TRIP TO ASIA

The Asian journey of IOC President H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch from 21st August to 2nd September 1985 took him from Japan to Sri Lanka via Korea, and the Republic of Maldives.

Once again, the President was to meet young athletes from all over the world, this time at the XIIIth Universiad* which opened in Kobe on 24th August. Almost eighteen years after Tokyo, 1967, the university athletes gathered in Japan for a second time for high-quality sports competitions under the sign of friendship.

In front of the 60,000 spectators in the athletics stadium of this major Japanese port, the crown Prince, H.H. Akihito, accompanied by his wife, officially declared open these Games in which athletes from 103 countries and all continents took part. On the eve of the opening ceremony, the FISU (International University Sports Federation) general assembly was addressed by President Samaranch, who greeted the growing success of the Universiad:

“They help to promote sport and the preparation of athletes, which makes them an important factor in the success of the Olympic Games. The IOC, the President added, will spare no efforts to support the university spirit”.

During a brief ceremony, in the presence of Mr. Primo Nebiolo, President of the FISU, Messrs. Hikaru Matsunaga, Japanese Minister of Education, Alexandru Siperco and Ashwini Kumar, 1st and 2nd Vice-Presidents of the IOC, Chiharu Igaya and Masaji Kiyokawa, IOC members in Japan, Sheikh Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, IOC member in Kuwait, President of the Olympic Council of Asia, and Mr. Yoshihiro Inamaya, President of the Organising Committee of the XIIIth Universiad, the President presented Mr. Hanji Aoki, President of the Japanese Athletics Federation and Vice-President the Organising Committee of the XIIIth Universiad and Past President the NOC with the insignia of the

* Universiad
Presidential Activities

Olympic Order. This decoration was awarded to him the 90th IOC Session in Berlin in June.

After a stopover in nearby Osaka, where he attended a meeting of the executive committee of the General Association of Asian Sports Federations (GAASF), which is made up of twenty-eight affiliated federations under the presidency of Mr. Chong Kyu Park, IOC member in Korea, President Samaranch travelled to Seoul for the second stage of his Asian trip. He was awaited there for working meetings with the leaders of the SLOOC, the Organising Committee for the Games of the XXIVth Olympiad and of the NOC. He thus had the opportunity to meet those personalities newly appointed to positions within the Committee, in particular Mr. Ha-Woo Lee, the new Secretary General (see O.R. 215).

The SLOOC had also planned a number of excursions to enable Mr. Samaranch to inspect the progress of work on sites for the Games, including visits to the Olympic Park, at the edge of which the Olympic Village is soon to be erected, the canoeing and rowing regatta site and the Taenung training centre adjoining the shooting stand. At the sites, athletes and former Olympic medallists engaged in training spoke with the President on the subject of ideal accommodation and facilities for the athletes taking part in the Olympic Games. The IOC President expressed great satisfaction at the quality of the work. He had the opportunity of repeating his compliments to the President of the Republic, Mr. Chun Doo Hwan, and to the Minister of Sports, Mr. Lee Yong Ho, who received him in audience.

THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES, A NEW NOC

The welcome given to President Samaranch by the population of Maldives will leave a lasting
impression. This small country, made up of a string of coral islands on the equator south of India, put on a splendid show. But the visit was particularly important because its purpose was to celebrate the official recognition of the Maldives NOC, the Olympic family’s one hundred and sixty-first NOC. This solemn commitment took the form of a pact of allegiance to Olympism and the presentation of an Olympic flag. The ceremony took place in the presence of Mr. Ashwini Kumar, IOC member in India and the members of the NOC led by their President Mr. Naseer Zahir. Talks with the President of the Republic, Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and the Minister of the Interior and of social affairs. Mr. Umar Zahir, left the IOC President firmly convinced that there is a genuine interest in the concentrated development of sport in Maldives.

The enchanting setting of these islands is a standing invitation to relaxation and sport. The
numerous popular sporting events on the programme of festivities demonstrated with brio the intensity of a highly structured sporting life. The most commonly practised disciplines are team sports, and the President was able to attend a basketball game in the capital, Maltes, covered stadium, a football match on the national ground and a volleyball game on Boduhiti. It was off the shores of this small island near Malé that the wind-surfing regatta took place. Badminton and table tennis also boast many skilful practitioners and the tournaments the President was invited to attend showed an excellent standard.

The President’s tour of Asia ended in Sri Lanka. Mr. Prema Pinnewale, Secretary General of the NOC, kindly passed on to us detailed notes on the proceedings of the President’s visit to Sri Lanka, which we reproduce below:

"The National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka had the great good fortune of welcoming H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, President of the International Olympic Committee to Sri Lanka when he made a stop-over here from 30th August, 1985 to 1st September, 1985.

This was a historic occasion as this was the first time that a President of the IOC had ever visited Sri Lanka. The Government of Sri Lanka, therefore, honoured Mr. Samaranch by granting him the status of a Guest of the State.

An exhaustive programme was arranged by the NOC for this short stay of two days and the highlights of this programme were a courtesy call on His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka, meetings with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Sports and National Security. The U. N. Resolution regarding protection for the Olympic Games, the Seoul Olympiad the meeting with the two Koreas and the role of the Sri Lankan Government in the development of sports in Sri Lanka figured prominently in these discussions."
The NOC also made arrangements for the President to witness the National Hockey Championships and the Junior National Basketball Championships. These two sporting events were held in two towns in the interior of Sri Lanka, nearly 125 km. away from Colombo. This afforded the President and his party an opportunity of enjoying, all but briefly the famed scenic beauty of Sri Lanka.

The President also met the members of the NOC at a formal meeting where a frank exchange of views on sports in Sri Lanka and the activities of the NOC.

The President also took time out from his many engagements to watch the First Cricket Test between India and Sri Lanka which was played in Colombo during the time of the President's visit to Sri Lanka.

Hayleys Ltd. of Colombo, the local agents for Philips S.A. of Netherlands donated a set of Philips video equipment to the NOC Sri Lanka. This presentation was done in the presence of H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, President of IOC, during his recent visit to Sri Lanka. This is in pursuance of a decision by Philips S.A. to donate video equipment to all NOCs for their use.*

**THE PRESIDENT IN AFRICA**

In our next issue, we shall be giving an account of the IOC President's trip to Africa. H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch began this journey across the African continent on 24th October. His itinerary took in the following destinations: Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Ghana, Benin, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, the Central African Republic, Uganda and Djibouti.

During this trip, the President was accompanied by a delegation of high-level African sports officials, including H.E. Mr. Louis Guirandou-N'Diaye, IOC member in the Ivory Coast, Mr. Anani Matthia, IOC member in Togo, President of the Togo NOC and of the Association of African NOCs (ACNOA), and Mr. Samwel Mbogo Wa Kamau, President of the Kenyan NOC and Vice-President of the ACNOA. The trip came to an end on 4th November.

* For a more detailed account of the XIIIth University Games, see also the article by Roch Campana, page 720.