

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF RULES AND COMPETITION SYSTEMS IN GYMNASTICS FROM 1896 TO 1912

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Abstract

The efforts for a subjective and fair judgment for Gymnastics began since the first decades of the 19th century i.e. since the sport began to take a primitive competition form. In the years that followed, various competitive systems and rules were formed without being commonly accepted for all countries and federations. Nevertheless, the two international sport agencies, the IOC and the FEG organized international tournaments (Olympic Games, International Tournament), where participating countries accepted, more or less, the rules and competitive systems applied each time. The lack of permanent and commonly accepted rules and specifications of gymnastic apparatus created many problems at the six Olympic Games mentioned in the present study. This fact created suspiciousness within gymnastics and especially within the two international agencies with a direct impact on the progress and development of the sport.

Keywords: *Gymnastics, Olympic Games, Judgment, Competitive systems, Rules*

INTRODUCTION

From the end of the 19th century to the beginnings of the second decade of the 20th century (1896-1913) it was the most important period in the total history of gymnastics. During these two decades the sport was highly promoted, formed, specialized and internationalized. Competitions began to be organized by the two important international sports institutions, the Olympic Games of the IOC and the international tournament of the FEG (Federation Europeenne de Gymnastique later named FIG). During this time we see

important efforts for the finding of reliable and commonly accepted scoring systems, without positive results since disagreements and problems were aroused during this period. This fact was a rather suspending factor for the progress and international acceptance of the sport as well as an important reason for consideration for all agencies involved (Kaimakamis, 2001). FEG established for its tournaments unified rules and assessment system without success since different federations were characterized by introversion and did not

have the will to give up their own systems. Problems also occurred at the Olympic Games, since each organizing country imposed its own scoring and competition system and its own events based on its own specified preferences. Even more when participating countries followed a different system, problems were rather great since each side competed according to its own scoring and competition system (Kaimakamis, 2001).

The fact that many countries participated at both the Olympic Games and the International Tournament which followed with the same rules and regulations was a big success especially for an era when many Gymnastics' Federations presented introversion and arrogance following their own path.

It should also be noted that in both these decades cooperation did not exist among the IOC and the FEG, despite the fact that these two important international agencies could be bonded based on their special love for Gymnastics. FEG for more than 20 years since its founding in 1881 up to 1903 when it organized the first international Gymnastics Tournament (then renamed to World Championship of

Gymnastics), showed no activity worth of mentioning.

The path to development was long since the FIG rules were first composed and commonly accepted in 1949 (with a total of 12 pages), and have been continuously improved up to present (Zschocke, 1997).

During this time and for the following decades Gymnastics, then called by the general name of "*Gymnastic Sports*", was not a separate and specialized sport but a mixed and integrated sport within a more general gymnastic system, which apart from the traditional competitive gymnastics events also included track and field games and even swimming. These extra events were included in Gymnastics' competitions up to 1950.

Today the Scoring System covers all details relating to competition and assessment. Subjectivity was not eliminated, often creating disagreement,

confusion and problems. This is the reason why the FIG, as well as some federations in many countries never stopped working to find a more reliable and simpler ways of assessment (Dörrer, 1999; Uhr, 1999a, b). The leaders of world gymnastics should be directed to such a path since it is proven that the objectivity and reliability of rules is directly linked to the sport's progress. It should be mentioned that 2001 the last change (improvement) of rules and regulations took place, which surely will not be the last since Gymnastics development will continue to be ongoing (Strickrodt, 1999). It is certain that in such an effort for the finding of ideal rules and regulations, their history could provide the necessary guidance. The present study offers assistance not only towards this direction but also to the knowledge derived from the general history of this sport.

METHODS

The present study makes an effort to investigate record and showcase the problems found within rules and competition systems of the first five (5) Olympic Games (1896-1912), and the Mid Olympic Games of Athens in 1906. This specific era was selected since the infrastructure of these games was formed not only for competitive systems and assessment method for athletes, but because it was a landmark for the development of Gymnastics.

The method used in the collection of data was made based on historic research of archives and focused on the rules and competitive systems used at the greatest sport event, the Olympic Games.

