official start of the activity within the FIG, that is until 1930. From that time on, artistic gymnastics for women is described in the general historical account and in the chapter on the Olympic Games.

Historical recall

Gymnastic and athletic exercises for young girls were regularly performed in Crete (Minos civilization) and in Ancient Greece. (And as for men's gymnastics in general, we will not go back as far as Ancient Egypt where many cultural ceremonies contained gymnastics exercises or games.)

Even though women, participants, or spectators, were excluded from the men's games, races for women were organized around the 4th century B.C. The Heraia (or Heraclees: from the goddess Hera, Queen of Olympia and wife of Zeus) never coincided with the men's olympic games and were held every five years in Athens. Other games for women were held in Rhodes, on the Octa mountain, on the Cos island and, as we discovered, also in Corinthia.

Elsewhere, we mentioned statuettes of "female runners" and Plato considered the neglect in women's physical exercises as an unforgivable mistake.

For the Spartans, Plutarc wrote: "The bodies of the virgins were trained with races, wrestling, disc-throwing and javelin so that they could resist the pains of childbirth and bear healthy and strong children."

However, women's physical exercises were neglected by the "Decadent Greeks" and later by the Romans. This situation would last until the Middle Ages.

One had to wait for the reformer Luther in Germany, the French Montaigne and, of course, Rousseau, as also the English Locke towards the end of the 18th century, to see physical exercises for the youth again.

The 18th century "philosophers" were followed by the 19th century "scientists" (Guts-mutz—Jahn) whose activities and researches resulted in artistic gymnastics performed by only the best. But sport for women was not held in honor.

The influence of the Danish F. Nachtegall and especially, of the Swedish professor P.H. Ling was dominant. Both detailed systems based on the laws of

anatomy and studied the effects on the internal organs. Ling created medical gymnastics.

Birth of women's gymnastics

In the historical account, we mentioned that around 1870, in Antwerp (Belgium), Albert Happel had formed a female group. Towards the end of the 19th century young girls and women performed gymnastics in the societies. In spite of the men's opposition, little by little the women found their own direction. This avant-garde gymnastics was first of all a folkloric production where heavy costumes hindered movement; fortunately, the Swedish pant-skirt would soon allow freer movements. The ladies performed optional exercises with or without accessories and successfully tried the men's apparatus.

More and more, the gymnasts performed in demonstrations and exhibitions. In Breslau, in 1894, a gymnastic festival with female participants was organized. The Sokols associations in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were created at the end of the century and women's gymnastics received a new impulse.

In 1909, an international festival with, for the first time female groups, was held in Luxembourg. The historian noticed that the program contained, most of all, rhythmic and choreographic exercises, circles and ballet. Team work first, individual specialization later (gymnastics and athletics). The games followed.

The first competition was held in Leipzig in 1913.

After World War I, apparatus was regularly used. (Swedish benches, pommel-horse, vaulting horse, bars, high bar.)

The first international competitions.

The year 1928 is a turning point for artistic gymnastics for women. An international competition was organized at the opportunity of the Olympic Games in Amsterdam and motivated by a few women and young girls who wished to compete. Five teams participated. The program contained an optional group exercise with and without accessories, one vault and one exercise on an optional apparatus. The participants were The Netherlands, Italy, England, Hungary, and France, placing in this order. (teams of 12 gymnasts).

A few technical considerations: a hand spring on vault was the major difficulty chosen. As apparatus, low parallel bars were used. Without a foundation, the scoring was difficult, lacking uniformity and full of subjectivity. There were only men in the jury. The score difference between the judges was enormous, but the participants were happy to have been able to compete in Amsterdam. There was no individual event.

This event was the starting point for international competitions which little by little were being organized in Europe.

In 1930, at the Congress of Luxembourg, the decision was taken to recognize the next international competition as the World Championships.

In 1932, the Congress in Prague gave the organization of the 10th competition of the FIG in 1934 to Hungary. These first official World Championships would be linked with great celebrations. Forty thousand female and male gymnasts were expected.

The women at the World Championships.

Thus, the first World Championships with female participation were held in Budapest in 1934.

The program contained: optional exercises, exercises with accessories, vaulting, bars, and beam. Besides gymnastics, athletic exercises were performed in the individual event with six sections (long jump, javelin, 60 m. race). The leadership was assumed by Countess Zamoyska. Female judges were used for the first time.

The program required the demonstration of a typical lesson of modern gymnastics for women. But such a lesson wasn't conducive to objective scoring for freedom of conception was given to the various nations. This typical lesson could contain optional exercises and exercises with accessories executed in teams as also exercises on bars and beam which, at the time was only 8 cm. wide.

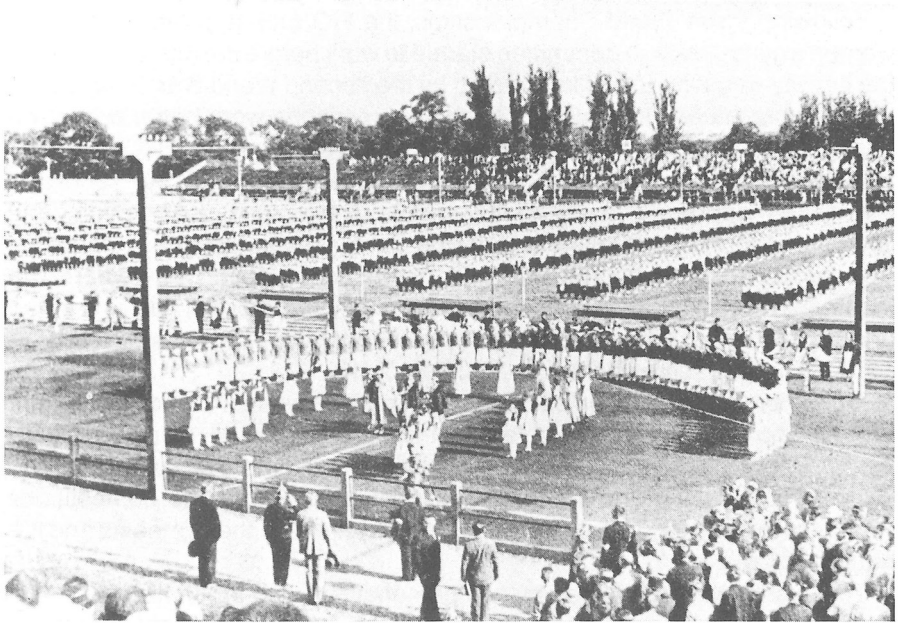
The first manifestation resulted in amusing and interesting situations: one gymnast held the javelin inverted and the exercise was declared invalid because the javelin would not stick in the ground. The approach judges were guilty of distraction because they observed the pretty eyes of the participants. One Hungarian gymnast, Gaki Meszaros, executed for the first time a split beam. One judge got up to observe the feat. Gaki received a score of 9.60 points for the exercise.

Finally, the Czech team won before Hungary, Poland, France, and Bulgaria. In the individual scoring of the event with 6 sections: Diekanova (Czech) first, followed by Kalocsai (Hungary) and Skislinska (Poland). There were 40 participants.

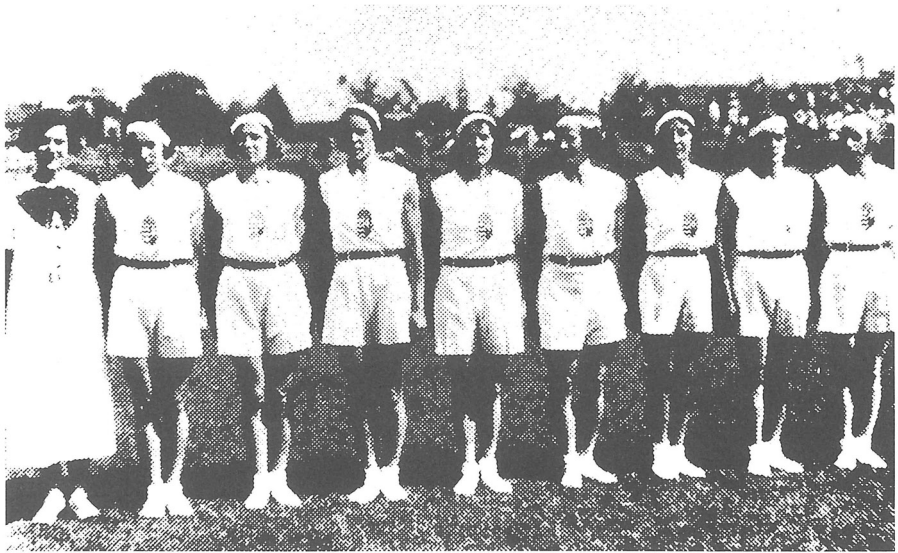
Mrs. Nagy draws valid conclusions from the first competition. First of all, there was no tradition, no experience in the organization and the scoring, which force the leaders to set up precise rules and judges' courses. (On location, after the competition, the judges met and discussed the value of the various vaults and the difficulties on bars and so on.)

At the end of the events, the gymnasts from Poland, France, Bulgaria, and Hungary presented national dances and rhythmic exercises. The Czechs chose the Club as an accessory. Sportive rhythmic gymnastics appeared in the horizon.

