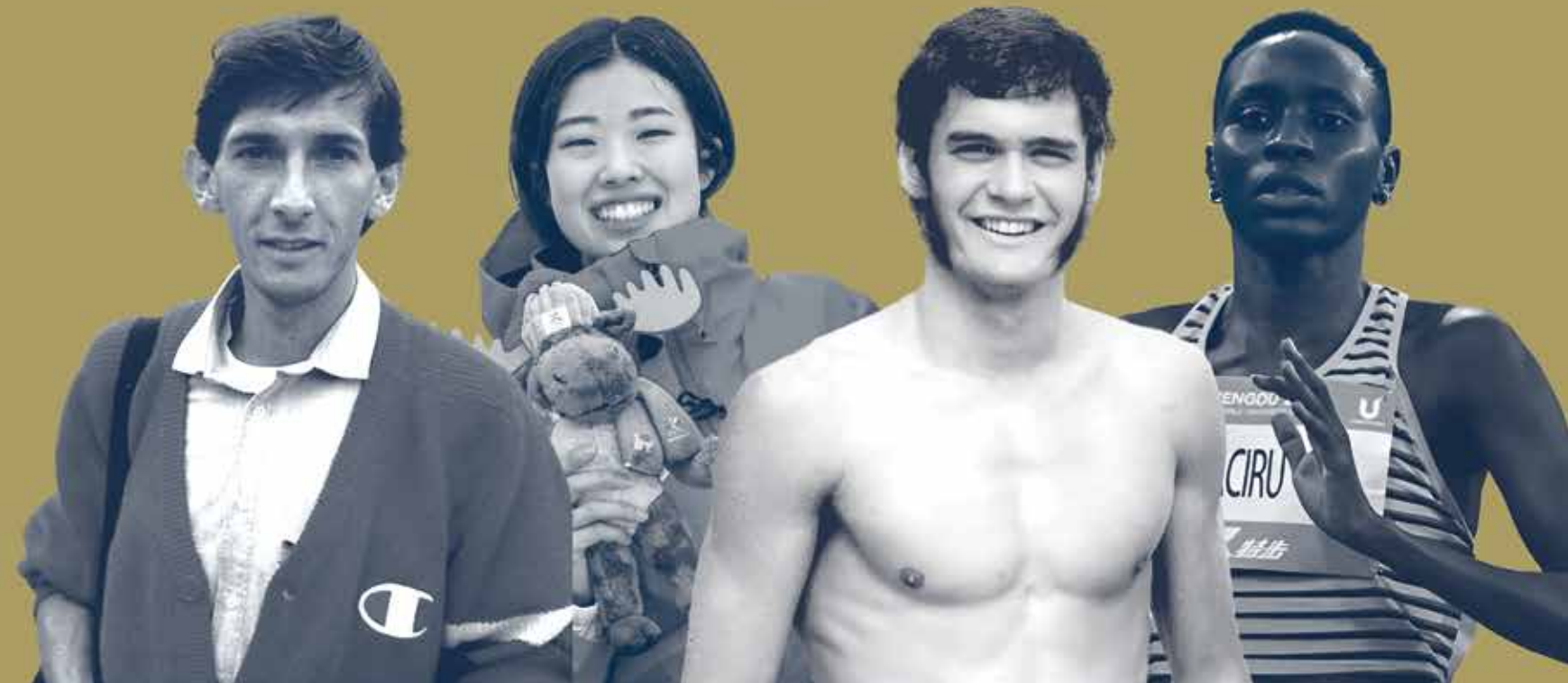




*A Family Album*





*A Family Album*



*A Family Album*

75 years of university sport is an incredible achievement for FISU. While such an accomplishment cannot be easily summarised, this book represents a nearly three-year process to share the stories and hear about the experiences from those that have been part of this great history. This was not written to be an institutional chronicle but instead a reflection of the emotions and memories of those that have brought FISU's 75 years to life.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported the Federation in its development over the past 75 years: FISU Honorary Members, members of the FISU Committees, Organising Committees of FISU events, international sports organisations, national university sports federations, continental university sport federations, athletes, FISU management and staff.

This publication pays tribute to FISU Emeritus Honorary Members who passed away since 2020 – Fritz Holzer, Roberto Outeiriño, Adrian Gagea, Constantin Anastassov, and more recently FISU Honorary Secretary General Roch Campana.

A special thanks goes to Lidia Lesnykh for building the concept of this book, conducting the interviews, as well as preserving FISU's archives and carrying out historical research on university sport.

We also thank Christophe Erhat for his design of the entire publication, Doug McLean for editing and proofing, and Thérèse Courvoisier for coordinating the team's efforts.

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# *Family Album*





Courtesy of the Lake Placid Olympic Museum

# Foreword

An anniversary is a good opportunity to pause for a moment and review a few experiences, including those from a personal perspective. 75 years of FISU, a proud figure that is backed by a great many people, initially and until not so long ago mainly men, but more recently and fortunately, increasingly also women. The only constant in life, even in the development of a sports organisation, is change.

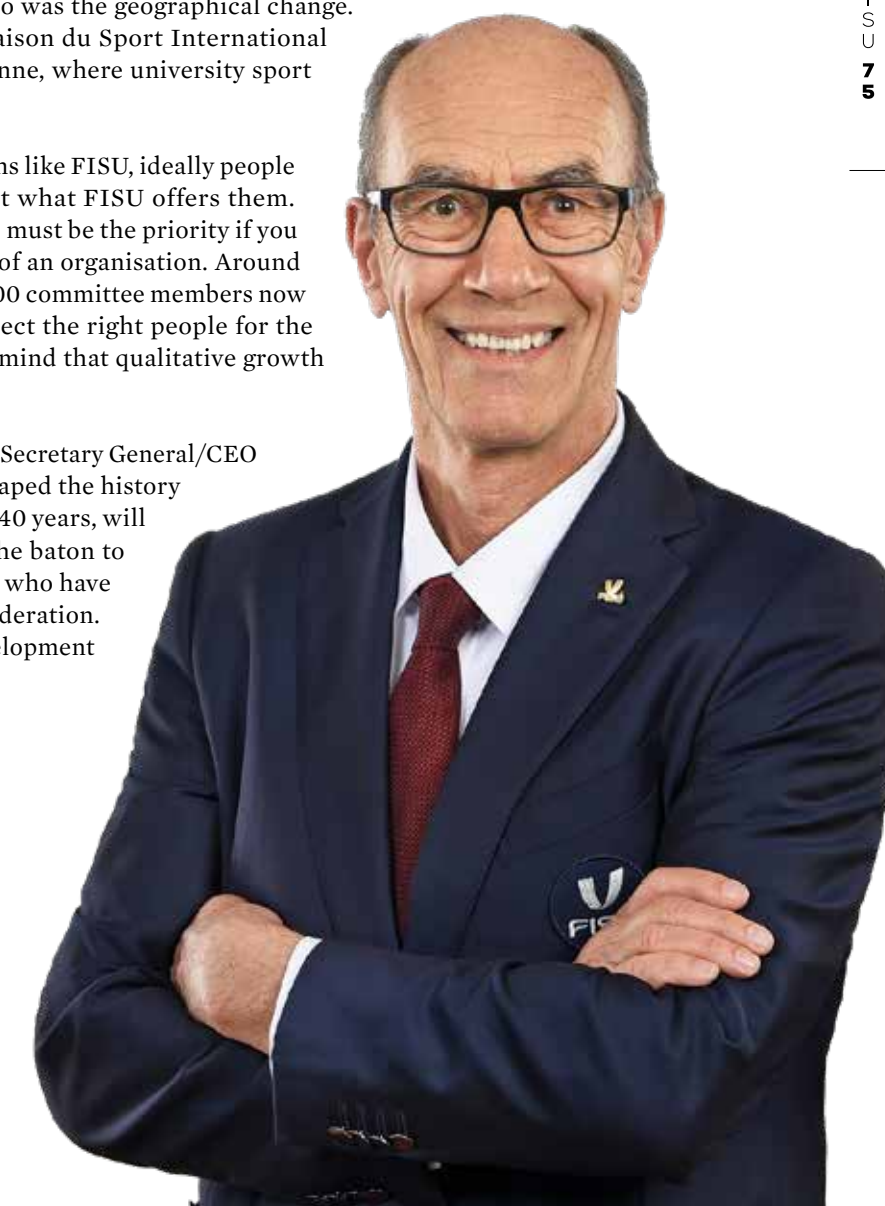
How amazed I was when, as a member of the Swiss delegation, I was allowed to walk into a packed stadium at the Universiade opening ceremony in Edmonton in 1983 and experience the full scope of this major student sporting event for the first time. In 1991 at the Winter Universiade in Sapporo, working as a journalist for FISU with my Hermes Baby typewriter, I learnt that Japan and other nations were much more technically advanced, already working with the first computers. When I was formally accepted into the small team of FISU Media Commission at the 1991 Summer Games in Sheffield, I realised that President Nebiolo primarily decided, Secretary General Campana delegated a lot, and I had to implement all this. That was the start of my career as a FISU official, in which my mentor Fritz Holzer always supported me.

The 'old guard', including Campana, Outeiriño, Anastasov, Lazer, Holzer, Killian, Zemrau, Furuhashi etc., shaped FISU internally and externally in the usual way of the time, in which workshops, group work, and other tools found it difficult to gain acceptance. I realised early on how important FISU was, and in particular the Winter and Summer Universiades, especially in Asia and Eastern Europe, while Western countries found it difficult to give FISU the attention it deserved. FISU began to grow steadily, cooperation with many sports federations was institutionalised, more employees were recruited, and the sports programme also grew strongly in the direction of World University Championships and later University World Cups. This was joined by education programmes and other projects such as Healthy Campus, which today make up a proud portfolio. Under the leadership of Secretary General/CEO Eric Saintrond, and supported by the Executive Committees led by Presidents Killian, Gallien and Matytsin, not only was the growth of FISU evident, but so was the geographical change. FISU moved from Brussels to Lausanne, first to the Maison du Sport International and from there to the campus of the University of Lausanne, where university sport belongs, in the proud Synathlon building.

It is always people who shape organisations and federations like FISU, ideally people who primarily ask what they can bring to FISU and not what FISU offers them. It may sound idealistic, but service, not personal prestige, must be the priority if you want to make a contribution to the further development of an organisation. Around 45 employees from 16 different countries and more than 200 committee members now look after the well-being of FISU. Let us continue to select the right people for the future-oriented development of FISU, always bearing in mind that qualitative growth is more important than quantitative growth.

FISU's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary coincides with a significant change. Secretary General/CEO Eric Saintrond, who has successfully and impressively shaped the history of FISU with incredible personal commitment for almost 40 years, will reach retirement age at the end of 2024 and will hand the baton to his successor Matthias Remund. Many thanks to all those who have helped shape FISU to date. We can be very proud of our federation. I wish all those who will continue to contribute to the development of FISU the best of luck and success. ●

**Leonz EDER**  
FISU President







# A Family Album

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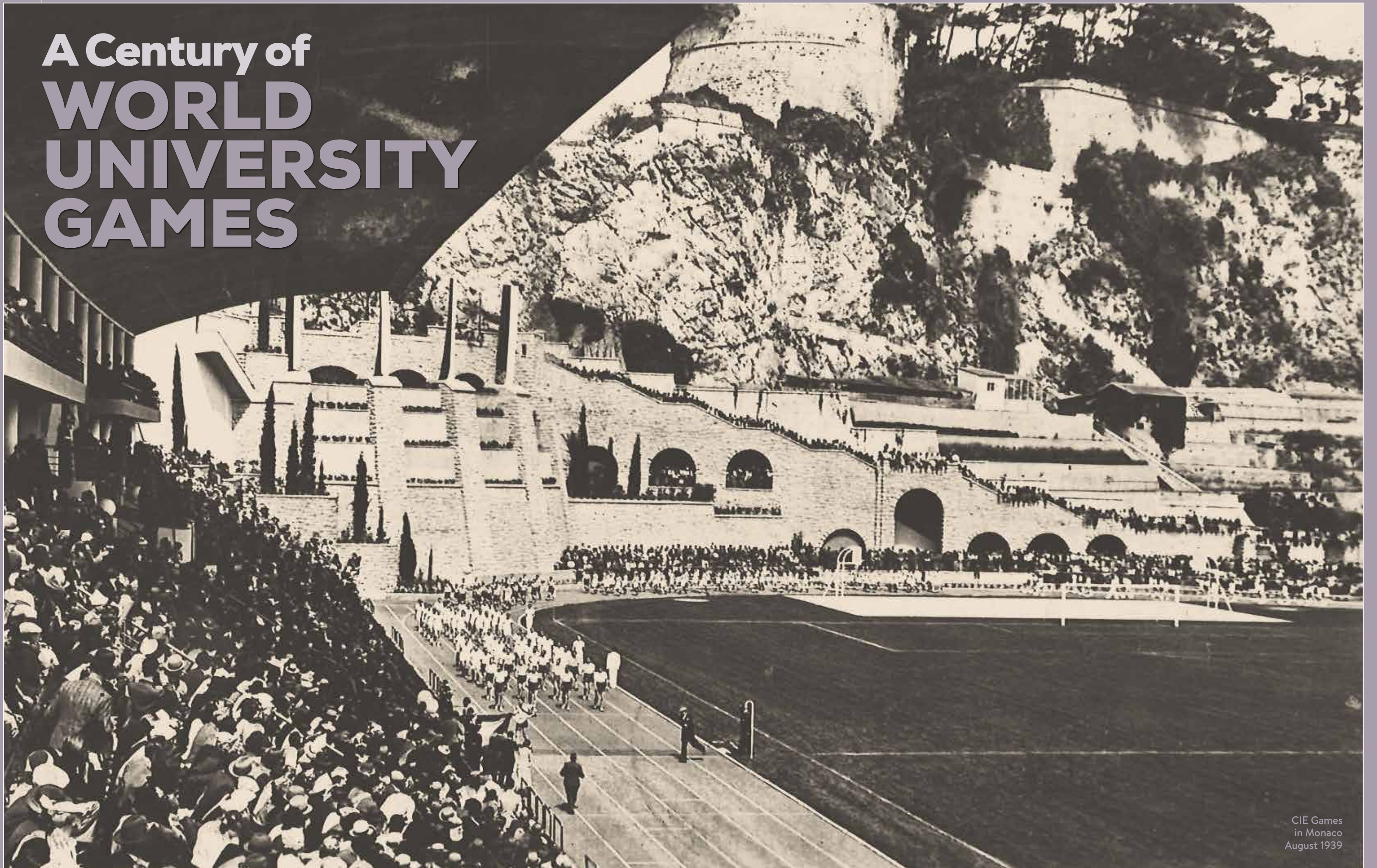
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# A Century of WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES



CIE Games  
in Monaco  
August 1939



## Sports in universities

**W**hen talking about FISU today, it is essential to understand where the Federation started, and the story of its first steps. FISU World University Games, known as Universiade for the past six decades, were inherited from the 1920s, namely in 1923 when the first edition took place in Paris.

There are written sources attesting to the fact that students have always engaged in practicing games and sports. However, academic authorities once refused to integrate physical education or recreation into university projects - and even tried to repress it. From the XVII<sup>th</sup> century onwards, under the influence of the Enlightenment philosophy, more and more universities offered their students physical education, which was nevertheless reduced to a few limited types of “academic arts” (fencing, horse riding, dance).

A new way of engaging in sport, the pure product of a triumphant industrial society, took off in XIX<sup>th</sup> century Britain as part of the education of young elites attending the most prestigious universities. Sport started becoming a means of education, developing a pedagogy based on individual responsibility and social solidarity. This consideration of sport within the field of education naturally spread to the British Empire and United States of America. In France, the Committee for the Propagation of Physical Exercises in Education, created by Pierre de Coubertin in 1888, was one of the first experiments to give sport and physical education an official status in schools and universities. It was not until the XX<sup>th</sup> century that student associations really took up educational, recreational, or competitive sport.

The first university clubs and sports associations were formed at the local level. They could be linked to festive or corporatist student groups but were also placed under the supervision of sports federations,

self-invested with monopolistic power and anxious to maintain their control over all practices. Several countries had developed a specific body acting as a liaison between all university sports clubs or associations while being autonomous from the civil sports authorities. The first student competitions were organised in Germany on the national level in the 1910s and in Switzerland in the 1920s. In Italy, a small group of Italian students close to the liberal right launched the “Olimpiadi Universitarie” in Rome in April 1922. The participation of foreign delegations remained very modest, but it now became clear that students needed their own international games.

The first international event for students was not long in coming in the context of a post-war rebirth of sports cooperation and pacifist movements. Starting in 1919, major international organisations and new movements based on the solidarity of various social groups, such as workers, women, and students were founded. In 1919, a team of French students, actively involved in their national student association, took the initiative of founding their own international body to help them communicate on various matters and to relaunch exchanges as soon as possible. In these economically and socially destroyed countries, establishing mutual help was one of the essential needs of students, who also realised the importance of organising their leisure. Enthusiasm took centre stage; young people aspired to peace and reconciliation, leading to the founding in 1919 in Strasbourg of the International Confederation of Students (CIE) with the aim of creating ties of esteem and understanding between students and intellectuals from member countries. This led to organising ongoing liaison between the student associations of these various countries, coordinating their intellectual actions, studying international issues relating to higher education and to students’ moral and practical life.

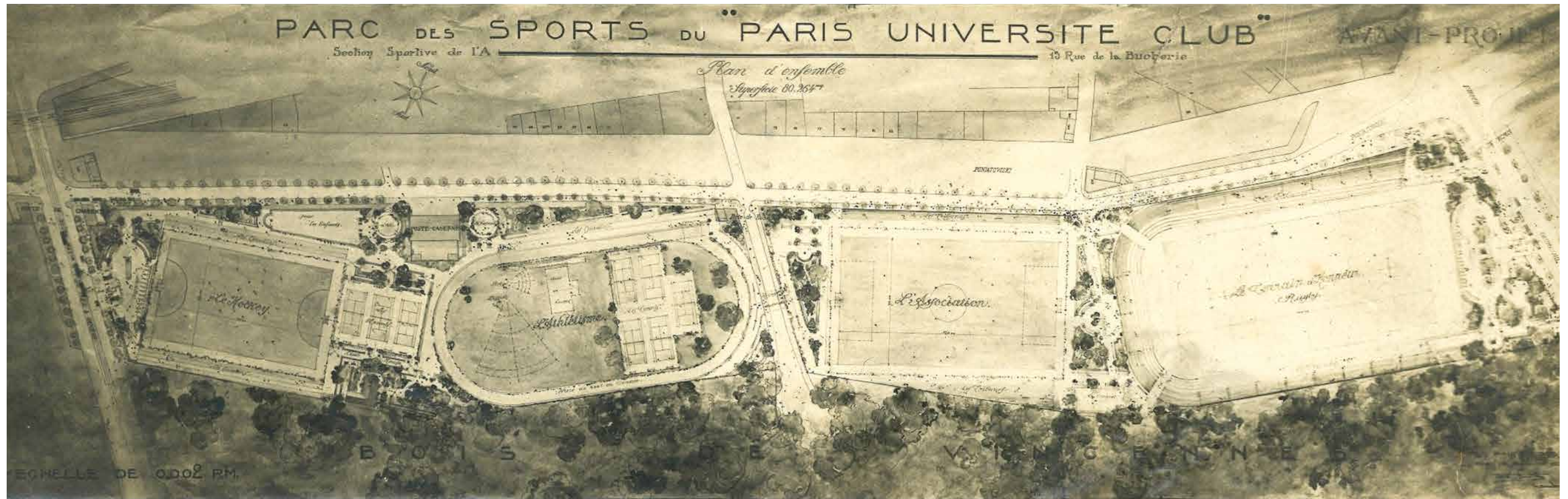
**First student competitions were organised in Germany on the national level in the 1910s and in Switzerland in the 1920s.**



• Poster of the first World University Games, Paris, France



Plans for the university sports complex to be built in Paris, France, 1921

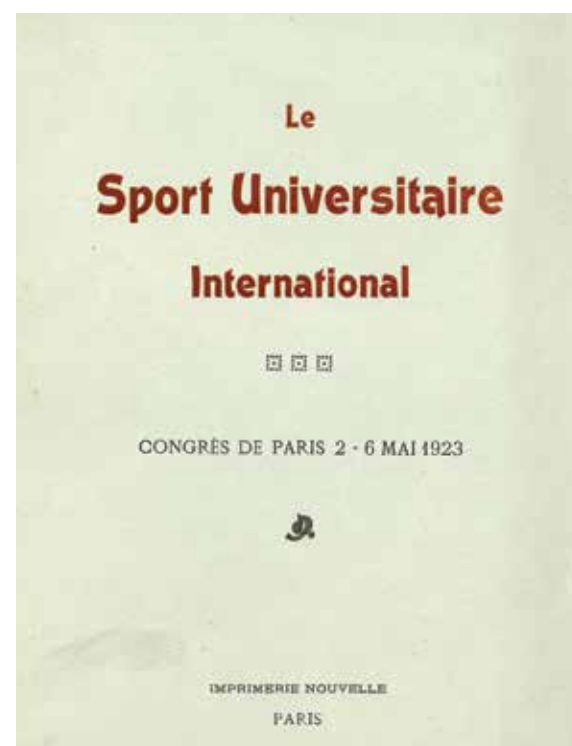


Sport soon earned a crucial place on the CIE's agenda thanks to the proactiveness of French student sports leader Jean Petitjean, who was then managing the sports club of Parisian universities. He had the ambition to create an international sports organisation to specialise in student sport and to launch competitions. However, the task was not easy knowing that the project would meet the resistance of some sports circles, both in France and internationally. For this reason, the CIE seemed to be a perfect foundation for launching the international university sports movement.

At the CIE Congress in January 1923, Petitjean presented his project, which received a large approval and enthusiasm from the delegates of 20 European countries and the American continent. The meetings resulted in the establishment of several committees, one of which was fully dedicated to sport. More interestingly, an international commissariat for sports was separately set up to encourage the development of student sports in different countries through the creation of national university sports associations (currently called national university sports federations or NUSFs).

The CIE granted official patronage to a university athletics championship, due to take place in Paris from 2 to 6 May 1923, together with an International University Sport Congress. Prominent French sports leaders and influential doctors were welcomed into the Congress committee.

• Booklet from the International University Sports Congress, Paris, 1923



The Congress held crucial importance for defining the direction of future development of university sport and there was much work to do during these three days: discuss the state of university sport in different countries; define the nature of relations between sports federations, student associations, clubs or sports sections at both national and international levels; establish programs, rules, protocols, and cooperation arrangements for the organisation of worldwide single and multi-sports competitions, combined with educational and cultural events.

Interestingly, one of the four main sessions was dedicated to women's sport. A long speech was

delivered by Suzanne Desternes, a literature student and one of the leaders of the feminine section that was about to be created within the Paris Université Club.

Jean Petitjean, who encouraged the creation of this section, was especially favourable to making the sports events open to female students. He initially settled for putting just a single sport - athletics - on the programme but upon further reflection, he decided to also organise a fencing tournament for both men and women. In the end, the difficulties proved too great, and women were unable to participate in the first World University Games. •

**One of the four main sessions of the Congress was dedicated to women's sport. A long speech was delivered by Suzanne Desternes, a literature student and one of the leaders of the feminine section that was about to be created within the Paris Université Club.**



# 1923 : The birth of the World University Games

**T**he Games began on the third of May 1923 with a fencing tournament. Athletics competition - the core of the event - lasted three days and saw the participation of Olympic medalists specially invited by Jean Petitjean. Student-athletes from twelve countries came to France to celebrate their first truly international sports meeting at the brand-new stadium built for this occasion in Paris.

From 1923 to 1939, university sport experienced remarkable growth under the guidance of the CIE. The Games traveled around Europe, from France to Poland, then to Italy, Germany and Hungary. The Winter Games, launched in 1928 in Italy, also took place at the most famous ski resorts in Switzerland, Germany, and Norway. While the sports program constantly grew, students showed a high level of performance and the university spirit of friendship that spread beyond national borders.

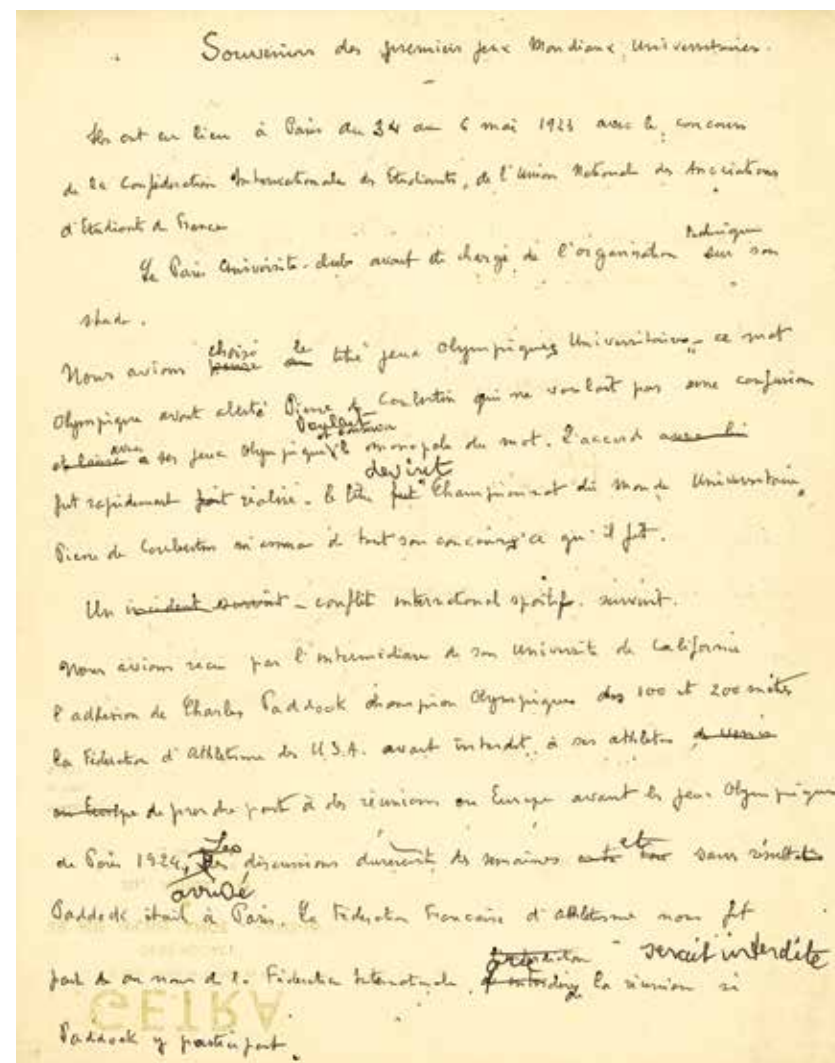
Interestingly, the World University Games held in Turin in 1933 were the first international event for FIBA (International Basketball Federation), which had been founded one year before and needed to test its newly formed rules.

In the mid-1930s, and specifically after the Berlin Olympics of 1936, the domination of totalitarian states in international sport became more and more obvious. Geopolitical tensions were steadily growing, making it urgent to protect university sport from sharp political conflicts. It took on even greater importance in the 1938 context, as Italy and Germany acted in coalition to launch a new international student sports organisation that would compete directly, or even substitute for the CIE in the organisation of World University Games.

In August 1938, France proposed the creation of a "Fédération Internationale du Sport Universitaire" (International University Sports Federation), which would oversee student sports activities at the international level. Jean Petitjean, who had regained his leadership position within French university sports, was actively working on the project of this new federation along with his Hungarian and Belgian colleagues. One of the key issues was to precisely define the role of the federation and the nature of its relationship to the CIE. The project was positively received by the CIE but did not have time to receive the final approval because of the outbreak of the new war...

This idea became reality ten years later, but this is a different story. ●

**In August 1938, France proposed the creation of a Fédération internationale du sport universitaire. This idea became reality ten years later, but this is a different story.**



“Memories from the World University Games”, Jean Petitjean, 1957



Jean Petitjean (left) pictured during the opening ceremony of the CIE Games in Monaco, August 1939

## Jean PETITJEAN

Founding Father of the World University Games (1923)

**J**ean Petitjean played sports during his studies in Nancy, but his involvement as a sports leader started during the Great War, upon his arrival in Paris in 1916. He joined the rugby team of the Paris Université Club (PUC), where he quickly became secretary (1916-1920) and then president (1920-1925). In 1920, he set up a body responsible for the development of university sports, first in France and then internationally. Petitjean oversaw the construction of a new university sports complex in Paris, which was inaugurated at the first World University Games in May 1923.

Due to his professional commitments Petitjean dedicated less time to sports from the end of the 1920s to 1938 but continued heading the university committees of several French sports federations: baseball, rugby, boxing, athletics, and fencing. Petitjean became secretary general of the French Office for Scholar and University Sport (OSSU) at its creation in 1938 and took the presidency in 1945. At that moment, he took the initiative for re-establishing the World University Games, which were organised in Paris in 1947, and once again in 1957 under his presidency. He then became a regular attendee at the Universiade.



**Petitjean attended the Summer Universiades in Sofia (1961), Budapest (1965) and Tokyo (1967), the latter of which was his last.**



1923

PARIS  
France

1924

WARSAW  
Poland

1927

ROME  
Italy

1928

PARIS  
France  
CORTINA  
D'AMPEZZO  
Italy

1930

DARMSTADT  
Germany  
DAVOS  
Switzerland

1933

TURIN  
Italy  
BARDONECCHIA  
Italy

1935

BUDAPEST  
Hungary  
ST. MORITZ  
Switzerland

1937

PARIS  
France  
ZELL-AM-SEE  
Austria

1939

MONACO  
Monaco  
LILLEHAMMER-  
TRONDHEIM  
Norway







# CIE Games in Monaco, August 1939

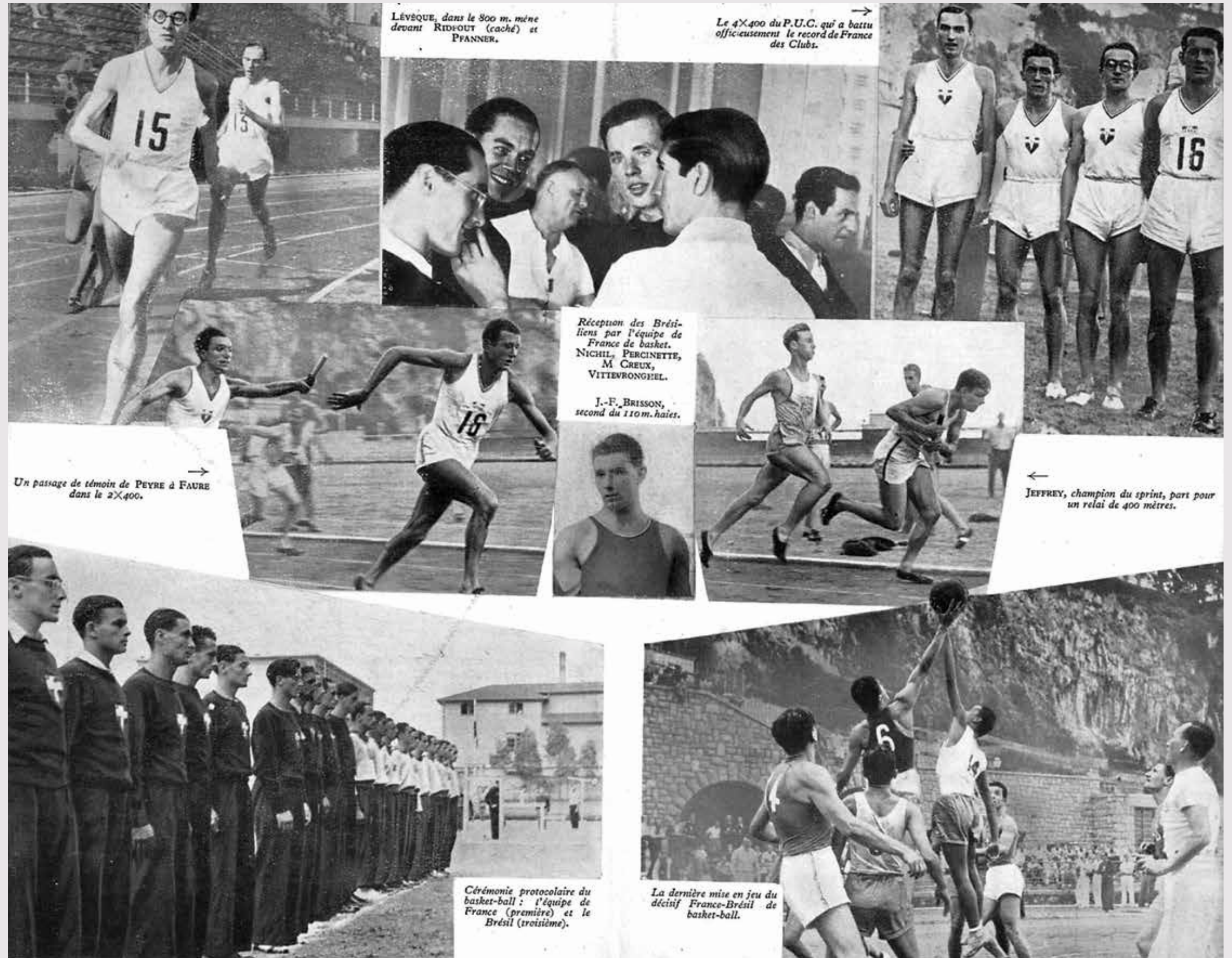


French women's athletics team during CIE Games in Monaco, August 1939



Athlete accreditation card

Photographs of the French team





**FISU celebrates**  
**75 YEARS**  
**OF UNIVERSITY**  
**SPORTS**

Celebration  
 after a hockey  
 game in Merano,  
 1949





**ERIC SAINTROND**  
FISU GENERAL  
SECRETARY/CEO

**T**he 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of FISU coincides with the year of my retirement. This is a moment when one naturally reflects on transition. I have already passed on all my important values to my two children. To my successor and to FISU, I would like to now hand over everything that has been done during these 75 years.

