Guatemala and Olympism

“Have it fixed in your mind that nobody without wanting or trying can reap the laurels of glory.”

Guatemala and Olympism

Guatemala

110,000 square kilometres.
6,200,000 inhabitants.

Comité Olímpico Guatemalteco, 1980

Role of the COG

The Guatemalan Olympic Committee endeavours to advance, in co-ordination with the National Federations, the Guatemalan sports movement, encourage physical education and sports as an aid in the development of character, good health and civic spirit. Through the promotion of the fundamental principles of amateur sports, the COG not only provides assistance to athletes in preparation for the regional and Olympic Games, but continuously collaborates in the expansion of sport and the ideals of the Olympic Movement with official and private sports organisations.

Creation and development

The Guatemalan Olympic Committee was formed in 1947 as a prerequisite when Guatemala requested and was granted the honour of organising the VI Central American and Caribbean Games, held in 1950.

As part of the organisation of the VI Central American and Caribbean Games, Guatemalan Sports Authorities in collaboration with Government Officials built for the first time in the country’s history the sports facilities required for the development of a long range programme.

In 1969 by government decree, the Guatemalan Olympic Committee was allocated a small budget and was officially made responsible for the participation of Guatemalan athletes in regional and Olympic Games.

COMITE OLIMPICO GUATEMALTECO

(COG)

Founded in 1947.

President in office: Dr Alejandro Giammattei Cáceres *.

Secretary General in office: Mr. Kenneth John Downing.

Address: Palacio de los Deportes, Zona 5, Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Telephone: 32 49 01, 67 268.

Telegrams: Colimpico.

* See biographical notes
General Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes *, from 1948 to 1952.

GUATEMALA AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES

- **First participation**: 1952 in Helsinki.

Guatemala’s participation in the Olympic Games has been discreet, however the best performances have been:

- Munich (1972): Andres Burge, wrestling, 8th place.

IOC members in Guatemala

Previous presidents of the COG

José Toledo.
Edmundo Nanne
Augusto Putzeys Rojas.
Julio Illescas Rojas.
Gabriel Garcia.
Miguel Massis.
Humberto Gonzalez Juárez.
Alfonso Martinez Esteves.
Justo Ramiro Garcia.
Donaldo Alvarez Ruiz.
Luis Canella Gutierrez.
Alejandro Giammattei Cáceres *.
Representation of Guatemala at the Olympic Games from 1952 to 1980

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Athletics</th>
<th>Rowing</th>
<th>Basketball</th>
<th>Boxing</th>
<th>Canoeing</th>
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1 The figure in brackets represent the number of women included in the first figure.
• Not included on the programme.
The present statutes were adopted in 1974.

Structure
The General Assembly of the COG is formed by a delegate from each of the affiliated National Federations. A Board of Directors is elected for a 4-year term by the General Assembly and is made responsible for its administration. The Board of Directors meets at least once a week. Amongst its tasks are to observe and comply with all regulations of the IOC, to protect and promote the ideals of amateur sport and the Olympic Movement, to promote the participation in regional and Olympic Games and to aid the athletes by providing adequate training for the Games.

Present board of Directors
PT: Dr. Alejandro Giannmattei Cáceres *; VPT: Cont. Juan de la Cruz Garcia; First Director: Lic. Francisco Toledo; Second Director: Prof. Augusto Robles Moran; Third Director and Secretary: Ing. Kenneth John Downing.

Financing of the COG
Financing for the COG is obtained through a government grant of $15,000 per year and through contributions from private entities who help develop specific programmes.

At present the Sport Authorities of Guatemala have presented the “Plan National de Desarrollo del Deporte y Recreatión” (Plan for the Development of Sport and Recreation) to government officials who are studying the programme and evaluating the possibility of increasing the COG budget as suggested in the Plan.
**Federations affiliated to the COG**

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<td>1970</td>
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<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judo</td>
<td>1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rowing</td>
<td>–</td>
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<td>Soft ball</td>
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<td>Shooting</td>
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<td>Swimming</td>
<td>1947</td>
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<td>Table Tennis</td>
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<td>Tennis</td>
<td>–</td>
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<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weightlifting</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yachting</td>
<td>–</td>
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</table>

**THE COG AND OLYMPISM**

- **Olympic Day**
  December 7th is by tradition set aside to celebrate “Sports Day” in Guatemala. The COG plays an active role in the celebrations.

- **Protection of the Olympic Emblems**
  The COG controls the use in Guatemala of the Olympic symbol and emblems.