According to Mrs. Nagy, the victory of the Czech gymnasts was due to high quality group performances. Surprisingly, it was learned that the team had practiced for three weeks to perfect the exercises. Modern training methods were born.



Opening of the World Gymnastics Championships of 1934 in Budapest.



Team Competition—World Championships in Budapest 1934.

The development.

Following these World Championships, the FIG took a greater interest in women's gymnastics. A committee started to work before the competitions but the activity would be totally interrupted by the second World War. However, at the Olympic Games in Berlin, 1936, the competitions were better organized and for the first time compulsory exercises appeared.

We recall that at the 20th Congress in Lausanne in 1933, the Technical Committee appointed three of its members, Hentges, Krizmanich, and Sommer to form, with Countess Jadwiga Zamoyska as president, a special commission to detail the reglement for the first competition for women. The leadership and evaluation of the events were given to women and since then artistic gymnastics for women is lead by an independent women's commission (WTC) whose first president was Mrs. Zamoyska.

From then on, the women's technical committee was formed of competent women who could solve the problems of the extraordinary development resulting from new training methods and definitive improvement of apparatus.

Until 1954, date of the World Championships in Rome, the competitions were held in open air. This was not alway convenient for the gymnasts and the equipment.

This period was dominated by two personalities who attempted to control the fantastic evolution of women's gymnastics. We first think of Mrs. Berthe Villancher (France), professor of physial education, director of the cultural and sportive center and assistant director of the Superior Schools of university sports. Mrs. Villancher was secretary of the WTC from 1948 to 1956, then president from 1956 to 1972. Her education, her technical competence. allowed her to face the biggest problems caused by a rapid quantity and quality progress. According to Mrs. Milica Sepa from Yugoslavia, Mrs. Villancher did not only "manage" the women's sport but in various analysis published in the FIG Bulletin, she relentlessly worked for the evolution and tried to correct its mistakes: style errors, unesthetic movements, mixing of the forms (rhythmic gymnastics, classical Ballet, acrobatic elements), even the tendency towards the spectacular.

Mrs. Valerie Nagy (Hungary) was another great lady of the FIG. In 1921, she was already professor of physical education. In our opinion, her greatest merit is to have lived and known the complete development of women's artistic gymnastics. Indeed, she participated as a gymnast and lead the Hungarian team in the "olympic attempt" of 1928 in Amsterdam. She was team leader at the World Championships in Budapest 1934 and at the Olympic Games 1936 and 1948. She knew the development from "the inside". She became a member of the WTC in 1948 and later became its vice-president. Mrs. Nagy was elected president of the WTC in 1972 but resigned in 1976. Mrs. Nagy always had a healty concept of gymnastics and continously fought against the abuses and unfortunate tendencies threatening the modern sport. (sport-spectacle, sensationalism, stardom, etc.)



Mrs. Valerie Nagy
Former President of the WTC
Honorary Member of the F.I.G.

Actual tendencies, towards the future.

We will not study the decisive evolution of the last 25 years. The readers know very well the contemporary evolution. Moreover, except for the beautiful technical reports of Mrs. Villancher, the major competitions for women did not benefit from the contributions of precise and meticulous historians such as Mr. Pierre Hentges, Sr. or Dr. Klinger. In the first part of our essay we mention quite often the activities and the problems of women's gymnastics. (Also see chapter on the Olympic Games)

It appears more interesting to start with a report written in 1955 by Mrs. Milica Sepa (Yugoslavia), vice-president of the WTC at the time, and to see what the situation is today. (Title of the article: Women's gymnastics within the FIG.)

Mrs. Sepa first observed that there was no information on the activity of former gymnasts, meaning that young gymnasts could not benefit from personal experiences. The problem is still present today.

Training: before World War II, one or two hours of exercises, two or three times a week, with group training sessions lasting four to five hours a day, two or three months before the World Championships or the Olympic Games was sufficient for a gymnast of international standard. With the actual conditions, says Mrs. Sepa (1955—start of the evolution), the same gymnast has to train two to four hours every day. Considering family and social obligations, these requirements were difficult to fulfill. Nowadays, these requirements have found original and varying solutions.

Mrs. Sepa observed: "In gymnastics, the men are ahead, they seem to have found their direction." Finally, Mrs. Sepa noted: "In our competitions, the beam is the only apparatus which allows total freedom of feminine expression. On floor, we attempt more and more to get closer to the concepts of our male colleagues. It is a mixing of modern gymnastics, elements of classical ballet, of acrobatics, and so on."

These highly significant sentences provide the true scale of the evolution. Women's artistic gymnastics rid of its complexes can stand on its own and is no longer envious of the men.*

Problems in the future are still apparent. For instance, very young gymnasts are 12 or 14 year old children. Mrs. Sepa opposed the participation in major international events of 16 year old girls even with a medical certificate. Mrs. Nagy also mentioned the participation of 14 year old girls in the Olympic Games. Dr. Krastev, Bulgaria, states in a very strong article: "there is no justification in sportive medicine to deprive the Olympic Games of sportive queens as Nadia Comaneci or Cornelia Ender and others in Montreal."

Diverging opinions remain and it is to be expected.

*Note:

Remark from Marie-Therese Eyguem (Eneye de la Pleiade): "Women's sports were first directed by men. The "feminization" of apparatus gymnastics came from Russia with its emphasis on dance." Basically fair observation that experts will have to accept.

MODERN RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS AND SPORTIVE RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS

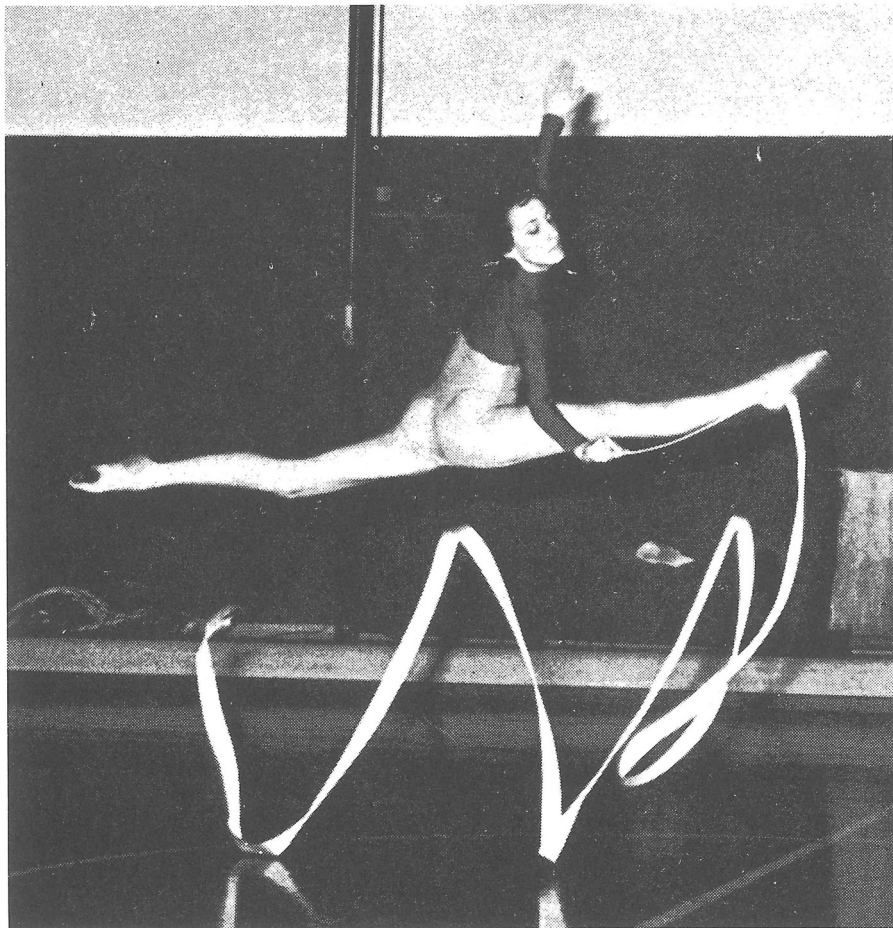
Definitions and objectives.

Many gymnasts and friends of gymnastics still are not certain about the goals and the reason of this feminine activity—quite traditional and performed since the origins—but returned to the spotlight and adapted to the tastes and the rhythms of today. We already know that in the last century, gymnasts performed group gymnastics with elementary ballet movements, circles or folkloric dances (Belgium and Luxembourg, among others). Women have been handling clubs, ribbons, ropes and other accessories for a long time. But from the charming and friendly entertainment of yesterday, this form of gymnastics became a rhythmic-sportive discipline with established technical characteristics.

The phenomenon is interesting and should be acknowledged for it reflects a *successful attempt of true mass gymnastics*. (quote from Mrs. Gotta) Thanks to Mrs. Andreina Gotta, president of the technical committee SRG, we are able to define the terms and distinguish between modern rhythmic gymnastics (for the masses) and sportive rhythmic gymnastics (for the elite).