We started from almost nothing and today the International University Sports Federation counts 164 member associations, almost 50 staff members, and has launched many exciting projects. This includes Healthy Campus which needs to continue its rapid development so that we will be able to address the university community as a whole - our goal being to create a stronger FISU community to continue growing together.

I must admit that my job has been a pretty thrilling one! The beginning of the opening ceremony of our events is always a very enjoyable moment for me, knowing that our work has been done, that the magic will happen again.

#### A MOUNTAINEER'S MENTALITY

Of course, watching sport still thrills me. The badminton mixed team final at the Chengdu 2023 FISU World University Games Summer was unbelievably intense. And that is just an example among so many others. By hanging on until the very end and never being tempted to give up, those student-athletes showed the same exceptional mentality as mountaineers. If you are unable to reach the top, you can't just stop there as you still have to get back down. There is no way you can simply abandon when you are halfway up or down a rock face or a mountain cliff.

That is also my mentality. My parents took me to the mountains from a very young age and I have loved them ever since. I climbed my first 4,000 metre summit when I was only 14 years old. Mountaineering is very special - it is a team sport where you work alone. I loved the effort, I loved the raw contact with the rocks, the snow, the ice. I also loved the idea of being attached to others and depending on each other for the duration of

the climb. It is a sport of mutual trust, but when it gets tough, you are alone making the decisions.

I believe this is also the case in other parts of life. An example being my position as FISU Secretary General and CEO, but even before that. Mountaineering has taught me to improvise, because weather changes or the nature of the terrain can shift rapidly, and you need to react quickly to carry on. You must remain constantly alert, because you will only be safe once you are back in the valley.

#### MEETING ROCH CAMPANA

I believe this philosophy, and my sense of humour, which allows me to take even the most complicated situations with a pinch of salt, have helped me greatly during my career. I have always been interested in people and sport. In 1984, I met someone incredible who started as a mate and rapidly become one of my closest friends, Roch Campana. He had been a member of FISU's Executive Committee since 1973 and had become Secretary General in 1979. I had just come back pretty shaken from an expedition in Peru that didn't end well, so when he asked me if I was interested in helping him at the FISU headquarters, I didn't hesitate.

FISU was really small back then. There were only three of us, including a secretary, in a tiny office. There were almost no structures and no resources, but we managed to have some great games, like in Kobe in 1985.

During our Winter Games in Štrbské Pleso, Czechoslovakia in 1987, I met another man who is central to the evolution of FISU in Primo Nebiolo. He was part of a trio of world sport leaders, together with Juan-Antonio Samaranch of the IOC and FIFA's João Havelange. His influence was impressive and often a simple "You need to organise the Universiade for me, my friend" was enough to make things happen.

#### MID 90S, A BIG STEP FORWARD

Before the 90s, the FISU Games (which were still called Universiade at the time) didn't bring us much money. Our business model changed after the

**“In 1984, I met someone incredible who started as a mate and rapidly become one of my closest friends, Roch Campana. He had been a member of FISU's Executive Committee since 1973 and had become Secretary General in 1979.”**

*Eric Saintrond*



• **Éric Saintrond**  
with FISU  
Secretary General  
Roch Campana,  
Chamonix 1986

Sheffield and Buffalo Games and thus our resources grew. We were then able to hire more staff and to stop doing everything ourselves. We bought our first official office in 1992 in Brussels, which soon proved to be too small. Roch came across a superb solution a few years later with the Château de la Solitude, on the outskirts of Belgium's capital, which we acquired in 2006. A year later, FISU was boasting 14 staff.

2007 is also the year I became Secretary General, after a change in the FISU Statutes that transformed the position into an staff role as opposed to an elected one. Roch Campana refused to be an employee and decided run for President. He ended up not being elected and decided to leave FISU that same year.

Following the turn of the century, we structured FISU more clearly and developed exceptional relations with Asia and Russia, which have since both hosted many successful FISU events.

#### UNDERSTANDING CULTURES AND TRADITIONS

I am someone who is always interested in other people, customs, cultures, and habits and I believe this was key to my work. It is important to understand what people expect and want, what their aims are, and then to show flexibility. You can only co-construct an event like the FISU Games if you understand the host country's traditions and culture.

Though FISU owns the World University Games, we don't do them for us but for the national university sports federations and the student-athletes. During these eleven days of collaboration with International Sports Federations, governments, and universities, we celebrate unity, sport, and education.

Of course, we have suffered setbacks but have managed to find last minute solutions even if sometimes our events were greatly reduced. The road hasn't been a straight one, but the goal has always remained the same. Today, the International University Sports Federation has built its own building, the Synathlon, situated on the Lausanne University Campus, halfway between the classrooms and the sports facilities. The move to Switzerland, and more precisely to Lausanne, was done in two steps, first in 2012 to the Maison du Sport International, then in January of 2018 when we moved back to the campus into our current headquarters. It is of course a strategic choice to be in Lausanne, so we can be close to all the other main International Sport Federations.

As I pass the baton to my successor Matthias Remund, under the presidency of my dear friend Leonz Eder, I know that FISU is in safe hands, but I also know we must not rest on our laurels. I take with me numerous precious friendships and even more unbelievable anecdotes that I'll enjoy sharing with a glass of wine.

For me, these 40 years at FISU can be summed up as follows: unwavering passion despite the challenges faced. Isn't this ultimately a reflection of life and of our lives? So, carpe diem! ●



# The foundation of FISU (1949)

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the revival of the university sport movement took place in a difficult socio-economic context. Contacts between university teams were relatively rare in the beginning, but common enthusiasm of student sports leaders, with the support of governments and of the Games' founding father Jean Petitjean, helped to reestablish cooperation.

In 1947, Swiss students organised the first post-war Winter International University Games at the alpine resort of Davos, while Paris welcomed the Summer International University Games, both under the leadership of the International Union of Students (IUS). However, the IUS, which had taken lead of the university sports movement since 1946, used cultural and sports activities to spread communism. Even though this fact was unsurprising in the context of the emerging Cold War, there was a general will to protect university sport from political influence. Some European student sport leaders expressed their wishes for an autonomous sports student body.

## 1948 OR 1949?

If confusion exists around FISU's founding year, it is because it took almost two years to create a special international body for university sport. The very first discussions started in September 1947 in Paris and continued into 1948 with the constitution drafted in Luxembourg in December of that year. However, the founding General Assembly held on the 1st of June 1949, counts as the official date of FISU's establishment. This gathering, organised in Zurich under the guidance of Luxembourg teacher and sports leader Paul

Schleimer, was attended by several European national university sports associations, with Italy, Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, and the Netherlands becoming founding members. Spain and Lebanon joined the federation later the same year.



## Paul SCHLEIMER LUX (1907-1993)

FISU FOUNDING PRESIDENT FROM 1949 to 1961

Paul Schleimer dedicated his life to the teaching of physics and mathematics and worked as the director of a technical high school. He was a founding member, and later president, of the Luxembourg national university sports federation (LASEL) in 1945. He was

involved in the Luxembourg government in the domain of Education as well as in various European institutions. The presidency of Paul Schleimer saw the creation of the first FISU competitions in 1949, the first Universiade in 1959, the reunification of the international university sports movement, and the recognition of FISU by the IOC in 1961.



**“University sport is more than just recreation or compensation for intellectual effort. It is a genuine tool for training and education. Sport becomes the ally of studies in the educational mission assumed by the university. It would be unforgivable if such a convenient, enjoyable, and useful, but above all versatile, means of education were not used fully. Developing and encouraging sporting activities is tantamount to contributing to the training of young students.”**

Paul Schleimer

In August 1949, the first elective General Assembly took place and the constitution was adopted, setting up as the federation's aim: *“To promote the cultural aspect of the student body from all countries, to exchange the experiences of university sport, to organise international university meetings and to spread the moral values of sport.”*

Starting from 1949, the regulations stated that each national student sport association must represent its country's athletes and that FISU would be governed by the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, the Technical Commissions, and three Auditors. The Executive Committee, composed of only seven members, was elected for a two-year term, while Technical Commissions for summer and winter sports were created. In the days following the General Assembly, the freshly elected Secretary General, Swiss Carl Schneider, approached the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and other federations to establish connections.

Beginning in 1951, Schneider edited the black and white “FISU Bulletin” – the predecessor of

the FISU Magazine – printing 100 copies. The modest budget could not cover the professional translation expenses for three languages (German, French, and English). Although students were often invited to help with the promise of an attractive salary, the quality of their work was not satisfactory. In 1955 before the end of his secretarial mandate, Carl Schneider proposed to move the headquarters from Switzerland to diminish the administrative costs and meet the increasing needs of a growing organisation.

For the first six years of its existence, FISU entrusted the secretarial duties to Schneider, who was working for the Academic Sports Association in Zurich (ASVZ) at the time. In its small office at the university, the young federation lived through its first few years and would not only benefit from the assistance of a secretary from the ASVZ but also the fact the organisation partly covered FISU's expenses. Apart from the basic secretarial activities, FISU's Secretary General was responsible for the coordination of the FISU international events: Summer and Winter University Sports Weeks, then Universiade and others. ●



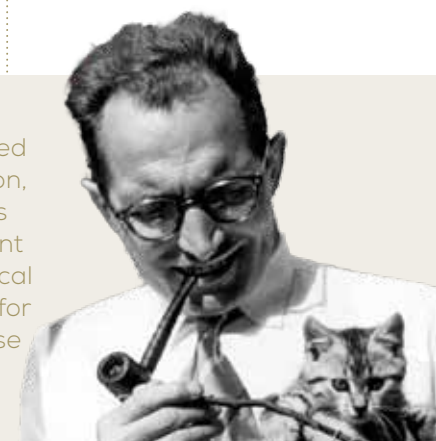
FISU Secretary General Carl Schneider congratulating Hermann Gericke on his gold medal, FISU 2<sup>nd</sup> International University Sports Week, Luxembourg, 1951 (courtesy of the SAS)

## CARL "CHARLY" SCHNEITER SUI (1911-2002)

FISU FIRST SECRETARY GENERAL FROM 1949 TO 1955

After organising the first post-war World University Winter Games in Davos in 1947, Carl Schneider became one of the protagonists in the creation of FISU and its first Secretary General. A multisport athlete, he got involved in Swiss university sport in the mid-1930s

and was then elected to the Swiss NUSF in 1941. Schneider, who devoted his life to teaching physical education, was involved in various Swiss sports institutions. He is known as an ardent promoter of sports for health, physical activity for the third age, as well as for creating the “Vita parcours”, a course with multiple stations offering physical exercises.







FISU  
1<sup>st</sup> International  
University Sports  
Week, Merano,  
Italy, 1949

## International University Sports Week The first FISU event

**O**n the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 1949, FISU saw its first event open in the Italian town of Merano. This inaugural edition of the International University Sports Week was the fruit of the efforts of the Centro Universitario Sportivo Italiano (CUSI), which had many challenges preparing the event; initially planned in Rome, in only three months due to examinations and holidays at

the universities. The organisation of this new and unknown event was impossible without the approval from sports federations, and the National Olympic Committee.

The ten-minute film created by the organisers highlighted the common purpose of tightening the solidarity between young people and promoting peace through sports. Nine delegations marched at the opening ceremony held in the city streets. Besides Italians, 495 student-athletes from Switzerland, Austria, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Germany, and Egypt competed in athletics (open to men and women), basketball, football, tennis, and fencing.

The story of the German team's participation is worth telling. The telegram sent by CUSI in May 1949 as the invitation to the event, was originally intended for the Principality of Monaco and not to Germany's city of Munich, where it ultimately arrived, as they are homonyms in the Italian language. As the telegram was dictated and not sent in written format, the mistake was not caught, but the recipient's name and address, "Comité national des étudiants, Avenue de la Gare" sounded French! Besides the post office's mistake, it was actually the desire for cooperation, expressed by both the German and Italian associations in the summer of 1948, and

**Adh took over the organisation of the third Week in 1953 in Dortmund. Accommodation for the participating delegations was arranged in a well-equipped camp in the vicinity of the athletic fields.**



prior to discussions of FISU's founding, that allowed German students to compete in Merano.

17 July 1948, the president of the freshly created German university sport association Adh, Richard Vorhammer, sent a long letter to the CUSI president congratulating him for the success of Italian athletes at the first post-war World University Games in Paris in 1947, while also expressing his wish to establish relations. He particularly highlighted his willingness "to reestablish sporting relations with students from other countries, considering that sport has

always been a basis for mutual understanding and friendship between peoples".

Germany found itself excluded from the Olympic movement and could not take part in international sports competitions organised under the auspices of international sports federations. Any match against foreign teams presented a precious opportunity for German athletes to not only measure their sports performance but to act as diplomats with the view to helping the reintegration of their country into international sport. Founded in spring 1948 to reunite the university sports sections in the Western part of Germany, the Adh seemed to be a perfect door into the European sports arena.

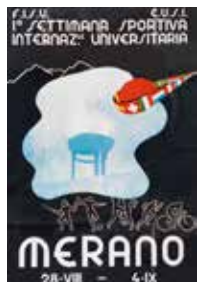
The local organising committee helped the German student team obtain the Italian visa. To cross borders, it was necessary to request permission from the military governments of the different post-war occupation zones, which demanded proof of participation in the competitions.

In 1951, Adh (as the association representing West Germany following the 1949 division of the country) joined FISU right after the second FISU Summer Week held in Luxembourg, the motherland of FISU President Paul Schleimer. Adh then welcomed the FISU Executive Committee meeting in 1952 and took over the organisation of the third Week in 1953 in Dortmund. Accommodation for the participating delegations was arranged in a well-equipped camp in the vicinity of the athletic fields. The swimming pool, tennis courts, and playgrounds were accessible to the visitors outside competitions. Spending time in the campground created a friendly atmosphere and fostered contacts between students coming from Europe and elsewhere. ●



Campsite lodging helped create connections amongst participants of the FISU 3<sup>rd</sup> International University Sports Week, Dortmund, Germany, 1953

Poster and medal (on the left) from the FISU 1<sup>st</sup> International University Sports Week, Merano, Italy, 1949



Telegram sent by Monegasque student athletes to Merano which instead arrived in Munich, 1949





1949

MERANO  
Italy (summer)

1951

BAD-GASTEIN  
Austria (winter)  
LUXEMBOURG  
G.D. Luxembourg  
(summer)

1953

ST. MORITZ  
Switzerland (winter)  
DORTMUND  
Germany (summer)

1955

JAHORINA  
Yugoslavia (winter)  
SAN SEBASTIAN  
Spain (summer)

1957

OBERAMMERGAU  
Germany (winter)

1959

ZELL-AM-SEE  
Austria (winter)

## International university sports movement during the 1950s

**A**fter the Dortmund International University Sports Week in 1953, FISU had 19 members, including several associations from the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. From eight affiliated national student sport associations in 1949, FISU's membership more than doubled by 1957. Brazil, Argentina, Yugoslavia, Saar, Japan, Israel, Portugal, Egypt, and Syria joined between 1953 to 1955, while Turkey and the USA both came on board in 1957. The increasing number of affiliations improved the success and credibility of FISU as an international sports federation.

Despite its growth and recognition by more and more sports federations, FISU did not hold the monopoly on university sport between 1949 and 1957, as the International Union of Students kept organising various regional and international events. Even though these competitions attracted hundreds of participants from outside of Europe, they were not attended by students from Western countries.

The improvement in the political climate during the mid-1950s, as well as the willingness for peace and cooperation, aided the reunification of the student sports movement. It was now time to think about collaboration with the International Union of Students and the possible organisation of a common games. Beginning in late 1953, much communication was done through letter exchanges, along with several meetings to get to

an agreement. Both organisations had no other choice, than find a consensus, which finally became possible.

The involvement of French student sports leaders was crucial, and in the summer of 1957, Paris hosted a common World University Games, which put an end to the split. They were open to all student athletes, whether they were representing FISU member associations or coming from the other side of the Iron Curtain. In Winter 1957, FISU Week in Oberammergau, West Germany was also open to non-members, and in 1959, Austria hosted the last Winter Week. In summer 1959, together with the six countries of the socialist bloc, Indonesia and France joined FISU looking forward to taking part in the very first Universiade in Torino, which showed much promise for reconciliation. ●

**The improvement in the political climate during the mid-1950s, as well as the willingness for peace and cooperation, aided the reunification of the student sports movement.**

### Michel OSTYN

BEL (1924-2013)

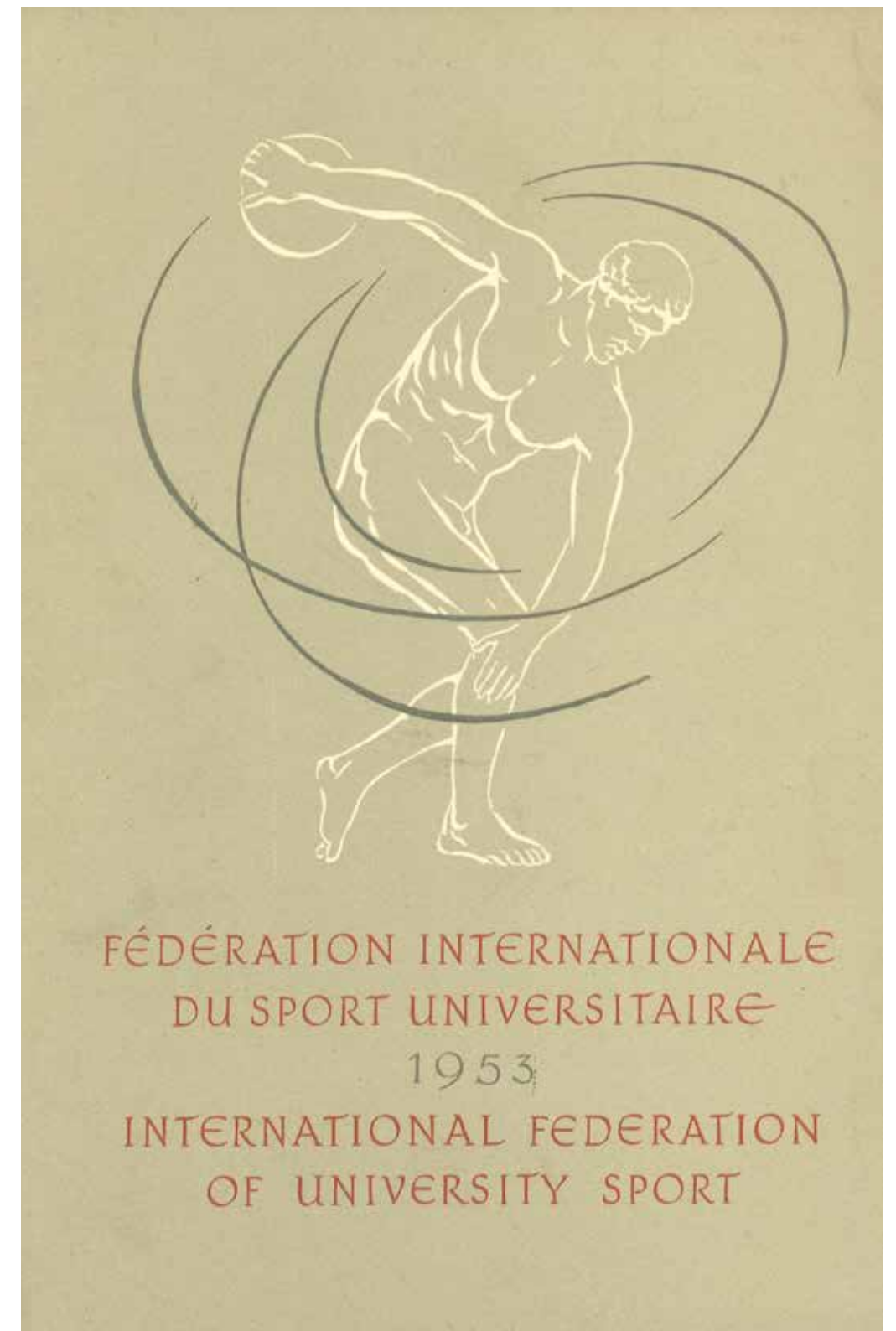
*FISU SECRETARY GENERAL FROM 1955 TO 1973*

During the General Assembly in August 1955 held in San Sebastian, Spain, the Secretarial Chair was given to Michael Ostyn, a young doctor from Belgium. With that, FISU's official headquarters moved to the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium. Ostyn joined

the Belgian University Sports Federation in the early 1950s and started his path at FISU as its vice president in 1953, before being elected as Secretary General several consecutive times from 1955 to 1973. He was then the Chair of the FISU Sports Regulations Committee (CRS), of which he remained a member until 1987. As a leading figure in sports medicine, Ostyn managed the Belgian Society of Sports Medicine and Science and the first Belgian Anti-Doping Committee.



● Medals of various editions of the FISU International University Sports Weeks (1951, 1955, 1957)



● One of the first booklets published about FISU activities, 1953



# FISU goes global

**F**ISU's activities increased in the years 1959 to 1961 and in 1960 a new constitution was adopted. In spring 1961, FISU received official recognition from the IOC.

Looking ahead to the 1961 General Assembly in Sofia, Bulgaria, Paul Schleimer decided not to extend his presidency. With two initial candidates for the presidential election - Jacques Flouret of France and Primo Nebiolo of Italy - only the latter ultimately ran for the position. He was elected receiving 20 votes out of a possible 25. This young sports leader from Torino, involved in the Italian Student Sports Association (CUSI), played a prominent role by organising the first edition of the Universiade in 1959, which helped him earn the trust of FISU.

From the start of the 1960s, FISU diversified its programme by establishing its regular educational event - International University Sports Days. Held for the first time in 1960 in Macolin, Switzerland, it would later become the FISU Conference. In 1961, FISU expressed interest in organising regional championships by sport. The first European University Championships for judo were organised in France and the first World University Championship (WUC) in handball was held in Sweden in 1963. Scandinavians expressed interest in FISU activities, so from 1961 to 1967, Finland, Sweden and Norway all joined FISU.

During this period, FISU expanded its networks on the five continents. Nebiolo personally visited Brazil, USA, Cuba, Spain, USSR, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Portugal, Great Britain, Austria, France and received his colleagues in Italy. This work attracted countries from outside Europe, making FISU a truly international federation.



FISU Executive Committee meeting, Turin, 1970

In 1962, the Cuban NUSF hosted the Latin-American University Games in Havana, organised under the auspices of FISU and a sports studies conference. One year later, the Universiade took place in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre - the first-ever FISU event outside of Europe. In 1965, the USA participated in the Universiade for the first time, while Canada, New Zealand, and Australia joined the federation.

The decolonisation of Africa and the creation of NUSFs on the continent made it possible for African countries to express interest in being part of the university sport movement and to join FISU from the middle of the 1960s. Interestingly, in 1971 Africa was the first to create a continental association, the Federation of African University Sports (FASU).

Asia and especially Japan, which was actively involved in FISU from the early 1950s, hosted the Tokyo 1967 Summer Universiade. Kiyoshi

**“FISU is in the process of continuous growth and evolution. In the space of a few years, the federation has seen a considerable increase in the number of its members, has strengthened its relations with the IOC and the other international federations, and has noticed the birth of interest for its ideas and its activities.”**

*Primo Nebiolo - 1967*

Kitazawa (Japan) played a key role in helping establish and reinforce the relationship with the Far East. FISU also saw North and South Korea join respectively in 1965 and 1967. In 1977, the NUSF of People's Republic of China affiliated with FISU.

During his presidency, Nebiolo made efforts to further reinforce the federation's ties with the IOC and other sports federations. In 1967, FISU became a founding member of the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF - also previously known as SportAccord). FISU progressively integrated into international sport to build further recognition of the Universiade and to avoid overlaps with other important sports events. This integration was further reinforced when the IOC gave its moral support to the Torino 1970 and Moscow 1973 Summer Universiades. By 1975, Nebiolo reported on the considerable growth of contacts with the sports world.

## Primo NEBIOLO

ITA (1923-1999)

*FISU PRESIDENT FROM 1961 TO 1999*

Primo Nebiolo had an athletic career as a long jumper before becoming a prominent figure in university sport. He studied law and political science, and was a businessman in his professional life, all of which were followed by many notable achievements in sport on an international scale.

He was the President of the University Sports Club of Turin (CUS Torino), President of the Italian University Sports Federation (CUSI), President of the Italian Athletics Federation (FIDAL), President of the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI), IAAF Council member and President, President of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) at its foundation in 1983, and Member of the IOC (1992).



## Claude PINEAU

FRA (1930-2022)

*FISU SECRETARY GENERAL FROM 1973 TO 1979*

A teacher and influential actor in physical education and sport in France, Pineau became the first director of the French National Institute of Sport and Physical Education at its creation in 1975. During his mandate FISU Headquarters moved to Paris.





## “Sport is a factor that facilitates mobility, solidarity, and enlarges one’s knowledge in learning about new countries and cultural traditions.”

*Roch Campana*

●●● At the General Assembly in Mexico in 1979, Belgium’s Roch Campana was elected Secretary General. With this development, FISU moved its offices back to Belgium and two years later, it set up in a new, more spacious office in Brussels. 1979 also marked a special moment in the history of the federation, which received its first amount of \$200,000 USD from the Mexico 1979 Summer Universiade for TV rights. Some important administrative changes also came into existence at the General Assembly in Mexico, one example being the quadrennial elections that are still in place today.

During this period, the relationship with the IOC was reinforced as Juan Antonio Samaranch became its President in 1980. Samaranch attended the FISU Executive Committee session in Madrid in 1980, which was also a way to symbolise the bond and friendship between FISU and the IOC.

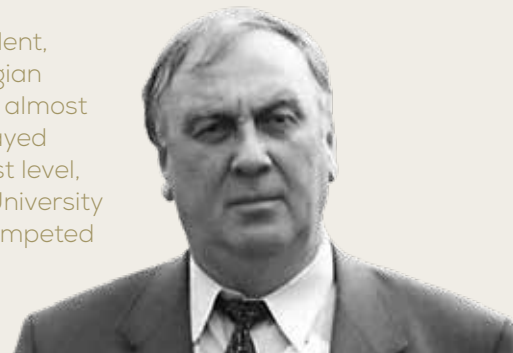
The Kobe 1985 Summer Universiade became a symbol of a growing Asian presence at FISU, but also of better involvement by the other continents in the international student sports movement. Besides Europe and Australia, 32 countries from Africa, 17 from Asia, and 14 from the Americas sent their athletes to Japan. This made for a grand total of 106 countries that took part in Kobe, a great success following the boycotts of the Olympic Games in 1980 and 1984, and demonstrating the potential of achieving unity in international sports. Additionally, the two Korean teams participated in the same competitions for the same medals, with the same ideals. Kobe was also the first time FISU appointed technical delegates for various sports.

### **Roch CAMPANA** BEL (1943–2023)

*FISU SECRETARY GENERAL FROM 1979 TO 2007*

Roch Campana began his career at FISU as a member of the Executive Committee in 1973 and then held the position of Secretary General from 1979. He remained a member of the Belgian University Sports Federation for more than 40 years, including

more than 20 as President, and worked for the Belgian Olympic Committee for almost 30 years. Campana played basketball at the highest level, winning three Belgian University Championships, and competed for Belgium in the Tokyo 1967 Summer Universiade.



The organisers did not only want the Universiade to be a demonstration of their high technological expertise in sports. They wanted to celebrate the Year of Youth, where the whole world could join the festival of sport and friendship. Therefore, they created a fundraising committee in order to assist more than 50 countries who could not afford the travel or accommodation costs.

In the 1980s, FISU did the first steps in developing its strategy. The Marketing and TV Commission created at the Executive Committee meeting in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia in 1985, was fully established in November 1987. Another Executive Committee meeting held in Sofia in March 1989 involved dialogue about the lack of income from marketing, advertising, and TV rights. The realisation of the programme started in 1991, as FISU entered an era where television and marketing rights enabled its professionalisation as an international sports organisation in both management and administration.



At the General Assembly in Sheffield, United Kingdom in 1991, for the first time ever, FISU had its programme planned for the following 8 years. Since new NUSFs appeared following the end of the Soviet Union, FISU membership also increased, and at the General Assembly in 1993, 15 new affiliations were registered – pushing the total to over 100 members.

As East and West Germany were separated until 1990, the Sheffield 1991 Summer Universiade was the very first time that the two German federations merged and competed as one nation - known today as team Germany. In 1993 Yugoslavia participated in the Summer and Winter Universiades in Buffalo, USA and Zakopane, Poland, after its suspension by the United Nations prior to the Barcelona 1992 Summer Olympic Games (where Yugoslavian athletes could participate without their national flag and while registered as individual participants).

### **George E. KILLIAN** USA (1924–2017)

*FISU PRESIDENT FROM 1999 TO 2011*

George E. Killian began his university sports career in 1954 in the United States collegiate system as the Athletic Director and men’s basketball coach at Erie Community College in Buffalo, New York. He later became the National Junior College Athletic

FISU Executive Committee meeting, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1978

A special budget was created to help developing countries take part in the Sheffield 1991 Summer Universiade, with 16 countries benefiting from it in 1991, 20 in 1993 and 30 more in 1997.

1999 was not only a year to celebrate FISU’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and congratulate the federation for its fruitful half-century in university sport, but also a moment to grieve the loss of its President Primo Nebiolo who passed away in November of that year.

During these two decades, FISU also made its first steps in the area of gender equality. In 1983, Jian Zang from the Republic of China became the first woman on the FISU Executive Committee.

She held the position of Assessor until 1991 and was named an Honorary Member thereafter. Yvonne Bovanga Akpa from the Ivory Coast was elected as FISU Assessor in 1995. In 1999, Kairis Ulp from Estonia and Alison Odell from the United Kingdom started their path at FISU in the same position to serve the federation for more than 20 years. ●

### **FISU Medical Committee**

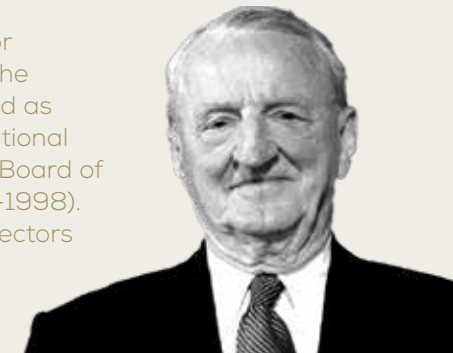
With the growth of the Universiade and the increased level of athlete performance, the necessity for advanced medical support during university competitions brought about the need for a permanent committee in charge of medical issues.

An ad hoc commission gathered in 1974 stated that it was time for FISU to adapt to the IOC’s and international sports federations’ technical regulations on medical matters, such as sex and doping tests, medical surveillance, and health services during competitions. Reinforcing links with the International Federation of Sports Medicine (FIMS) was also considered important.

In 1975 FISU’s Medical Committee was created. One of its main goals was “to promote the scientific study of university sport by all appropriate means and to support mass sports activity among students with the cooperation with CESU”.

The Committee’s chairmanship was given to Slovak Olympian and sports administrator Ludovit Komadel, a position he remained in until 1983.

Association’s first executive director and then held prominent roles on the international sport stage. He served as both the President of FIBA (International Basketball Federation) and on the Board of Directors at USA Basketball (1990–1998). Killian was also on the Board of Directors for the United States Olympic Committee (1967–2004) and was a voting member of the IOC.