The collection of data for the present study was mainly based on written and sources of Guts Muths (1793), Jahn (1816), Brustmann (1906), Savvidis (1906), Diem (1912) and Chrysafis (1930). Data were also derived from modern writers such as Göhler (1980), Lennartz /Teutenberg (1995), Gajdos (1997), e.t.c. Useful data

came from the two studies by Kaimakamis (2002, 2003), where Gymnastics in the

Olympic Games of 1896 and the Mid Olympics of 1906 were analyzed.

COMPETITION AND ASSESSMENT IN GYMNASTICS BY GUTS MUTHS AND JAHN

It is widely known that the birth, formation and the first development of Gymnastics took place during the first decades of the 19th century where the bases were set for this sport. A short mention of Gymnastics during this era will be helpful for the present study.

Since the first years the students of Jahn felt the need to be compared, to compete and to show excellence in many gymnastics events. In the sport's "primitive" era there were no technical specifications for the various gymnastic exercises. What was assessed was the number of repetitions of the various exercises and the endurance of the total performance time. In this way the best were easily found since the only thing needed was to measure repetitions or time. Jahn in his book «*Die Deutsche Turnkunst*», proudly narrates the story of his young student named August Thaer, who performed on the high bar 60 rotations (Aufschwünge), later increased to 132 (Göhler, 1987; Jahn, 1816; Spieth, 1989). Guts Muts, who is considered as the immediate precursor of Jahn in Gymnastics, in his writing «*Gymnastik für die Jugend*», suggests that he assessed gymnastics by the number of repetitions and endurance (time). For exercise, competition and winners in his primitive high bar, many athletes were found simultaneously at the same apparatus, Guts Muts (1793, p. 225-226) mentions that: "On the signal they jump and keep their weight on the bar. It is something one may do during climbing. It is very good if the gymnast competes and the winner is the one that will hold the most time".

At the beginning, the role of the judge was undertaken by the fellow athletes or the coaches who based their judgment on

empirical observation and simple comparison of those competing. Later these primitive forms of assessment determined the winners and were developed, reformed and used by the creators of gymnastics, since this was necessary for the development of the sport itself. The development and specialization led the people involved with Gymnastics to search and apply more reliable assessment systems relevant to the level and needs of the sport.

Borrmann (1987, p. 36-37), informs us that the first official forms of gymnastics took place in 1832 at the gymnastics' festival of the city of Aarau, Germany while in 1844 the German city of Feldberg also held other activities and gymnastic events without archives regarding the assessment of athletes.

From the middle of the 19th century onward, the organization of athletic games always included gymnastics. No archives for the assessments were found.

Gajdos (1997, p. 198), informs us that in 1862 the Czech Federation of Gymnastics organized the first public events where the athletes' performance and the type of exercises were determined by a type of "lottery" as follows: "Little pieces of paper with the various exercises were placed in a hat. Each athlete put his hand in the hat and after mixing the papers he took one. He then executed the exercise mentioned on the piece of paper while three judges graded with a score scaled from one to five".

In 1880 Frankfurt held a mixed event (exathlon) including three track and field and gymnastic apparatus events. For the assessment of these events, a scale from one to five was used (Borrmann, 1987).

JUDGMENT AND SCORING SYSTEMS IN THE FIRST OLYMPIC GAMES IN ATHENS (1896)

Just before the end of the 19th century many Gymnastics' Federations had been created in Europe, which used a score system with the highest score being the 10 or 20, with many specificities and

deviations. During the same time though, a general mixed system began a form of specialization with qualitative execution. Assessment and classification of athletes became a complex and difficult situation. For this reason people involved with Gymnastics tried to find even more reliable and simpler ways of assessment.

In the German Gymnastics system we find a similar philosophy regarding the direction of assessment not only from country to country, but even from teams of different areas of the same country. Occasionally disputes arose causing many problems.

At the first modern Olympics in Athens (1896), the rules under which the so called "gymnastics" took place were not formed by the IOC or any international organization. The organizing country through a special committee had undertaken the obligation to form the regulations, taking under consideration only some directions given by the IOC and Coubertin (Kaimakamis, et al, 2002).

The committee members, that were all Greeks, supervised by gymnast Ioannis Fokianos, did not take under consideration foreign regulations used for many years prior to the games by many central European countries with a great tradition in gymnastics. (Chrysafis, 238).