Modern rhythmic gymnastics is thus a type of gymnastics specifically feminine which, *conforming to the principles of human physiology*, refines and perfects the movement by a continual neuro-muscular action, rhythmic, dynamic esthetic movement which is reflected in the personality of the gymnast. It involves simple gymnastics, beautiful and interesting, with limited difficulties, open to all ages. This educative basic activity finds its natural development in the more complex *sportive rhythmic gymnastics*.

At this point, the difficulties, the speed of the execution, the intensity are more distinct. The esthetic character, the originality of the sequences and of the technical element, the appropriate music which accompanies the move-



Rhythmic Gymnastics
Elegance and Performance

ment, everything contributes to a high virtuosity resulting in the competitive forms of the elite sport. However, even at this level, along with the individual competitions, the group events remain.

Regardless of the level, the exercises have common characteristics. The exercises are usually performed with accessories (ribbons, balls, clubs, ropes, hoops). The gymnast has to harmonize the movements of her body to those of the apparatus she uses. Dexterity, jumps and balance have to emphasize the fantasy and the original expression of the personality.

In conclusion, rhythmic gymnastics present the realization of ideas, particular fantasies, individual exaltation completed with the collaboration of the group. Such is this sport with a potential development but also very strong in many countries—and which allows women to reach a motor and psychic balance supplied by aesthetic characteristics which are their own, such as: the rhythmic aspect, the elegance of the coordination, the surety and correctness of the movements, the physical beauty.

Mrs. Gotta states again that this type of gymnastics provides joy and serenity. No doubt that it will be present in the future.

The historical evolution

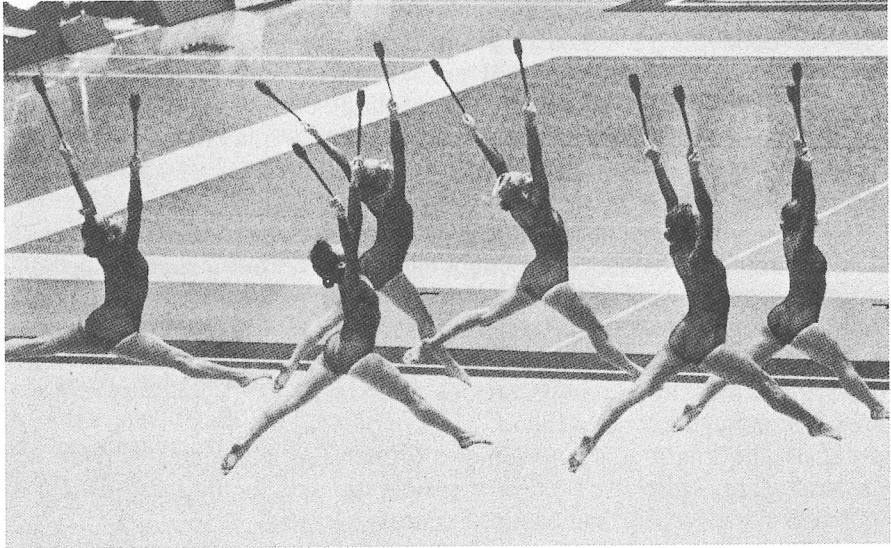
In the general account, we mentioned the major events of the development of this new type of activity and it seems necessary to condense them in a chronological order. The task is not easy for the many sources that we consulted showed that similar tendencies developed in various eras at the same time. In general and until the Olympic Games in Melbourne, 1956, only artistic gymnastics with its four classical events was known and performed. However, many partisans of gymnastics for women felt the need to also practice rhythmic group gymnastics. (Rhythm dominated). And it was understandable that the individual gymnasts in the classic competitions found it difficult to perform in team work. On the other hand and thanks to the researches of technicians, educators and scientists in Superior schools, institutes, and physical education centers, a modern technique was developed.*

It is thus difficult to place the exact origins of the SRG movement. For instance, we know that in 1950 Mrs. Andreina Gotta taught future educators. We also know that an education Institute was created in 1952. Mrs. Gotta summarized the basic ideas of these institutes: study of movement with music and modern teaching principles of creativity; true participation of the basic and various types of natural and physical movement; alternation of almost psychological contraction and relaxed forms. (Conscious gymnastics. Amplitude, dynamic impulsions and so on.) The essential ideas of the technicians can be simply translated by: To live your body.

During the 50's, the women's technical committee worried about these new problems. The Committee laid the basis for a study commission by associating with the representatives from countries interested in the trend. The most active

protagonists were Mrs. Villancher (president), Demidenko, Gotta, Sepa, Nagy, and Wiessenberger. The goal of the WTC was a performance which would be more feminine, more collective, better adapted to all women and especially less acrobatic.

There were several demonstrations after Melbourne and the new trend was launched at the youth Festival in Sofia, 1963. The WTC took this opportunity to lay the foundation of a reglement and appointed a subcommission including Mrs. Villancher, Gotta, Foerster, and Tchakarova. Later Mrs. Cerna, Batajem, Abad, Vrzinicok, and so on.



Rhythmic Gymnastics Group Exercise Grace & Harmony

The first official competitions took place in December, 1963, in Budapest. The program was optional, hesitation dominated. The first rules were established by each expert who dealt with her part regardless of the whole. In the general account we wrote: "Dance? . . . Gymnastics? . . . Apparatus or floor exercises with accessories? Modern gymnastics was popular *but could not find its definitive form.*" The situation would last a long time.

The following events were called World Championships and were held in Prague (1965), Copenhagen (1967), Varna (1969), Havana (1971), Rotterdam (1973), Madrid (1975), Bale (1977), London (1979). European Championships and four continent Championships were also organized.

Modern gymnastics was directed by a sub-commission managed by the WTC until 1972.

A commission with its own responsibilities—almost equal to those of the WTC—and with general assemblies of delegates functioned from 1972 to 1975.

Finally, at the Congress of Berne, 1975, the former commission became an independent technical committee. Moreover, the competitive gymnastic type became known as “sportive rhythmic gymnastics” (SRG).

**Note:*

The difficulty of clearly distinguishing the problem is confirmed by the French Marie-Therese Eyguem in the “Encyclopedie Jeux et Sport de la Pleiade” concerning the evolution of women’s gymnastics in France.

For instance, in 1900 women’s gymnastics was marked by stiff, mechanical movements with strength exercises on apparatus in sailors’ costumes . . .

But it is also the era of the famous dancer Isadora Duncan who would “free herself from the formalism of classical dance.” Her admirers would attempt to “*unite dance and sports.*” (Pierre Paysse, Irene Popard)

The components would be Swedish gymnastics, Demy’s French gymnastics, the “rhythmic” of the Swiss Jacques-Daleroze. Irene Popard, especially, would spread the new sport “based on analytical movements typically feminine” through some 350 schools in France.

Thus, with Isadora Duncan’s “liberation,” with the relation between movement and expression, an evolution took place in Europe (Scandinavian countries, Germany) and one talked of “*modern gymnastics.*”

Let us add that in 1922 a Women’s French Gymnastics Federation was created which—after a period of misunderstanding by the men—would be included in the French Gymnastics Federation in 1941.

Actual problems and potential evolution.

In Sofia, 1962, the representatives of the WTC chose a program with four events: ball, hoop, rope, and one free hand exercise. To the first three accessories were soon added the ribbon and the club. Thus, competitions varying from year to year resulted from the free choice of the technical authorities or organizers. If today, the Reglement stipulates the precise conditions for the organization of the various competitions, the final choice and number of disciplines remains however quite inconsistent, causing some difficulties.

In 1963 in Budapest, there was only one individual event with a floor exercise and one exercise with an optional accessory. In Prague, 1965, the competition was similar but the scores were doubled (composition and execution). In Copenhagen, 1967, team exercises were included. The individual event included the free hand exercise and two exercises with accessories (rope and hoop). In Varna, 1969: free hand exercise and three exercises with accessories. Cuba, 1971: the free hand exercise disappeared, a fourth accessory was added and individual finals were introduced. Finally, team finals with the six best gymnasts were added.

The development and the actual situation are optimistic. It is undeniable that SRG is the FIG's best developing domain. One example: Eleven teams in Madrid, 1975, 30 teams in Bale two years later. This type of gymnastics seems to be appreciated by the Latin countries (South America) and those in Eastern Europe. In the latter, an intensive and scientific training allows quasi-perfect performances (USSR, Bulgaria . . .)

In a report published in March, 1978, Mrs. Gotta wrote: "This sport, pride of the European gymnastics federations, opened the borders of our planet, arousing everywhere interest and admiration. The years of hesitation and grinding were replaced by specific shapes and maturity. Our highest aspiration: the admission of sportive rhythmic gymnastics to the Olympic Games."

Some technical leaders shared their fears concerning the possible evolution of SRG. Even though institutes and schools fight to maintain the didactic and sportive form of these disciplines, high level competition, however, tends to favor a dexterity and virtuosity close to sensationalism. The most conscientious leaders fight against the dangers of pure acrobatics and music-hall spectacles.

It is however true, that the female authorities of the FIG were right and that with modern or sportive rhythmic gymnastics, they helped to solve the very delicate problem of mass activities. Women's gymnastics in all its forms, is active, alive, popular, and in constant evolution. We can only be glad.