## A sports federation in constant development

**T**he federation entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century led by American sports administrator George E. Killian, who would lead the federation from 1999 until 2011. Killian, who benefited from widespread trust, was re-elected to the presidency at the General Assembly in Bangkok in 2007. Danzadorj Bayasgalan from Mongolia was also elected as the treasurer.

Eric Saintrond from Belgium, who was appointed as Secretary General, held the role from 2007 to 2024.

Another notable change occurred in the composition of the FISU Executive Committee at the 2007 General Assembly: associate status would now be automatically allocated to each of the five CUSFs.

### CULTIVATING UNIVERSITY SPORT OPPORTUNITIES ON A GLOBAL SCALE

Since the early 1990s, FISU has worked on the expansion of the university sports community worldwide. Currently, the Committee for the Development of University Sport coordinates the cooperation and engagement of FISU's continental and national associations. In 2019, FISU renewed its support to the NUSFs for project development with university sports, education, governance, student participation, gender equality, and fair play.

Growing participation called for FISU to assist national members from less privileged countries in having their student-athlete compete at top-level university events. The Help Programme is one example, initiated in 1991 to ensure equal access to FISU competitions. Since 2020, the Step Up financial aid programme has supported each

region's representation at the major sports and educational events and welcomes new members to the FISU family, meaning increased participation of student-athletes and ensuring the involvement of more countries over the coming decades.

### FROM BRUSSELS TO LAUSANNE

From 1992 to 2006 FISU general secretariat was situated in the building purchased by the federation, and located next to Université libre de Bruxelles. This headquarters was inaugurated in the presence of several important international sports figures, such as Juan Antonio Samaranch of the IOC and his future successor Jacques Rogge, who at the time was the president of the European Olympic Committee.

In 2006, the Château de la Solitude in Brussels would become the historical building for FISU, whose inauguration was attended by 250 friends of FISU. *"This building will stand as a lasting tribute to the many who have served FISU so faithfully since its humble beginnings"*, – President Killian said.

Moving to Lausanne, Switzerland was a decisive step for FISU in getting closer to the universe of international sports. From 2010 to 2018 the federation had its headquarters at the Maison du sport international (MSI).

The plan to earn its place in the heart of the academic community emerged in 2012 when FISU President Claude-Louis Gallien and FISU Secretary General Eric Saintrond informed the Canton of Vaud of FISU's desire to move its headquarters to the campus of the University of Lausanne. Construction of the Synathlon started in early January 2016, and after two years, the building opened its doors. ●

Situated in a park-like setting inside the University of Lausanne campus, the Synathlon put FISU in a building dedicated to sport sciences and international university sport development.

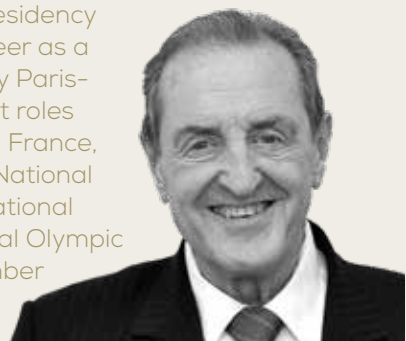


### Claude-Louis GALLIEN FRA (1948-)

*FISU PRESIDENT FROM 2011 TO 2015*

A track and field athlete in hammer throw, Claude-Louis Gallien was a finalist at the 1967 Tokyo Summer Universiade. He was elected to FISU's Executive Committee in 1991 as Assessor and later took the Chair of the Education Committee from 1997 to 2011 before

being elected to the federation's presidency until 2015. During his academic career as a professor of biology at the University Paris-Descartes, Gallien took on important roles in numerous sports organisations in France, including Paris Université Club, the National Council of Universities, the NUSF, National Anti-Doping Committee, the National Olympic Committee. Gallien was also a member of the IOC Medical Commission.

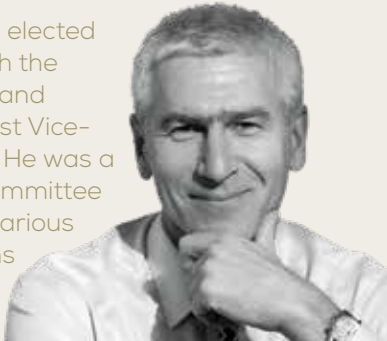


### Oleg MATYTSIN RUS (1964-)

*FISU PRESIDENT FROM 2015 TO 2021*

A table-tennis player, Oleg Matytsin had a successful academic career at the Russian University of Sport, for which he was Rector and President. During this period, he held the presidency of the Russian Student Sports Union (2005-2015) and led the Russian delegation at

each Universiade. In 2007, Matytsin was elected as an Executive Committee member with the European University Sports Association and also at FISU, ultimately becoming FISU 1st Vice-President in 2011 and President in 2015. He was a member of the International Olympic Committee Olympic Education Commission and of various national sports and academic institutions in Russia. Matytsin was Russian Minister of Sports from 2022-2024.





# Promoting gender equality

**W**ithin FISU's governance structure, the FISU Committees strive towards a 50-50 men and women balance in their composition. This change was introduced as part of an attempt to significantly increase the number of women on FISU Committees and work towards the general objective of achieving gender equality in sport.

## WOMEN AT FISU GOVERNANCE

In the early 1980s, FISU made its first concrete steps towards ensuring gender equality at its sports and education events, as well as in its governance. The first woman to be a part of the FISU Executive Committee (EC) was Jian Zang from the Federation of University Sports China (FUSC), who held the position of Assessor from 1983-1991 and was thereafter named an Honorary Member. Following in her footsteps was Mrs Yvonne Bovanga Akpa from Côte d'Ivoire, who was a FISU EC Assessor from 1995-1999.

In 1999, Kairis Ulp from Estonia and Alison Odell from the United Kingdom started on their paths with the FISU Executive Committee and each served the Federation in different roles for more than 20 years. Ulp occupied leading positions in Winter Universiade management from 2003 to 2019, while Odell was later elected as the Senior EC Member and, as a result, became the first female member of the FISU Steering Committee. In parallel, she led the FISU Education Committee from 2011 to 2015.

**“Today it's important to build a world with more opportunities for everybody, where nobody is left behind, where inclusion is the key for new fights. FISU is [seeking] new proposals that allow our organisation to take forth to open more spaces and opportunities.”**

*Rosaura Mendez Gamboa,  
FISU Gender Equality Committee Chair*

The 2019-2023 mandate of the FISU EC included 19 male, and 4 female members, including Penninah Aligawesa Kabenge from Uganda who was elected in 2019 as FISU's first female Vice-President. Kabenge had previously been part of the FISU Gender Equality Committee. South Africa's Nomsa Mahlangu became the first female CUSF delegate on the FISU EC following her election as the first female president of the Federation of African University Sports (FASU).

Verena Burk, from Germany, took the baton as the FISU Education Committee Chair in 2015 after having started her work with FISU in 1996. She became the Senior EC Member and was then elected as one of three other FISU female Vice-Presidents in 2023. Her election, at the 38th General Assembly held in 2023 in Geneva, Switzerland, included seven women voted to the EC for the 2023-2027 mandate, the most ever, including three out of four Vice-Presidents

## FISU GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE

In 2007, FISU established the Women's Committee which, in 2011, gave way to the Gender Equality Committee. Rosaura Mendez Gamboa from Costa Rica took the committee's lead tasked with the strategic objective of integrating gender equality and balanced representation into all FISU activities and the global university sport movement.

2011 was particularly fruitful in terms of gender equality as FISU signed the International Working Group on Women and Sport's (IWG) Brighton Declaration - a road map to support the ongoing development of a fairer and equitable system of sport and physical activity, fully inclusive of women.

In 2023, the FISU Gender Equality Committee and Working Group presented its findings and recommendations to the FISU EC from the leadership and governance perspective of its Gender Equality Review and Report.

## GENDER EQUALITY AT FISU EVENTS

Over the past decades, FISU has led the way in this direction, with groundbreaking adaptations to its sports events. Women's ski jumping, for example, was included as an Olympic discipline for the first time in 2014, but it had prior been



included in the programme of the Innsbruck 2005 Winter Universiade. Today, there are mixed team disciplines in various FISU sports, including in archery, sailing, triathlon, and ski jumping, among many others. Rapid strides have also been made over the last 25 years with regard to the number of female competitors at the World University Games.

In 1999, at the Summer Universiade in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, there were 2,635 male athletes as compared to 1,441 female competitors. By the time the Napoli 2019 Summer Universiade came around, the number was nearly equal - with 3,100 men and 2,793 women, 52% and 48% respectively. In 2023, for the first time the NUSFs participating at the Chengdu 2021 FISU World University Games had a chance to nominate jointly male and female flag bearers for the Opening ceremony.

## THE FISU GENDER EQUALITY AWARDS

Since 2009, FISU presents a special award to NUSFs, CUSFs, and universities that have developed outstanding projects designed to advance and achieve gender equality in sport. Starting in 2021, the FISU Gender Equality Committee led by Rosaura Mendez Gamboa

began to recognise individuals who have made significant efforts to advance and achieve gender equality in university sport in their country, continent, or internationally.

On a biennial basis, the FISU Gender Equality Project Award, and the FISU Gender Equality Champion Award aim to promote the advancement of gender equality in sport. They recognise outstanding efforts and achievements to increase the participation of women, but also non-binary and transgender individuals, in sports at all levels, both on and off the field of play.

## THE FISU GENDER EQUALITY ROUND TABLE AND WEBINAR

The Round Table has been celebrated since the Summer Universiade 2011 in Shenzhen, China, and has been extended to both Summer and Winter editions of the FISU World University Games. These are open to all FISU Games participants and focus on different aspects of gender equality in university sport from around the world. The FISU Gender Equality Committee has also celebrated, since 2021, International Women's Day by organising a webinar for FISU member associations and student-ambassadors. ●

- Nomsa Mahlangu, Jin Liu, Verena Burk, Ágnes Ančić-Valkai, Rosaura Mendez Gamboa at the FISU Executive Committee meeting, Lausanne, Switzerland, 2024.



# Seven decades of STORIES FROM THE FISU WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES

Closing ceremony  
of the Chengdu  
2021 FISU World  
University  
Games Summer  
(2023)







**LUCIANO CABRAL**  
FISU 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President

**“FISU is a core element of the global sports platform and as one of the top sports entities in the world.”**

*Luciano Cabral*

**W**hen did you first hear about FISU? The first time I heard about the Universiade was back in 1995. I was a high-level judo athlete and participated in the Brazilian University Games (JUBs) but did not have an opportunity to go to the Universiade in Fukuoka, Japan. However, a college colleague who played volleyball was selected to be a part of that team.

In 1999, a series of injuries prevented me from continuing to compete at this level, so I continued my path as one of the coaches of the Brazilian university judo team and attended my first Universiade in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. This was my first real experience with FISU, and I returned to the Universiade in 2003 in Daegu, Korea, as one of the leaders of the Brazilian delegation.

By that time, I had been involved in Brazilian university sport as president of the athletic association at my university, and then later of the University Sports Federation of my state. But in 2004, I was elected president of the Brazilian University Sports Confederation (CBDU), which brought me to the 2005 Universiade in Izmir, Türkiye as head of the Brazilian delegation and to my first FISU General Assembly. Since then, I have participated in each edition of the Summer Universiade and, since 2007, every edition of the Winter Games.

#### **Do you remember your first steps towards further involvement in FISU?**

In Daegu, I met FISU leaders: its President, George Killian, Secretary General Roch Campana, and Treasurer Roberto Outeiriño. I learned a lot about university sport on my continent, and also about Brazil's situation within FISU. President Killian was an extraordinary man, with a broad vision and was far ahead of his time. His ideas and plans for university sports were truly innovative, which fascinated me. Campana and Outeiriño also paid special attention to the American continent and Brazil.

By the end of 2006, as FISU intensified its development work, President Killian entrusted me to help the reunification of university sports in the Americas. At that time, it was divided into two blocs – COSUD from South America, and

ODUCC from Central America and the Caribbean. North America was not part of either organisation. In 2007, I participated in the foundation of the Pan American University Sports Organization (ODUPA), which brought together all countries of the Americas. In 2015 the organisation's name was officially changed to FISU America.

#### **Your path was influenced by many people...**

2007 was an important year for me, as I was elected FISU Vice-President for the first time and became the first Brazilian to hold this position. The FISU universe then became part of my routine. I met remarkable people and made great friendships besides President Killian. This included such people as Dr. Zhang Xinsheng, Chikh Hassan, Michael Malumbete, Oleg Matytsin, Al Hai Omar, Isato Igarashi, Stefan Bergh, Kemal Tamer, and Pedro Dias.

As a member of the Inspection Commission of the Summer Universiade, the Sports Commission, and the Communication and Media Commission, I saw a wide variety of projects and structures across NUSFs. I also came to deeply understand the existence of different structures and formats of continental federations.

#### **What are your main satisfactions?**

Reflecting with several colleagues, including Pedro Dias, helped us to envision the future of university sport and new event formats in Brazil and with FISU America. Innovations in sports management platforms, administrative and financial aspects, strategic planning, CRM systems, new competition formats, and para-sports and eSports were introduced. Holding the first women's FISU Championship Futsal in 2008, to support gender equality, is one of the examples. More recently, CBDU organised 2024 FISU World University Championship Beach Sports.

FISU is a core element of the global sports platform and is one of the top sports entities in the world. Together with the continental and national university sports federations, we provide opportunities for students worldwide to pursue dual careers. Competing in sport during their academic journeys ensures that future professionals are forged with sports values, thus becoming high-performance citizens. ●

## An incredible journey of the FISU flag



The FISU flag in the Château de la Solitude, the former headquarters of FISU in Brussels, Belgium. On this day, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012, the International Foundation for the Development of University Sport (FIDSU) was established



Lake Placid 1972 Winter Universiade opening ceremony (courtesy of the Lake Placid Olympic Museum)



FISU flag raising ceremony of the Moscow 1973 Summer Universiade

Starting with the first Torino 1959 Summer Universiade, the flag with an "U" surrounded by five stars began its journey around the world, while the traditional goliardic song *Gaudeamus Igitur* sounded at all the official ceremonies of the Games. No national anthems were actually played, which is still the case today!

At each new edition of the Universiade, an embroidered patch indicating the hosting city and the year was added to the original flag. It had been used for the flag handover ceremony until the 1990s, before being permanently conserved at the FISU headquarters as an important historical artefact.



FISU flag handover from Belluno 1985 to Kobe 1985



FISU flag handover from Sofia 1989 to Duisburg 1989

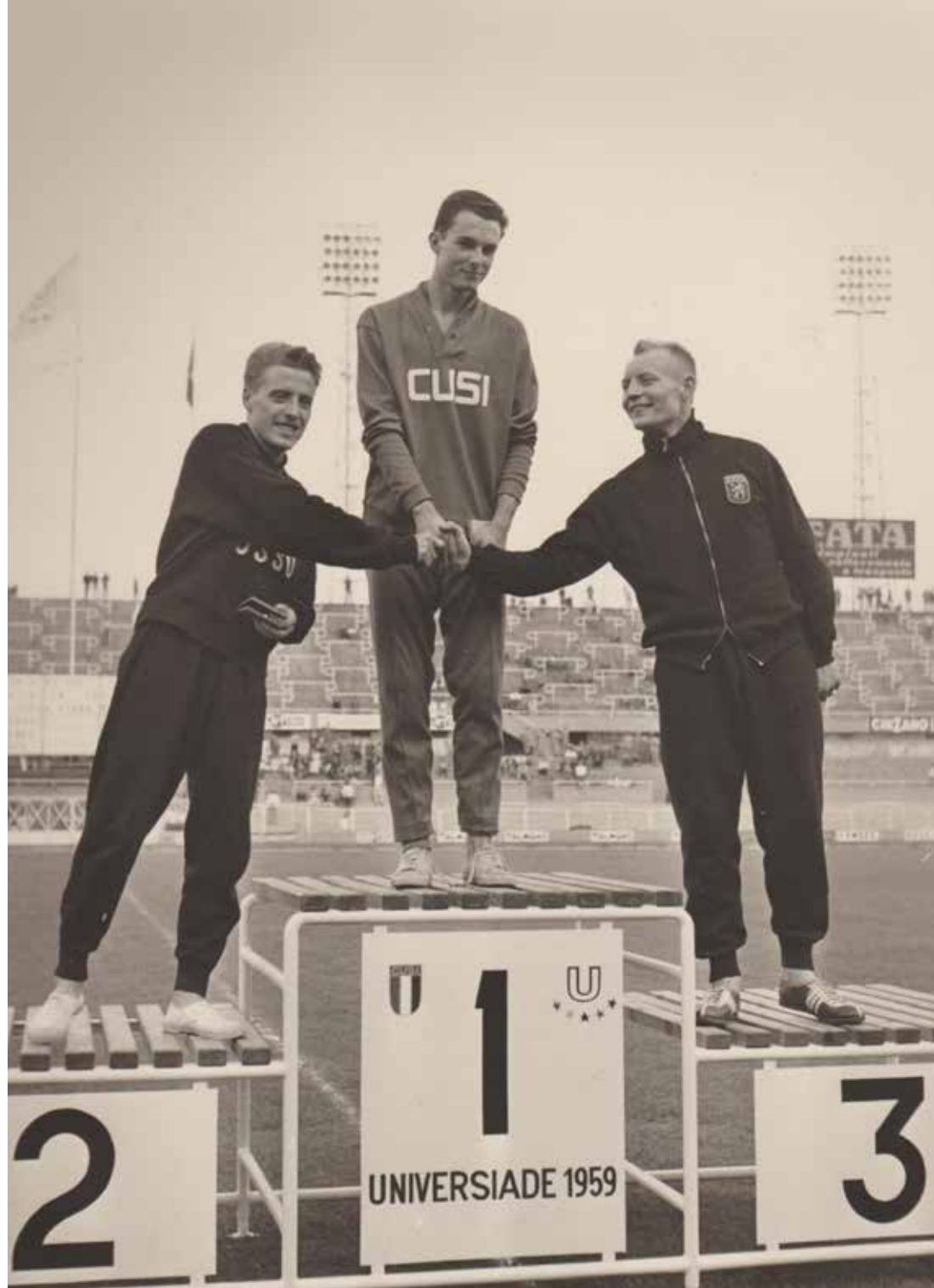


# 50s



With a decade of discord finally behind, Torino wrote its name in the history books as the birthplace of the Universiade, which saw university athletes from all parts of the divided world participating together for the first time. The local organising committee, namely the Torino University Sports Association, or CUS Torino, led by Primo Nebiolo, would also give the world the Universiade flag and adopted Gaudeamus Igitur as its official anthem. It was the first time that the term "Universiade" was used to describe the multi-sport event.





Jean-Claude Penez, Livio Berruti and Romain Poté on the podium after the 100m race, Torino 1959 Summer Universiade

## Livio BERRUTI

Italy | Athletics | Universiade 1959

**L**ivio Berruti won three gold medals at the first Universiade in Turin: 100m, 200m, and 4x100m relay. In 1960, he was a 21-year-old chemistry student when a Rome Olympics gold brought him international glory. Numerous successful competitions followed, but Berruti always studied hard and even missed one Universiade because his laboratory courses could not be postponed.

"First of all, there is a necessary premise to be made: the political, economic and social conditions of the

1960s were so different from those of today that it is difficult to compare current sport with that of a distant past. In the 1960s, sport was predominantly amateur, and therefore experienced as a beautiful and enjoyable moment. It was an expression of one's passion and desire - and I would also say curiosity - to give free rein to one's energetic exuberance to be exhibited in competition with everyone.

Athletes competing with passion had no ideological conditioning. Agonism in sport has the same behavioural characteristics as the research activity of a scientist, meaning an absolute lack of political,

confessional, ethical and economic discrimination. The political world used sport as an image promoter to take pictures with the champion of the moment but remained rather insensitive to its educational and social values.

A characteristic of university competitions was the goliardic spirit that animated them, and the Universiade did not escape these rules. From a competitive point of view, the Turin Universiade was perceived as a series of international meetings spread over several days, and rather than the novelty of the event, the curiosity was to see athletes from all over the world. Playing sport, in short, was an excellent leisure time commitment and nothing more. And that was the spirit with which I approached competitions.

My experience at the Turin Universiade brought about a very curious situation. Since the dressing room of the Italian team was outside the stadium and the car park inside, an hour before going out onto the track to run the 100 metres, I arrived at the stadium with my car (living in Turin, I had been authorised to sleep at home) and parked it inside the stadium, showing my sports card.

I then went back out of the stadium to change, and after a few minutes, I was about to re-enter

the stadium in my flaming Italia tracksuit. The gruff control officer, however, stopped me asking me to show my badge. Unfortunately, I could not find it, and so began a discussion that saw me succumb to the arrival of other colleagues of the controller.

Fortunately, since I was competing in the Police Sports Group, the Fiamme Oro, I found my police badge and after about twenty minutes of discussion I managed to compete, overcoming the barrier created by the controller and all his colleagues. The races ran smoothly, with very composed, dare I say Savoy-style, spectator participation.

The climate, however, was quite different in Porto Alegre and Tokyo. In the Brazilian city, the cheerful, easy-going, and boisterous atmosphere of the people, not unlike that of the Neapolitans, matched perfectly with the athletes, and the competition was approached in a casual university campus atmosphere. Additionally, the officials were also in perfect harmony with the athletes.

There was a feeling of familiarity that skyrocketed after a visit the Italian team made to a nearby town where, to their surprise, they discovered that they spoke not Italian but Piedmontese and Veneto dialects. ●●●

Men's 100m final, Torino 1959 Summer Universiade





**“In fact, when in Tokyo we learned that it was possible to go to the port of Yokohama at dawn to watch the arrival of the fishermen and eat like them. We did not miss that opportunity to eat some excellent shrimp accompanied by good sauces of unknown composition.”**



Silver medal,  
Torino 1959  
Summer  
Universiade

... In Tokyo, the cradle of technology and electronics, the atmosphere was radically different, typical of that part of the world. It included lots of smiles, great operational efficiency, ultra-Swiss punctuality in rail transport with masses of people moving with order and composure in an apotheosis of audio-video product offerings.

The result was that the many photo and audio-video enthusiasts, I among them, spent much of their free time in the shops selling these products with endless attempts at dialogue with shopkeepers who spoke exclusively Japanese.

The Japanese Universiade was a reduced format copy of the Olympics that had been held there three years earlier, and the competitions were held with an apparently Olympic commitment and concentration. In reality, the atmosphere and spirit remained, as witnessed by the parade of the Italian team that arrived at the finish line, where FISU President Primo Nebiolo and Emperor Hirohito were present. All the male athletes pulled a remnant of their shirt out of their trousers for easy interpretation and sang for Nebiolo a very scurrilous goliardic hymn!

It was, however, in 1965 that I gave in to Primo Nebiolo's insistence and switched to the CUS Torino (of which Primo was president). This allowed him to insist that I take part in the Universiade in Budapest from 25-29 August, where I did not even make it to the final in the 100 metres, finished sixth in the 200 final, and third in the 4X100 final, from which we were then disqualified for reasons not specified in the Italian press reports.

In the 1960s, the athletes were completely uninvolved in political issues. Italian officials never made any political remarks, and the same was seen from the athletes of the Eastern European world, even though they knew that some of the people accredited as sports officials were actually political commissars.

We were all animated by feelings of respect and friendship, especially with the Russians who were the nicest and with whom we also did business. When they came to compete in Western countries, they would arrive overloaded with caviar, cameras, and photographic lenses (most of them made by East Germany based Zeiss), which they sold for dollars and then used to buy Western products. I bought Zenith cameras and a splendid Zeiss telephoto lens for three to four times less than similar Italian products.

All in all, the athletes were bearers of very positive values, friendship, and dialogue that made it possible to break down all barriers. There were many captivating smiles, as well as exchanges of badges and addresses that would reach their peak at the closing ceremony, of which, alas, I remember nothing.”

## Jean-Claude PENEZ

France | Athletics | Universiade 1959

**J**ean-Claude Penez was a 20 year-old man studying to become a school teacher at the Ecole normale d'instituteurs de Douai. He said that Universiade was his only important international competition.

“After having had good performances at regional competitions, I received the opportunity to train at France's National Institute of Sport (INSEP) and to participate in the Universiade. After receiving my degree, I started my military service by going to Algeria for more intense training, and when I returned, I participated in the 1962 Military World Games. There, I remember it as a time when the photo-finish was not in use yet, and the pole vaulters still used bamboo poles.”

**“I was disappointed to lose against Livio Berruti, until the moment I learnt he became the Olympic champion one year after in Rome.”**



Jean-Claude Penez kept his bib from the first Universiade



STORICI ED EDITORI

CONI - CUSI

TORINO

27 agosto - 6 settembre 1959

Giochi mondiali  
dello  
sport universitario

# UNIVERSIADE

1959

*Permanente  
16/5/59*

# TRIBUNA

RIDOTTO

L. 300



Serie E N° 0035

FISCU 75

FISCU 75



1961

SOFIA (BUL)  
II<sup>nd</sup> Universiade (summer)

1962

VILLARS (SUI)  
II<sup>nd</sup> Universiade (winter)

1963

PORTO ALEGRE (BRA)  
III<sup>rd</sup> Universiade (summer)

1964

SPINDLERUV MLYN (CZE)  
III<sup>rd</sup> Universiade (winter)

1965

BUDAPEST (HUN)  
IV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)

1966

SESTRIERE (ITA)  
IV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1967

TOKYO (JPN)  
V<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)

1968

INNSBRUCK (AUT)  
V<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)



# 60s



Inaugurated with the first Winter Universiade held in Chamonix, France, the decade of the 1960s saw the first wave of FISU's intercontinental expansion. Among the newcomers was the team from the United States, which snared a total of 12 gold medals at the Budapest 1965 Summer Universiade, including one in a historic men's basketball final against the Soviet Union. This event would become a catalyst for higher level competition and further internationalisation of Universiade, which was met with open arms by the founder of the World University Games Jean Petitjean, who kept attending Universiade until 1967.



Cécile Prince at the slalom competition, Chamonix 1960 Winter Universiade



## Cécile PRINCE

France | Alpine Skiing | Universiade 1960, 1962 & 1964

**C**écile Prince was lucky to be chosen to take the athlete oath at the first Winter Universiade organised in the French Alps. One of the best slalom skiers of this era, she stood on the Universiade podium six times from 1960 to 1964, in addition to her victories at other important international competitions. Showing her medals was a good ice-breaker for our conversation.

In a small box, dozens of medals and pins tell us the glorious story of Cécile Prince's skiing career. She also has an impressive folder of near one hundred pages with press cuttings telling of her success, and an album with photos carefully attached and accompanied by detailed captions.

Cécile Prince (number 9) and her teammate Marie-José Dusonchet, Chamonix 1960 Winter Universiade (courtesy of C. Prince)



"I was born in Grenoble in the French Alps in a family of eleven children. As two cadets, with my brother, we often went skiing. I sometimes participated in competitions but my regular engagement in sports started when I registered for my academic degree.

I was studying English. All the rich girls at the time were doing English and skiing (laughs)!

So, I joined the sports section of my university, the Grenoble Université Club, and that is how I had a chance to participate in the first Winter Universiade in Chamonix. The event was great, but we did not have expectations to receive a very warm welcome. The mountain was tough, and we were intellectuals... At least, that was my feeling.

Universiade had a more fun atmosphere and was definitely more relaxing as compared to the Olympics, where I competed in 1964 in Innsbruck. And as the French team was among the best, I can assure you, it was totally different. There, we were playing for our skins! What was more, it was not easy for me to be a member of both university and national teams at the same time. That was only the case for Marie-José Dusonchet (another French ski champion) and me. With the student team we felt more equal and supported each other. Still, training occupied most of our time during the Universiade, so we did not have a lot of time to talk with other athletes.

After Chamonix in 1960 and Villars in 1962, I had the chance to discover Czechoslovakia at the Spindleruv Mlyn 1964 Universiade. It was a long trip by train, with interminable stops at the border. It was actually not my first time in Eastern Europe, as I had already been in Poland at another student ski competition. I also keep good memories from international ski camps organised in the mountains not far from Grenoble." ●

## Heidi & Thérèse OBRECHT

Switzerland | Alpine Skiing | Universiade 1962, 1964 & 1966

Thérèse Obrecht receiving her silver medal, Sestriere 1966 Winter Universiade

**L**ike many in Switzerland, sisters Heidi and Thérèse Obrecht became familiar with the mountains at a very young age. They grew up in the heart of the Swiss Alps discovering skiing in the company of their father, and then having their lives take different paths. As a journalist and filmmaker, Thérèse has lived in different countries, including Russia and Kosovo, while Heidi has dedicated her life to raising future ski champions.



Right after their Olympic debut in Austria, the two sisters travelled to Czechoslovakia to take part in the Spindleruv Mlyn 1964 Winter Universiade. Heidi, a student in psychology at Bern University, won a medal in all alpine disciplines, except for the downhill, and shared the podium with a rising star from France, Annie Famose. Thérèse was injured before the Olympics and struggled with an infection and was not there either to celebrate her sister's success or to witness an incredible story involving the Swiss team on its way back home.

The division created by the Cold War and the associated differences in living conditions made citizens from European socialist countries dream about emigration, often clandestine, to the West. This was the case of a young East German man who, through an agreement with the driver, took the Swiss team bus in Spindleruv Mlyn and courageously spent several hours under a heavy pile of skis to

cross the Austrian border, without getting caught by the border control police.

At the Sestriere 1966 Winter Universiade, it was Thérèse's turn to dominate the podium with victories in the downhill and combined, and two silver medals behind Annie Famose. The latter beat Thérèse in slalom by 1/100<sup>th</sup> of a second, taking the title from her Swiss friend. Despite FISU rules not taking hundredths of seconds into account at the time, the race was controlled by the International Ski Federation, and the race director could not authorise Famose's offer to share the win. Heidi won two bronze medals in Sestriere and participated in the following edition in Innsbruck, winning the gold in downhill, which had been missing from her collection. ●

Heidi and Thérèse Obrecht with Jean Saubert (USA) at the Sestriere 1966 Winter Universiade





# Guy de CALLATAÏ

Belgium | Alpine Skiing | Universiade 1962



At the Belgian national junior ski competition in the early 1960s (courtesy of G. de Callatay)

**B**ack in 1962, Guy de Callatay was an 18 year old student of civil chemical engineering at the Catholic University of Louvain in Leuven, Belgium. As the only Belgian athlete at that year's Winter Universiade, he was his country's flag-bearer. Connections with his peers helped him overcome some difficulties related to this solo-travel and competition experience.

"As a Belgian junior alpine skiing champion I was classified as an elite athlete by the Belgian Ski Federation. Thanks to my student status, the Federation let me represent my country at the Winter Universiade in Villars, Switzerland from 6 to 12 March 1962.

In fact, of the 23 participating countries and 273 athletes, I was the only Belgian registered as a competitor!

As the only Belgian, and therefore the flag-bearer for the Belgian delegation, I have an extraordinary memory of the opening ceremony on the Villars ice rink the evening of 6 March 1962. The athletes were paraded in alphabetical order in French, so after the strong German and Austrian delegations came the letter B. A little boy carried a BELGIUM sign, then six metres behind I arrived carrying the Belgian flag with nobody behind me. I was cheered like I'd never been before! We went around the ice rink and lined up by country.

The important thing about the competition for me was to take part and finish in the middle of the pack because I wasn't up there with the best. After all, Belgium is a flat country with very few ski runs.

In training on the downhill run, during a long and fast schuss, I unfortunately had a spectacular

**"As a souvenir, I kept my number from the giant slalom (my last race on 12 March). We had organised amongst ourselves to put our signatures on the numbers, indicating our countries of origin. As such, there are signatures on my bib from 17 countries."**

fall. Luckily, nothing was broken, but it affected me terribly. I didn't have a coach, and the head of the Belgian delegation did not follow me during the competition (I actually only saw him once). During my training sessions and competition, I was left to my own devices without a support person, unlike the other delegations. So, I decided not to take part in the downhill race the next day, which I really regretted when I saw the level of skiers. Despite that, it gave me the energy to concentrate on the slalom and giant slalom races, in which I came 47th and 55th, respectively, out of 69 competitors.

I have fond memories of the spirit of camaraderie during competition, as we encouraged each other, whatever our country of origin. I remember the Spanish competitor, Alfonso de Borbon, who was the cousin of King Felipe of Spain and unfortunately died in a terrible skiing accident in the USA years later. He was wearing number 51 and had started the giant slalom just before me.

I still remember discovering young people of the same age, sharing the same passion for sport, and above all discovering different countries and cultures. We met up either on the slopes or in the resort. I made friends with a Swiss-German skater, Marianne Gerber, and others whose names I can't remember, but it was always a pleasure to meet them and try to understand other languages.