Being aware of the fact that these regulations would not favor Greece, Fokianos adapted them to fit the abilities of local athletes, aiming to increase participation and possibly the chance for distinction. Both goals were reached since from a total of 71 athletes, 52 were Greek and the Olympic winner in still rings was the Greek Ioannis Mitropoulos. It should be noted that the success of the Greek athlete was not due to his excellent performance but mainly on the adapted in the Greek standards regulations. Lennartz (1995, p. 105) mentions for the winning of Mitropoulos: «*Despite the fact that German athletes were obviously superior in the still rings, the judges committee with Prince George presiding, announce the Greek Ioannis Mitropoulos as the winner*».

At the Olympic Games of Athens (1896), where the first games of Gymnastics took place, the score system with a scale of 20 points (Kaimakamis et al, 2002). For the assessment of athletes an international committee of seven judges presided by the Greek Prince George was used. The President's opinion was not doubted in case of disagreement among judge (Chrysafis, 1930; Teutenberg, 1995).

For synchronized team execution (high bars, parallel bars) the assessment was done as follows: Each judge assessed three factors simultaneously, i.e. synchronization (general team performance), rhythm and technique. For the above three factors each judge produced three scores from zero to 20 (Kaimakamis et al, 2003). The secretary added all the scores and then divided the sum of the seven judges. This means that if a team was awarded perfect scores from all judges then the final score would be $20+20+ 20 \times 7 : 7 = 60$. The assessment of the individual execution of the above two events, was done as follows: Each judge gave the athlete's routine two marks, one for power exercises and one for agility exercises. The secretariat then added all marks and produced a mean score which was divided by the number of judges (Kaimakamis, et al, 2002). As can be seen by some photographs of the Athens Olympic Games, judges would stand far from one another wearing black round hats and long black coats (Kluge, 1996; Tselika, 1995).

JUDGMENT AND SCORING SYSTEMS IN THE SECOND OLYMPIC GAMES IN PARIS (1900)

The second Olympics were set to take place in 1900 in Paris, despite the Greek reactions and the strong wish of some athletes, mainly Americans, for the Olympics to take place permanently in Greece (Mouratidis, 2009). Coubertin was very active in order to ensure success for the Games and for this reason he took advantage of the international trade fair in Paris, within which he included the sports

of the Games. Things though, did not go as the French organizers wished since this fair not only did not give any merit and perspective to the revival of the Olympic Games but on the contrary it downgraded them (Yalouris, 1996). No mention neither the Olympics nor the International Athletic Games was found in any advertising material of the organizers (Concours Internationaux d' exercices phissiques sports) or even of a world championship (Wohlrath, 1900). A main characteristic of the pretty bad organization and the chaos relating to the Games was the fact that these lasted for more than five months (from May 14 to October 28), without any opening and closing ceremonies. Many historians support that it was rather difficult for anyone to separate sports included in the Olympic program from simple demonstrations or other separate games that took place during the same period (Kamper, 1972; Lennartz & Teutenberg, 1995; Umminger, 1969).

At the Paris Olympic Games (1900) gymnastics took place according to the German system but with events and rules that favored the organizers (Chrysafis, 1930). Athletes competed only in one individual medley, including a total of 16 events from which some were track and field events. No individual medley was included in the competitive program because of a disagreement among the various sides regarding rules and judgments (Kaimakamis, 2001). For better organization athletes were separated in to 16 groups and moved from each event with the three judges grading with a scoring scale from zero to 20 with no decimals. In other words if an athlete scored perfect scores in all events his final score would be $16 \times 20 = 320$ points. At every event the score was a result of the mean of the scores given by the three judges (Wohlrath, 1900). The French Gustave Sandras was the winner, gathering 302 out of the 320 points. It should be noted that the organizers awarded Sandras the title of Champion du Monde without any mention of an Olympic Winner, a sign of a bad organization and downgrading of the

Paris Olympics (Lennartz & Teutenberg, 1995).

During these games as well as at those that followed a big problem was created regarding objectivity of the judges and with the scoring system itself. The unprecedented triumph of the French athletes taking the top 27 places was not just a product of their numerical superiority (109 French out of a total of 136 athletes) or of their obvious competitive level by the competitive system formed according to their measures, along with the competition taking place in their country and the judges' favorable attitude (Wohlrath, 1900). Apart from this all events were well known to the French since for a long time these were included in the examinations' material for the military academy where almost all athletes were members.