(All the official results can be obtained at the FIG secretariat.)

THE WORLD CUP OF ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

The origins

The organization of the World Cup was quite difficult. During the 51st Congress in Munich, 1972, proposals and suggestions from the federations of the German Democratic Republic and Switzerland were discussed at length. The executive committee had already had a project of Reglement in June, 1972. Proposals from the GDR were partially accepted at the 52nd Congress in Rotterdam, 1973. Finally, following the meetings of the executive committee in April, 1974, the Reglement was detailed in June of the same year.

What were the motives behind the creation of a new world competition? The first three articles of the Reglement provide an explanation:

Article 1 (Goals and motives)

The World Cup of Artistic Gymnastics will be organized for the following reasons: to popularize artistic gymnastics, to enhance friendship between the world elite in artistic gymnastics and to establish the level of Olympic competition by direct competitions.

Article 2 (organization and periodicity)

The World Cup of Artistic Gymnastics will be organized every two years between the Olympic Games and the World Championships or vice-versa in the country of a federation affiliated with the FIG. The competition will be held during a period determined by the FIG in agreement with the organizers and under the leadership of the international federation.

Article 3 (invitations and duties of the federations)

The invitations will be sent to 12 female and 12 male gymnasts selected according to their ranking in the previous Olympic Games or World Championships and according to ranking in other major international competitions such as regional games, championships and competitions between countries, in accordance with a system to be detailed by the CT/FIG and approved by the CE/FIG. The invitation of the gymnasts is the responsibility of the authorities of the FIG.

The First World Cup, October 1975

According to the president's report: "Organized for the first time in London, the World Cup was successful. However, a few difficulties arose because at

the last minute, female judges and gymnasts had to be called in. The form of execution raised some doubts and the possibility of a revision of the rules should be considered." The amount of difficulties which this competition would know were already apparent. The members of the technical committees and secretariat can prove it.

Twelve men and ten women competed and there were two great winners: Nicolai Andrianov and Ludmila Tourischeva (USSR), the latter winning the four finals at the apparatus. (See detailed results in the FIG files.)

The Second World Cup, October, 1977

The competition was held in Oviedo (Spain) from 12 to 10 gymnasts, the participation rose to 17 gymnasts with 1 or 2 participants from the host country.

The Soviets Nicolai Andrianov and Vladimir Markelov won the Cup and shared all the other titles. New names and unusual movements appeared at the same time: Tkachev (USSR), Delesalle (Canada), Deltchev (Bulgaria). Oviedo, 1977, can be considered as a decisive point in the evolution. On the women's side, emergence of Steffi Kraker (GDR), Natalia Shaposnikova, Elena Moukhina, and Maria Filatova (USSR).

Decisions of the Congress in Rome, 1977 and Third World Cup, November, 1978

On the proposal of the FIG authorities, the Congress of Rome, 1977, decided to organize the World Cup every year in November-December or alternating in June. However, some are now requesting a return to the old dispositions because of the number of international competitions.

The World Cup, annual for the first time, was held in Sao Paulo in a warm and colorful atmosphere and became, for the Brazilians, a great festival of gymnastics. Sixteen women and nineteen men, alternating regularly, created an indescribable enthusiasm. (A new disposition in the reglement allowed the participation of 2 gymnasts from the host country.)

With the absence of the World Champion, Andrianov, the competition was very strong among the men. Alexandre Ditiatin (USSR) won the competition with 1 / 10 point over Kurt Thomas (USA) the real hero, along with the Soviet, of this competition.

There were six different winners in the finals for individual events.

Concerning the women, the absence of the Romanians was apparent. Silvia Hindroff (GDR) was able to place between the Soviets Filatova and Shaposnikova in the all around. Steffi Kraker (GDR) and Vera Cerna (Czechoslovakia) completed the winner's list.

The Fourth World Cup, June 1979

The last competitions in Tokyo were marked by a new Soviet success, even though the World Champions Nicolai Andrianov and Elena Moukhina were

absent. Alexandre Ditiatin kept his title and Stella Sacharova won on the women's side.

High level performances, high scores (20 points for Nadia Comaneci on floor), unusual winners (Bart Conner, USA, on pommel-horse), great champions, still in the race (Kasamatsu and Kenmotsu, Japan, Fienger, GDR) were the main characters of the last World Cup before the Olympic Games of 1980.

The future of the World Cup seems guaranteed if—often a delicate point—the federations remain willing to send their best gymnasts.

STATUTES AND REGLEMENTS

At the beginning, conventions

How is the FIG managed? How did we reach the actual legislation?

In the general account, we explained the slow advancement of an international conscience rising in the very “nationalistic” atmosphere which dominated until World War I.

We wrote: at the turn of the century, no one talked of a structured international federation. But uncontestedly, 1881 is the reference-year of the first materialization of the idea of a few strong personalities. At the time, and in all other domains: social, political, economical, cultural, or sportive, there were no or very few comparable international institutions. (Except for the Red Cross, the first international institutions started at the beginning of the century. Worker movements or unions were only ideas.)

The national federations were still omnipotent and could not delegate authority to a supra-national organization. The character of the 19th century is totally reflected in the “state-nation.” Only a few great voices inspired by poets or philosophers—as Victor Hugo—expressed their “federal” hopes in total openness.

Let us not doubt that N.J. Cuperus was one of these inspired voices. But he had to deal with the ideas of his time. He is easily accused of being egocentric, authoritarian. We believe, rather, that he struggled to maintain the principle of international understanding. We mentioned the difficulty he had to convince, invite, gather, or discuss the common problems. Contemporaries repeat that Cuperus worried, wrote, struggled again, wanted to put some important federation “under his hat,” but he often failed or received only minimal esteem for his relentless efforts of propaganda.

Spirit of the time still: in the analysis of the 4th official meeting in Antwerp, 1903, (see chapter on World Championships) we noted that the proposals were left up to the approval of the federations. (Only decision: the principle of competitions was approved.) And on the “ground” itself, we will recall that international competitions were always held during a federal festival and some events were literally “imposed” by the host country.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the European federations first signed simple *international agreements* with limited practical goals. The first agreement of 1881 was renewed in 1896 and 1897 and was completed in Paris on November 2, 1923.

We can state that the first administrative structures, the first Bureau of the European Federations (Brussels, 1897—three members) was not based on any statutes.

The first and real statutes were adopted at the 22nd meeting in Brussels on July 18-19, 1935.

Transition

These statutes reveal the transitional characteristic of the era. It is not yet the modern federation but it is no longer the “friendly understanding.”

Article 4 mentions:

“An Interfederal Committee with a delegate from each country and one Bureau. A permanent, executive organ with a Secretary representing no country and appointed by the Interfederal Committee.”

Article 9:

“The invitations to festivities organized by a group will be made through the federal committee of each federation.”

But articles 11 and following show an evolution.

“A Technical Committee with one delegate from each country and an executive commission with 7 members (5 members for women).”

An international competition every four years, alternating with the Olympic Games.

The technical program was detailed.

The FIG was cautious of professionalism.

There was no mention of the principles of neutrality or non-discrimination. The concept of national sovereignty was respected by excluding all actions or declarations which could offend the affiliated countries.

Technical reglement of the era.

A rather complete technical reglement was also adopted by the Assembly of delegates in Brussels on July 19, 1935.

We noted the most original or curious dispositions:

Article 7: Only one official competition of the FIG: the *international event* every four years. (Individual or team World Championships could only be exceptionally organized and under the control of the FIG.

1881-1936

FÉDÉRATION
INTERNATIONALE
DE GYMNASTIQUE



STATUTS
ET RÈGLEMENTS



RÉSUMÉ HISTORIQUE



The FIG did not recognize the individual event on apparatus. (Team competition with individual ranking.)

Article 13: Nominative list with photograph of each participant (30x25 mm.)

Article 16: List of the 2 events, artistic and athletic (to be performed in 2 days)

Article 17: List of the apparatus (For athleticism: conforming to the Reglement of the Athletic International Federation.)

Article 19: A panel of the official judges of the FIG.

Article 34: Repetition of compulsory exercises allowed.

Article 36: Possibility of bringing own apparatus and installing them assuming costs and risks.

Article 37: Exercises to be performed successively by gymnasts of the same group and no longer simultaneously.

The Reglement for women, adopted at the same time was totally identical.

The modern statutes and Reglements

A number of amendments, revisions, and additions proved necessary during the quarter of a century following W.W.II. We chose not to detail them but indicate that the whole resulted in the statutes on 1970, and an image of a modern federation. These statutes determined the shape of a FIG finally structured, with real competences, with a role clearly defined in regard to the affiliated federations and with executive organs freed of any representative duties. (The policy of an independent, international federation was possible).

We will only mention the main dispositions for, in general, they were similar to the actual statutes. We will mention what the last edition of 1976 modified in spirit and letter.

As soon as they were enacted, the statutes were submitted to various contestations whose sources can be found in the phenomenons of society or even of civilization. In the FIG, as everywhere, politicization of the sport was a fact, and inevitably the tendency would also appear in the written documents. Therefore, an enlarged commission was appointed which—with representatives from the executive committee—would present an initial project in 1975. This project created so many amendments and discussions that the Congress in Berne could not deal with them. The Congress in Montreal, 1976, finally accepted the revised project.