There was also the beautiful closing ceremony where all the flag bearers, including me, arrived together, followed by all the competitors. It was really wonderful to be together, coming from all over the world.

As a souvenir, I kept my number from the giant slalom (my last race on 12 March). We had organised amongst ourselves to put our signatures on the numbers, indicating our countries of origin. As such, there are signatures on my bib from over 17 countries.

I was able to meet competitors from Eastern Europe – quite impressive during the time of the Cold War – and we shook hands and joked in all languages with Poles, Hungarians and

Russians. They were well looked after, but very approachable and friendly. There was a superb atmosphere of fraternity that continued on the cogwheel train down to Aigle and then on the train to Geneva from where most of the athletes were returning to their home countries.

As director of a multinational company, I returned to Villars 30 years later, where I organised a sales meeting for my team of European employees, and I wore my number to introduce the theme of the meeting, 'move forward, go for gold'. I took the opportunity to visit Jean-Daniel Dätwyler, the Swiss ski champion who had opened the slalom in Villars as a then 17-year-old Swiss hopeful. It was a great follow-up to this wonderful Universiade adventure."

Bib of Guy de Callatay signed by athletes from 17 countries





# Thomas KIRK

Canada | Ice Hockey | Universiade 1966

**T**om Kirk was 19 when he made his first airplane trip to cross the Atlantic and compete at the Sestriere 1966 Universiade. The University of Manitoba Bisons team was representing Canada. The Bisons had won the Canadian university hockey championship in 1965 and were selected to go to Italy the following year to represent the country.

“I was born and raised on a small farm in Manitoba so the thought of flying to Europe to compete for my country was tremendously exciting. We flew

from Winnipeg to Montreal, on to Paris and then Genoa where we caught a train to Turin for the Games. I remember an incident at the train station in Genoa where our hockey sticks seem to have been temporarily lost and our coach getting into a shouting match with the baggage staff about the whereabouts of our sticks. It was hilarious because one was yelling in English and the other in Italian and nobody could understand a word the other was saying!

We arrived in Turin and were checked in to a very nice hotel where several of the other teams

No 1367	
F. I. S. U. - C. U. S. I.	
Universiade 1966	
PAYS	CANADA
NOM et PRENOM	KIRK THOMAS WILLIAM
SPORT	HOCKEY
À TITRE DE	ATHLETE
COMITÉ D'ORGANISATION	VISA DE LA C. I. C.
UNIVERSIADE 1966 COMITATO ORGANIZZAZIONE	<i>[Signature]</i>

Thomas Kirk's accreditation from the Sestriere 1966 Winter Universiade

**“I was born and raised on a small farm in Manitoba so the thought of flying to Europe to compete for my country was tremendously exciting.”**

were staying. I know the Norwegian and Finnish teams were there, but we did not meet any of them other than when passing on a stairway. In fact, one unfortunate aspect of the entire experience was not interacting with other teams to get to know the players and their culture. However, as a hockey nation there were high hopes for Canada and our coach and manager were careful to be sure that we did not interact – after all they were the foe and we needed to concentrate on beating them!

I have a clear recollection of going to the rink for our first practise and watching teams from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Romania arrive. Iron Curtain countries that were mysterious and frankly a little scary at the time of the cold war. We were transported by a Mercedes bus but the Romanian team arrived in an army truck that looked like it had been used in the Second World War. And they had travelled all the way from Romania in it! One of our first games was against them and I remember lining up for the opening face-off and the opposing Romanian player reaching over to touch my hockey gloves and saying (I think) “nice”. My gloves were kind of state of the art for the time and his were little better than winter mitts! But they were a good team, and he was a good player so they certainly had our respect.

The opening ceremonies were up in the Alps in Sestriere and I do remember stopping for some reason on the way and getting into a snowball fight with members of other teams as we waited outside our buses. Sestriere was spectacular and I am sure I had never seen mountains before let alone the famous Alps. I remember, and still have a photo, of a St Bernard rescue dog with the little keg of brandy on a strap under its chin. A classic picture.

I'm afraid to say that as young, somewhat undisciplined, men we did get into a little mischief. I recall one night some of us broke curfew and went to a local nightclub. It must have been open mic night as there was literally a parade of singers who got up on stage and sang. Each one sounding like an Italian opera star to us. It was a great night but we were in the coach's bad books for that escapade.

The tournament was tough for us as the teams from the USSR and Czechoslovakia were very good.

Although we did our best we ended up 4th in the tournament.

On our last night at the hotel, our coach and manager decided we could finally have a real “Italian Dinner”. We assembled in a dining room and I so clearly recall the doors to the kitchen bursting open and waiters bringing huge tureens of spaghetti noodles and sauce to our tables. It was delicious and we asked for more and they brought more until we were absolutely stuffed. What we didn't know was that the spaghetti was like an appetizer because then the doors burst open again and they brought out plates with whole roasted chickens! We were young men and could eat a lot but that was just too much. We laughed about how unsophisticated we were many times on the way home.

We left Turin after the competition and travelled by bus through the Alps, including the Mont Blanc tunnel to Grenoble, France where the Olympics would be held in 1968. There we played a game against a Canadian armed forces team. Grenoble was promoting the Olympics and between periods there was a fashion show featuring models from Paris wearing the latest in winter clothes. After the game, there was a light dinner for us and the models came over to our table and asked for our autographs! We were sure we had died and gone to heaven!

Our trip then took us by train to Paris for a couple of days and then on home to the cold prairies of Manitoba. The Universiade was a great experience and one I will always treasure.” ●







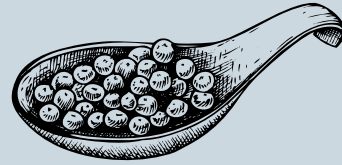
# +19 60s

80



**SOFIA 1961** The Higher Institute for Plastic Arts engaged its students to develop poster projects. More than 80 were selected and used to decorate the road leading to the Universiade village which was based on the student campus of Sofia.

Universiade in Sofia in 1961 was as much a food festival as a sporting event! 55 kg of caviar, 2700 kg of chocolate, 9200 kg of paprika, 5200 kg of cacao, among other specialties, were consumed. What else could be needed to achieve excellent results?

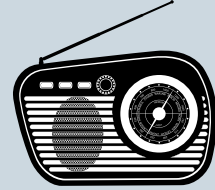


2



**VILLARS 1962** The host of this Universiade changed twice. It was originally planned in the famous Swiss ski resort of Davos, then it was to be held in St. Moritz, before ultimately being hosted by Villars.

**PORTO ALEGRE 1963** Universiade had its own radio station. One day the station reported that a wallet with a considerable amount of money and documents belonging to a certain Roberto S. was found in the Olympic Village.



Although Brazil is a tropical country, Universiade was held in August, right in the middle of the region's winter season.

During the Universiade, the Instituto Brasileiro do Café offered fresh Brazilian coffee, which, unsurprisingly, was gladly welcomed and consumed by the participants.



1



Norway was represented by only one athlete, who was simultaneously a competitor, delegate, and the head of delegation.

**BUDAPEST 1965** A special international seminar on sports and physical education was organised in cooperation with UNESCO to discuss the challenges of university sport in developing countries.



**TOKYO 1967** was the last edition of the World University Games that its founding father, then 77-year-old Jean Petitjean, attended as an honorary guest.

Approximately 30 students from Japanese universities played a fanfare. A thousand students formed a human letter U. The Universiade song was sung by a choir of 700 students.

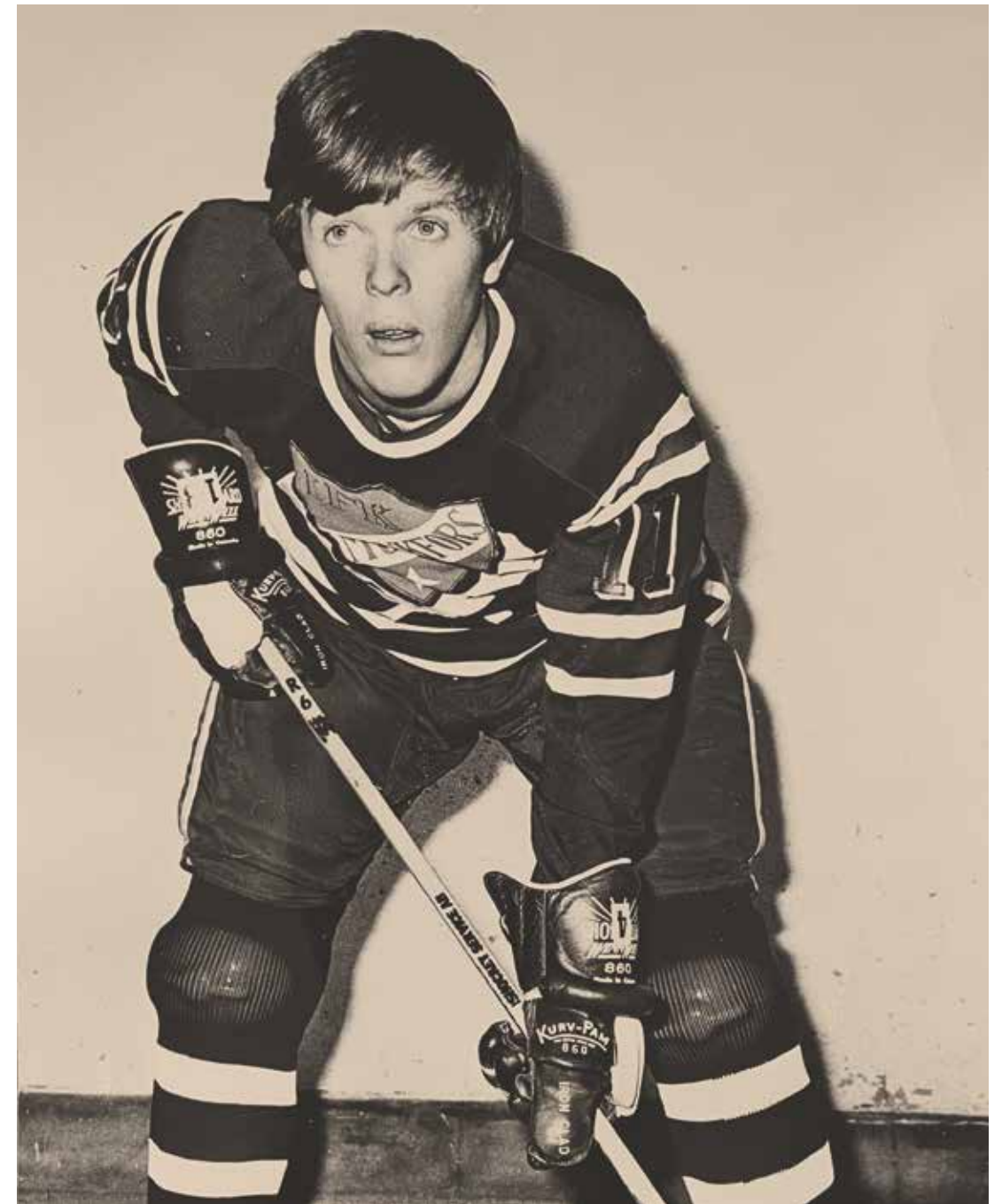


165



The total number of goals scored during the VI<sup>th</sup> Summer Universiade in Tokyo. It is reported that no Universiade has beaten this astonishing world record.

**1969 Cancellation** Summer Universiade, initially planned for Portugal, was cancelled by the government and had to be postponed to 1970. That led to Turin hosting the event for the second time.



Anders Ajaxson in 1966 (courtesy of A. Ajaxson)

## Anders AJAXSON

Sweden | Ice Hockey | Universiade 1968

**A**nders Ajaxson lives in Sweden and often shares with his family some fun stories about his sports adventures and student life in the 1960s. He was lucky to be a student in 1968, one of the most significant years for European universities! His son Christer, who initially contacted us to find the hockey tournament results from the Universiade, agreed without hesitation to interview Anders for the FISU anniversary book. Actually, he does not speak English, so Christer kindly translated the text and even sent a photograph of his father proudly holding his team jacket from Innsbruck.

I could never have imagined that two years in a row in the 1960s (1967 and 1968), I would be able to make joyful visits to Austria. The first visit took place so that I – and ten ice hockey teammates from our Swedish province Värmland – could see our blue and yellow national team play the ice hockey World Cup in spring-like Vienna in 1967. During the second visit, which took place a year later in January 1968, I would then be wearing the blue and yellow national team jersey myself. Wonderful, wintry Innsbruck, and the students' own worldwide Olympic Games – the Universiade – was the reason for my trip back to Austria. I then experienced the ice hockey tournament in the Universiade – by ●●●



••• far my most enjoyable sporting experience as an active player. This assessment is equally valid 54 years later.

#### How would you describe the atmosphere of the Games?

Consistently friendly and fantastic weather. The sun shone every day, as I remember it. I felt, when I went home, that I had a memory for life. That's still the feeling I have now in the year 2022.

#### What was the most memorable moment of the Games?

The opening ceremony march where we walked the same route as the athletes during the Olympics in 1964. It was very solemn and nothing that I had ever expected to experience.

In our game against Canada, which was represented by players from the University of Toronto, we were heavily tipped for defeat. Still, we managed to get a 3-3 result and I was responsible for two of the goals – for me a highlight as an ice hockey player.

#### Do you remember where the opening and the closing ceremonies took place?

My memory is that we – the participants from each country – marched around the skating rink and finally into the inner court.

#### Do you remember some interesting facts about your trip and stay?

I remember that we always took a taxi into the city centre, as we lived a bit outside of the city. I have a good feeling when it comes to the city itself, but no longer any clear memories of any particular areas. It was great to eat at different restaurants.

#### Could you talk to the athletes from the socialist countries?

No, that was not possible, nor did we make any major effort to talk to them. A very clear memory I have was that the Soviet team, which lived in the same house as we did, had a designated guard in a long overcoat sitting on a ledge. He was strategically placed so that he could have full control over the entrance and the exit.

#### Do you remember any incidents, including political ones? Some scandals?

Not really. But I shall mention the high-tension game a year before in the Wiener Stadthalle at the 1967 World Cup between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, where all of us spectators were rooting for the Czechs and the atmosphere was very tense.

At the Universiade, the Soviets had a very strong team, which we were completely without a



Anders Ajaxson with the uniform he wore at the Innsbruck 1968 Winter Universiade

## “In our game against Canada, which was represented by players from the University of Toronto, we were heavily tipped for defeat. Still, we managed to get a 3-3 result and I was responsible for two of the goals.”

chance against. On their team there were some national team players, and I especially remember the forward Vladimir Shadrin and their team captain Vladimir Jurzinov. At that time, there were also players from Latvia on the Soviet team, Juris Reps was one of them, also a national team player.

#### Tell us about your sports career

During my teenage years in Värmland, 60 km north of the large lake Vänern, I played many sports, especially ball ones. During the summer season it was football that mattered, in the winter I spent a lot of time playing ice hockey and outdoor bandy. But from the age of 19 it became necessary to concentrate on ice hockey, when I was an established player of the club's A-team (which played in Sweden's second highest league). Immediately after I finished my studies at the School of Journalism in Gothenburg, I started working as a journalist. For only one season was it possible to combine the job and playing ice hockey, so at the age of 25 I was forced to end my ice hockey career.

#### How were you selected to participate in the Universiade?

Coincidence played a big role. On a notice board in the union building at the University branch in Karlstad, I happened to see an unassuming note where ice hockey players for Sweden's team at the Universiade in Innsbruck were requested. A fellow student and I, also an ice hockey player in the same league as me, sent in our names to the Swedish Academic Sports Association in Stockholm. We got a quick answer – you are selected! Our Swedish team was mainly picked up from the Chalmers University of Technology's league team in Gothenburg (division 3). We also had two players from the highest division, one from Djurgården (Stockholm), the other from Röggle (Skåne).

#### Were you a part of the national team?

My participation at the Universiade was the only time I wore the blue and yellow national team jersey. I certainly had good skating speed, but I did not have enough physical strength in my arms to become a “real” Swedish national team player in ice hockey. On our strong junior team

back home in Munkfors there was, by the way, one guy who would become one of Sweden's first players in the NHL: Thommie Bergman.

#### What did you study at the university?

I studied political science and Nordic languages at the newly started University branch in Karlstad 1967-1968. After that I continued at the School of Journalism in Gothenburg 1969-1970.

#### Was it difficult to combine sports with studies?

Not at all. It was no problem to combine sports and studies. Instead, it was a motivating factor to practice and play games while focusing on the studies.

#### How did sport influence your life and your career?

In all stages of life, it has been an asset to carry sports in my backpack. More and more, since I left my active career as an athlete, my interest in football has increased. Football is played in all countries on earth, which is not at all the case with ice hockey.

Three days after school finished, I started working at the local newspaper Värmlands Folkblad's central editorial office in Karlstad. Very early on, I was given the role to focus on political aspects at both local and regional level. When Sweden's leading politicians came to visit Värmland, it was often me who got to follow them in their footsteps. I even met Prime Minister Olof Palme a handful of times, as well as his predecessor Tage Erlander, who came from the same area as me in Värmland.

I am very happy that I was able to pass on the interest in sports to my four children. For my two sons, floorball has become an important sport, which the next generation (grandson 18 years old, granddaughter 16 years old) also enjoys with life, desire, and success. ●



1970

ROVANIEMI (FIN)  
VI<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1970

TORINO (ITA)  
VI<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)

1972

LAKE PLACID (USA)  
VII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1973

MOSCOW (RUS)  
VII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)

1975

LIVIGNO (ITA)  
VIII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)  
ROME (ITA)  
VIII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)

1977

SOFIA (BUL)  
IX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)

1978

SPINDLERUV MLYN (CZE)  
IX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1979

MEXICO CITY (MEX)  
X<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)



After checking off Northern Europe as a host region by heading to Rovaniemi, Finland in 1970, the Winter Universiade was in terra incognita once again two years later when it arrived at the American resort of Lake Placid, which would also be host for the 2023 FISU World University Games Winter. The Moscow 1973 Summer Universiade showed the Soviet Union was determined to make the Universiade a rousing success as the Games were a test for the 1980 Olympics. The Winter Universiade returned to Špindlerův Mlýn in 1978 after 14 years with the motto 'With Sport for Peace and Friendship between Nations'.



# 70s



# Sandra HARTLEY

Canada | Artistic Gymnastics | Universiade 1970

In 1970, Sandra Hartley was the first woman to be awarded Female Athlete of the Year at the University of British Columbia. Ranking within the top three on Canada's National Artistic Gymnastics team from 1967-1970, she represented her country at the 1966 and 1970

World Championships and the 1968 Olympic Games. At the 1970 Summer Universiade, Sandra achieved her highest international ranking while she was a full-time student in a Master's Programme. Coming back from Turin, young Sandra wrote a report that she is sharing with us.

## WORLD STUDENT GAMES - TORINO, ITALY August 22 - Sept 8th,

A day and one half of traveling by car, plane, bus and train and Canada's 78 athletes "straggled" into Torino, Italy. The athletes were all university students representing the sports of volleyball, basketball, gymnastics, swimming, diving and track and field. Unrepresented sports were fencing and water polo.

The gymnastics team from Canada was:

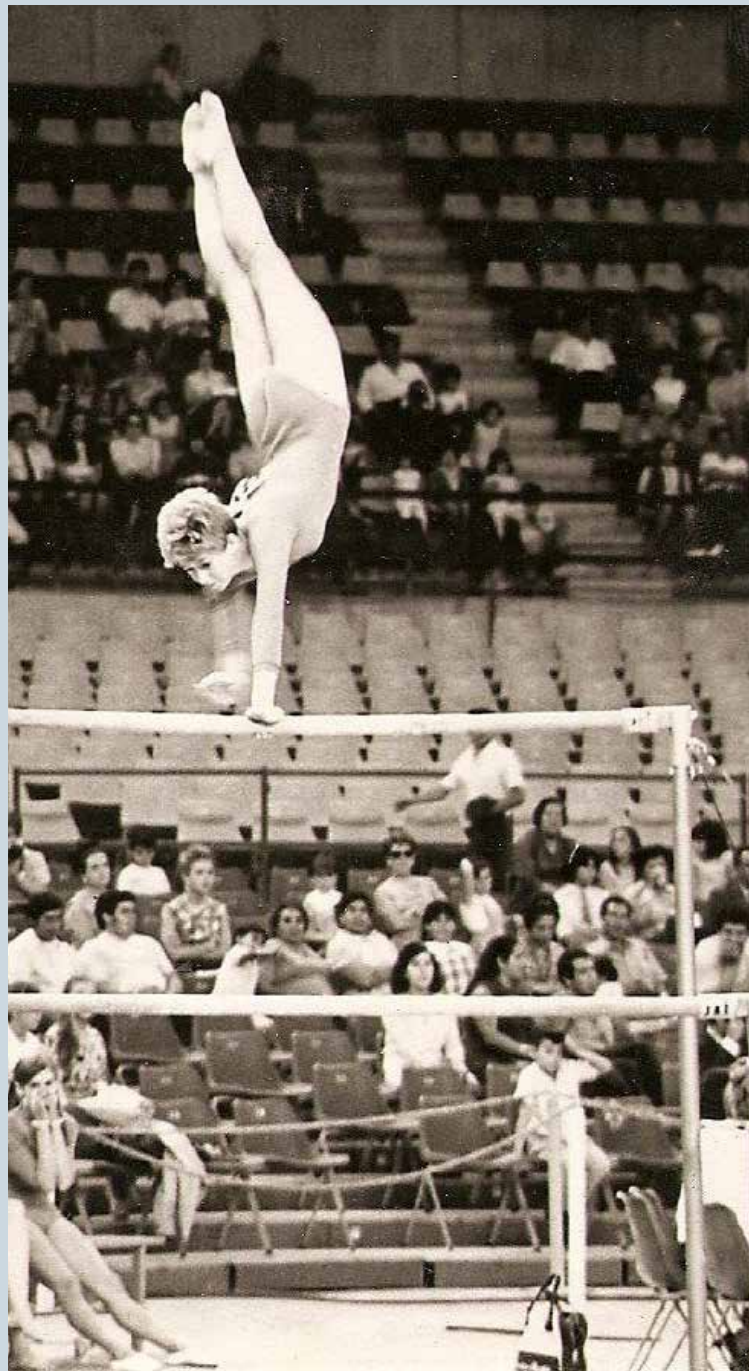
Women: SANDRA HARTLEY, U.B.C.	KAREN DEAN, Vancouver City College
LIZ SWINTON, York U.	LOUISE LAMONTE - McMaster U.
Men: STEVE MITRUK, McMasters	TIM SEDEWICK, University of Sask.
GARY BALCOMBE, U. Of Sask.	TOM KINSMAN, York U.

These gymnasts were chosen from regional and national level trials in the spring.

When the train pulled into Torino, we were met by our coach Mrs. Carol Ann Letheron. The team looked a sorry sight - the traveling for so long plus the lack of sleep in 2 days left us without any kind of equilibrium. Also with the time change we were 9 hours ahead of at home time.

The Liguire Hotel housed the whole Canadian delegation right in the heart of the city. The hotel was a good one and convenient for touring, but downtown Torino was not the healthiest place to live. The truth is that the air was sooty, dusty and polluted. Foul vegetable odour, sour dough smells and industrial wastes polluted the air. The street noise was unbearable especially at 3 a.m. with typically pushy Italian drivers and their horns. The food for our team was set-up in a self serve cafeteria that was an inexpensive and thus crowded public restaurant. The team medical staff ruled out most of the dishes they served, and everyday the same food was served. The major complaints of the team was the bad food, lack of good drinking water, obnoxious Italian men (by the girls) and everyone was astonished that the Alps were invisible in the heavy smog although they were only a few miles away.

After 16 hours sleep straight and three more days adjustment, we started to get used to the time change. The swimmers started competition right away. They had no chance to get adjusted to the time change, but also little chance to get sick. The basketball and volleyball teams started their games and elimination and exhibition matches, and continued these through most of the Games. Gymnastics was scheduled about 2/3 of the way through the Games and Track and Field had to wait patiently until the very end.



"Downtown Torino was not the healthiest place to live. The truth is that the air was sooty, dusty and polluted. The street noise was unbearable especially at 3 a.m. with typically pushy Italian drivers and their horns."

The report written by Sandra Hartley upon her return to Canada (courtesy of S. Hartley)

The Russians followed with marvelous expression but not much difficulty. Their dramatic movement and explosive music brought them well deserved 9.4's, 9.5's and 9.6's. Petrik got 9.80 for a very beautiful and dramatic routine but her tumbling was a little low.

Our pianist was an Italian woman who had spent many hours learning the music for Karen and I. The other two girls used cassette tapes. We had given the pianist a corsage and she wore it when she played for us.

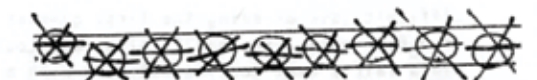
The Italian gymnasts scores were a farce-she could barely do a layout yet she got 9.15 on floor ex and 8.80 on beam. She was poor but Italy's only gymnast, so she had boosted scores. I thought the judges were very accurate on our scores on balance beam and floor exercise... for a change!

After the competition a flurry of excitement took place behind the bleachers-a Japanese girl crying in a moment of relief and emotion, the trainer gave me a big hug and everyone was signing autographs trading clothes and exchanging souvenir pins.

March-in and award presentation followed. USSR won the top 3 all-round medals with Petrik placing first. USSR won the team trophy closely followed in second place by Japan and Hungary third. I placed 18th all-round, Karen 25th, Liz 28 and Louise 29th. Canada placed 7th team in the world and we are confident in this standing as Canada though we were good enough to be sent; and the teams that did not come likely were not of the calibre worth sending.

I'm sure all of us would like to thank all of the people who gave us their time and interest regarding this trip, especially Skip, our team "manager", and Carol Ann, our coach, and also all those who helped finance the trip. It was so worthwhile.

Submitted by SANDY HARTLEY



FOR SALE: The Flicka Gym Club have resin for sale. The cost is 5 lb for \$2.50 - 2 lb. for \$1.50. Anyone wishing to obtain some contact:



# Tor-Björn STENFORS

Finland | Alpine Skiing | Universiade 1970 & 1972



• Tor-Björn Stenfors in 1970 (courtesy of T-B Stenfors)

**T**or-Björn Stenfors was studying mathematics and computer science at the University of Helsinki, which allowed him to participate in the Universiade three times: in Innsbruck (1968), in his home country in Rovaniemi (1970), and finally in Lake Placid (1972). He competed in all alpine skiing disciplines, and remembers that weather circumstances changed significantly during competition days in Lake Placid.

“From Finland we participated with one leader and five athletes: one woman in figure skating; one

man in speed skating; one man in Nordic combined and two men in alpine skiing.

We did not have any national clothing, so in the opening ceremony, it was only the flag that connected us. I remember that I had my father’s jacket made of seal leather. I also had a pair of trousers with broad legs, made especially for the trip, in the three American colours of red, white and blue.

Two American brothers were our guides - one a pilot and the other a house builder. They both spoke

“We did not have any national clothing, so in the opening ceremony, it was only the flag that connected us.”

Finnish and helped us a lot. We lived in a separate, wonderful house with four or five rooms, a living room with a fireplace, fantastic bathrooms and a kitchen. In addition to our great house, we were also able to visit the house of our guides to use their Finnish sauna that they had in the cellar.

The days started early at 7 am in the restaurant where all the participants ate and where we were served a fantastic breakfast. Specifically, I remember the seven cooks that served us eggs and bacon in all different ways. Our team leader was quite interested in all the invitations arranged each day, so we athletes had no trainer or leader during all the events. It was often that when we woke up, our leader had just gone to bed!

For slalom, we had a clear morning but when the race started the fog was very thick so one could not see more than the next gate. I thought that I had missed a gate so I went back to the hotel. There, I got the start list for the second run and found my name on it. Unfortunately, I returned to the hill too late to start. In giant slalom, the day before the race we had a hard and well-prepared course, but by the next day it was covered with 30-40 cm of new snow. All participants had to help remove the snow from the course as well as possible. However, with the snowbank near the course, the conditions were not ideal. During the run, I stopped with my ski edges in the bank and lost a lot of time. In downhill we had two Finns race on the first training day, but my teammate said that he did not dare race that course after having seen my first training run. The slope was 3,500 meters long and had three



very steep parts followed by narrow turns. I liked the course, as it was really demanding. So, I was alone until I found a very nice American fellow who helped during training. He drove me around with his Mustang car – I was lucky! I had a good last training day and delivered a good result, in about 20<sup>th</sup> place out of what I believe was 80 participants.

From all these three FISU Games I have the most fantastic memories.”

• Tor-Björn Stenfors competing at the Lake Placid 1972 Winter Universiade



# Carlos OLIVEIRA

Portugal | Swimming | Universiade 1973



• Carlos Oliveira (left) with Felipe Muñoz of Mexico, at the Moscow 1973 Summer Universiade

**C**arlos was excited to learn about the victory of his compatriot Gabriel Lopes in swimming competition at the Chengdu 2021 FISU World University Games. Exactly 50 years earlier, at the 1973 Moscow Universiade, his time of 2:44.7 allowed the young man to beat the Portuguese national record in the 200m breaststroke.

“My participation at the 1973 Moscow Universiade, will remain in my mind and my heart as the most important swimming competition I’ve ever had. I celebrated it this past August [of 2023], the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this competition where I set a Portuguese national record in the 200m breaststroke. I still have the Portuguese Swimming Federation ratification of this national record. It was a strong competition that included Mexico’s Felipe Muñoz, the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Champion in the 200m breaststroke, who won that gold with a time of 2:28.7.

For my participation at the 1973 Moscow Universiade I was named Athlete of the Year 1973, in Mozambique, my home country (at the time a Portuguese colony in Africa).

I was the only swimmer from Portugal and travelled without my coach. So, the Portuguese mission asked the French mission if they could support me, which let me join training sessions with the



French Swimmers in Paris in the 15 days before our departure and during the Universiade in Moscow. It was really a warm welcome from all of them.

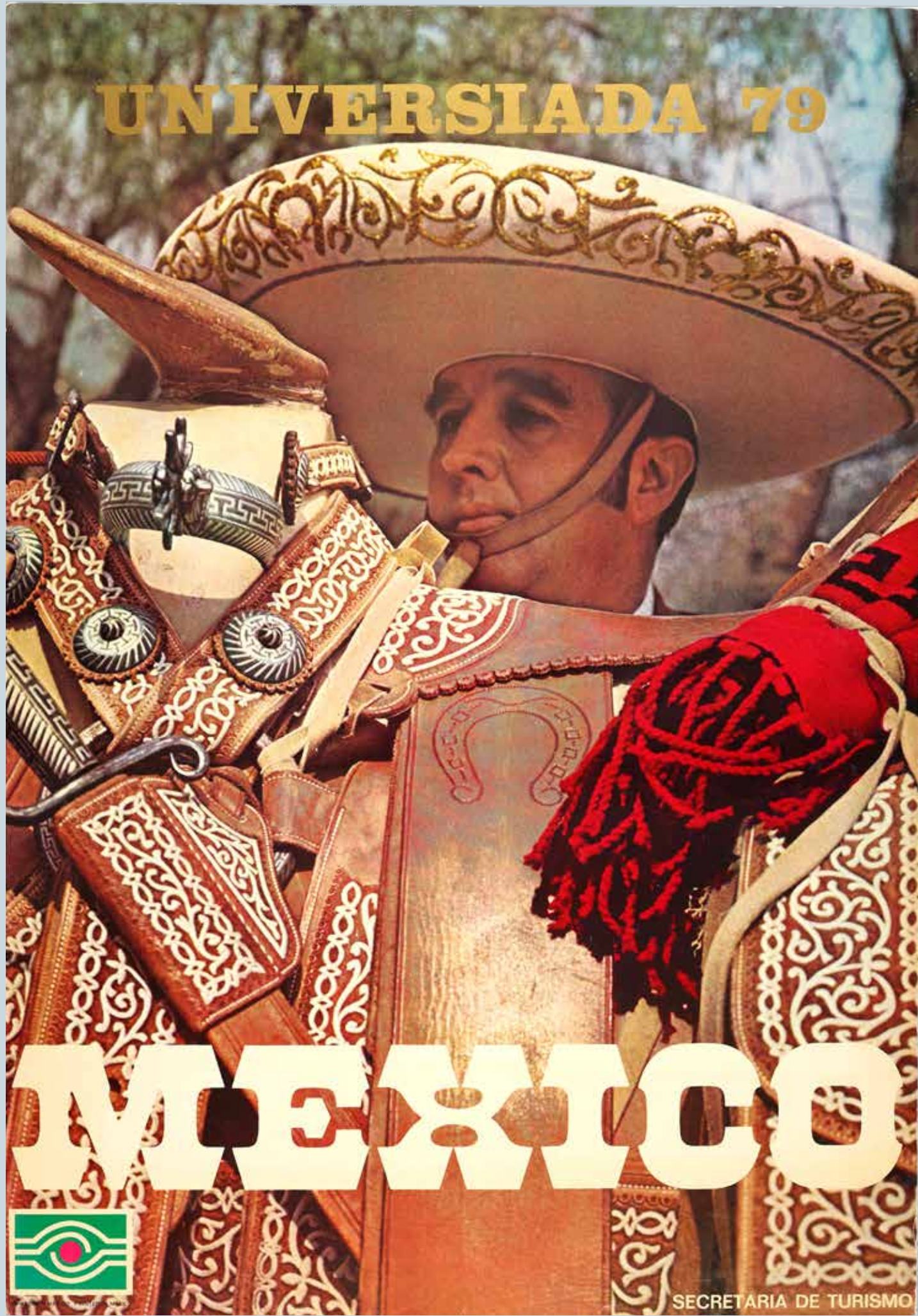
As a swimmer, I was also at the 1974 Wien Swimming European Championships. Later in 1996, as a master swimmer, I was nominated for the Board of Directors of the Portuguese Swimming Federation, with the mission to start masters swimming in Portugal. I was also the Head of Delegation of the Portuguese Swimming Team for multiple competitions (24<sup>th</sup> LEN European Swimming Championships Istanbul 1999 - long course, 4<sup>th</sup> LEN European Swimming Championships Valencia 2000 - short course, 9<sup>th</sup> FINA (World Aquatics) World Swimming Championships Fukuoka 2001 - long course, as well as a return to Moscow for the 6<sup>th</sup> FINA World Swimming Championships Moscow 2002 - short course). In the early 2000s, I served as the Vice-President of the Portuguese Swimming Federation and at the LEN (European Aquatics) London 2004 Congress, I was nominated as LEN Technical Masters Committee Member. I quit in the summer of 2008 and since then I have held no further official roles.” ●

“My participation at the 1973 Moscow Universiade, will remain in my mind and my heart as the most important swimming competition I’ve ever had.”