- **Olympic Awards obtained**
  **Olympic Diploma of Merit**
  - Obtained by “Comité Olimpico Guatemalteco”, 22nd holder in 1950, for its excellent organisation of the Central American and Caribbean Games.

*The sports complex in the capital.*
1973 - 1st Central American Games: Major Sylvia de Magalhães Padilha, IOC member in Brazil and representative of the President of the IOC, hoists the Olympic flag watched by Mrs. Ingrid Keller and Mr. Luis Canella, respectively secretary general and president of the NOC.

Olympic Order
- 1978 : Bronze medal to Mrs. Ingrid Keller de Schiavoni, secretary general of the COG from 1967 to 1977. She was national swimming champion, vice-president of the national federation (1950-1956), Board member of the PASO and the ODECABE.

Publications of the COG
The COG has published the “Compendio didactico y de consulta para voleibol” written by the well known Mexican, Prof. Macario Gonzalez Guerrero, as a didactic manual for trainers, promoters and umpires.

SPORT IN GUATEMALA

Training of sports leaders
There is no set pattern for the training of sports leaders in Guatemala. However, Mexico and Olympic Solidarity have been most helpful in this field.

Other sports governing bodies
The Confederación Deportiva Autónoma de Guatemala controls national sports in co-operation with the COG and the National Federations. They promote the ideals of and the participation in Amateur Sport in Guatemala.

State aid for the sports movement
The Government of Guatemala grants $ 150,000 a year to the Confederation Deportiva Autónoma de Guatemala for the promotion of sport at the federal level and an additional grant of $15,000, is given to the public schools system through the Ministry of Education for the promotion of sport in school.

Organisation of Games
1950 – VIth Central American and Caribbean Games in Guatemala City.
1973 – 1st Central American Games in Guatemala City.
Sports installations

Almost every town and village in Guatemala has a football field and many have a basketball court, however these facilities are mostly improvised.

The country's main sports installations are found in the capital city and include:
- Estadio Mateo Flores (football, track and field) 30,000 seating capacity
- Gimnasio Teodoro Placios Flores (basketball, judo) 5,000 seating capacity
- Diamante Enrique Torrebiarte (baseball) 10,000 seating capacity
- Coliseo Deportivo (badminton, weightlifting) 3,000 seating capacity
- Gimnasio 7 de diciembre (volleyball, gymnastics) 1,000 seating capacity
- Piscina Ciudad de los Deportes (swimming, diving, water polo) 3,000 seating capacity
- Estadio del Ejército (football, track and field) 15,000 seating capacity
- Diamante de Softbol Zona 15 (softball) 1,500 seating capacity
- Diamante Gálvez Sobral (Junior League Baseball) 1,000 seating capacity
- Piscina Vista Hermosa (swimming) 1,000 seating capacity
- Cancha de Tennis Ciudad de los Deportes (tennis) 500 seating capacity
- Poligono Los Cipresales (shooting) 250 seating capacity
- Club de Caza, Tiro y Pesca (shooting) 250 seating capacity
- Palacio de los Deportes (boxing) 1,000 seating capacity, (wrestling) 1,000 seating capacity, (fencing) 100 seating capacity.

Sports experiencing the greatest development

Swimming, shooting, weightlifting, football and bowling.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Doctor Alejandro Giammattei Cáceres

President of the COG since 1973

Graduated as a dental surgeon from the University of San Carlos of Guatemala, later specialising as a periodentist at New York University (USA). Dr. Giammattei played on the national basketball team in 1958. Was elected Vice-President of the Guatemalan Bowling Federation from 1964-1966. In 1970 was elected President of the Confederación Deportiva Autónoma de Guatemala for two periods (1970-1973).

Became President of the Organising Committee for the First Central American Games (ORDECA). In 1973 accepted the office of President of the Guatemalan Olympic Committee. In 1977 became President of ORDECA. In 1979 elected third Vice-President of the Pan American Sports Organisation (PASO). In 1973 was pronounced the best sport director in Guatemala by the Association of Sports Writers.

General Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes

IOC member from 1948 to 1952, President of Guatemala from 1958 to 1962.

Once Guatemalan Ministerial Representative in Great Britain, General Ydigoras Fuentes played football on several amateur teams and participated in 1926 at the Xth Central American Sporting Games in Shooting Events. Was the Chef de Mission in 1926 for the First Central American and Caribbean Games (CACSO).

Sport at school

Participation during the school year is promoted and regulated through the department of the Dirección de Educación Física y Salud in the Ministry of Education.

Sports which draw the biggest crowds

Football, basketball, baseball and cycling.