In the new statutes, the old concept of *absolute political, religious, and racial neutrality* was replaced with a *political, religious, and racial non-discrimination*. (Art. 2)

The concept was totally different: with neutrality, interference with the activities of a federation was forbidden. On the other hand, the concept of non-discrimination implies the analysis of the conditions of the federation.

Some articles were less restrictive: contrary to the old statutes, proposals rejected at one Congress could be discussed at the next congress. The problem of entry visas for various manifestations was not clarified and some ambiquities remained.

However, there was an undeniable effort towards simplification, clarity and effectiveness. Among other innovations, we noted:

"The direction committee will be called *Executive Committee* (CE) and will be composed of 14 members." (before then, 11 members)

The Technical Committee for sportive rhythmic gymnastics was officially included in the authorities of the FIG.

In the technical assemblies, the delegates can be male or female, but men cannot be members of women's technical committees.

The president's board includes the president, the general secretary, and one CE member appointed by the CE.

With French, German, English, Russian and Spanish became the official languages of the FIG; French remained the first reference language.

The World Cup of artistic gymnastics appeared in the list of official competitions.

(such as also continental games in artistic gymnastics or sportive rhythmic gymnastics.)

“The amateur status was established according to rule 26 of the IOC. (Same for personal propaganda and fees.)

The new FIG status resulted in the adoption of various technical directives. For many years, the technical committees—and especially Karle-Heinz Schocke, secretary and editor—discussed and detailed a new technical Reglement. The reglement brought many reactions but was finally adopted by the Congress in Rome, 1977.

Before this period, and during the 1965-75 decade, marked by the presidency of Arthur Gander, various specialized reglements had been published: Gymnaestrada (1967), international competitions and judges (1967), and the various editions of the booklet: “Measures, dimensions and forms of apparatus” and also the list of judges, last editions 1974 and 1978.

Temporary conclusions.

We believe we are not mistaken when we state that few international organizations were more modest than the FIG. For a long time, the FIG was directed by a few idealist, strong personalities who adapted statutes and reglements according to necessities. This easy adaptation, this practical spirit and the punctual evolution perhaps saved the federation during the dark hours of world conflicts from skepticism or lack of material means.

Let us not doubt, the FIG could practice a policy of means and its legislation was always adapted to real needs. In spite of the rapid development of the last years, it is rather surprising to note that all functions (officers positions) remain honorary.

EVALUATION, COMPETITIONS AND TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The fundamental subjectivity of the evaluation system for the exercises has always been the biggest problem of the technicians. This statement is valid for all sports whose performances are not directly “measurable”. The evaluation—or simply, the scoring—always argued but also always more accurate, had been the object, since its origins, of observations, proposals, researches, experiments, articles, brochures, courses, debates, symposiums, and so on. It would be vain to try to recall the hard and sometimes contradictory technical work which lead to the actual code, itself still and always being developed.

Once more, we can transcribe the valuable accounts of the technician Pierre Hentges, Sr., who under the title “Revue retrospective sur la taxation en gymnastique artistique masculine”, was able to perfectly summarize the problems in their general context. We also consulted the honorary president of the FIG, Arthur Gander whose contributions regarding the development of the Code of Points was all important.

Here are the introduction and the first two chapters of Mr. Hentges' document. In the third chapter dealing with recent years, we added Mr. Gander's accounts and personal comments.

N.J. Cuperus, founding father of the FIG and one of the creators of World Championships (called "competitions" from 1903 to 1934), enacted the following "law": "competition has to be the climax of physical education, without specialization of the exercises and sanctioning the principle of integral development."

On this basis, until 1954, the technical program of the competitions and championships of the FIG included with individual apparatus exercises, optional group exercises (later replaced with the floor individual event) and some athletic events, weight-lifting, climbing and even swimming.

But during the century, there were many changes for civilizations, individuals and sports. Today, artistic gymnastics is an Olympic sport. It remains faithful to the principle of "all around art" and presents a harmonious whole. The artistic gymnast practices the modern program of the "gymnastic dodecathlon" using racing and jumping only for his all-around training.

Thus, in our brief retrospective, we will only deal with the scoring and penalization on the six actual apparatus: high bar, parallel bars, rings, pommel horse, vaulting horse, and floor.

I. Heroic phase, 1903 to 1913. Antwerp 1902, Bordeaux 1905, Prague 1907, Luxembourg 1909, Turin 1911, Paris 1913.

Until the publication of the Code of Points in 1949, the jury had only rather incomplete—but adaptable to an objective evolution—directions for the scoring of a gymnast's work. Points: 0-2-4-6-8-10 for invalid, deficient, mediocre, satisfactory, good, perfect performance—division by quarter points. Plus 2 points for going to and leaving the apparatus.

Usually, there are two judges per exercise who consulted each other to render one score or an average score.

We neglect the "optional group exercises," which were later replaced with floor exercises.

The scores were not called out.

There were meetings before the competitions, possibly with demonstrations at the apparatus, for the instructions of the judges.

General remarks: The reglement stated that "if a gymnast fell from the apparatus, the exercise could be repeated, and only the second performance was considered. Moreover, if the gymnast touched the floor or fell, the exercise was terminated and the evaluation was only valid for the actual performance. These dispositions were the subject of discussions and revisions to finally result in the actual solution: the gymnast who interrupts the exercise will be penalized but can continue the exercise.

II. Evolution phase. Ljubljana 1922, Lyon 1926, Luxembourg 1930, Budapest 1934, Prague 1938.

In 1922, the jury and the table of penalizations had not changed, except for the 2 points for going to and leaving the apparatus.

In 1926, the introduction of new dispositions was attempted:

- a) Three judges whose average scores was multiplied by 1.5 (maximum points: 15).
- b) Evaluation according to the old system but deductions in tenths.
- c) Score of the optional exercise: combination 2 points, difficulty 3 points, execution 5 points.
- d) Scores announced aloud.
- c) Sections of 6 to 8 gymnasts competing in the events, but only the 6 best individual totals were considered for team ranking.

Since 1926, the biennial cycle of the World Championship was replaced by a quadriennial cycle, alternating every other year with the olympic games.

In 1930, the group exercises were replaced with an exercise of artistic gymnastics. For the first time film was used for compulsory exercise.

The reorganization of the technical committee also occurred in 1930 (one member per federation) with the formation of an "executive commission" with Alphonse Huguenin as president (Switzerland) and Pierre Hentges as secretary. These measures were ratified by the Congress in Lausanne (1933) where was also formed a study commission (Mrs. Zamoyska, Mr. Krizmanich, Sommers and Hentges) for the creation of World Championships for women.

In 1934, the word "competition" was replaced with "World Championships."

Also in 1934, the jury was formed of 3 judges of which 2 worked while the other rested—a judge could not score his own team—the judges were drawn. The meetings of judges before the competitions were becoming real instruction courses with demonstrations and evaluations.

In January 1938, a first "permanent list of official FIG judges" was established.

Since 1938, there were official rankings with the title "World Champion" for teams and individuals for the 12 events but also on apparatus. There were 3 judges who rendered an average score.

That same year, a "code of points" was mentioned in the reglement but it could not be realized until after World War II.

Four judges per apparatus were considered after the last competition. The highest and lowest scores would be dropped and the difference between the middle scores could not be more than one point for 0 to 9 and ½ points above 9.

III. Phase of accomplishments. Bale 1950, Rome 1954, Moscow 1958, Prague 1962, Dortmund 1966, Ljubljana 1970, Varna 1974, Stasbourg 1978, and Fort Worth 1979.

In 1950, there was an attempt to give the possibility to weaker nations to participate in the team event in a B group. The results were negative; however, the possibility to participate with three individual gymnasts was maintained until today.

The “formal oath of the jury” was introduced at the Olympic Games in Rome 1948.

In 1952, a “head-judge” was added to the four judges—the head-judge still functions today with increasingly greater responsibilities.

In 1952 also, the team event was amended inasmuch as for each exercise, the best five scores were considered for ranking (teams of six gymnasts) of teams.

The “Code of Points” suggested in 1949 by P. Hentges became a reality. At the beginning, it was a small booklet to which were later added typical examples of A, B and C difficulties and which stated the number of parts the optional exercise had to include. The Code was completed and re-edited in 1954, 1956, 1958, 1959, 1964, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1975, and 1979.

Note of the author: We have to acknowledge the extraordinary work regarding the evaluation of the actual honorary president of the FIG, Mr. Arthur Gander, Pierre Hentges’ associate since 1954, he continued and completed the delicate work on judging and penalization. Let us mention Mr. Gander’s account presenting the situation before World War II: Some prescriptions or penalization margins were fixed before the competition by the technical commission. Each judge scored more or less freely and according to what he had learned at the national level. All this naturally resulted in great differences in scores and judging errors which were unfavorable to the development of artistic gymnastics.