• Visiting Red Square in Moscow with a friend from the French Swimming team



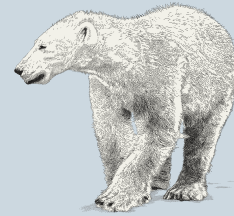






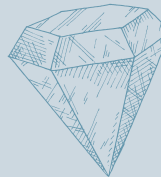
19  
70s

**ROVANIEMI 1970** The Winter Games of 1970 were dubbed the "Polar Universiade", given that they took place beyond the Arctic Circle.



**TURIN 1970** As part of the opening ceremony organisers used a musical show, surrounded by fireworks, followed by the appearance of an outline of the African continent. When the sign "Welcome Africa" emerged, characteristic African music could be heard, then Asian music, jazz for North America, and Latin music for South America. A Polynesian motif followed to represent Australia, and the Strauss Waltz was played in honour of the European students.

Turin 1970 was the first Universiade to receive the official patronage of the IOC.



**MOSCOW 1973** In Yakoutia, the major world diamond mining centre, a newly found diamond was named "Universiada-73".

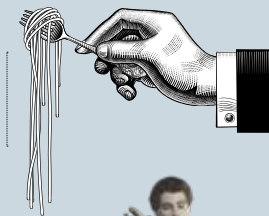
32

Teams participated at the basketball competition at the Moscow Universiade in 1973. Only 16 nations participated in the same competition at the Munich Olympics in 1972.



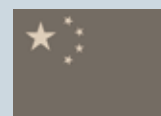
International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach attended the Universiade as an athlete, competing in fencing.

300



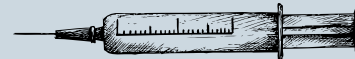
In Moscow, 300 dishes from the cuisines of four continents were served during the event. Bon appétit!

The "Interclub" organised get-togethers, discos, and cultural activities for the athletes every day.



**SOFIA 1977** After long years of discord, the People's Republic of China took part in the Universiade.

**SPINDLERUV MLYN 1978** The first ever anti-doping and femininity control took place at the Winter Universiade.

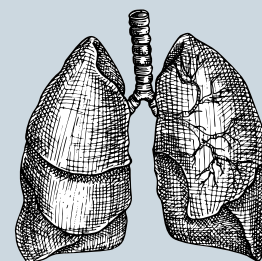


5

**MEXICO 1979** Five Olympic buildings were also used during the 1979 Universiade in Mexico. All of them provided by National University of Mexico.

-25%

less oxygen available. During the 1979 Universiade in Mexico, the competitions took place on an altitude of more than 2240 meters. An Information bulletin was devoted to the acclimatisation.



Eric Stahl at an international ski competition in France, early 1970s (courtesy of E. Stahl)

**"The medal ceremony took place at the hockey rink. I expected *La Marseillaise* to play but suddenly I heard *Gaudeamus Igitur*. It was quite a surprise."**

## Eric STAHL

France | Alpine Skiing | Universiade 1972

**T**he gold medalist in the downhill and alpine combined in Lake Placid in 1972, Eric Stahl was a medical student from France. He competed in other sports, like discus throw, and even won a national university championship in that discipline. However, studies were always a priority for the future doctor, who made a career as an orthopedic surgeon in the United States.

"I started skiing at the age of 14 and later joined the Grenoble Université Club, with which I attended most international competitions: several European Cups, the World Cup, and finally, the Universiade in Lake Placid that I wanted to win!

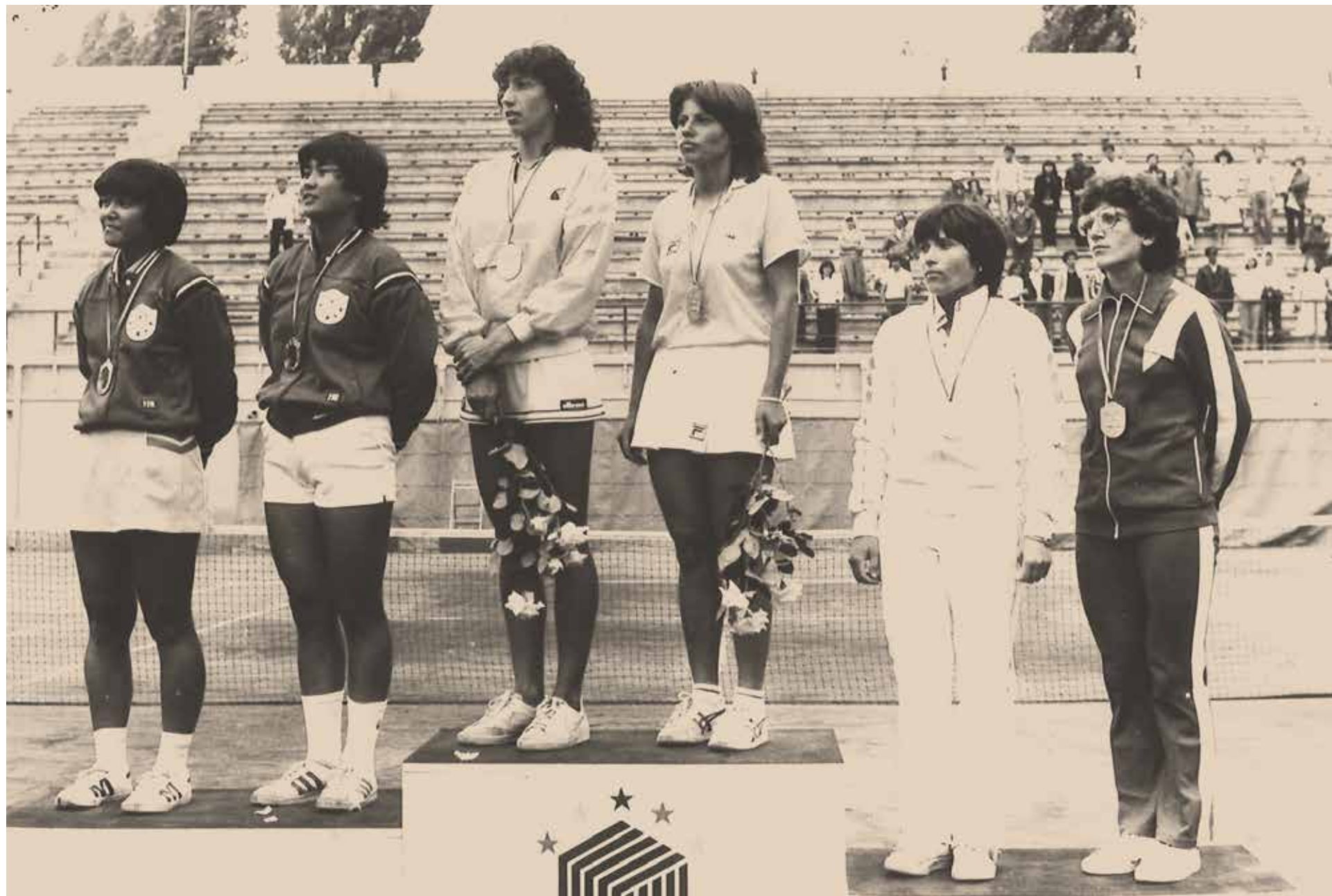
I was considered a favourite and actually won against two or three skiers who had just arrived

from the World Cup. It is safe to say that the level was extremely high. For example, one of my competitors was a confirmed "false student", he did not have any time to study. The sensation of winning was magnificent, but the choice of ski was not right. I was just surprised about the 2-minute gap I had with second place. It was J.-P. Puthod, my teammate, who later became the technical director of all the French ski programs.

The medal ceremony took place at the hockey rink. I expected *La Marseillaise* to play but suddenly I heard *Gaudeamus Igitur*. It was quite a surprise. Actually, at university competitions in Europe, we were not even used to hearing an anthem. Then I managed to call my parents even though we did not have WhatsApp at those times (laughing).

Winning this medal was a landmark and a great finish to my sports career. I had to spend more and more time as an intern in hospitals, so there was not enough time for sport. But being a student athlete was a great school of time management! It enormously helped me to find the right balance. Skiing was also a way to discover my passion for traveling and the pleasure of encounters and of sharing. It was marvelous!"





## Virginia RUZICI

Romania | Tennis | Universiade 1977, 1979 & 1981

**V**irginia Ruzici was born behind the so-called "Iron Curtain" in a small Romanian town. She was a student back in 1978 when she won the French Open at Roland Garros and reached the finals in 1980. One year before her Paris triumph, however, she won her first Universiade gold in Sofia, Bulgaria. Virginia's life was dramatically changed by tennis, and in 1981 she moved to France. During her career, she won 12 major singles titles and 16 in doubles and was ranked 8th in the WTA in 1979.

"I was Romania's senior champion at the age of 16, and during my whole career, I was champion for my age group. Tennis gave me the chance to travel.

It was very hard to participate in competitions abroad because you had to first receive a Romanian visa to leave the country, and then a visa for every country where we played a tournament. It was really difficult because you never knew until the last minute whether you would go or not. Universiade was very important for Romania. It wasn't the Olympics, but it was a little bit like that anyway. And representing Romania in this way was crucial for the Romanian government at that time. I won my first Universiade gold medal in women's doubles in Sofia in 1977. But in 1981 in Bucharest, I won gold in singles, women's doubles, and mixed doubles.

I also remember in 1979 we went to the Universiade in Mexico, but I had wanted to go to the US Open,

**"Travel is the greatest education you can have. That post competition train trip ignited my desire to travel the world to visit many foreign countries and experience many cultures."**

though I wasn't allowed despite several requests I made to the government. Not taking part was so hard for me.

In Bucharest we played against the mother of Andy Murray, and she is the one that reminded me of that match, which I think we won. A tough one! Each time I meet her, we talk and laugh about it, as we have some good memories!

Universiade was always a very happy, very fun victory. It's kind of like an Olympic Games, and at that moment I didn't yet play at the Olympics [tennis was part of the Olympic programme from 1896 to 1924 and then returned in 1984]. So, I really wanted to go for my university, for my country, to go there to get the medal, and it really helped me. The Universiade has become a developer of great players. It's something more than a competition. Maybe I'll take a look at my Universiade medals!" •

• Virginia Ruzici and Florenta Mihai winning the gold in doubles, Bucharest 1981 Summer Universiade

• Press clipping from the Universiade daily newspaper, Mexico 1979 Summer Universiade



Virginia Ruzici –Romania– considerada entre las grandes favoritas se quedó en el camino, con bronce.



1981

- BUCHAREST (ROU)  
XI<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- JACA (ESP)  
X<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1983

- EDMONTON (CAN)  
XII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- SOFIA (BUL)  
XI<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1985

- KOBE (JPN)  
XIII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- BELLUNO (ITA)  
XII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

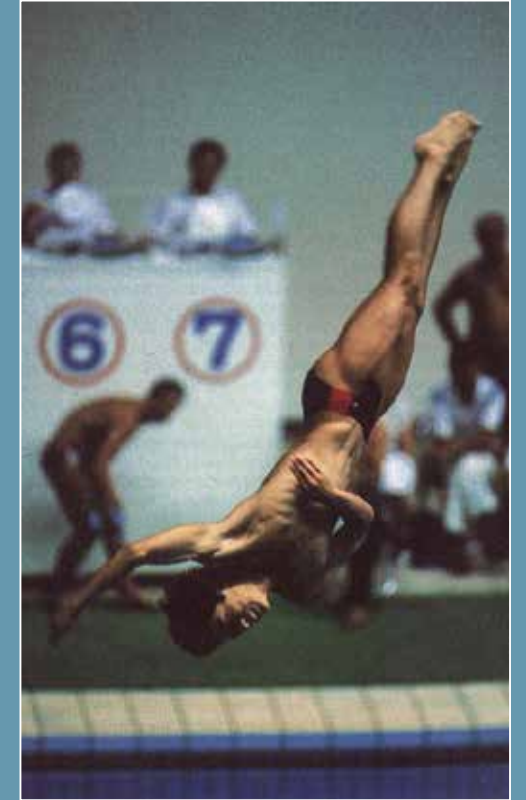
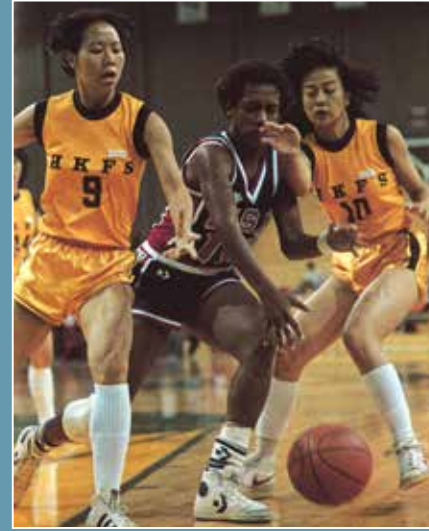
1987

- ZAGREB (CRO)  
XIV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- STRBSKE PLESO (SVK)  
XIII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1989

- DUISBURG (GER)  
XV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- SOFIA (BUL)  
XIV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

# 80s



After boycotts by major nations at the Moscow 1980 and Los Angeles 1984 Olympics, the significance of Universiade extended far beyond the field of play. The Bucharest 1981 Summer Universiade restored drive and faith in international sport, while Kobe 1985 saw a record 106 countries introduced at the stadium. At the Belluno 1985 Winter Universiade, athletes from all over the world, free from political divides, marched in the city and enthusiastically exchanged pins. The 1980s also gave birth to the first Universiade mascot at the Jaca 1981 Winter Universiade, and established the standard for the Games to be held in odd-numbered years.





# Zofia KIELPIŃSKA TOPOR

Poland | Cross Country Skiing | Universiade from 1981 to 2023



Zofia Kielpinska at the Lake Placid 2023 FISU World University Games Winter

**Z**ofia Kielpinska, the FISU Technical Committee Chair Cross-Country was competing at the Winter Universiade in 1983 and 1987. Her first experience was not successful but in 1985, she pursued her second degree at Warsaw University and got her chance to win a medal. She competed at the 1992 and 1994 Winter Olympics.

“At the time when I was a professional competitor, Poland was distinct from the countries of Western Europe. Our lives were different, so going to the Winter Universiade was an exhilarating experience at all emotional levels. I remember my first trip to the 1981 Winter Universiade in Jaca, Spain. Although I did not win a medal there, I finished in the top ten and was very pleased with the result. However, the most important thing for me was that competitors from other teams accepted us the way we were, strangers from a far away and unknown Poland. I made friends there with Françoise Gindre from the French team. I invited Françoise to Zakopane, and it was a long and informative journey by train for her. Our friendship continues to this day. I remember, years later, as a FIS Technical

Delegate to the Cross-Country Skiing World Cup, I met a competitor from France, it turns out, who was trained by Françoise.

The atmosphere of competition is always beautiful, and everyone experiences it in their own way. The most beautiful Universiade closing ceremony for me was in the Tatra Mountains of Czechoslovakia in 1987, near my home of Zakopane, just on the other side of the Tatras. All the teams were gathered at the jumping hill stadium in Strbske Pleso. There was a vibrant hustle and bustle, and I was happy to have my dream medal. A member of the Japanese team approached me and asked if I would like to exchange jackets with him. Because his was beautiful and mine rather ordinary, I took mine off, he took his off and we exchanged them, and then it all started! Suddenly, everyone followed in our footsteps, running from team to team, exchanging hats, jackets, trousers and even socks. After a dozen minutes or so, none of the teams were the same, all of them were mixed and colourful, and everyone was having a great time.

This place turned out to be very friendly and welcoming many years later. In 2015, already

“I made friends there with Françoise Gindre from the French team. I invited Françoise to Zakopane, and it was a long and informative journey by train for her. Our friendship continues to this day.”

sitting as the FISU Technical Committee Chair Cross-Country Skiing at the Winter Universiade in Strbske Pleso, I started the first meeting with the organisation committee team of judges, and suddenly one of the judges raised his hand and asked for the floor. He rose up and said, “I remember you back in 1987, winning a bronze medal here at our place, I was a finish judge then. I kept this track marking flag, as a souvenir [they are no longer used] and I would like to give this memento to you as an expression of our gratitude for your presence here today and your assistance in organising our Winter Universiade. It’s so good to work with you.” He pulled out a yellow flag on a wooden pole from his backpack, came up to give it to me and hugged me. It was beautiful for me. I was moved, and I felt tears welling up in my eyes.

I understand that audiences and sports fans want to read success stories. However, often very interesting stories, though sometimes sad and even dramatic, are those of unfulfilled hopes about participation in the most important sporting events in athletes’ careers. Unfortunately, I also have my sad story. In 1983 in Sofia, we were very well prepared and had a great chance to win a medal in the relay race. Due to my quick pace, the trainer decided that I would ski the first leg of the race as the so-called “bullet”. I liked it very much. The day of the competition was freezing, and the humidity was high. We didn’t have such warm boot protectors like girls from other teams. As early as during warm-up, I felt my feet were freezing. Before the start, the trainer massaged my feet and toes, I put on my boots, took my skis, and ran to the start line. I felt it wasn’t good as my feet weren’t warmed up, and I experienced an utter nightmare during the race. More and more excruciating pain started shooting through my toes, then the entirety of my feet. I was unable to ski. I was struggling, but the pain was getting stronger. I came to the baton passing zone only in the ninth position. The lead group stretched out, and my teammates no longer had a chance to compete for the medal. Eventually, I finished in an ambulance, and the doctor said, “The toes are frostbitten, we have to take you to the hospital”. I returned to the hotel in the evening. My friends were waiting for me, and to cheer me up, figure skaters brought their beautiful dresses (I’ve always liked beautiful dresses) and said, “Try them on and don’t be sad, you’ll win a medal eventually!”

Zofia with her friend Françoise Gindre from France







Abigail Nutt at the closing ceremony of the Duisburg 1989 Summer Universiade (courtesy of A. Nutt)

## Abigail NUTT

Australia | Fencing | Universiade 1989

**I**n 2021, when Abigail Nutt contacted FISU to ask for the results of the fencing competitions at the Universiade in Duisburg, we suggested that she share her story with us. She remembered a uniform exchange with a Swiss fencer whose name was “Mike”, but the surname was unknown. Through research in the competition sheets, and then in the Swiss press, we could find Michael Felber, who also had fond memories from the Games and was glad to hear from Abigail.

“The atmosphere was buzzing. Everyone seemed so excited. It was my first Universiade and I was so excited like everyone else. All the weeks of training before the competition were finally coming together for this one big event. Just waiting outside the stadium for the opening ceremony to start was almost electrifying.

The most memorable parts of the Games for me were the opening and closing ceremonies. As Germany was a last-minute host nation for the Games, only four sports were included, athletics, men’s basketball, fencing and rowing. I felt very

lucky that fencing was one of the sports to be chosen. It was also the first time that women’s epee was included. I was there to fence in both the epee and the foil. My brother was also fencing in the men’s event, so it was equally exciting for him too.

I remember standing outside the athletic stadium waiting to walk in for the opening ceremony. Everyone was so excited. I remember bumping into my New Zealand fencing friends which was a surprise because I didn’t know they would be there. This just added to the excitement of the Games. When it was Australia’s turn to walk in, I felt so proud. As we walked around the track waving to the people in the stadium it felt like I was at the Olympics itself. The opening ceremony seemed just as big as the Olympics, even with the lighting of the torch. This was the biggest competition that I had ever been to. I remember we were ushered into one little area in the centre of the stadium where we stayed and watched as the other countries walked in. The theme of the Games was “All in one boat”. The music they played, *Wir Bauen Uns Ein Boot (Like a Boat)*, was in German, and I still have the record they gave us. At one stage there were these huge earth balls that were thrown out

to the athletes to bounce around. As these balls were being bounced around, the athletes started mixing in with each other as they tried to hit the balls. Everyone was having so much fun. Smiles were on faces all round.

I remember at the closing ceremony athletes were more mixed together as friendships had been formed. I remember during the closing ceremony I swapped my Australian tracksuit with a Swiss guy.

**“I remember standing outside the athletic stadium waiting to walk in for the opening ceremony. Everyone was so excited. When it was Australia’s turn to walk in, I felt so proud.”**

I still have that Swiss tracksuit today. Everyone was taking photos of each other and again, having so much fun and celebrating the end of a fun competition. There were thousands of people in the stadium watching and seems like thousands more athletes all coming together.

Another memory that will always stick out above the rest was that I remember before the competition we had to line up and take a femininity test to make sure we were female. All it was, was a swab of saliva from your mouth and a quick pin prick on your finger. I hated needles and the line we had to wait in was so long, by the time I got to the front of the line I had tears of panic in my eyes in anticipation of the needle. The wait and anticipation were worse than the needle itself.”

**Do you remember some interesting facts about your trip and stay?**

Our team stayed together at the same hotel, the Rheingarten Hotel which overlooked the Rhine. I remember I was sharing a room with an ●●●



Closing ceremony of the Duisburg 1989 Summer Universiade





Abigail, her brother Nigel, and other members of the Australian Fencing team at the opening ceremony, 1989 (courtesy of A. Nutt)

••• Australian runner. We became good friends during this time. During the competition days we would go to the other events and watch and cheer the other Australians competing in their events. After the competition we only had about 2 days of free time before we left so we did a little bit of sightseeing.

I also remember we were given a little show bag that contained a few items. The one thing I remember in the show bag was two cans of sardines. Most of the Australians weren't too keen on sardines so I remember people giving me their sardines as I didn't mind them too much. I don't think I've had sardines since and anytime I see a can of sardines, I think of the Games.

Lunch and dinner were served in a huge room that could seat 1000 people. We would line up waiting to get in then we would grab a plate and sit down at a table that was empty. Sometimes we would sit with other countries, so it was nice meeting new people.

I also remember when arriving in Germany with my team, the first night we got in quite late and stayed in a youth hostel in Essen Worden. Because we came in so late the kitchen was closed, so the meal we received at the youth hostel was raw

beef mince patties. I think most of us went to bed without dinner that night as we were not used to eating raw mince.

Although I didn't do anything fantastic or memorable with my fencing, I was proud of my achievements. I was ranked 59<sup>th</sup> before the competition I ended up coming 34<sup>th</sup> in the epee and 55<sup>th</sup> in the foil. It was fantastic representing my country and being on a team with my brother, who was also fencing in the competition, was very special to me.

#### From which age and what sports did you practice?

I started fencing when I entered high school, so I was about 11 years old. My brother Nigel was already fencing at that stage. I am nearly 53 years old and am still fencing competitively (as much as COVID has allowed me to).

#### How were you selected to participate in the Universiade?

I applied to my association, and my brother and I were selected with one other fencer, Julian May.

#### Were you a part of the national team?

In July that year, I was a member of the Australian Under 20 team that went to Athens, Greece for

World Juniors. I have been on several national teams since those days.

#### What did you study at the university?

I did a Bachelor of Education when I was at university.

#### Was it difficult to combine sports with studies?

Yes, it was. I was trying to compete overseas while studying and having to take time off each time I went. As Australia is so far from everything, I needed to take nearly two weeks or more at a time. I eventually deferred my course for a couple of years as I was missing out on too much work. When I came back to finish my degree I had to really pick and choose what competitions to go to so I wouldn't miss out on so much work. In Australia, you had to fund everything yourself, so

it was a really expensive sport to do if you were wanting to travel.

#### How did sports practice help you in your studies?

Not only did it help clear your mind from the stresses of assignments and classes, but I guess it also gave me the discipline to knuckle down and work for what you want.

#### How did sport influence your life and your career?

I've been teaching primary school since I finished my university degree. Being in a competitive sport like fencing, it teaches you never to give up. If you want something bad enough, you need to work for it. For the last 15 or so years, I've been teaching sport to children from 5-12 years old. Not only can I explain the importance of striving for what you want, children can use and see me as an example. I do hope that I have inspired children in the past, and in the future to work hard and help them to believe they can achieve whatever they set their minds to whether it be in their sport or in their future careers.

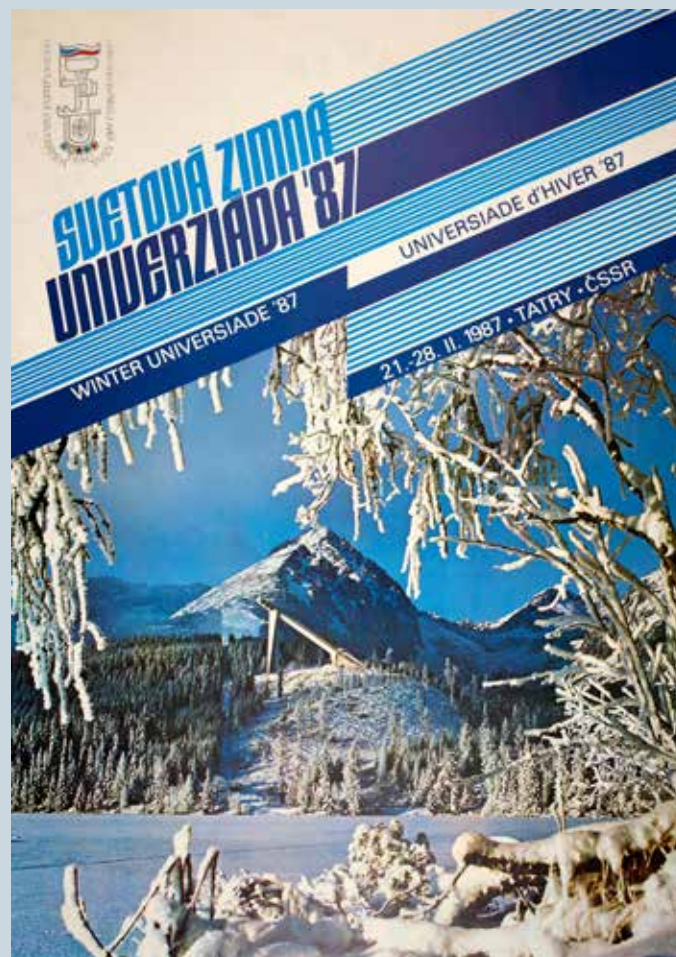
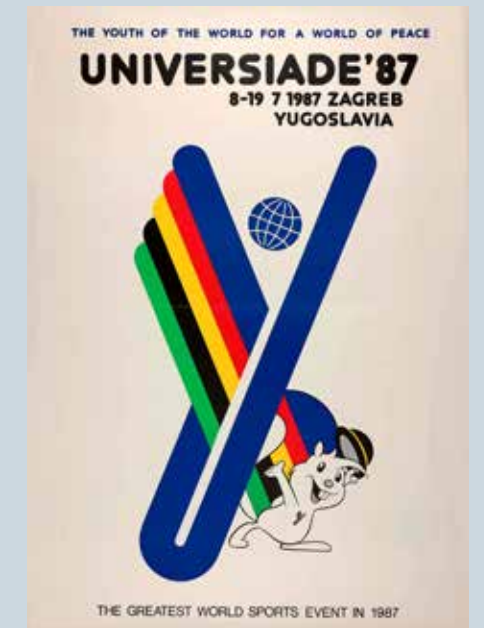
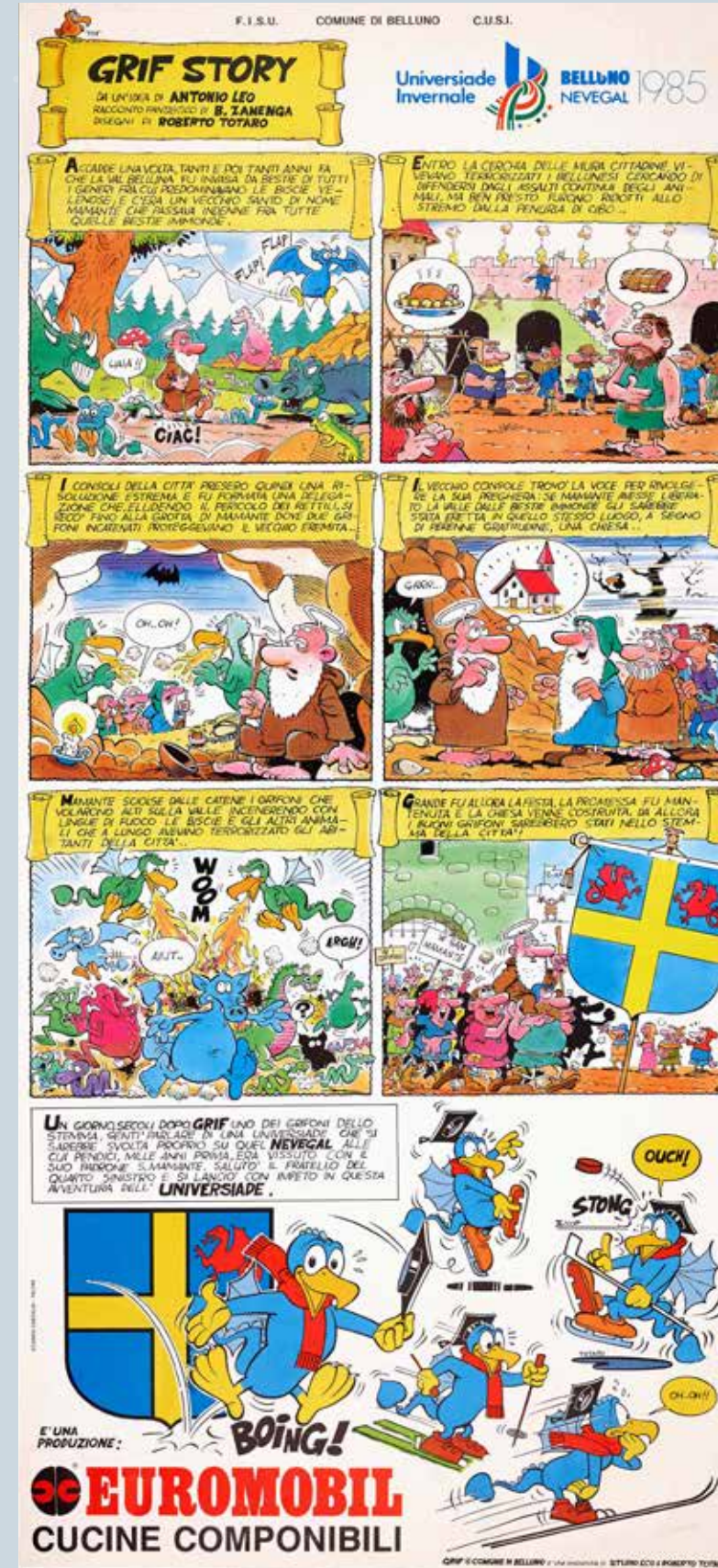
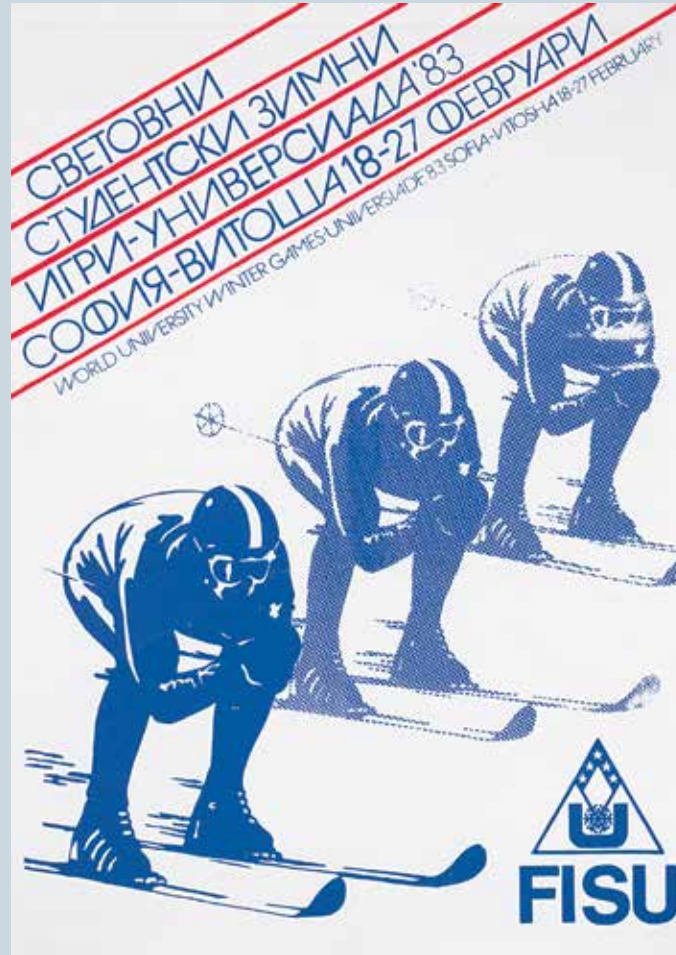
My two best results that I am most proud of in my fencing career were coming second at the World Veteran Fencing Championships in Egypt in 2019 for epee and coming 17<sup>th</sup> in epee at World Juniors in 1989.