The formation of the competitive system in favour of the organizing country as well as favourable judging was a fact for almost all games. Fokianos, four years earlier, during the Athens Games (1896) formed the competitive system based on his own views. On this issue Chrysafis (1930, p. 382) mentions that: "*For Fokianos it was a unique opportunity to adjust the rules of Gymnastics based on his own views and ideas*".

Regarding the lack of subjectivity of judges during the Paris Olympics, many eye witnesses-writers offered the following information. Chrysafis (1930, p. 382), who watched the games, writes: "*The outcome of the game is a great surprise while doubt is created regarding the correctness and impartiality of the judges' decisions*". The President of the Competition Committee Dr. Lauchaud (French) following the end of the games submitted a special report where among others admits that "*something went wrong with the judges*" (Chrysafis, 1930). Nevertheless, the fact that only capable German athletes many of which had triumphed at the Athens Games of 1896 were classified at lower positions (the first German was found at the 29th position) definitely raises some questions. Pahncke (1983, p. 65) supports that "*it was a bitter*

disappointment resulting from the hostility shown by the German Federation against the Olympic Movement". Lennartz & Teutenberg (1995, p. 34) wrote on same subject: "German athletes expressed many complaints on the condition of the organs, the biased subjectivity of the judges and mainly on the facts that they were not allowed to exercise prior the main event".

Information on the judgment issue, according to the above mentioned writers, is also given to us by the coach of the German team Fritz Hofmann (at a written report to the President of the German Olympic Committee, Dr. Gebhardt), the German athlete Theodor Wohlrath (1900, p. 36), the correspondence following the Games between Goubertin and Gebhardt, as well as by the written report submitted to the German Federation after the games by President of the German Olympic Committee (Gebhardt 1900). In other words, athletes, coaches, leaders and observers complained not only about the competitive system, which they knew in advance, but also for biased objectivity on behalf of the judges.

JUDGMENT AND COMPETITIVE SYSTEMS AT THE THIRD OLYMPIC GAMES IN ST LOUIS (1904)

The third international Olympic Games were organized at St. Louis, USA and lasted from July 1st to November 23. They were too included in a large international fair trade (Louisiana Purchase Exposition), despite the fact that the Americans had protested four years earlier against the French for such a form of the Games (Diem, 1912).

Gymnastics was quite a tradition throughout the USA and especially at the city hosting the Games, since a few decades ago many students and associates of Ludwig Jahn had moved there. This was actually the reason why there were so many gymnastics teams (Turnvereine) of German immigrants who promoted the German gymnastics system (Binz, 1985; Temme, 2000)

It should be mentioned that the participation of foreign athletes at the overseas

Olympics was very limited since only 10 foreign athletes (nine Germans and one Swiss) participated at the gymnastics events, while the 111 Americans participating were mostly of German origin (Gajdos, 1977; Göhler, 1980; Umminger, 1969). It was therefore a case of the organizing country with the German-American athletes and the few German ones. This was the reason why the proclamation of all gymnastics events as well as the program was written only in the German language (Kaimakamis, 2001).

As expected the Olympic Games of St. Louis (1904) were organized according to the German system but the Americans adjusted the competitive systems and the rules based on their own preference as was done by the organizers in 1896 and 1900.

(Kaimakamis, 2001). The above scoring system included four individual medleys (triathlon, hexathlon, heptathlon, enneathlon), and a team event which was unique for the history of the Games. The organizers included the last event (individual medley) to favor themselves, since only domestic teams and not nations were allowed to participate (Chrysfafis, 1930; Kamper, 1972; Kluge, 1981). In total, seven gymnastics apparatus were included (some of which had obligatory programs) while from athletics triathlon, shot put, running and long jump were included, as well as swimming (Göhler, 1980; Umminger, 1969).