Mr. P. Hentges commented:

“Another great innovation was introduced on the initiative of Mr. Gander: ‘the judges’ course’ on the international and national level with the goal to have competent brevetted judges. The official list of judges, re-edited in 1960, was totally revised and often completed on the basis of the exams which ended the courses. The first examination was given in Zurich, 1964.

“The Code of 1968 stated that for individual finals the maximum was reduced to 9.70 points, and the remaining 3/10 would be used to reward risk, originality, and virtuosity. In 1956, the difference between the two middle scores was also modified.”

Note of the author: For scoring of optional exercises, the code of 1975 maintained three factors:

- a) difficulty: 3.4 points
- b) combination, composition of the exercise: 1.6 points
- c) execution: 4.4 points

Thus a starting score of 9.4 points to which bonus points could be added for risks, originality, and virtuosity (0.6 point).

Mr. Hentges’ conclusions:

“At the end of this little retrospective, we saw how the complex and delicate questions of evaluation were treated according to the experience gained and the general evolution. The future will surely bring other modifications and improvement.”

Congress of the F.I.G.

- | | | | | | |
|-----|------|-------------|-----|------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | 1881 | Liege | 32. | 1953 | Rotterdam |
| 2. | 1896 | Liege | 33. | 1954 | Rome |
| 3. | 1897 | Brussels | 34. | 1955 | Paris |
| 4. | 1903 | Antwerp | 35. | 1956 | Vienna |
| 5. | 1906 | Berne | 36. | 1957 | Zagreb |
| 6. | 1907 | Prague | 37. | 1958 | Moscow |
| 7. | 1908 | Paris | 38. | 1959 | Copenhagen |
| 8. | 1909 | Luxembourg | 39. | 1960 | Rome |
| 9. | 1911 | Torino | 40. | 1961 | Stuttgart |
| 10. | 1913 | Paris | 41. | 1962 | Prague |
| 11. | 1921 | Brussels | 42. | 1963 | Beograd |
| 12. | 1923 | Paris | 43. | 1964 | Zurich |
| 13. | 1924 | Paris | 44. | 1965 | Vienna |
| 14. | 1926 | Lyon | 45. | 1966 | Dortmund |
| 15. | 1928 | Amsterdam | 46. | 1967 | Warsaw |
| 16. | 1930 | Luxembourg | 47. | 1968 | Rome |
| 17. | 1931 | Paris | 48. | 1969 | Basel |
| 18. | 1932 | Prague | 49. | 1970 | Ljubljana |
| 19. | 1932 | Los Angeles | 50. | 1971 | Madrid |
| 20. | 1933 | Lausanne | 51. | 1972 | Munich |
| 21. | 1934 | Budapest | 52. | 1973 | Rotterdam |
| 22. | 1935 | Brussels | — | 1974 | Montreux
(extraordinary congress) |
| 23. | 1936 | Berlin | | | |
| 24. | 1938 | Prague | 53. | 1975 | Berne |
| 25. | 1946 | Geneva | 54. | 1976 | Montreal |
| 26. | 1947 | Paris | 55. | 1977 | Rome |
| 27. | 1948 | London | 56. | 1978 | Strasbourg |
| 28. | 1949 | Stockholm | 57. | 1979 | Fort Worth |
| 29. | 1950 | Basel | 58. | 1980 | Moscow |
| 30. | 1951 | Firenze | | | |
| 31. | 1952 | Helsinki | | | |

Presidents of the FIG

1881-1924	Mr. Nicolas J. Cuperus	Belgium
1924-1933	Mr. Charles Cazalet	France
1933-1939	Mr. Adam Zaoyksi	Poland
1946-1956	Mr. Goblet d'Aviella	Belgium
1956-1966	Mr. Charles Thoeni	Switzerland
1966-1976	Mr. Arthur Gander	Switzerland
1976-	Mr. Yuri Titov	USSR

Secretaries of the FIG

1896-1900	Mr. Cyrille Wachmar	France
1900-1906	Mr. Johann Dahlmann	Denmark
1906-1926	Mr. Aloyse Kayser	Luxembourg
1926-1930	Mr. Fr. Blomart	Belgium
1930-1938	Mr. Hubert Clement	Luxembourg
1938-1960	Mr. Charles Thoeni	Switzerland
1960-	Mr. Max Bangerter	Switzerland

Executive Committee 1976



Nicola Hadjiev, Ellen Berger, Alex Lylo
Andreina Gotta
Nicolae Vieru, George Whitely, Rudolf Spieth, Milivoje Radovanovic
Frank Bare, Max Bangerter, Yuri Titov, Takashi Kondo,
Maurice Burette.

Men's Technical Committee 1976



Tuomo Jalantie, Enrique Gonzalez, Sandor Urvari
Akitomo Kaneko, Alexander Lylo, Boris Chakhlin,
Darl-Heinz Zschocke

Women's Technical Committee 1976

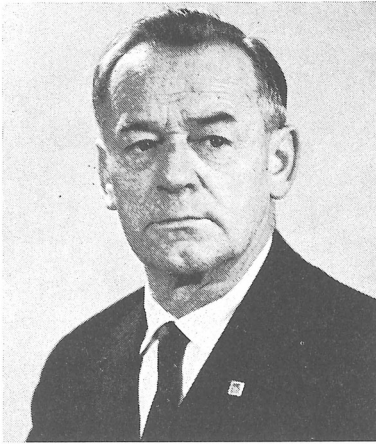


Carol Anne Letheren, Ulla Berg, Riek Fentsahm, Jackie Fie
Jaroslava Matlochova, Ellen Berger, Maria Simionescu

*Modern Rhythmic Gymnastics
Technical Committee 1976*

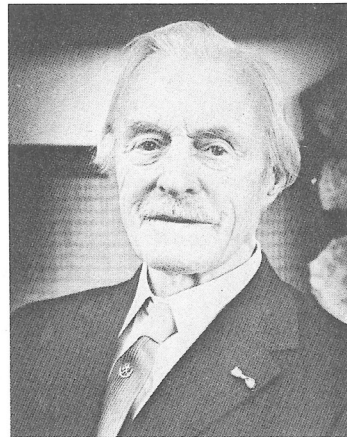


Julia Chichmanova, Kveta Cerna, Jeannine Rinaldi,
Irmgard Foerster, Andreina Gotta, Valentina Bataen, Evelyn Koop



Arthur Gander
Honorary President of the F.I.G.

1954-1958 Member MTC
1958-1964 Vice-President MTC
1964-1966 President MTC
1967-1976 President of the F.I.G.



J.H.F. Sommer
Honorary Member since 1960
Former Vice-President of the MTC



Vaino Lahtinen
Honorary Member since 1964
Former Member of the MTC
from 1950-64



Taissia Demidenko
Honorary Member since 1976

1956-1968 Member of the MTC
1969-1976 Vice-President of the MTC



Berthe Villancher
Honorary Member since 1972

1948-1956 Secretary of the WTC
1956-1972 President of the WTC



Nicolai Popov
Honorary Member since 1972

1956-1960 Member of the Executive Committee
1960-1972 Vice-President of the F.I.G.



George Gulack
Honorary Member since 1972

1960-1964 Member of the Executive Committee
1964-1972 Vice-President of the F.I.G.



Klas Thoreson
Honorary Member since 1976

1951-1952 Member MTC
1952-1956 Member Executive Committee
1956-1964 Vice-President Executive Committee
1964-1972 Member Executive Committee
1973-1976 Vice-President of the F.I.G.



Pierre Hentges
Honorary Member since 1975

1964-1968 Former member of the MTC



Milica Sepa
Honorary Member
1950-1952 Member WTC
1952-1968 Vice-President WTC



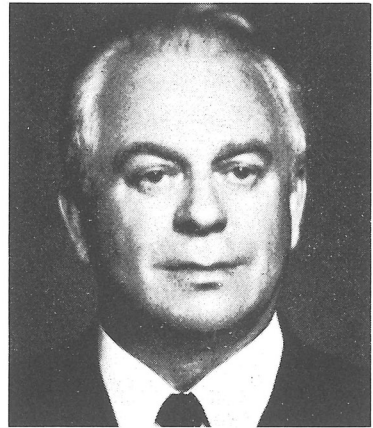
Kathe Wiesenberger
Honorary Member since 1976
1952-1976 Member WTC



Henriette Abad
Honorary Member since 1976
1967-1976 Member MRG TC



Mario Gotta
Honorary Member since 1976
1964-1976 Member Executive Committee



Ivan Ivancevic
Honorary Member since 1976
1960-1964 member MTC
1964-1972 Vice-President MTC
1972-1976 President MTC



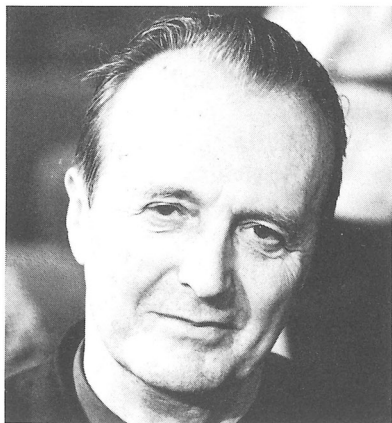
Valerie Nagy
Honorary Member since 1976
1948-1972 Vice-President WTC
1972-1976 President WTC