Unfortunately, COVID has stopped me from travelling overseas for fencing the last couple of years, but I am hoping to go again as soon as it is safe to. I don't see myself giving up fencing for many years yet. ●



Both Abigail Nutt and "Mike" Felber from Switzerland still remember their exchange of uniforms at the closing ceremony (courtesy of A. Nutt)







# Chris APPLEBY

Australia | Basketball | Universiade 1983 & 1985

Welcome from  
Japanese athletes  
competing  
at home  
(courtesy of  
C. Appleby)



**C**hris Appleby was picked as one of 11 for the Edmonton 1983 Summer Universiade - his qualification courtesy of studying first-year sports journalism at Canberra University. Canada was a homecoming for him, as he was born to a Canadian mother and an Aussie father. Two years later, he headed to Kobe, Japan for another exciting cultural and sporting experience.

"I kind of fell into basketball. All that growing from around age 15, or through my grade 10 year in 1980, made it a no-brainer to become my sporting focus. Suddenly I was six foot six, all arms and legs, no game, just finding my way.

The World University Games were exciting nonetheless. I'd never really played major 'ball before. Receiving our pack of ASICS sports gear and uniforms was special. This was real now and the experience in Canada was a memorable one.

Cuba was so athletic, they jumped over everyone and from memory gave the US a tough matchup, but my only vivid recollections are from our game against the USA. In those days you'd only see details about top US college players in the Street & Smith's - no internet, YouTube, or Instagram videos here. This US team was stacked, with future NBA stars and they smashed us, 100-52.

**"Our dorm was one huge room with a series of bunk beds and I distinctly remember the soundtrack of that tournament was two albums - Spandau Ballet and AC/DC."**

Our dorm was one huge room with a series of bunk beds and I distinctly remember the soundtrack of that tournament was two albums - Spandau Ballet and AC/DC. On the final night, the whole Australian team had a function and Valerie Taylor was there. Taylor, an Australian diver and shark expert, had helped with the production of the movie Jaws, shooting the real life great white shark sequences, so she had plenty of great stories.

It was a fantastic experience... so I was keen for Kobe 1985. I was 20 and the '85 Universiade team was made up mostly of players from the Australian Institute of Sport, the nation's top basketball academy where I trained in '83 and '84. Some big names to go through that program included Chicago Bulls centre Luc Longley, NBA No.1 pick Andrew Bogut, Joe Ingles, Patty Mills and Matthew Dellavedova. We didn't really have any size that year and we were middle of the road in terms of results.

The hoops tournament in Kobe was tough - it was so hot and sticky, and most of the courts we played and trained on were on the second floors of buildings with very little ventilation or air conditioning. We were all out of Canberra in the middle of winter in August/September, so overnight we went from freezing to 20 degrees Celsius.

There were plenty of big name athletes in Kobe, particularly in swimming. Multiple Olympic gold medal winner Matt Biondi, Madam Butterfly Mary T Meagher, Michael Gross and our very own

Olympic champion and world record holder Jon Sieben, the 200m butterfly gold medal winner at the 1984 Los Angeles Games.

I don't think I knew Jon, but like at the Olympics, the swim meet is over in the first half of the Games, so he was enjoying his first night away from the competition. And I thought it was a good idea to join him for a couple of drinks outside in the parkland that surrounded the athlete's dorm. The problem was we were still in the competition and when the coach strolled by with some other staff taking a late night walk in the heat, I was busted. He didn't say much from memory, but at practice the next day, the entire team ran for my stupidity and in those exhaustive conditions - it wasn't fun.

The Kobe mess hall and dining room was a melting of culture and a feast of food on tap all day and most of the night. It was buffet style, slide your tray along the metal shelf and choose whatever took your fancy. It was brilliant.

And this is where I found an amusing example of "lost in translation". Everything was labelled in English and I could not help but notice the salad dressing was written as Italian Dressing and they were selling tie crips (clips) in the bookstore.

There were many cultural activities during these Games that brought a lot of the competing nations together, which was cool. Japan is my favourite country to visit. I've been four times now, ●●●



Australia  
vs Japan at  
the Kobe 1985  
Summer  
Universiade





On the way to training hall (courtesy of C. Appleby)

... but I was blown away by the courtesy and manners and deference. Everyone there seems to be on the lookout for someone else, allowing you to move through first, or clean up after themselves on a train, just so good-natured.

And the Japanese are just such a cool people. They are really forward thinkers from a fashion perspective, and while the language isn't easy I was able to converse with a few people our age, even meeting a lovely young girl from memory named Kazuko Katayama. We remained pen pals of sorts for a few years later, but it was cool to get insights from someone in another country and so vastly different to Australia.

Japan was just so unique and different, from the signage on buildings to the comic book art and super cool electronics. I remember there was a whole block of electronics stores and malls that

**“Japan was just so unique and different, from the signage on buildings to the comic book art and super cool electronics.”**

we all got lost in one afternoon. Every new piece of technology that was months away from hitting the shores of Australia was there.

The cultural experience of Kobe was way more rewarding than the basketball for me. I still hadn't worked out the effort, time and commitment required to be a serious basketballer, and that was probably made obvious by my night with Jon Sieben.

I just never thought about basketball as a career. By 1988 I was out and was finishing my studies to get a degree and then moved into the workforce as a sports journalist, and now in sports television production through my own company.

But I'm sure grateful I had the opportunity to experience Universiade basketball, with plenty of great memories from Canada and Japan.”

## Howard KELSEY

Canada | Basketball | Universiade 1979, 1981 & 1983

The final game vs Yugoslavia (Dražen Petrović) at the Edmonton 1983 Summer Universiade



**H**oward Kelsey played with Team Canada in basketball at the Universiade three times: Mexico City 1979, Bucharest 1981 and Edmonton 1983. All were excellent, but the most memorable for him was on home soil winning the gold medal in Edmonton. The year after he participated in the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles.

“Some of the most memorable moments include scoring 15 points while starting in the backcourt with Stew Granger, who played at Villanova, and Jay Triano, from Simon Fraser and my teammate in Guadalajara, Mexico in 1979, as we beat Team USA for the first time in Canadian Men's FISU/FIBA Basketball history in Bucharest in 1981. Then beating Team USA for the second time in our history in the 1983 Universiade semi-final, and following that by beating Yugoslavia in the gold medal game. That gold medal win was, and to date likely remains, the biggest moment in Canadian men's basketball history.

From the ages of 5 or 6, I played soccer, baseball, American football, rugby, track and basketball but at 15 years old, I decided to focus exclusively on basketball. I was a part of the Canadian national

**“The Olympics are a much grander scale, but our FISU experiences and competitions helped prepare us for the biggest FIBA stages like World Cups and the Olympics.”**

team, and played for eleven consecutive years 1977-1988, for Team Canada. We were consistently ranked in FIBA's top five worldwide during that time.

Combining sports with studies required focus and discipline and sports enabled me to earn my university undergraduate and master's degrees via scholarships. Sport shaped most of what I am today and has blessed me with incredible friendships, business and life acumen, and motivated me to continually try to do good, give back, and support those deserving of mentorship and support.”



19  
80s

**BUCHAREST 1981** During the Universiade, several delegations celebrated their national holidays: France, Iraq, Colombia, Belgium, Poland, Egypt, Cuba, Liberia, Peru, and Switzerland

100

tons of meat, 25,000 litres of milk, 15 tons of cheese and vegetables, and 400,000 bottles of refreshments were needed to ensure good athlete nutrition during competition.



Cameron Sharp, an English sprinter, during the 100m competition saw his compatriot Ivan Constantin fall. Cameron who was one of the favourites in the event, stopped running and helped his friend.

**EDMONTON 1983** Charles and Diana, Prince and Princess of Wales, attended the Universiade in Edmonton.



**BELLUNO 1985** The organisers created a unique plan for the opening ceremony, which was celebrated on one of the town's central squares, Piazza dei Martiri.



At the first medals ceremony, rock music played by mistake instead of *Gaudeamus Igitur*. A lack of gas also extinguished the flame at one point.

40°/78%

**KOBE 1985** During the Games, temperatures reached 40°C with a humidity of 78%

The song *Beautiful rivals* written for the Universiade was aired on the Japanese radio and released on record!



The mascot which is represented by a typical Japanese bird red-crested white crane, got his name "Unitan" after a national call (8000 applications received)

5 billion

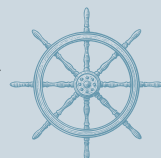
**ZAGREB 1987** The birth of Earth's five billionth inhabitant was celebrated at the Universiade opening ceremony in the presence of the United Nations Secretary General.

**SOFIA 1989** This was the fourth time Sofia hosted the Universiade.



**DUISBURG 1989** The organising committee of the 1989 São Paulo Summer Universiade cancelled the event due to a lack of financial support. Germany took over at the last minute and hosted the Games in Duisburg.

"All in the same boat" was the motto of the Universiade... because a boat is a symbol of Duisburg port.

COPICO  
THE FIRST  
MASCOT

In 1981, Spanish artist Julián Santamaría designed "Copico", the first Universiade mascot, inspired by the story of a small boy from the Aragonese mountains who tried skiing before taking his first steps. While his father compared him to a snowflake, his mother - a pure Aragonese - offered her accent: that's how Copico was born. The snowflake image was also present in all Jaca 1981 Winter Universiade graphics, such as medals, posters and pictograms.







## Orlando PIZZOLATO

Italy | Athletics | Universiade 1985

**Orlando Pizzolato is a long-distance runner from Italy. His gold medal in the half-marathon at the Kobe 1985 Summer Universiade fits nicely between his New York City Marathon victories, being the first Italian to win this title in 1984 and again 1985. His athletic experience is rich in national and international events, including the World Championship in Rome in 1987 and the 1988 Olympics in Seoul.**

“The Universiade wasn’t a top field of starters, and it was a balanced race in terms of athletic values. The

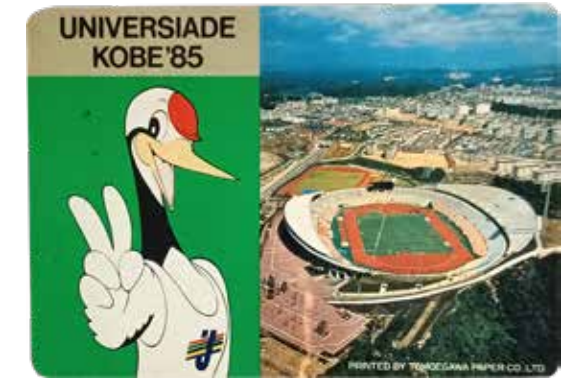
marathon was a demanding competition for such hot summer weather. It was known that it would not be a ‘fast’ race in terms of time, and so many of my opponents wanted to keep fit for faster races in the autumn.

I experienced the days of the Universiade in a very stimulating environment because life in the athletes’ village was lively and very energetic. The athletes were particularly motivated to give their best, and this was also reflected in my psychological mindset. Being able to do the running training (even 25km) on the streets of Kobe, I enjoyed doing some of

“I think the Universiade is a very constructive experience. The competitive pressure is less, but the environment of the Universiade is particularly stimulating.”

these sessions as a ‘tourist’. I was therefore able to experience the local context every day, running around the city.

The most memorable moment of the Games was without a doubt the opening ceremony in Kobe Stadium. Unfortunately, I could not attend the closing ceremony because I returned to Italy early. So, I did not have the chance to exchange the uniform but instead exchanged competition material with other competitors.

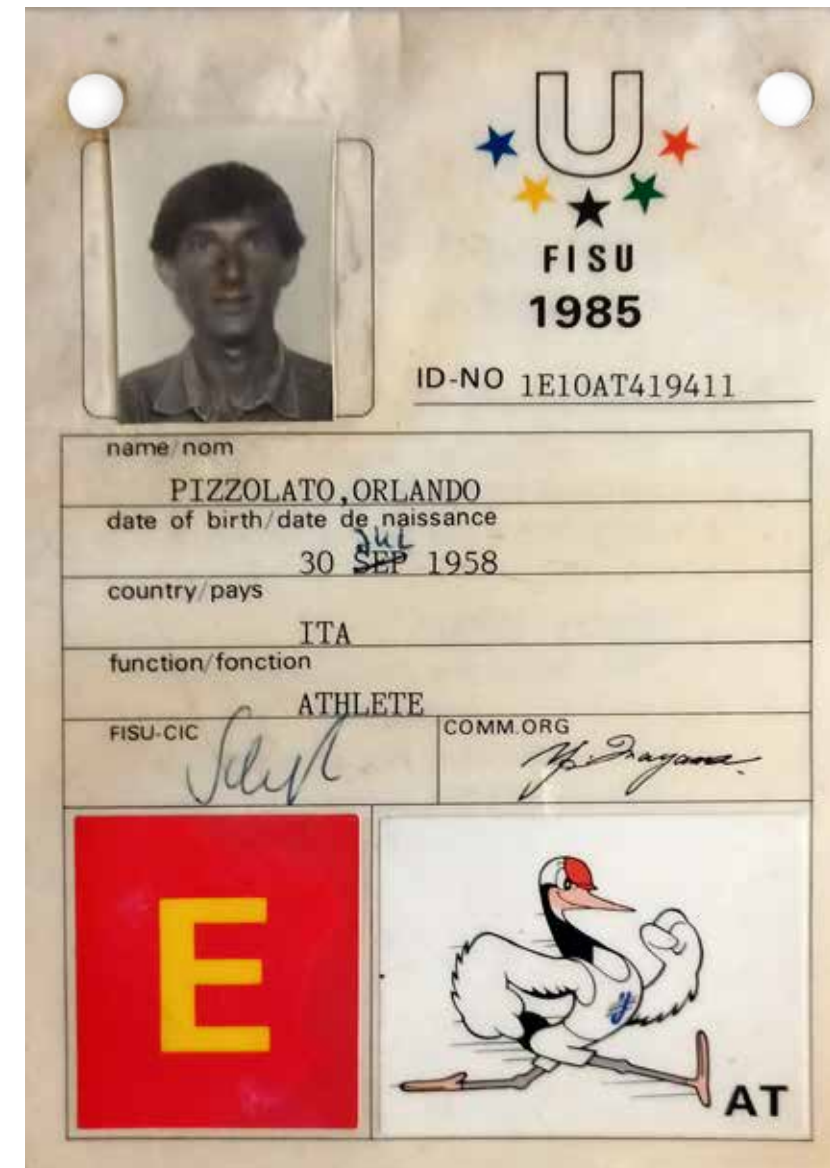


During my week’s stay in Kobe, I had a couple of opportunities to visit the city and took a trip to the surrounding area to visit a monastery. It was interesting to experience the peaceful atmosphere of the monks in the monasteries, to see the care they take of their gardens, and also to see how living in silence contrasts with the chaos of the cities. I also used some practice sessions as a chance to get around the city streets. Close to race day I preferred to rest in my room. During meals in the canteen I hung out with foreign athletes I already knew.

I think the Universiade is a very constructive experience. The competitive pressure is less, but the environment of the Universiade is particularly stimulating. It is almost an automatic step to first participate in the Universiade and then in the Olympics.

I obtained a diploma as a medical practitioner in the field of sport, as a physiotherapist. My professional activity did not develop because of the studies I did. I was lucky enough to work in the field of sport, being a personal trainer for a large number of amateur runners, and this gave me the pleasure and satisfaction of working in a very exciting field.

There are times in sporting activity that can be stimulating for studies, especially when you ease up a bit on the training load, and also when - unfortunately - you experience a period of poor athletic form. The specific elements of high-level sport (dedication, commitment, perseverance) are just as useful and effective in dealing with everyday and professional situations.” ●



● Above: Athletes’ village and sport venues access card

Left: Accreditation from the Kobe 1985 Summer Universiade, with the official mascot pictogram



# Nawal EL MOUTAWAKEL

Morocco | Athletics | Universiade 1981, 1983, 1985 & 1987

Nawal El Moutawakel in Paris, 2023 (D.R)



**N**awal El Moutawakel rose to fame in the 400 metre hurdles at the 1984 at the Los Angeles Olympics. She became a member of the IAAF (International Amateur Athletics Federation) in 1995, and then a member of the IOC (International Olympic Committee) in 1998. She became the first African female Olympic champion, a figurehead for African women, and a leader of a movement for the emancipation of women through sport.

“I could win at any time in Morocco because I was often alone in the 400 meters hurdles, which was a new event for women at that time. And as I knew I was going to win, I just trotted to the finish line. But when I first arrived in the USA, there were thousands of women who ran better than me or like me. It was necessary to fight hard every time, to run until you were exhausted in order to snatch that first place.

When I went to study at Iowa State University, the United States presented for me a new language, a new culture, and a world of striving for excellence. I lost my father a week after I arrived in the USA, and I learned about it several weeks later because it was kept secret from me, as they didn’t want me to become depressed. Otherwise, the dream of becoming an Olympic champion could have evaporated.

All this created an electric shock in my head. I decided to stay in the USA for four years or longer. Sometimes we might give up, but often we can excel because everything is working to prepare yourself mentally, psychologically, and physically to continue to move forward.

Education is important, and a university course is even more important. And I think that’s the background. Without that academic experience, I would never be what I am today.



Running for the gold medal in the hurdles at the 1987 Summer Universiade in Zagreb

I had to excel in athletics, of course, which is what I wanted. But it was also necessary for me to excel in my academic studies to deserve the scholarship I received. My effort was really a double one, because I not only had to, first of all, master English and then work by translating what I wanted in my head every time, but I also had to go and earn my place on the track and field team. The examinations were set for a certain date, and you couldn’t say to your professor, “Excuse us, we were in a competition.”

There was no Internet, no tablets at that time, so we were always with a school bag full of working papers, because the distances between different states are huge. We were always leaning on our books, always had the lights on.

Often they call me “Sirocco of Morocco,” because when I ran, I won everything, the 100, 200, 400, 4x100, all the events. And so they said, “Oh, no, not her. Not the Moroccan again.” But there was a spirit of extraordinary solidarity. We spoke the same language, we had the same spirit, the same purpose, the same objective, which was to win the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) title every time.

Participating in the Universiade for us was like a party, a celebration. We were getting together as students and seeing how each and every one of us had evolved in the right direction, intellectually, at all levels. For me, every time it was an unmissable event to represent my country first and indirectly, my American university. Nowadays, when I look back, when I look at the photos, I still think today what a good time it was.

In the early 1990s, the Olympic Congress in Paris coincided with the introduction of a special quota for women in international institutions, giving me a little hope. Primo Nebiolo, Lamine Diack and Juan Antonio Samaranch brought me into this world that was totally new to me, a world I had to discover.

Somewhere I felt a huge sense of pride to have taken part in pushing this door, pushing this door that was a little bit closed in the minds of some people, to understand that there are Muslim, Arab, African women who could also find their place at the international level.”

**“Education is important, and a university course is even more important. And I think that’s the background. Without that academic experience, I would never be what I am today.”**



1991

- SHEFFIELD (GBR)  
XVI<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- SAPPORO (JPN)  
XV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)



The Sapporo 1991 Winter Universiade was the first for the unified German university team that had been divided back in 1950. It was also the first time in 15 editions that the Winter Universiade was staged in Asia and only the second time it was held outside of Europe. Another Winter edition quickly followed in South Korea with the Muju-Chonju 1997 Winter Universiade. Japan was also host for the Fukuoka 1995 Summer Universiade that gave athletes representing opposite sides of the war in Yugoslavia the opportunity to peacefully live together in the athletes village and compete in a spirit of fair play.

1993

- BUFFALO (USA)  
XVII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- ZAKOPANE (POL)  
XI<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)



1995

- FUKUOKA (JPN)  
XVIII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- JACA (ESP)  
XVII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1997

- SICILY (ITA)  
XIX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- MUJU-CHONJU (KOR)  
XVIII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

1999

- PALMA DE MALLORCA (ESP)  
XX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- POPRADE-TATRY (SVK)  
XIX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

# 90s



## WORLDSTUDENTGAMES

- All Sport T-Shirt. 100% cotton, full cut white t-shirt, printed on front with World Student Games, plus small full colour illustration of each sport, and on the back of the shirt with the official World Student Games logo in full colour, sizes S, M, L, XL, £18.95
- All Sport Sweatshirt. Printing as per t-shirt above, both sides full colour on quality white fleece sweatshirt, sizes M, L or XL, £14.95 (not guaranteed)
- Wrap Design Individual Sport T-Shirt. White 100% full colour official logo on front and reverse, with each individual sport name and illustration, wrapped around the body of the shirt, designed for all the following Sports: Athletics, Basketball, Volleyball, Swimming, Soccer, Water Polo, Diving, Fencing, Tennis, Hockey and Gymnastics, sizes S, M, L, XL, £18.95
- Shell Suit. Navy/white, with full colour embroidered





After its debut in Sapporo, the unified German delegation marched again at the Sheffield 1991 Summer Universiade

## Christian EIFRIG

Germany | Football | Universiade 1991 & 1993

**C**hristian Eifrig found out about his participation in his first Universiade only two weeks before the event when the soccer coach of his university in Berlin called to inform him about the invitation from the German Student National Team. Christian and his teammate traveled a couple hours away by train to a meeting for players being considered for the team. Everything happened so quickly and ultimately back home both were told that they had made the team!

“I was very excited, but also clueless as to what that actually meant. Slowly but surely I started to understand how big it actually all was. We got our outfits, not only for the field but also for the opening ceremony, etc., and I started to realise that this was like the Olympic Games just on a slightly smaller scale!

I enjoyed it so much: the opening and closing ceremonies, the competition, meeting other

athletes from all over the world, the athletes village - just everything! Even though our team didn't do as well as we had hoped, I was so excited that I was able to be part of this fantastic event.

In Sheffield I was able to organise a place for my girlfriend and father to stay, as they both wanted to come and watch me play. I simply went outside the athletes village, knocked on doors, and asked about possibilities for accommodation. It worked out, and was also a great way to get in touch with the local community.

Back home, I concentrated on my studies and resumed playing at my local club and for my university. I knew that the next FISU World University Games would be in Buffalo, New York, and I committed to making the team again because I now knew what this would mean. At this point my studies were nearing the finish line and Berlin was bidding for the Olympic Games in 2000. In the spring of 1993, I got an offer from the Berlin Olympic Games bid committee to have

a leading role in their merchandising department that I would be able to fulfill parallel to my studies. That offer also meant that I would have had a job once my studies were completed. At this point I hadn't yet made the team for Buffalo, but I only had a couple of days to decide. The choices were studying and a secure job with no chance to play in Buffalo, or just studying, no job, and a chance to make the team for Buffalo. It didn't take me long, to make my decision. I wanted to be part of that experience again!

I practiced very hard, got the support of my club, and made the team, which was filled with top level players. Everything was even better organised by our federation, and obviously it was a bigger adventure flying overseas. I had been to the USA before, but this was very special for me, since my girlfriend was American. She and my father were able to make it over from Germany, and her family from Pennsylvania was able to watch me play for the first time.

Even though I was the only player on my team that didn't get to play in the preparation games we had in Boston a week before the World University Games, I was just so happy to be part of the experience again! Everything, from the opening and closing ceremonies, to the competition, and the media coverage, was even bigger than in Sheffield.



Closing ceremony of the Sheffield 1991 Summer Universiade (picture taken by C. Eifrig)

“In Sheffield I was able to organise a place for my girlfriend and father to stay, as they both wanted to come and watch me play. I simply went outside the Athletes Village, knocked on doors, and asked about possibilities for accommodation.”

It turned out that I got a chance to play in our first game and ended up being the high scorer for our team, like in Sheffield, and we won the bronze medal. It was a dream come true that I carry with me to today.

I am still playing and coaching. I also like sharing my passion for sport with my two adult daughters who are college athletes (soccer and track and field). ●



# Martin ROBERTS

Australia | Swimming | Universiade Buffalo 1993

**A**s a ten year member of the Australian swim team between 1986 and 1996, Martin Roberts won Universiade gold in 1993, competed in two Olympics (1988 and 1992), as well as at two Commonwealth Games, where he won three gold, one silver and one bronze medal.

## How would you describe the atmosphere of the Games?

The atmosphere at the Buffalo 1993 World University Games was fantastic. I had just completed my second Olympics in Barcelona in 1992, and it was such a relaxed but focused environment. The feel of the event was organised and enjoyable, a perfect environment in which to perform well.

I also noticed how the common bond between competitors really made it a collegial environment - we were all students, working towards our life after sport. We shared this no matter where we were from.

## What were the most memorable moments of the Games?

For me, it was winning the men's 100 and 200m butterfly. The 100 was my best ever time and it felt fantastic. It made me realise how important it is to be able to stay relaxed and focused in competition. This was sometimes a challenge on the world stage, especially with the expectations at the Olympic

Games. The Universiade felt like it supported excellence in a relaxed environment.

## Do you remember the opening and the closing ceremonies?

I particularly remember the closing ceremony. There were tens of thousands of people there and I particularly remember watching Kenny Rogers perform on stage - amazing.

## Did you have spare time, and how did you spend it?

Yes, we had a day off from training and competition. On this day we decided as a team to take a day trip to Niagara Falls. It was amazing and I remember being with my teammates under the falls, wearing spray jackets, and laughing at all the water crashing down in front of us.

## Did you stay with your teammates in the hotel or go out?

We all stayed together. We travelled to get here, trained and competed as a group.

## Do you remember any incidents?

Yes. After I won my 2 gold medals, I was invited as a special guest to meet the Mayor of Buffalo. I didn't think much of it and was taken along to his inner city office to have him meet me, see my medals, have a chat, and get a photo. What

**“I particularly remember the closing ceremony. There were tens of thousands of people there and I particularly remember watching Kenny Rogers perform on stage - amazing.”**

I didn't realise that he was an anti-abortion campaigner and behind us in the photo shoot was the campaign sign. I felt sick about it afterwards because I didn't realise it at the time. I guess I was young and naive. I am super pro-choice, so this was not a nice situation to be in and I wouldn't have done the photo, if I had realised.

I competed in swimming. I started swimming when I was four years old - I learned to swim because my two older sisters were learning and I got dragged along. The water was so cold, and the only way I would get in was if they threw a lolly (candy) into the pool and then I would dive in and get it.

## How were you selected to participate in the Universiade?

The opportunity came up as I had only just graduated from a Bachelor of Applied Science the year before. I was ranked high enough in the world to be selected. I was very honoured.

## If yes, can you compare Universiade with the Olympics?

They are both very big, multi-sport events. Having been to the Olympics did prepare me for the environment of the Universiade. The main difference was in the media coverage and public interest from around the world in the Olympics. The Universiade was a much less publicised event.

From a personal point of view, I felt like I could relax more at the Universiade and allow my best performances. The Olympics was a much higher stress event.

## How did university sport and the Universiade help you to get to the Olympic summit?

I think it did help a lot, although my particular Universiade followed my Olympic competitions (although I didn't know it at the time).

Universiade helped me learn how to manage myself well in a large-scale event. In swimming we didn't get the opportunity to race in large-scale, multi-national, multi-sport events very much, so the Universiade provided a perfect opportunity to compete on the world stage that closely simulated an Olympics.

## What did you study at the university?

Bachelor of Applied Science in Sports Coaching (University of Canberra). I also completed part of my studies at the University of California at Berkeley

## Was it difficult to combine sports with studies?

It was a challenge in some years when we were travelling a lot and often I had to cut study down to one subject in an Olympic year. However, studying while competing was a great complement to the hard work of competitive swimming.

I feel like every athlete should study if they have the chance. It certainly makes you a better athlete and a more well-rounded person. In my case, study helped me understand my body and the training response to a much deeper level.

## How did sports practice help you in your studies?

Sport enabled me to study for free and to ensure my holistic development was well-rounded. Sport forced me to plan and anticipate fatigue and time management - essential in both study, sport, and life.

## How did sport influence your life and your career?

I have had a very fortunate life through sport. It has helped me establish a career in management, consulting, and coaching. Sport gave me entrée to more opportunities in the work place, since employers respected my work ethic and intelligence.

I also gained a lot of unique experiences through sport. I have been to and lived in many different countries and cultures through my sporting career. I also had to negotiate a lot of quality self-management before I even started working post study. I think this was attractive to employers.

## Tell us about your profession and your career.

I have worked primarily in government as both a sport management specialist and particularly in the area of Sport for Development (using sport as a tool for development in developing countries). I have also established a successful consultancy in sport for development and now I am a professional coach with a strong interest in sustainability and sport. ●



Martin Roberts with Australian diver Samantha Mills at the Kazan 2013 Summer Universiade (courtesy of M. Roberts)



# Nuray KILIÇ

Türkiye | Volleyball | Universiade 1993



**I**n the 30-year-long volleyball career of Nuray Kiliç the Buffalo Universiade was one of the most memorable moments. She told us about the enthusiasm and team spirit she had experienced in the summer of 1993, which was a proud summer for her and her family.

Nuray Kiliç  
visiting Niagara  
Falls (courtesy  
of N. Kiliç)

“After a long period of preparations and camping, we set off for the 17<sup>th</sup> Summer World University Games in the United States of America. My teammates and I, together with our delegation, were experiencing the pride and excitement of representing our country. When we arrived in New York State, we set off for the Universiade Village in Buffalo. Arriving at the village our excitement was replaced by great surprise and joy. The place was naturally so crowded. The village had gathered thousands of athletes from many races, nationalities and different cultures. We were all gathered for a common goal. I love this unity of sport.

It was a very nice feeling to share a common space with all the nations of the world and to compete

“1993 Buffalo Summer World University Games started with a perfect opening ceremony. I was given the task of carrying the flag at the ceremony. It is impossible to describe my emotions, pride, and joy at that moment.”

at the same time. We were even communicating with the countries whose languages we didn't know, and our signalling, shouting, and strange communications with them were quite fun and funny.

It was also very fun to wake up every morning to the oriental music played by the Qatari caravan with which we shared the same building.

1993 Buffalo Summer World University Games started with a perfect opening ceremony. I was given the task of carrying the flag at the ceremony. It is impossible to describe my emotions, pride, and joy at that moment. The torch was lit on 8 July and was extinguished on 18 July. This period is one of the most beautiful experiences of my sports career.

This torch is always in our memory, burning with the same enthusiasm today. The excitement I felt standing in front of the net is still vivid for me. I can still hear the moment when I was looking straight and proudly into the faces of my teammates and in my heart I kept saying that we had to win. The sounds at the match, our enthusiasm, the match tactics given by our coaches, all of them are still exciting.