At the Olympic Games of 1904 a total of eleven gymnastics events took place from which the IOC recognized only two sets of events as Olympic. The events were conducted in two different competition dates four months apart. At the first competition date, July 1-2, the International Turner's Championships took place including the all-around, the triathlon and team events. On October 29, the second competition date, the individual events took place in seven individual apparatus and the combined event. The latter were actually a

USA- AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) Gymnastics Championship, but because few foreign athletes also competed the games were recognized as Olympic Gymnastics Championships.(Göhler,1980; Merert, 1983).

At the St. Louis Olympics USA won almost all medals (29 out of 33 and 12 gold), since they took advantage of their numerical superiority, the selected by them events and the athletic abilities of the American athletes (Kaimakamis, 2001).

JUDGMENT AND COMPETITIVE SYSTEMS AT THE MID-OLYMPIC GAMES IN ATHENS (1904)

At the Mid-Olympics of Athens (1906), not organized by the IOC, two competitive systems with three events were included. In other words there was a team round according to the Swedish system and two individual rounds (pentathlon and hexathlon) according to the German system. At the first one, the team had 25 minutes to present the best exercises in various events, while the judges graded two factors, team synchronization and technique. In order to impress the judges all teams tried to put the aspect of difficulty in their exercises (Lennartz & Teutenberg, 1991; Savvidis, 1906). Scoring ranged from zero to 20 points resulting from the means scores of all the judges. The final team score came from the mean of all scores given for all events while decimals were also calculated. Teams scoring from 18 to 20 were classified at the first category while those scoring from 16 to 17, 90 were classified at the second category (Kaimakamis et al, 2001).

At the two individual rounds each athlete was given three minutes on each event to perform the best exercises of *power* and *skill*. Score for every event resulted from the mean of the scores given by each judge. The highest score an athlete could get was 20 points, while the final of the individual round resulted from the addition of the five scores given for the five organs. In other words, if an athlete scored in every

apparatus 20 points, then his final score would be $20+20+20+20+20=100$. In both team and individual rounds we had decimals and two categories (Kaimakamis et al, 2001).

Regarding judging and the organization of judges, the Greek organizers (up to the point that they could) did not leave space for negative comments and protests. It should be mentioned that at the Paris Olympics (1900) there was, as already mentioned, big problems due to the attitude of the organizers (Chrysafis, 1930). For this reason the Hellenic Olympic Committee sent on October 1905, Ioannis Chrysafis to various European cities (Stockholm, Copenhagen, Paris, Berlin) to be updated on the rules and regulations of the most important sports, in order for the rules applied at the Athens Olympics to be more or less commonly accepted. It should be noted that the Germans had submitted since 1901 to the IOC a proposal for the formation of unified and commonly accepted rules, which did not get accepted by the IOC. The Germans talked about a set of commonly accepted written rules as these were applied by their federation (Lennartz, 1999; Lennartz & Teutenberg, 1991). The German Olympic Committee noted that what happened during these games, made the following positive comments regarding judgment and organization shown by the Greeks: *“At the same time one should congratulate the judges. They were generally objective and only a few actions led to protest. It should also be mentioned that the work of a judge is very difficult when it comes to international games. We wish for the formation of international rules at future Olympic Games”* (Lennartz & Teutenberg, 1991).

As a protest one can consider the view of M. Brustmann for excessive time (3 minutes), given to athletes in individual rounds for each event. Here is what a track and field athlete wrote, who seemed to know in depth issues related to Gymnastics in that era: *“It seems to me that rules for gymnastics pentathlon and hexathlon have been formed by people who did not know*

much about competition, since in my opinion it is bad for an athlete's health to execute exercises on an apparatus for such a long time" (Brustmann, 1906).

Also, the German coach Fritz Hofmann (also coach at the Olympics of 1896 and 1904), in order to justify the not so flattering position of the German team, expressed the view that the Greek leaders favored more the Danish and Norwegians since the coaches of both these teams were their army colleagues. Such a view though seems to have no basis. The fact though that Greece had started to use the Swedish system leaving the German one aside, may have led the Greeks to emotionally affect them towards the Swedish. The heart of these Games was Chrysafis who since 1900 and onward had endorsed the Swedish system showing at the same time a blind hatred towards the German one (Paleologos, 1960).

Finally, Savvidis (1906, p. 38) (an eye witness and sports commentator) who among others promotes the excellent organization and subjectivity of Greeks expresses some reservations regarding judging at pentathlon: *"The judges' committee is divided. Others watch (assess) parallel bars, others the high bar, others the still rings and others pommel horse, meaning that no judgment will be fair considering that the same judges should judge all events"*.