Ivanka Tchakarova
Honorary member since 1976
1967-1976 Member MRG TC



Susy Urzunicok
Honorary Member since 1976
1968-1976 Member MRG TC



M. Ivko Pustisek
Honorary Member since 1960
1950-1960 Secretary of the CTM

Affiliation Years of the Federations

1881	Belgium		Mongolia
	France		New Zealand
	Italy		
	Netherlands	1964	Algeria
1897	Czechoslovakia		Kuwait
1898	Hungary		Malaysia
1899	Canada		(excluded in 1975)
1900	Luxembourg		Philippines
1907	Romania		Taiwan
	Yugoslavia		(excluded in 1978)
1910	Egypt	1965	Greece
1921	United States of America	1966	Cambodia
1922	Poland		(Khmere Republic)
1923	Switzerland		Hong Kong
1924	Finland	1967	Indonesia
1926	Denmark		(excluded in 1973)
1931	Bulgaria	1968	Lybia
1933	Spain	1969	Birma
1935	Norway	1970	Guatemala
1936	Great Britain		Panama
1947	South Africa		San Marino
	Austria	1971	Ecuador
	Iran		Lesotho
1948	Argentina		(excluded in 1975)
	Columbia		Lichtenstein
	Cuba	1972	Thailand
1949	USSR		(excluded in 1976)
1950	Portugal	1973	Dominican Republic
1951	German Federal Republic	1975	Iraq
	Brazil	1976	Bolivia
	Japan		El Salvador
1952	India		Ireland
1954	Australia		Iceland
1956	Syria		Nigeria
1957	German Democratic		Puerto Rico
	Republic	1977	Bangladesh
1959	Korea		Cyprus
	Peru	1978	Angola
	Tunisia		People's Republic of China
1960	Morocco		Vietnam
1961	Chili		Thailand
1962	Lebanon		(second admission)

Partial Bibliography

Encyclopedie de la Pleiade: Games and Sports, under the direction of Roger Callois.

"La civilisation grecque," Andre Sonard (3 Vol. Guilde du Livre—Lausanne)

"L'art grec," K. Papaioannou (Mazenod)

"La Crete" and various articles, Oliver Reverdin and Nicolas Platon

Human Societies (Larousse)

History (Larousse)

Quillet encyclopedia dictionnaires

"18e Siecle francais. Le Siecle des Lumiere," Louis Forestier (Guilde du Livre—Lausanne)

Works of Jean Jacques Rousseau:

"Emile ou de l'education," "Lettre a M. d'Alembert," Consideration sur le de Pologne."

"Le sport et l'education physique en France," Dr. Louis Burgener (Magazine Physique 1973).

"Le sport et l'education physique en Suisse" (from the beginning until today), Louis Burgener (magazine EDUCATOR 1973).

"La gymnastique de Ling en Suisse," Dr. Louis Burgener, (magazine EDUCATION PHYSIQUE 1976).

"L'education corporelle selon Pestalozzi," Dr. Louis Burgener, (magazine EDUCATION PHYSIQUE 1977).

Belgian history (1865-1965) C. Ardouille and R. Moreau.

"La gymnastique chez nous," Robert Bruch, Luxembourg

Article on F.L. Jahn, Mr. F.K. Mathys (SCHWEIZER TURNEN).

History of the FIG, Dr. Miroslav Klinger (1881-1921).

Statutes and Reglements with historical summary (1881-1936).

History of the World Championships of artistic gymnastics, Pierre Hentges, Sr. (OLYMPISCHE TURNKUNST).

Album of the XXVIIth Belgian federal festival of gymnastics . . . and the first of competition gymnastics, Antwerp 1903.

History of the FIG, Rudolf Spieth synopsis at the 90th anniversary in 1971.

History, goals and development of the FIG, Arthur Gander. (magazine of the AGFI, bulletin of the FIG and other articles.)

1865-1965: 100 ans SJG (article A. Huguenin).

25 Jahre EKV, 1920-1945, Rudolf Balsiger

50 Jahre EKV, 1920-1970, Ernst Schraner and Andre Huguenin.

Bulletin of the FIG as of 1951

History of colonialism, R. Luraghi (Marabout-Universite)

Results and commentaries—Olympic Games.

Anfange des Frauenturnens und die erste Weltmeisterschaft, Mrs. Valerie Nagy, Budapest.

Sportive Rhythmic Gymnastics, Mrs. Andreina Gotta, Roma.

A. Huguenin articles in the "Le gymnaste suisse" as of May 1975.

Statutes 1970. 1975 1976. Various reglements.

Various articles.

List of the results of FIG competitions since 1948:

- a) WC men and women (artistic)
- b) Olympic Games men and women (artistic)
- c) EC Men and women (artistic)
- d) EC juniors men and women (artistic)

- e) World Cup men and women (artistic)
- f) WC sportive rhythmic gymnastics
- g) EC sportive rhythmic gymnastics

For sale at the general secretariat of the FIG.

1896 ATHENES

a) Team Competition - Not contested

b) Individual Competition

c) Apparatus Finals

Pommel Horse:

1. Zutter Louis	SUI
2. Weingärtner Hermann	GER

Rings:

1. Joannis Mitropoulos	GRE
2. Hermann Weingärtner	GER
3. Petros Persakis	GRE

Vault:

1. Carl Schumann	GER
2. Zutter Louis	SUI

Parallel Bars:

1. Alfred Flatov	GER
2. Louis Zutter	SUI
3. Hermann Weingärtner	GER

High Bar:

1. Hermann Weingärtner	GER
2. Alfred Flatov	GER

1900 PARIS

Men's Gymnastics line

a) Team Competition - Not contested

b) Individual Competition

1. Gustave Sandras	FRA	302 P.
2. Noël Bas	FRA	295
3. Lucien Démanet	FRA	293
4. Pierre Payssé	FRA	290
4. Jules Rolland	FRA	290
6. Gustave Fabry	FRA	283

c) Apparatus finals - Not contested

1904 ST. LOUIS

Men's Competition

a) Team competition

1. Turngemeinde Philadelphia	374.43 p.
2. New Yorker	356.37 p.
3. Central Chicago	349.69 p.
4. Concordia St. Louis	344.01 p.
5. South St. Louis	338.65 p.
6. Sté. Norvégienne Brooklyn	334.00 p.

b) Individual Competition

1. Julius Lenhart	AUT	69.80
2. Wilhelm Weber	GER	69.10
3. Adolf Spinnler	SUI	67.99
4. Ernst Mohr	GER	67.90
5. Otto Wiegand	GER	67.52
6. Otto Steffen	GER	67.03

c) Apparatus Finals

Pommel Horse:

1. Anton Heida	USA	42
2. George Eyser	USA	33
3. William Merz	USA	29

Rings:

1. Hermann Glass	USA	45
2. William Merz	USA	35
3. Emil Voigt	USA	32

Vault:

1. Anton Heida	USA	36
1. George Eyser	USA	36
3. William Merz	USA	31

Parallel Bars:

1. George Eyser	USA	44
2. Anton Heida	USA	43
3. John Duha	USA	40

High Bar:

1. Anton Heida	USA	40
1. Edward Henning	USA	40
3. George Eyser	USA	39

1906 ATHENES

Men's Competition

a) Team Competition

1. NOR	19.00 points
2. DAN	18.00 points
3. ITA	16.71 points
4. GER	16.25 points
5. HUN	14.45 points

b) Individual Competition

1. Pierre Payssé	FRA	116
2. Alberto Braglia	ITA	115
3. Georges Charmoille	FRA	113
4. Carl Ohms	GER	112
5. Vitaliano Masotti	ITA	111
6. Pissié	FRA	110
6. Wilhelm Weber	GER	110
6. Béla Erödy	UNG	110
6. Mario Gubiani	ITA	110

1908 LONDON

Men's Competition

a) Team Competition

1. SWE	438 points
2. NOR	425 points
3. FIN	405 points
4. DAN	378 points
5. FRA	319 points
6. ITA	316 points

b) Individual Competition

1. Alberto Braglia	ITA	317.0
2. S.W. Tysal	GBR	312.0
3. Louis Ségura	FRA	297.0
4. Curt Steuernagel	GER	273.5
5. Friedrich Wolf	GER	267.0
6. Samuel Hodgetts	GBR	266.0

1912 STOCKHOLM

Men's Competition

a) Team Competition

1. ITA	265.75 points
2. HUN	227.25 points
3. GBR	184.50 points
4. LUX	179.75 points
5. GER	162.00 points

b) Individual Competition

1. Alberto Braglia	ITA	135.0
2. Louis Ségura	FRA	132.5
3. Adolfo Tunesi	ITA	131.5
4. Giorgio Zampori	ITA	128.0
4. Guido Boni	ITA	128.0
6. Pietro Bianchi	ITA	127.75

1920 ANTWERPEN

Men's Competition

a) Team Competition

1. ITA	359.855 points
2. BEL	346.785 points
3. FRA	340.100 points
4. TCH	305.255 points
5. GBR	290.215 points

b) Individual Competition

1. Giorgio Zampori	ITA	88.35
2. Marco Torrès	FRA	87.62
3. Jean Gounot	FRA	87.45
4. Félicien Kempeneers	BEL	86.25
5. Georges Thurnherr	FRA	86.00
6. Laurent Grech	FRA	85.65