And of course, the wonderful trip to Niagara Falls was unforgettable. After leaving the Universiade village we had a short tour of New York. I would have loved to see New York City's Statue of Liberty up close, but we didn't have much time on that last day so we couldn't go. We were happy as if we were rediscovering America.” ●



## Accreditations



Today, it is hard to imagine that the metal badge was the precursor of plasticised accreditation for major international sporting events. Modern accreditation cards with a barcode offers additional guarantees for the security of the events. At the same time, having the lanyard is important for athletes and volunteers who wish to trade pins!

Metal accreditation badges were initially created for the Olympics and existed from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the 1980s.

They can be considered genuine pieces of art. Made of glazed metal, they usually feature the logo of the event, its date, and the host city. Some badges have a lower part, produced of leather or silk in different colours indicating the category of the owner: athlete, judge, official, organiser, and probably others.

For example, the manufacturer Bertoni, a family company founded in the 1930s in Milan, produced the badge of the Torino 1959 Summer Universiade (below). Bertoni manufactured numerous FIFA and UEFA cups, necklaces for the prestigious Olympic Order, and medals for the 1960 Rome Olympics.







Jens Dautzenberg and his teammate Anke Feller showing the special finger sign of their hometown Aachen at the Sicily 1997 Summer Universiade

## Jens DAUTZENBERG

Germany | Athletics | Universiade 1997 & 1999

**J**ens Dautzenberg competed in the 400m race at the Universiade twice, both times on an island - Sicily in 1997 and Palma de Mallorca in 1999. Both took place in the middle of his successful athletic career. After joining the German national athletics team in 1991, he became the European Junior Vice-Champion with the 4x400m relay team in 1993. In 2004, Jens attended the Olympic games in Athens as part of the senior national team.

“I have had the honour of participating in many international competitions, but at none of them have I experienced the unique atmosphere we had at the Universiade. There was never a better team spirit without pressure to perform. Maybe that’s why the sporting performances were very good.

Sicily was fantastic - international friendships were formed that have lasted until today. Sport connects across many years and national borders. Suffering also connects. In the men’s 400 metres, I was

unfortunately eliminated, along with an Australian runner in the semi-finals despite fast times. Both of us would have qualified for the final with our performances, but the qualification rules did not allow this. In the evening, my coach took me to the bar to relieve my frustration. We drank a glass of vodka lemon for the emotional pain. There we met the Australian colleague and his coach, who were doing the same. A terrific evening with a final exchange of team clothing. I still cherish the T-shirt today. The next morning, I ran my best split ever in the relay heats.

Fun inspires performance and after our relay heats, we visited Etna and hiked up the volcano. This would have been unthinkable at any other competition 24 hours before the final.

On the morning of the final day, we relaxed by the pool. The accident and the death of Lady Diana in Paris then made the rounds. News (in a world without social media) was shared and retold with the dismay evident to all. A sad occasion but an

“The Universiade in 1997, however, was the spark that motivated me to continue working on the Olympic dream after I missed out on qualifying for the Atlanta Games in 1996.”

impressive situation with international exchange and discussion. The youth of the world came together and quickly grew into a crowd.

The next highlight was a fantastic closing ceremony. The stadium in Catania was full because the finals were enriched by the then IAAF (now World Athletics) chief Primo Nebiolo with interludes of international top stars. We partied all night and made friends that last until today. The only problem was that our clothes were wet on the return flight, as we laid in the pool with all our clothes on and didn’t have time to change prior to catching the plane. Memories for Life!

Palma de Mallorca in 1999 was also a fabulous and incomparable experience.”

**How did university sport and the Universiade help you to reach the Olympic summit?**

The structure of university sport in Germany in the late 90’s was not necessarily conducive to sport. It was often a struggle with university management to be released for competitions.

The Universiade in 1997, however, was the spark that motivated me to continue working on the Olympic dream after I missed out on qualifying for the Atlanta Games in 1996. Even 25 years later, the thought of these great games in Sicily motivates and makes me happy.

**What did you study at university?**  
Business & Administration

**Was it difficult to combine sport and studies?**  
Yes. At that time it was not so easy to combine this with sport. It took me 24 semesters - but it was the best time of my life

**How did being active in sports help you during your studies?**

I learned how to deal with pressure and stress. Being consistent and focused was important in training as well as in my studies.

**How has sport influenced your life and career?**

Sport, with its successes and defeats, has made me what I am today. I have learned to enjoy success

with humility. I have learned that defeats are part of life and important. I have learned to believe in myself and my convictions and to work hard on dreams.

I also owe it to sport that I met my wife, for example, and thus my three daughters - who are all also active in athletics.

**Tell us something about your profession and your career**

I was very lucky to be able to practice my sport successfully. I had 14 years on the national team with European Cup victories, World Cup final placings, finals participation in European & World Championships, six national championship titles and many international trips.

After the end of my sporting career, I went into business at the age of 31. After working for a few years in an advertising agency, I became an independent entrepreneur in 2008. I am now active as a marketing & brand consultant in the fashion & lifestyle sector. Sport is always in my favour. The passion I lived as an athlete I now bring into my professional projects on a different level. Again and again, there are connections between emotional sport and emotional fashion. They are the most beautiful projects that have to do with sport.

Thank you FISU for the really great gift of Universiade. ●



Athletes from different delegations visiting Etna volcano in Sicily (courtesy of J. Dautzenberg)



# Lubica BÖHMEROVÁ

Slovakia | Artistic Gymnastics | Universiade 1995 & 1997

**L**ubica Böhmerová started practicing artistic gymnastics at the age of 5. She participated in two Summer Universiades in Fukuoka, Japan, and Sicily, Italy. Today she works as an assistant professor in the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport at Comenius University in Bratislava, and also as a gymnastics coach. Her husband, an Olympic rower, also participated in Universiade in Buffalo in 1993.

“The World University Games is one of my most beautiful sports experiences ever (especially Fukuoka). I think it was a reward for all those years of hard work and hard training. When I was 16, I was seriously injured in training and the predictions were that I would never do top sports again. I loved gymnastics, so I trained just for myself, and in the end, I was nominated for important competitions such as the European Championships in Birmingham, United Kingdom in 1996, and the World Championships in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1997.

The Fukuoka Universiade was probably the most beautiful experience. Japan itself was a very attractive country. Everything was different compared to the European way of life. I remember in the city there were a lot of people, cars, and ads. The doors of the taxis that drove us opened on their own. It was like sci-fi for me, coming from a post-socialist country.



Volunteers at the Sicily 1997 Summer Universiade

I was impressed by the athletes village, it was like a small town, and practically all the athletes lived there. With all the nations we met in the dining room, there was a very friendly and pleasant atmosphere. I also remember the amazing food. I think that each country had its kitchen there and we could taste the specialties of different countries, not just the Japanese ones. Of course, only after the competition so that we don't spoil the figure!

To this day I have a lot of friends from the event and we meet at various gymnastics competitions.

I remember how my coach and I went to encourage our footballers, but by chance, we got on the bus of their rival, South Africa. They were very friendly and we then had to promise to encourage not only our team but theirs! I also remember the very friendly athletes from Uruguay.

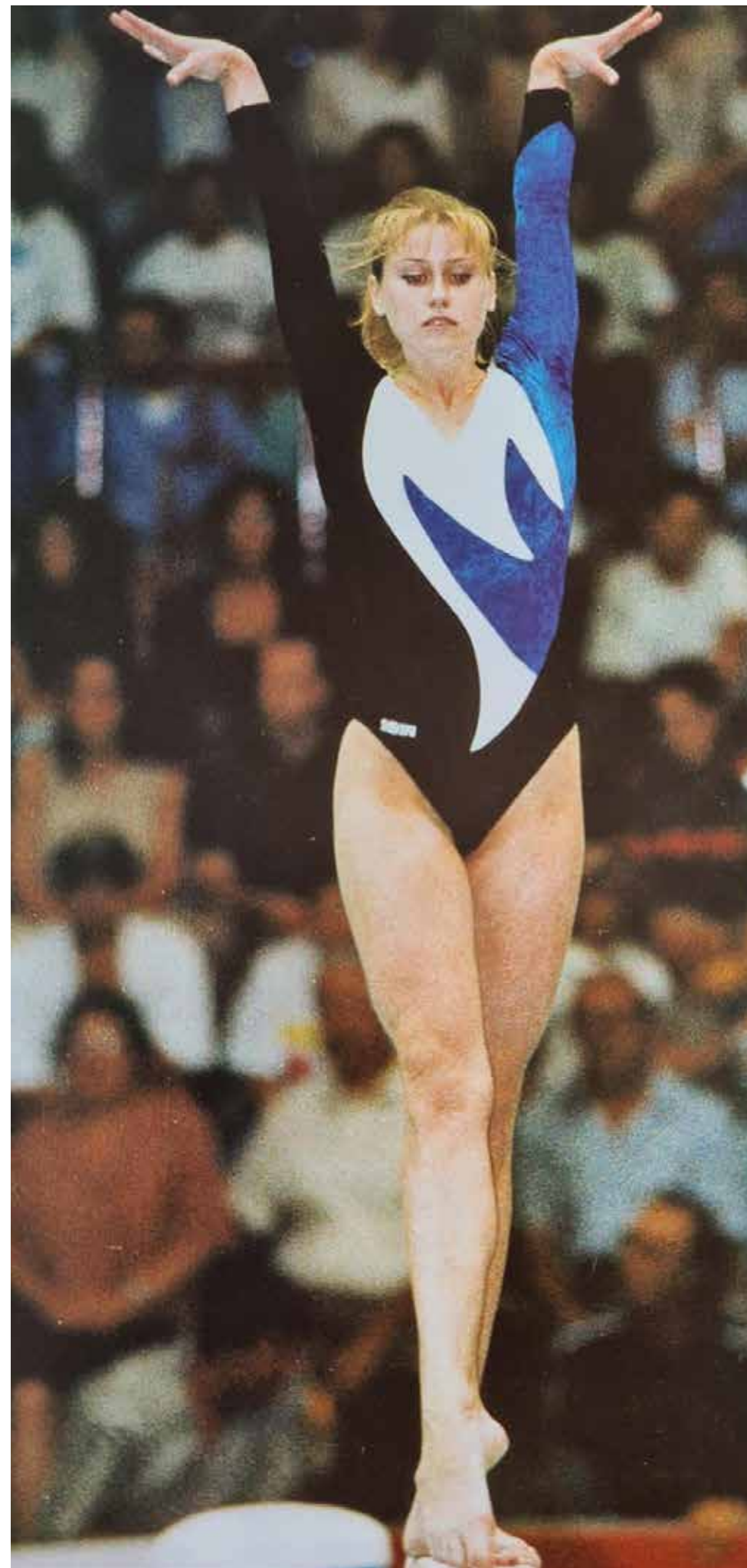
The Japanese volunteers were also amazing. They were very helpful and tried to meet any of our requirements. From the city tour, I remember the gallery and also the aquarium with huge Japanese crabs - after this experience, we did not swim in the sea again!

At the Universiade, we also had the opportunity to watch teammates from other sports. We shared our room with two tennis players, a swimmer, and a fencer. We saw how they were preparing for the competition, encouraged them, and shared all their emotions. The most successful athlete from our team was swimmer Martina Moravcová. She won a gold medal in Fukuoka, and later in her career also Olympic medals. Of course, we also experienced stress during the competition, hoping to see the best possible performance, but the whole atmosphere was dominated by an excellent atmosphere of friendship and fantastic encouragement by spectators.

I did not attend the opening ceremony, but the closing ceremony was moving and resonated with the idea of living in peace. It was also dedicated to the anniversary and commemoration of the victims at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Sicily Universiade was also an amazing one, in a beautiful country with the majestic Mount Etna.

Athletes in Sicily did not live together in one place but in different hotels on the coast, or in other cities, which was disappointing compared to Fukuoka. I remember the sold-out Catania sports hall, the venue for gymnastics, and the fantastic audience that was in a trance when Jury Chechi performed.



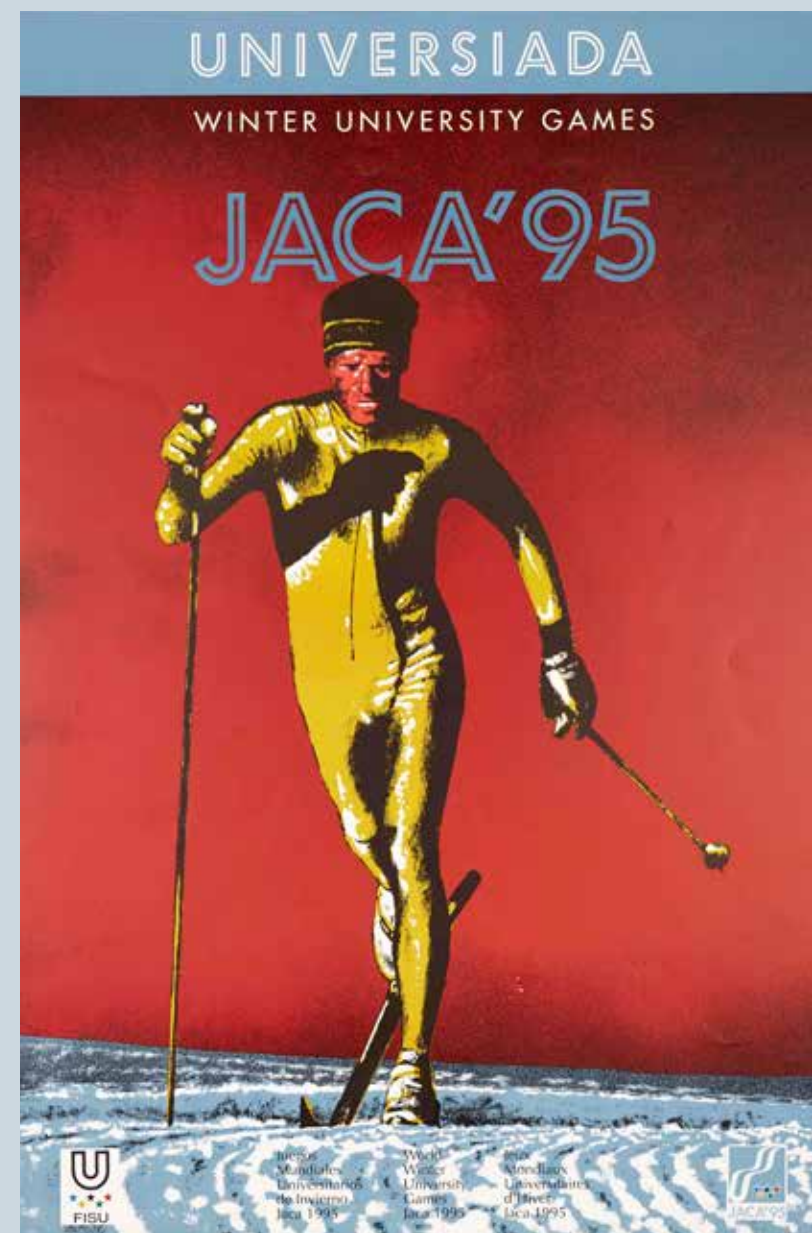
The competition had an excellent lineup of athletes, with such names as Shannon Miller (USA) and Henrietta Onodi (Hungary), both previous Olympic medalists. It increased the prestige of the competition as at that time it was rather rare for Olympic medalists to be studying at university at the same time.

It was difficult to combine sports with studies, but I enjoyed both. Sport helped me to have better time management. You are more focused and determined, and the mental and physical work compensates each other. Sport is my life, I'm teaching, coaching, and trying to do exercise by myself.”

“I was impressed by the athletes village, it was like a small town, and practically all the athletes lived there. With all the nations we met in the dining room, there was a very friendly and pleasant atmosphere.”

Lubica Böhmerová competing in the all-around final during the Sicily 1997 Summer Universiade









## Farai GOREMOUCHECHE

Zimbabwe | Tennis | Universiade 1997

**T**hanks to the FISU Help Programme dedicated to less privileged countries, the first-seeded tennis player at the University of Zimbabwe Farai Goremoucheche experienced his first trip outside the African continent and his first flight on an airplane.

“The Zimbabwean delegation was composed of four people, two athletes and two officials. I was with the manager of the delegation in Palermo for tennis, and the other athlete, 100m sprinter Ms Lucy Nyadenga, was in Catania with her coach. Although

we missed the opening ceremony, being part of such a large-scale event was electric if not intimidating. Everyone I came across was friendly and always ready to help with directions or anything we would have asked. I was wowed by the whole thing as it all seemed like a dream to me. For a person with my background, there was statistically zero chance that I would be part of such an event!

The first few days were busy settling in and practicing. I didn’t have a tennis partner with me, but I joined the delegation from Slovenia and asked to practice with them. They were lovely and very

accommodating. Luckily I wasn’t too shy to ask! It was fun and with these guys, both were named Bosjan (Boss for short!), we also became friends for many years after the games. So in my spare time, I played cards with the boys, and my lady friends took me to the local museum. I went to the markets to buy cheap clothes. I suspect most were fake labels - D&G and Gucci wallets for my family and friends back home.

Once I made friends, I was out most of the time. My manager was actually fearful thinking I was going to get lost or something, but I just wanted to make the most of the experience.

The trip almost didn’t happen because, at the last minute, there was a fax from Italy saying that they were not going to finance the trip because Zimbabwe was not listed as a “poor country.” That caused a lot of confusion and disappointment as there was no way the University of Zimbabwe, and certainly I, could have been able to raise funds for such a trip. But finally after deliberations, the tickets were facilitated and the trip happened. On our way back, it was the unfortunate day that Princess Diana died in a car crash. Our plane from London was delayed as one of the Royals, Princess Sarah Ferguson, boarded the plane. I had the opportunity to see her as I sat near the front and she went to her seat further in front of me.”



**“The first few days were busy settling in and practicing. I didn’t have a tennis partner with me, but I joined the delegation from Slovenia and asked to practice with them. They were lovely and very accommodating.”**

### What was the most memorable moment of the Games?

For me, there were many memorable moments, however for brevity I will just list a few here: My first match! I remember I played a gentleman from Moldova – a very strong player. The match lasted three sets, but unfortunately I didn’t win it. I however enjoyed every part of it. Also meeting lots of different people from a lot of different countries that I had never heard of. I must also mention the excursions for shopping and going to the beach. The closing ceremony was awesome as we carried the Zimbabwean flag. At last seeing Mount Etna in Catania near the end of the competition.

Sports certainly helped me a lot in many different ways. I learned how to be a team player, supporting other players and teams in other sports. As chairman, captain, and member of the Sports Council I learned how to lead and to organise various functions and competitions at the university and nationally. Tennis opened my eyes to the world out there and inspired me to want to see different parts of it. Because of tennis and travel, I was confident to leave my country for new experiences and have travelled to a few countries in Europe, the USA, Canada, and I’m now in Australia. I don’t think I would have had the confidence and the curiosity if I hadn’t played tennis at the university level. ●

● Farai Goremoucheche at the entrance of the Sicily 1997 Summer Universiade tennis venue (courtesy of Farai Goremoucheche)



2001

- BEIJING (CHN)  
XXI<sup>st</sup> Universiade (summer)
- ZAKOPANE (POL)  
XX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)



2003

- DAEGU (KOR)  
XXII<sup>nd</sup> Universiade (summer)
- TARVISIO (ITA)  
XXI<sup>st</sup> Universiade (winter)



2005

- IZMIR (TUR)  
XXIII<sup>rd</sup> Universiade (summer)
- INNSBRUCK (AUT)  
XXII<sup>nd</sup> Universiade (winter)



2007

- BANGKOK (THA)  
XXIV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- TORINO (ITA)  
XXIII<sup>rd</sup> Universiade (winter)



2009

- BELGRADE (SER)  
XXV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- HARBIN (CHN)  
XXIV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

# 00s



While the Polish ski resort of Zakopane was hosting its second Winter Universiade, China took important strides within the international university sports movement. The first hosting opportunity for the country, the 2001 Beijing Summer Universiade, became additionally special with the city learning only a month before its start that it had won the right to host the Olympic Games in 2008. A few months after those Summer Olympics, China hosted the 2009 Winter Universiade in Harbin. Organising two Universiade editions in the same decade was not new to Italy, which welcomed the event for the sixth time in Tarvisio in 2003 and then again in Turin in 2007. The most indelible moment of the decade was when athletes from the two Koreas marched into the stadium under the same flag at the Daegu 2003 Summer Universiade.





# Valentina VEZZALI

Italy | Fencing | Universiade 1995, 1997, 1999 & 2001

**V**alentina Vezzali is one of the most decorated fencers in the world. She participated in the Universiade four times from 1995 to 2001. She won medals in all five of her Olympic appearances from 1996 to 2012, and was the first fencer in Olympic history to win individual foil gold medals at three consecutive Olympics – 2000, 2004 and 2008. She also has sixteen gold medals from the World Fencing Championships, and nine gold medals from the European championships.

## Your track record is impressive, what's the secret to your success?

The secret behind this success lies in the teachings of Master Triccoli. He was the founder of my club and my fencing master. According to him, one must never give up. Many people tend to gloat over the results they've achieved, always trying to maintain the status quo, content with keeping things as they are. However, these people soon lose the very momentum that led to their success. I think this is a grave mistake because when someone spends so much time and energy just maintaining the status quo, they can hardly progress and thus are bound to lose ground.

## What is your best sports memory?

The memory I cherish the most in sports these days goes back to 1984 when I won my first Italian title in Rome. Not only was it my very first major victory, even more importantly I was finally able to prove my worthiness as a fencer to all those who used to come watch my matches without believing much in my capabilities.

## You successfully took part in four FISU World University Games. What made you want to participate in these games?

What pushed me was only the desire to compete with people who play sports with the same kind of spirit as I do. It's all about fair competition among

**“The secret behind this success lies in the teachings of Master Triccoli. He was the founder of my club and my fencing master. According to him, one must never give up.”**

Valentina Vezzali winning her first gold at the Fukuoka 1995 Summer Universiade



many opponents whose prime objective is to place another gold medal on their university's banner.

## Do you have any special memories regarding one of these FISU World University Games (or all four of them)?

One of my most indelible memories goes back to 1999 and the World University Games held in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. There, I happened to meet a soccer player and my future husband Domenico Giugliano, who was also competing in the Games.

## In your opinion, are the FISU World University Games a different kind of competition?

There is something very special about the World University Games that you don't find in other competitions. For instance, winning a medal here takes on a symbolic meaning, full of positive values that are often lost or suppressed in other Games, simply because a more utilitarian definition or practical approach is given to winning from a career and scholarship perspective. ●

# Wu MINXIA

China | Diving | Universiade 2003 & 2005

**W**ith her 7 Olympic and 14 World Championship medals, Wu Minxia is officially the most decorated female athlete in the history of diving. At the age of 17, and a year before her first Olympic success in Athens in 2004, Wu won three gold medals at her first Universiade in Daegu, Korea.

Here are some excerpts of the interview the young champion gave back in 2003, just after having competed and prior to going for a walk in the city.

For Wu Minxia, the Universiade was an unforgettable experience. It was her first time to outperform compatriot Guo Jingjing in the medal tally. Guo, 21, a superstar on the international women's diving circuit, had for several years overshadowed Wu. “When I came to Daegu, I didn't expect anything like gold medals. For me, the competition is more like a struggle with myself than anybody else.”

A freshman at Shanghai's Renmin University of China, Wu said diving was already a profession for her. “I started diving when I was in kindergarten. Since then, I've thought of diving as amusement and I have become increasingly fond of it while practicing more and more.”

Wu and her colleagues lived in an athlete-only dormitory in China and practiced three full and

**“When I came to Daegu, I didn't expect anything like gold medals. For me, the competition is more like a struggle with myself than anybody else.”**

four half-days a week, with many professors who regularly came to the dorm to give lectures because athletes could not attend classes. Wu studied philosophy and usually tried to build up confidence on the springboard, just seconds before diving.

“The moment before diving, I feel on edge and sometimes even scared, but at first, I repeatedly picture the motion in my head, feel confident, and then leap. Just after diving into the water you immediately feel how good or bad you are.”

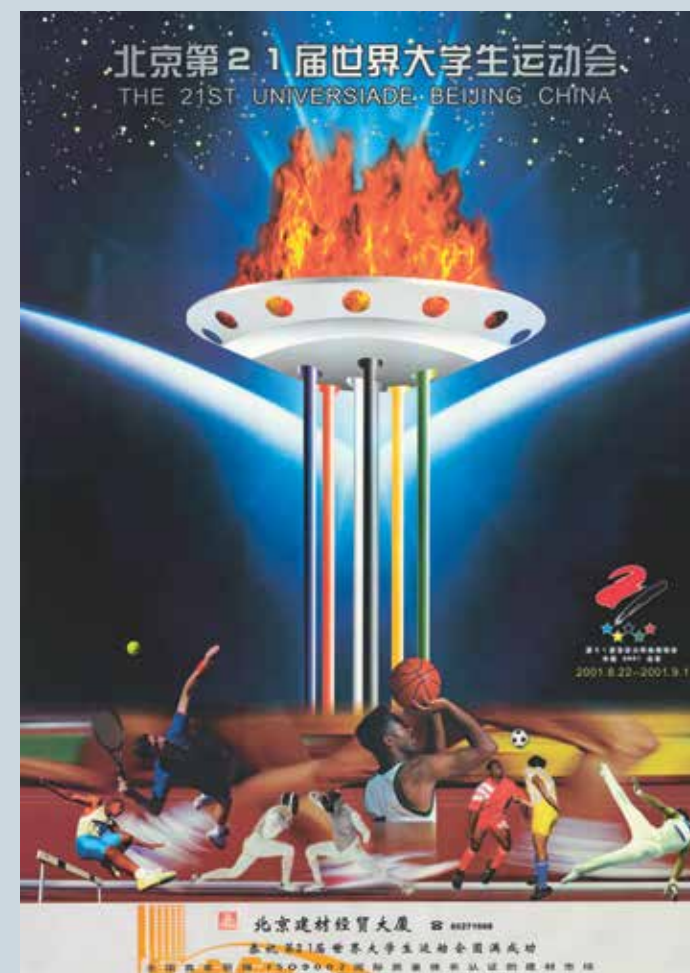
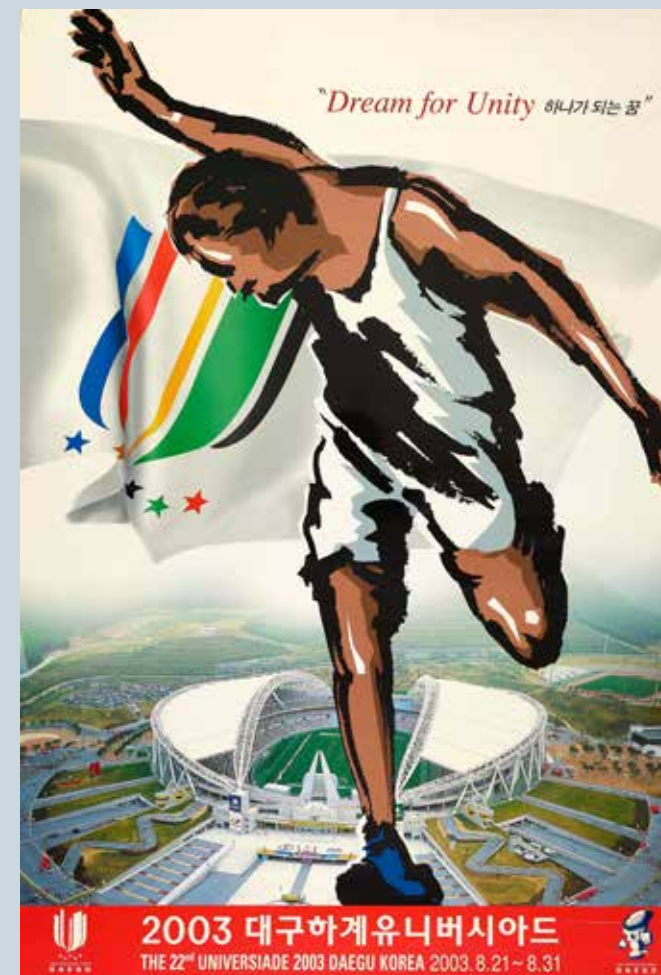
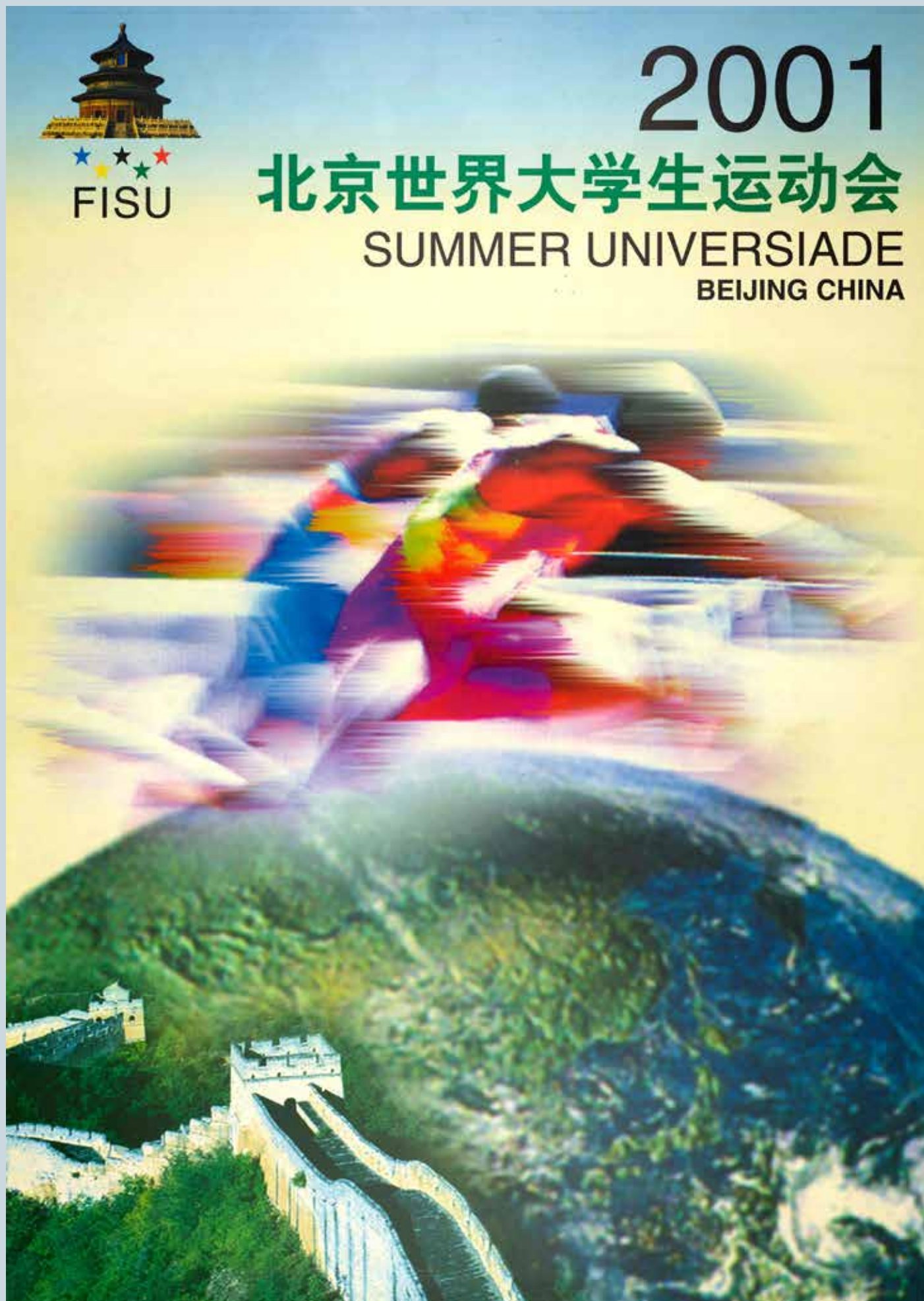
“Now I hope I can win a gold medal in the Olympic Games in the future, just like every other athlete hopes.”

In 2023, 20 years after her triumph at the Universiade, Wu Minxia participated in the flame relay of the Chengdu 2021 World University Games. ●



Wu Minxia during the torch relay of the Chengdu 2021 FISU World University Games Summer (2023)







# Roger ROTH

Switzerland | Cross-Country Skiing | Universiades 1981 to 2023



At the Harbin 2009 Winter Universiade a bag with the FISU logo became the federation's first ever branded uniform item

**R**oger worked as a sports teacher at Fribourg University in Switzerland from 1981 to 2017 and was a coach for the Swiss cross-country skiing team at Universiades from 1981 to 1999. In 2000, he started at FISU as Technical Committee Chair for cross-country skiing and became the Chair of CTI (International Technical Commission) Winter in 2003. He held this position for eighteen years, and in 2022 was nominated as FISU Honorary Member.