During the same year and during the Mid-Olympics of Athens, a technical committee was formed for the first time under the auspices of FEG in order to discuss and offer solutions to many problems regarding the primitive existing rules (Huguenin, 1981). This committee consisting mostly of active athletes made some progress towards this direction but it was not possible yet to solve all problems and form a commonly accepted scoring system. It should be noted that this committee with its first president, Pierre Hentges, was initially activated during the fourth International Tournament (Prague, 1907), while the initial proposal for its formation was prepared and submitted by

the well organized Czechoslovakian Gymnastics Federation. In this sense technical and rules related issues that up to then were dealt by FEG's President, N. J. Cuperus and his Belgian advisors were now under the jurisdiction of an international committee (Huguenin, 1981). Regarding the above mentioned competition the Czechoslovakian professor Miroslav Klinger writes among others that: *"Scoring was secret and made known only at the end of the competition, while athletes were obliged to wear shoes when performing (Huguenin, 1981).* The same Czechoslovakian Federation from 1907 to 1936 applied the following rules: *"Execution errors, change or replacement of elements in the obligatory program that was graded from zero to 10, was penalized with the score of zero. Free program was graded with the highest score 20, i.e. up to 10 points for the assessment of difficulty and up to 10 for execution. Already since then, athletes in their free program should have included elements of power, position and swinging without clarifying the specific analogies"*.(Gajdos, 1994).

It is important to state that during this era there was no cooperation at all between FIG and the IOC.

JUDGING AND COMPETITIVE SYSTEMS DURING THE FOURTH OLYMPIC GAMES IN LONDON (1908)

The Olympics of 1908, officially the Games of IV Olympiad, took place parallel to the Franco – British Exhibition, from April 27 to October 31, 1908. Contrary to the Paris and St. Louis Olympics, which due to chaotic conditions in sports the Games were downgraded, the London Games were quite successful. Success was mainly a result of the fact that more than a 2/3 of all sports took place within the two weeks of

July at the White City Stadium. (Kluge, 1997; Lennartz, 1998).

Gymnastics games also took place at the White City Stadium at specially formed premises from July 13 to July 18. At the

London Olympics, and in order for the IOC to maintain some balance among the German and the Swedish systems, it organized the Games with two competitive systems: One team event according to the

Swedish system and an individual event according to the German system (Göhler, 1980). At the first competition a team consisting from 16 to 40 athletes had 30 minutes to execute exercises on various apparatus. The competitions were judged by three judges who assessed general impression, difficulty, versatility, entrance and exit of its team. Each judge could give a maximum of 160 points for each execution. In other words a judge could give 40 points (the maximum) for entrance and exit, 60 for versatility and accuracy and 60 for level of difficulty. At the end of the competition the scores of all three judges were added and the summary was the actual score of the team (160+160+160=480 maximum score) (Lennartz, 1999).

At the individual round (heptathlon) according to the German system each athlete had two minutes time on every apparatus.(Gajdos, 1997; Kaimakamis, 2001; Kluge, 1977). For this competition there were also three judges, who graded on a scale from zero to 24 points. For every apparatus the grade resulted from the mean of the scores of all judges, while the final (individual all-around event) score was the sum of the scores of all apparatus. These Games were the first to assess separately the difficulty of the exercise and technique (Gajdos, 1997). Many protests were made though for unreliable judgments and the competitive systems (especially by the

Italians and German athletes and team leaders).

It should be noted that by Coubertin's proposal the judges were all English who supported, as did the viewers, the Swedish system (Gajdos, 1997; Pahncke, 1983). The fact that the English athlete Tysal was placed second and had no other athletic achievements and, thus, no athletic future was an indication for the lack of biased subjectivity of the judges. Göhler (1980, p. 160) conveying the view of the Germans,

Gunsch and Wiedemann on the same issue writes: "*German athletes did not lose because of lack of ability but because arbitrariness and lack of objectivity of the international and more specifically of the English judges*".