1924 PARIS

Men's Competition

a) Team Competition

1. ITA	839.058 points
2. FRA	820.528 points
3. SUI	816.661 points
4. YUG	762.101 points
5. USA	715.117 points
6. GRB	637.790 points

b) Individual Competition

1. Leon Stukelj	YUG	110.340
2. Robert Prazák	TCH	110.323
3. Bedrich Supcik	TCH	106.930
4. Fernando Mandrini	ITA	105.583
5. Dr. Miroslav Klinger	TCH	105.500
6. Ladislav Vácha	TCH	105.300

c) Apparatus Finals

Pommel Horse:

1. Josef Wilhelm	SUI	21.23
2. Jean Gutweniger	SUI	21.13
3. Antoine Rebetez	SUI	20.73
4. Carl Widmer	SUI	20.50
5. Giuseppe Paris	ITA	20.10
6. Stane Derganc	YUG	19.93

Rings:

1. Francesco Martino	ITA	21.553
2. Robert Prazák	TCH	21.483
3. Ladislav Vácha	TCH	21.430
4. Leon Stukelj	YUG	21.330
5. Bedrich Supcik	TCH	21.120
6. Bohumil Morkovský	TCH	21.083

Vault:

1. Frank Kriz	USA	9.98
2. Jan Koutny	TCH	9.97
3. Bohumil Morkovský	TCH	9.93
4. Leon Stukelj	YUG	9.91
5. Max Wandrer	USA	9.85
6. Ivan Porenta	YUG	9.76

Parallel Bars:

1. August Guttinger	SUI	21.63
2. Robert Prazák	TCH	21.61
3. Giorgio Zampori	ITA	21.45
4. Josef Wilhelm	SUI	21.40
5. Mario Lertora	ITA	21.33
6. Ladislav Vácha	TCH	21.31

1924 PARIS

High Bar:

1. Leon Stukelj	YUG	19.730
2. Jean Gutweniger	SUI	19.236
3. André Higelin	FRA	19.163
4. Antoine Rebetez	SUI	19.053
4. Georges Miez	SUI	19.053
6. Jean Gounot	FRA	19.043

Parallel Bars:

1. Ladislav Vácha	TCH	18.83
2. Josip Primozic	YUG	18.50
3. Hermann Hänggi	SUI	18.08
4. Jan Gajdos	TCH	17.92
4. Bedrich Supcik	TCH	17.92
4. André Lemoine	FRA	17.92

1928 AMSTERDAM

Men's Competition

a) *Team Competition*

1. SUI	1718.625 points
2. TCH	1712.250 points
3. YUG	1648.750 points
4. FRA	1620.750 points
5. FIN	1609.250 points
6. ITA	1599.125 points

b) *Individual Competition*

1. Georges Miez	SUI	247.500
2. Hermann Hänggi	SUI	246.625
3. Leon Stukelj	YUG	244.875
4. Romeo Neri	ITA	244.750
5. Josip Primozic	YUG	244.00
6. Mauri Nyberg	FIN	243.750
6. Heikki Savolainen	FIN	243.750

c) *Apparatus Finals*

Pommel Horse:

1. Hermann Hänggi	SUI	19.75
2. Georges Miez	SUI	19.25
3. Heikki Savolainen	FIN	18.83
4. Edi Steinemann	SUI	18.67
5. August Güttinger	SUI	18.58
6. Georges Leroux	FRA	18.25

Rings:

1. Leon Stukelj	YUG	19.25
2. Ladislav Vácha	TCH	19.17
3. Emanuel Loflier	TCH	18.83
4. Romeo Neri	ITA	18.67
5. Mauri Nyberg	FIN	18.33
6. Bedrich Supcik	TCH	18.25

Vault:

1. Eugen Mack	SUI	9.58
2. Emanuel Loflier	TCH	9.50
3. Stane Derganc	YUG	9.46
4. Josip Primozic	YUG	9.42
4. Georges Miez	SUI	9.42
6. Georges Leroux	FRA	9.33

High Bar:

1. Georges Miez	SUI	19.17
2. Romeo Neri	ITA	19.00
3. Eugen Mack	SUI	18.92
4. Vittorio Lucchetti	ITA	18.83
4. Hermann Hänggi	SUI	18.83
5. Josip Primozic	YUG	18.67

1932 LOS ANGELES

Men's Competition

a) *Team Competition*

1. ITA	541.850 points
2. USA	522.275 points
3. FIN	509.995 points
4. HUN	465.650 points
5. JPN	402.00 points

b) *Individual Competition*

1. Romeo Neri	ITA	140.625
2. István Pelle	HUN	134.925
3. Heikki Savolainen	FIN	134.575
4. Mario Lertora	ITA	134.400
5. Savino Guglielmetti	ITA	134.375
6. Frank Haubold	USA	132.525

c) *Apparatus Finals*

Floor:

1. István Pelle	HUN	9.60
2. Georges Miez	SUI	9.47
3. Mario Lertora	ITA	9.23
4. Frank Haubold	USA	9.00
4. Romeo Neri	ITA	9.00
6. Heikki Savolainen	FIN	8.97

Pommel Horse:

1. István Pelle	HUN	19.07
2. Omero Bonoli	ITA	18.87
3. Frank Haubold	USA	18.57
4. Frank Cumiskey	USA	18.23
5. Péter Boros	HUN	17.57
6. Alfred Jochim	USA	17.07

Rings:

1. George Gulack	USA	18.97
2. William Denton	USA	18.60
3. Giovanni Lattuada	ITA	18.50
4. Richard Bishop	USA	18.47
5. Oreste Capuzzo	ITA	18.27
6. Franco Tognini	ITA	18.03

Vault:

1. Savino Guglielmetti	ITA	18.03
2. Alfred Jochim	USA	17.77
3. Edward Carmichael	USA	17.53
3. Einari Teräsvirta	FIN	17.53
5. Marcel Gleyre	USA	17.46
6. István Pelle	HUN	17.13

Parallel Bars:

1. Romeo Neri	ITA	18.97
2. István Pelle	HUN	18.60
3. Heikki Savolainen	FIN	18.27
4. M. Noroma-Nyberg	FIN	17.80
5. Mario Lertora	ITA	17.53
6. Alfred Jochim	USA	17.47

High Bar:

1. Dallas Bixler	USA	18.33
2. Heikki Savolainen	FIN	18.07
2. Einari Teräsvirtä	FIN	18.07
4. Veikko Pakarinen	FIN	17.27
4. Istvan Pelle	HUN	17.27
6. Michael Schuler	USA	15.57

1936 BERLIN

Men's Competition**a) Team Competition**

1. GER	657.430 points
2. SUI	654.802 points
3. FIN	639.468 points
4. TCH	625.763 points
5. ITA	615.133 points
6. YUG	598.366 points

b) Individual Competition

1. Alfred Schwarzmans	GER	113.100
2. Eugen Mack	SUI	112.334
3. Konrad Frey	GER	111.532
4. Alois Hudec	TCH	111.199
5. Marti Uosikkinen	FIN	110.700
6. Michael Reusch	SUI	110.700

c) Apparatus Finals**Floor:**

1. Georges Miez	SUI	18.666
2. Josef Walter	SUI	18.500
3. Eugen Mack	SUI	18.466
3. Konrad Frey	GER	18.466
5. Matthias Volz	GER	18.366
6. Walter Steffens	GER	18.300
6. Willi Stadel	GER	18.300

Pommel Horse:

1. Konrad Frey	GER	19.333
2. Eugen Mack	SUI	19.167
3. Albert Bachmann	SUI	19.067
4. Marti Uosikkinen	FIN	19.066
5. Walter Steffens	GER	19.033
6. Walter Bach	SUI	19.033

Rings:

1. Alois Hudec	TCH	19.433
2. Leon Stukelj	YUG	18.867
3. Matthias Volz	GER	18.667
4. Alfred Schwarzmans	GER	18.534
5. Franz Beckert	GER	18.533
6. Michael Reusch	SUI	18.434

Vault:

1. Alfred Schwarzmans	GER	19.200
2. Eugen Mack	SUI	18.967
3. Matthias Volz	GER	18.467
4. Walter Bach	SUI	18.400
5. Walter Beck	SUI	18.367
6. Marti Uosikkinen	FIN	18.300

Parallel Bars:

1. Konrad Frey	GER	19.067
2. Michael Reusch	SUI	19.034
3. Alfred Schwarzmans	GER	18.967
4. Alois Hudec	TCH	18.966
5. Eugen Mack	SUI	18.834
6. Walter Bach	SUI	18.733

High Bar:

1. Aleksanteri Saarvala	FIN	19.367
2. Konrad Frey	GER	19.267
3. Alfred Schwarzmans	GER	19.233
4. Innozenz Stangi	GER	19.167
5. Heikki Savolainen	FIN	19.133
6. Veikko Pakarinen	FIN	19.067