The German Federation believed that the competitive system and the judging were not proper or objective, and ignored the institution of the Olympic Games. As already mentioned the German Olympic Committee had suggested that the IOC suggested the formation of special international judges' committee for judging and assessing all sports. This was not accepted due to other existing predicaments (Lennartz, 1995). It should be mentioned that during these Games FEG participated for the first time without having any special jurisdiction.

JUDGING AND COMPETITIVE SYSTEMS DURING THE FIFTH OLYMPIC GAMES IN STOCKHOLM (1912)

Stockholm Olympics with their good organization and great success created hopes for their global promotion and acceptance (Mouratidis, 2009). After 1896, these were the first Olympic Games that were not included or were a secondary event within some international trade.

At the Stockholm Olympic Games (1912) the IOC and the FEG cooperated for the first time in organizing the competition, before problems resulted by competition and diversity of the two main systems (Swedish and German) (Kaimakamis, 2001). In order to keep some balance and keep all sides happy they organized the Games according to the following four systems:

-A team round according to the Swedish system.

-A team round with free selection of events, apparatus and exercises.

-A team round according to the German system.

-An individual round according to the German system (Kluge, 1977).

Despite these efforts protests were made for both competitive systems and judging. At the second competition which was a peculiar team round, there was a free selection of apparatus, events and exercises with a time limit of one hour and the team consisted of 16 to 40 athletes. There were five judges who graded not only qualitative execution and synchronization but also the number of athletes per team for a specific apparatus. The final score, each time, resulted from the addition of the scores given by all judges divided by the number of athletes and apparatus (Gajdos, 1997). If one studies the scores given by each judge and compares them with the rest of the judges (for a specific country), the degree of the judgment problem becomes obvious and was nothing but a "Babel". Some scores were so far apart that one score was almost double the other. Carl Diem, chief of German delegation in O.G. 1912, presented a table with judges and scores given for each country, where the large difference among scores was clearly visible. At the third competition, a team round according to the German system also had five judges. Each team could have up to 24 athletes who competed on four events in one hour. Just as happened in the previous Games, there were great differences in the judges' scores (Diem, 1990).

Despite all the above, the games of Stockholm remained in history for the intense juxtaposition among the two main gymnastics system and mostly for the well organized effort of the Swedish to promote their own system (Huguenin, 1981). It should be noted that a first serious effort to promote the Swedish gymnastics system at a world level, was done in 1906 during the Mid-Olympics of Athens.

CONCLUSIONS

At the Olympic Games organized by the IOC (1896-1912) there were no commonly accepted rules. Each participating country composed its own rules in order to have balance on the one hand but favor itself on the other. This was

the reason why in each Olympiad we had different competitive systems. It should be noted that we had only one competition (individual medley) in 1900 in Paris.

At almost all Olympic Games there was protesting not only for competitive systems but for the judgment as well. It should be noted that protesting during the Games of 1896 and 1906 was very limited.

At the competitive program of the first three Olympic Games (1896-1904) competitive systems and rules were added only according to the German Gymnastic system, while at the other three games (1906-1912) we also had the Swedish system. This was the reason why the problem with rules grew over the last three Games.

FEG and the representatives of various federations early on recognized various imperfections in rules and therefore agreed to change them. The fact though that each federation led its own path did not leave any room for mutual understanding, and so the significant changes did not occur immediately but much later.

During time cooperation did not exist between the IOC and FIG, regarding the organization of tournaments or even any exchanging of views. The two agencies first met at the Olympic Games of 1908. It was during the Games of 1912 where they first cooperated with each other. During the last years there was a sense of cooperation between the two agencies.

At that time Gymnastics was not a separate and specialized sport since it included more events than it does today. Apart from the traditional gymnastics events, various competitive systems included other sports as well (mainly track & field).

Various scoring scales were used (mainly 10 & 20 points). The factors assessed were synchronization (in team performance), technique, rhythm and difficulty. Within the same events there was different assessment for power and swinging.

The lack of written set of rules and commonly accepted operational

specifications for gymnastics competitions, created great problems in the development of gymnastics. It should be mentioned that at competitions organized by FEG the various teams had the right to use their own events creating even bigger problems.

The German and Swiss were the most important Federations during this era (especially the first had the most power and the most athletes), did not like the two international agencies (FIG, FEG), neither the competitions organized by them. The two federations never participated at competitions organized by the FEG.

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