Like many international sports federations, FISU has developed significantly and decisively over the decade of the 2010s. The competition programme at the Winter Universiade has expanded, incorporating new sports, new disciplines, and new formats. These sometimes preceded the international federations when it came to implementing innovations at major world competitions, such as world championships or even the Olympic Games, or saw the Universiades used as a testing ground.

I would like to focus on the development of the Winter Universiades, especially the sports programme, the development of the media, the budding collaborations with the international federations, as well as a few anecdotes that were part of the charm of these world student sporting events.

## COLLABORATION WITH INTERNATIONAL FEDERATIONS

One very important FISU objective was to get closer to the umbrella federations to integrate their standards (regulations, competition venue standards, international classification of our competitions) and to increase the attraction for top-level athletes. Gradually, these objectives began to bear fruit, and collaboration became essential, if not indispensable.

A good example was the preparation phase for the Harbin 2009 Winter Universiade. After the FISU Executive Committee chose Harbin, China in January 2005 to organise the 2009 Universiade,

it was necessary to go on site to establish plans for existing or new sports venues. Especially for snow sports, experienced specialists were needed to draw up a precise inventory. There, and thanks to my close links with the FIS (International Ski and Snowboard Federation) as Technical Delegate in cross-country skiing, access to the FIS President and those in charge of each discipline was possible and allowed us to be supported in an exemplary manner.

I had the privilege of forming a team with FIS and International Biathlon Union specialists for the construction and homologation of snow sports facilities. The mission, which began in autumn 2005, was a great success and the links between people and federations have persisted long after the Universiade. These specialists were also committed to taking care of training of officials, who were responsible for and successful in ensuring the smooth running of all event aspects.

We realised that communication between our specialists from different countries and local people was often complicated. So, in 2007 FISU drew up a glossary of the main technical expressions in ice sports and snow sports" with expressions written in English, French, Italian, and in later years Chinese, allowing events to become more efficient.

## VIDEO, TELEVISION, AND LIVE TRANSMISSIONS

In 2001 at the Universiade in Zakopane, Poland, for the first time FISU sent a team to record video-camera images for its own reports. In 2005 at the Games in Innsbruck/Seefeld, Austria, the first live broadcasts of ski cross and women's ski jumping events were shown on Austrian TV. At the Torino, Italy 2007 Universiade, we learned that live coverage was not something to be improvised; during a ninety-minute snowboard-cross live broadcast, viewers rarely saw the competitors in action or on-screen graphics, but rather children and dogs having fun in the snow. During the debriefing, we had to face some harsh criticism and had to learn quickly!

**“Fearing the worst, he jumped from the grandstand, walked out of the venue, unhooked a flag from in front of the stadium’s entrance.”**

## THE UNFORESEEN MOMENTS

Discovering during a protocol ceremony at the 2003 Universiade in Tarvisio, Italy that a country's flag was upside down, and thanks to the attention of a spectator, had been turned upside down at the last second before being hoisted, gave those in charge a few shivers. This situation went unnoticed by the paparazzi but could have resulted in a reprimand for this unforgivable oversight.

But there were more adventures to come and at the opening ceremony, one misfire after another was unleashed. To begin with, there were a few dance presentations by local groups where the music stopped unexpectedly, leaving them to finish performances with no accompaniment.

This was followed by the entry of each nation's athletes. With the music restored, everything got off to a good start, but the announcer and the person in charge of lining up the teams alphabetically did not have the same list of participating nations. One was in English, the other in Italian. The confusion was quite visible. After the athletes had entered, the ceremony called for the solemn hoisting of the FISU flag. Everyone on the rostrum was still laughing at the scene of the misaligned nations, except for one vigilant FISU employee who was gnawed by a doubt that those who were to hoist the flag... perhaps didn't have a flag! Fearing the worst, he jumped from the grandstand, walked out of the venue, unhooked a flag from in front of the stadium's entrance, and ran across the ceremonial square to the soldiers in charge of securing it, handing it over just in time to raise it as Gaudeamus Igitur played. No one ever knew how it was possible that the flag, carefully guarded by FISU, was not in the right place for the ceremony.

The ceremony continued with the sparkling flame and torch arriving in the stadium. The last torchbearer got ready to light a sophisticated system that would take this little flame from the torch to the cauldron which would be alight and burn throughout the Universiade. But, nothing happened. Confusion on all sides until an exceptional improviser arrived with a ladder, climbed to the top, took out his lighter and saved the situation. The cauldron was lit!

The Universiade was underway and was a wonderful ten days, with no other dramatic moments.

Even today, everyone who was there smiles a little when they think of those unforeseen moments. Today, things like that are no longer possible with everything tested several times and under absolute control. But the Winter Universiades will always be a magical, unforgettable event for athletes and accompanying officials, organising committee staff, and members of the FISU family, even if the name has changed to the FISU World University Games in the meantime. ●



2011

- SHENZEN (CHN)  
XXVI<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- ERZURUM (TUR)  
XXV<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

2013

- KAZAN (RUS)  
XXVII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- TRENITINO (ITA)  
XXVI<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

2015

- GWANGJU (KOR)  
XXVIII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- STRBSKE PLESO/  
OSRBLIE (SVK)  
& GRANADA (ESP)  
XXVII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

2017

- TAIPEI CITY (TPE)  
XXIX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- ALMATY (KAZ)  
XXVIII<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)

2019

- NAPLES (ITA )  
XXX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (summer)
- KRASNOYARSK (RUS)  
XXIX<sup>th</sup> Universiade (winter)



# 10s



Starting with the Erzurum 2011 Winter Universiade, the decade of the 2010s saw unprecedented growth in athlete participation and in the use of social media to interact with fans around the world. Four of ten editions took place in Asia, while European countries demonstrated the spirit of support and friendship in helping the Universiade flame burn. In 2015, Spain and Slovakia teamed up to co-host the Winter Universiade. After forty years, Russia hosted again with Kazan 2013 an event of unprecedented scale in the history of the World University Games, and was followed soon after in the winter with the success of Krasnoyarsk 2019. For Italy, this decade was a time to deliver two rescue missions. First in 2013, Trentino stepped in to host the Winter Universiade after the initial host city of Maribor, Slovenia had to pull out due a lack of government funding. In 2019, it was Naples' turn as it replaced Brasilia, Brazil for the same reasons. At the closing ceremony, Stadio San Paolo was where the world would say goodbye to Naples and to this decade - giving the 35,000 spectators an unforgettable and electric atmosphere.







Elena Romanchenko and her teammates' golden performance at the Kazan 2013 Summer Universiade

## Elena ROMANCHENKO

Russian Federation | Rhythmic Gymnastics | Universiade 2013

**E**lena Romanchenko was a member of the gold-winning Russian rhythmic gymnastics team at the Kazan 2013 Summer Universiade. But her story stands out among the ones that numerous successful gymnasts from her country can tell, because Elena has a twin sister Olga with whom they shared life, studies, and almost all their respective sports careers.

Elena and Olga Romanchenko first saw the gymnastics floor when they were six, considered quite a late start in the sport known for its demanding physical requirements, and especially the flexibility of the young girls. "One day our mum saw an advertisement and, when back home, told us about rhythmic gymnastics, suggesting we try it. That's how we got into this wonderful world of grace and beauty. To avoid any confusion, our mother tried to dress us differently from the first lesson: we had different colors and styles of the training leotards." Elena immediately liked gymnastics, while Olga needed more time to appreciate the sport.

The sisters' gravitation to the sport was also thanks to their first trainer Zhanna Kolotilova who made the future stars fall in love with rhythmic gymnastics. "We have been with her since childhood, she is like a second mum to us. She has always helped us in sports and also in life. We are in touch to this day and try to attend the tournaments and festivals she organises." Elena and Olga trained under her supervision for over ten years, achieving great results and always sharing the podium. Kolotilova also always had a gift to recognise the twins, even from far away.

**"One day our mum saw an advertisement and, when back home, told us about rhythmic gymnastics, suggesting we try it. That's how we got into this wonderful world of grace and beauty."**

In 2011, they moved from the Russian capital of Moscow to Kazan to train for the regional team. The invitation to the national team followed shortly thereafter, but unfortunately due to injury Olga was unable to continue her gymnastics career and came back to Moscow. It was a difficult decision for Elena to go the path alone, but supported by Olga and an encouraging team spirit, she was helped to achieve her best results.

About her sister, Elena noted, "We are very close in life and sport, regardless of time and age. We always support each other and rejoice in each other's successes. And at competitions, we never felt like rivals. We are sisters, soul mates. We trust each other very much – tell all the secrets."

Elena won gold medals in group at the Kazan 2013 Summer Universiade (all-around, 10 clubs, 3 balls & 2 ribbons) and bronze in all-around at the World Championships in Kyiv the same year. However, she considers the Universiade as her most memorable event and is proud of those three medals won. ●

## Laura & Kareen FALLAHA

Lebanon | Swimming | Universiade 2015



Laura & Kareen Fallaha at the Gwangju 2015 Summer Universiade. Below: Laura's accreditation

**L**ebanese swimmers Kareen and Laura Fallaha trained and competed together from the ages of six and eight, respectively. Always alongside each other, the pair competed at events around the world. Today they live in different countries but still keep warm memories about Universiade, which Laura enthusiastically shared.

"During the 2015 [FISU] Games in Gwangju, I was studying architecture at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon where I was a part of two varsity teams, swimming and track and field. When the qualification competitions happened, I raced in both events and qualified for the Universiade for both sports. It was quite a dilemma to choose which one to go for, however, our swim team, where my sister Kareen also qualified, was short on relay participants. I was beyond excited to be representing the Lebanese swim team in Gwangju and more specifically to take part in the Universiade with my sister.

To date, nine years later, those two weeks still come up as my most memorable experience. Any student athlete's dream would be to get qualified and experience the Universiade! We were quite a large team from Lebanon, with different disciplines

and sports, which [made for] great team bonding on our way to Gwangju. We landed in Seoul where the mascot greeted us and were then taken by bus to the athlete's village in Gwangju.

The opening ceremony was probably the most goosebumps causing event I've attended! All those colours, music, fireworks. It was so grand I can still remember the way I felt walking along the stadium!

Days started quite early when we used to all gather in the cafeteria, which was very rich with all kinds of cuisines and cultures! It was a lot of fun roaming around observing and learning how other athletes fuel before practices, before races, etc. We used to then go to the pool for our team practice sessions where we trained and mingled with so many athletes!

Our afternoons were always fun and varied with us either going to watch races or games or roaming around campus. We got to meet a multitude of fellow student-athletes from so many countries.

The Universiade was such a memorable experience and invited such amazing bonding with fellow athletes. I am still in touch with a few, especially after the famous pin exchange that filled up my badge! I even still have the mascot on my bed." ●

**"The Universiade was such a memorable experience and invited such amazing bonding with fellow athletes. I am still in touch with a few, especially after the famous pin exchange that filled up my badge!"**

Laura Fallaha





# Axel ELIAS

Mexico | Artistic Gymnastics | Universiade 2011

**A**xel Elias started practising gymnastics at age 11. In 2011, he was finishing his master's in modern and contemporary history, and he is now a historian of modern Latin America and the Caribbean. Axel believes sport helped him to become more organised and keep his academic and gymnastics careers afloat.

“My first impression was that the organising committee had invested a lot of resources in the organisation of the Shenzhen Universiade. There were several new stadia and sports venues. There were also many volunteers and special conditions for people participating in the event to move freely through the city.

The atmosphere was very sport focused, but I felt there were few opportunities to interact with other athletes. The event did not feel as festive, but I guess people were focusing on the competition per se. The village was also far from the city centre so there was not much to do or see in terms of nightlife. Many of my Mexican colleagues took some days off to visit Hong Kong.

I found the opening ceremony to be most interesting. The Mexican delegation chanted some popular songs and even some funny phrases. This was perhaps the moment when we interacted most with people from other sports and other countries. On a personal note, I was also happy to finish the competition. I injured my left knee during the podium training two days before I competed, so I was not sure I would be able to make it. Luckily, I competed without any major errors, although I did drop the difficulty level on the floor and vault. When I finished the competition, I thought about my mum, dad, siblings, and even the person I was with at the time. It was a very emotional moment for me since I was just going through a tough period during my master's.

**“I found the opening ceremony to be most interesting. The Mexican delegation chanted some popular songs and even some funny phrases.”**



• Mexican team's arrival at the Athletes Village (courtesy of A. Elias)

Everything seemed quite new and people were quite friendly when we went out shopping. There were all the big transnational brands in the city, a huge Coca-Cola sponsorship in the village and at the sports venues. The Universiade felt very capitalistic. On the last evening of our stay, we had some soju with the Korean gymnasts. Sadly, it was hard to stay in touch since I did not know how to go through the Chinese firewall. I tried to email people through their QQ [instant messaging] but with little success. Facebook, Twitter and other social media were banned, so people used proxies.

My training times were reduced drastically. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, I had classes from 10 to 13:00 and then from 16 to 19:00, so training sessions were quite short. I also had some academics question my decision to continue competing, and they were difficult when I asked for options to submit my work in advance or to receive a bit of support I guess planning and resilience are the most constructive influences, but other aspects were not so great, for instance, a bit of hypervigilance about body image.” ●

• Axel Elias at the Shenzhen 2011 Summer Universiade



# Wang FEI

China | Football | Universiade 2011

**W**ang Fei was the goalkeeper for the gold medal winning Chinese women's football squad at the Shenzhen 2011 Summer Universiade. She became the first Chinese student footballer to play in Europe and also played at 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup. She later played for Bayern Munchen and the Dalian Quanjian teams.

Wang Fei was born in Dalian in northeast China. She's the eldest of two daughters in her family. Wang considered becoming a model before opting to pursue a career in football and teach herself English. "In China, I told the players: if you want to play in Europe, please first start learning English. That is so important."

In September 2015, Wang moved to Lyon to play for one of Europe's top teams, after having played one season in Potsdam, Germany. She had a big challenge in Lyon, whose team had stars from France, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Japan, and now China. Initially a forward, she explained her decision to switch positions. "In 2003, I started playing football at school. In the beginning, I didn't want to be a goalkeeper, but a striker. At that time, no one wanted to be a goalkeeper on the team. So, I took the job."

Wang's life changed following the Shenzhen 2011 Summer Universiade where she became a hero after saving two penalties in the semifinal shootout against Brazil. In a memorable final, China came from behind to beat Japan to win in extra time, giving China a gold medal after an 18-year wait, having previously won in 1993.



Wang Fei at the Shenzhen 2011 Summer Universiade



**"In 2003, I started playing football at school. In the beginning, I didn't want to be a goalkeeper, but a striker. At that time, no one wanted to be a goalkeeper on the team. So, I took the job."**

*"2011 was such a good year. I was at university at this time and was not even sure I could be a very good player. But after this game, my whole life changed, I think. I think it was a great final, but I faced a lot of pressure during the final game. But at the end, we won it."*

Wang Fei's career has gone from strength to strength. In 2015, she went to the World Cup as China's number one keeper. The Steel Roses reached the quarterfinals before losing to the eventual winners, the USA, to the huge disappointment of the goalkeeper. However, Wang was recognised by FIFA as one of China's "most impressive performers" in the team's progress to the knockout stages. ●

# Yang HAK-SEON

Republic of Korea | Artistic Gymnastics | Universiade 2013 & 2015

**I**n 2012, Yang Hak-seon became the first South Korean gymnast to win an Olympic gold medal. He was born in a shanty town in the Gwangju area and has always supported his family by sending them his modest athlete's stipend. At the time of the interview with him, prior to Gwangju hosting the 2015 Summer Universiade, he was the only gymnast to have executed the three-twist front somersault he invented. Yang won team silver in Gwangju and gold in vault two years earlier in Kazan. \*

"Gwangju is my hometown, so I'm looking forward to performing in front of my parents and to the local people. Watching gymnastics live at the competition is totally different to watching it on TV, so I want to go to the Universiade to show my skills, and I hope that all the other Korean athletes can also perform very well during the Games.

My parents haven't often seen me compete because there are not many international competitions in South Korea. They came to see me for the first time at the Asian Games in 2014, but unfortunately, I couldn't get the gold medal. The Universiade is an

**"The Universiade is an occasion to finally offer my parents and my family that desired gold medal. So to achieve it, I have been practicing and training very hard."**

occasion to finally offer my parents and my family that desired gold medal. So to achieve it, I have been practicing and training very hard.

I started with gymnastics because I love this sport. Secondly, it didn't demand a lot of important financial investment. I never felt shame accepting the situation of poverty of my family. It got more fun when I completed new skills, and my parents always encouraged me and have been my motivation.

My private situation had no impact on my performance or other fields of life. I was able to succeed because I practiced the exercises that were taught by my former coach, who also told me that I could win a major international competition, and that was important.

A lot of people helped me after winning the gold in London (in the vault at the 2012 Olympics). For example, the house that my parents are living in now is the house that was built by those generous people. I've also received a flat in the countryside as a gift. And with all those kinds of contributions, the lifestyle of my parents has improved a lot. So, I was able to contribute to improve their life due to my results at the Olympic Games.

The Korean National Sport University of Seoul offers me the facilities to practice, and there are lots of good teachers. Professors in the sport department already knew me when I was in the young categories, and my first coach from high school also graduated from this sports department. My studies program is adapted to my needs, as I'm able to carry on my studying at the same time as my training in the National Sport Training Centre.

I only made my next goal right after the London Olympics. It means I would like to get the gold again in Rio, so I'll continue to practice and prepare for the 2016 Olympic Games. If everything goes well, I'm sure that I'll be in good shape. The university program fits perfectly with my training routine. ●

\* This is an excerpt from an article prior to the Gwangju 2015 Summer Universiade



Yang Hak-Seon performing in his hometown at the Gwangju 2015 Summer Universiade



2021

- CHENGDU (CHN) - POSTPONED  
XXXI<sup>st</sup> FISU World University Games Summer
- LUCERNE (SUI) - CANCELED  
XXX<sup>th</sup> FISU World University Games Winter

2023

- CHENGDU (CHN)  
XXXI<sup>st</sup> FISU World University Games Summer
- LAKE PLACID (USA)  
XXXI<sup>st</sup> FISU World University Games Winter

2025

- RHINE-RUHR (GER)  
XXXII<sup>nd</sup> FISU World University Games Summer
- TORINO  
XXXII<sup>nd</sup> FISU World University Games Winter

2027

- CHUNGCHONG (KOR)  
XXXIII<sup>rd</sup> FISU World University Games Summer
- TO BE CONFIRMED

2029

- NORTH CAROLINA (USA)  
XXXIV<sup>th</sup> FISU World University Games Summer
- TO BE CONFIRMED



The 2020s were set to start when the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020 abruptly changed plans. The majority of that year's events were cancelled and FISU only saw a return to events in 2022. Following the cancellation of the Lucerne 2021 Winter Universiade, the FISU Games returned in earnest with the Lake Placid 2023 FISU Games Winter and the delayed Chengdu 2021 FISU Games Summer, which ultimately took place in 2023, leading into FISU's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024.



# 20s



# Misaki SHINNO

Japan | Speed Skating | FISU World University Games 2023

Misaki Shinno with Yuka Takahashi and Germany's Josephine Beate Heimerl after winning the mass start event at Lake Placid 2023 FISU World University Games



**O**n the historical James C. Sheffield Speed Skating Oval during the Lake Placid 2023 FISU Games, Japan's Misaki Shinno and Canada's David La Rue both skated to gold in the women's and men's mass start races respectively. For Shinno it was her second medal having won bronze in the team pursuit, while La Rue went home with three medals – his gold and bronze in team pursuit and the men's 1000m.

**Some people think mass start in speed skating is like F1 racing. With all the skaters and the related chaos going on, what was the first thought when you went across the finish line and who did you call or text first?**

**Misaki Shinno:** When I crossed the line, I could not believe it. After the race, my parents messaged me.



**David La Rue:** When I crossed the line finishing first, I was just so happy. It was the best way to end the weekend. And the first person to text me was my girlfriend, so I was happy to live that moment with her.

**A mass start outdoors can be tricky. You have to adjust your pace because of the lack of glide on the ice. So how else did you prepare to account for outdoors?**

**M.S.:** I really wanted to focus on the physical aspects of my training and becoming quite a bit stronger. And then just for my mental sake, I used the excitement to really push myself through.

**D.L.:** You need to adapt because the weather changed every day. Sunny days are better for gliding, but when there is a lot of snow, the ice gets frosty. It was all about changing the way you skate every single day to adapt for the temperature, I guess.

**Mass start is a big strategy game. So, are you the cat? Are you the mouse? Do you pop out during the sprints? Do you stay back? What is your strategy?**

**M.S.:** I like to have somebody to chase down rather than being the one to kind of set the pace.

**D.L.:** Well, it was about the same as her. I think in a mass start, well, for my profile, you need to chase. And well, it's true there are drawbacks to the strategy because you need to be further at the back and there are more things happening in the back. In a mass start, I never lead until the last corner, I guess. So my strategy was basically to just save as much energy as possible by getting the draft from other skaters and then we'll hit at the end. That is amazing.

# David LA RUE

Canada | Speed Skating | FISU World University Games 2023

David La Rue with Daniele Di Stefano (Italy) and Canada's Hubert Marcotte on the podium after winning the mass start event at Lake Placid 2023 FISU World University Games



**The best mass start athletes apparently have a lot of pack experience. Since I don't know what that means, can you tell me how did you get comfortable skating in a pack?**

**M.S.:** I actually haven't had much practice.

**D.L.:** I started short track at 12, and I have this kind of ease with doing passes and being close to other skaters. I guess that helps me to get the best draft possible out of the back. That helped me a lot to get this medal. It's not my first mass start, and all those attributes helped me a lot in this discipline.

**6,400 meters is such a long distance. At what point in today's race did you decide this was your moment to dominate it?**

**M.S.:** Until the very end, I really gave it my all. I was really trying to hold out or hold on and at the last 300 metres, I pushed. I thought I'd win coming out of the last corner. That's the moment I knew I had it.

**D.L.:** 6,400 metres is a long distance. I stay at the back, trying to put my mind to sleep actually, just saving as much energy as possible. And it helps me to handle the pain because I'm not a long-distance skater like most of the other ones.

**Tell us about your education.**

**D.L.:** I'm studying finance at Laval University. I'm almost done with my degree. Education just helps me manage adversities in either my life or sports. That's a good attribute for athletes.

**M.S.:** I study at the Nippon Sports Science University. I am not sure it has really much crossover into my training at all, actually, but I think studying helps with my communication skills.

**"It is amazing to see all the nations getting along together. In our hotel, in the beginning, people were quite shy, but as the event went on, especially in the lobby, everybody started to meet and play games together."**

**FISU promotes excellence in mind and body. How does that translate as a concept into managing your education and your training?**

**M.S.:** My studies and my athletics are both connected. I'm working hard to improve in both.

**D.L.:** For sure we are athletes, but our sport doesn't define us. I think it's really important to pursue other interests, open your mind, and learn as much as you can. And sometimes athletes just go into a tunnel and focus on sports, which is quite sad.

**If there are any young student athletes who are reading this, what advice would you give them?**

**M.S.:** Enjoy what you do in sport and have a fun time. Talk to different kinds of people and use that to improve yourself.

**D.L.:** My message would be that it's okay to live through hardship sometimes, but that is what helps you achieve new heights. Work hard and everything's going to turn out fine. ●



# Knight ACIRU

Uganda | Athletics | FISU World University Games 2023



800m finals  
at the  
Chengdu 2021  
FISU World  
University  
Games Summer  
(2023)

**R**eminiscing about that special moment from the summer still brings goosebumps to Ugandan athlete Knight Aciru. At the Chengdu 2021 FISU World University Games, the 25-year-old became just the third female Ugandan student-athlete to win a medal in World University Games history, clocking a time of 2:04.34 to win silver in the 800m women's final.

Knight, a third-year accounting student at the Ndejje University in Uganda, was confident heading into the two-lap final having won her semi-final against a tough field. In a tightly contested final, Knight was pipped to the post by Italy's Laura Pellicono by just 14 split seconds, yet being the winner of one of just

two medals her country earned in the competition made her immensely proud.

"It was the best and most marvellous moment I have ever experienced in my life, seeing my country's flag being raised up. Winning this silver medal is my greatest achievement. This will now serve as a stepping stone for me in the future".

Knight feels the level of competition at the FISU Games was incredibly high, and that an unknowing audience should not be misguided by the word "student" when discussing the World University Games. "The competition at a student level these days has almost become like all the other high-profile events across the world. The reason being, there is very little difference in these events, as several students who competed in the FISU Games managed to qualify for these big competitions as well."

Knight hopes to follow in the footsteps of her country's most decorated athletes, but also acknowledges the importance of having a degree behind her.

"I will first focus on my running career for a few years after finishing my degree to see whether I can excel. Yet I feel great knowing that if running fails, I have my education behind me, so I will be able to settle down somewhere and continue to broaden my knowledge." ●

**"It was the best and most marvellous moment I have ever experienced in my life, seeing my country's flag being raised up."**

# Dismas YEKO

Uganda | Athletics | FISU World University Games 2023

**F**rom running in the rain on the muddy streets of a remote village in Uganda, to standing atop the podium at the Chengdu FISU World University Games – it has been a journey of persistence, determination, and sacrifice for middle-distance runner Dismas Yeko.

The 19-year-old's talent was only discovered in high school, having been noticed while participating in inter-school athletics events. Despite having never run competitively, he opted to harness his newfound prowess as best he could while pursuing his tertiary level education.

"After leaving high school, I did some training on my own before enrolling in Ndejje University in August 2019. This made me train even harder in order to earn a scholarship since my parents were not really able to afford the fees for my studies."

The forestry science and environment management student had to strike a balance between training and his classes, knowing that his future depended on it.

"I had to train in the morning from 6 am until about 7:40 am, then prepare for my classes before starting evening training at around 4 pm. The worst was when it used to rain in the morning. But I knew I had to continue these sacrifices for my future because it was the only option for me, to earn a

scholarship to have my tuition paid for since I was from a poor family."

Disma's focus, perseverance, and unwavering spirit paid off, as he was last year selected to represent his university and country at the FISU World University Games in Chengdu. Not only did he participate but he impressed, finishing the men's 10,000m final in a time of 28:59.25 to claim his country's only gold medal at the summer event.

"That was the highlight of my career so far. I was really confident heading into the race as I knew I had prepared enough. Standing on the podium gave me immense joy, knowing I was representing my university and my country."

"The Games gave me the necessary experience in a tough competition abroad, while encouraging me that I can achieve and do something big in international events". ●

**"I had to train in the morning from 6 am until about 7:40 am, then prepare for my classes before starting evening training at around 4 pm."**



Dismas Yeko  
celebrating  
his 10,000m  
gold at the  
Chengdu 2021  
FISU World  
University  
Games Summer  
(2023)







# FISU History in medals 1959-1972



1960 Winter Universiade  
**CHAMONIX**



1962 Winter Universiade  
**VILLARS**



1963 Summer Universiade  
**PORTO ALEGRE**



1964 Winter Universiade  
**SPINDLERUV MLYN**



1965 Summer Universiade  
**BUDAPEST**



1966 Winter Universiade  
**SESTRIERE**



1967 Summer Universiade  
**TOKYO**



1970 Summer Universiade  
**TORINO**



1972 Winter Universiade  
**LAKE PLACID**

## Highlight

1961 Summer Universiade  
**SOFIA**



Since the inception of the Universiade in 1959, creating a memorable set of medals has been a challenge for each event organiser. The medals began to transform into a genuine piece of art - famous artists and sculptors were often invited to produce this unique sports symbol. This trend accelerated in 1961 with the Bulgarian sculptor Lubene Dimitrov proposed quite an original form of the medal. Using ancient Roman coins from the second century as the prototype, Dimitrov's design paid homage to the patroness of Sofia, the goddess Serdika.



# FISU History in medals 1973-1987



1973 Summer Universiade  
**MOSCOW**



1977 Summer Universiade  
**SOFIA**



1978 Winter Universiade  
**SPINDLERUV MLYN**



1979 Summer Universiade  
**MEXICO CITY**



1981 Winter Universiade  
**JACA**



1981 Summer Universiade  
**BUCHAREST**

FISU  
75

FISU  
75



1983 Winter Universiade  
**SOFIA**



1983 Summer Universiade  
**EDMONTON**



1985 Winter Universiade  
**BELLUNO**



1985 Summer Universiade  
**KOBE**



1987 Winter Universiade  
**STRBSKE PLESO**



1987 Summer Universiade  
**ZAGREB**



# FISU History in medals 1989-1997



**1989 Winter Universiade  
SOFIA**



**1989 Summer Universiade  
DUISBURG**



**1991 Winter Universiade  
SAPPORO**



**1993 Winter Universiade  
ZAKOPANE**



**1993 Summer Universiade  
BUFFALO**



**1995 Winter Universiade  
JACA**

FISU  
75



**1995 Summer Universiade  
FUKUOKA**



**1997 Winter Universiade  
MUJU-CHONJU**



**1997 Summer Universiade  
SICILY**

FISU  
75

## Highlight

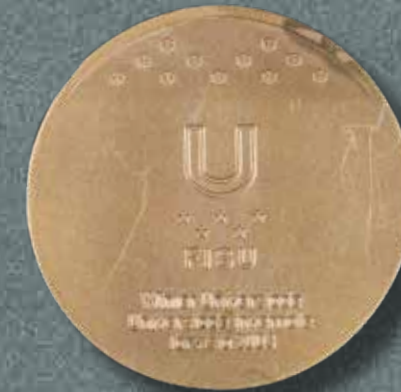
**1991 Summer Universiade  
SHEFFIELD**



In 1987, Thessco Limited, one of the world's foremost precious metal fabricators, offered to sponsor the production and supply of all the winners' medals and participants' medallions for the Games. The design of the medals were picked from artwork submitted in a competition by students at universities, polytechnics and art colleges throughout Britain. From the designs submitted, one was considered worthy to be reproduced for both faces of the winners' gold, silver and bronze medals. Two other entries were also considered of merit and the designs were incorporated to form the two sides of the participants' medal.



# FISU History in medals 1999-2009



**1999 Winter Universiade  
POPRAD-TATRY**

**1999 Summer Universiade  
PALMA DE MALLORCA**

**2001 Winter Universiade  
ZAKOPANE**

**2001 Summer Universiade  
BEIJING**

**2003 Winter Universiade  
TARVISIO**

**2003 Summer Universiade  
DAEGU**



**2005 Winter Universiade  
INNSBRUCK**

**2005 Summer Universiade  
IZMIR**

**2007 Winter Universiade  
TORINO**

**2007 Summer Universiade  
BANGKOK**

**2009 Winter Universiade  
HARBIN**

**2009 Summer Universiade  
BELGRADE**



# FISU History in medals 2011-2023



**2011 Summer Universiade  
SHENZHEN**



**2011 Winter Universiade  
ERZURUM**



**2013 Summer Universiade  
KAZAN**



**2013 Winter Universiade  
TRENTINO**



**2015 Summer Universiade  
GWANGJU**



**2015 Winter Universiade  
GRANADA AND  
STRBSKE PLESO/  
OSRBLIE**



**2017 Winter Universiade  
ALMATY**



**2017 Summer Universiade  
TAIPEI**



**2019 Winter Universiade  
KRASNOYARSK**



**2019 Summer Universiade  
NAPOLI**



**2023 FISU Games Winter  
LAKE PLACID**



**2021 FISU Games Summer  
CHENGDU (2023)**



# Sports

# DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE OF THE UNIVERSIADE

Opening ceremony of the Istanbul 1968 FISU World University Championship Wrestling in Türkiye







**MARIAN DYMALSKI**  
FISU Vice-President

**F**rom a historical perspective, what was the role of the Championships in the development of FISU?

FISU World University Championships have been the cornerstone of FISU ideals and activities. The first event was a handball championship that took place in 1963 in Sweden. Championships were, and continue to be, a response to student demand for physical activities. Although the status of physical education is very different at higher education institutions from country to country, many people will agree that physical activity dwindles with age. Often it starts as early as at university because physical education is often no longer obligatory. However, student years are the prime of one's physical shape and playing team sports was perhaps the only way in the past for them to meet and have fun. Starting FISU Championships was a great nudge for other students to join, as it is more fun to participate in sport when there is a competitive edge.

**In your opinion, what is the importance of the FISU World University Championships for the global university community?**

Nowadays, FISU has very diverse activities and FISU World University Championships can be overshadowed by bigger events like FISU World University Games. However, in my opinion, FISU Championships still play a core role in enabling people to know university sport. A freshman can start with a sports club, take part in a FISU Championship with their team, and fall in love with the whole idea of FISU, entering its big, international family.

**“I believe the FISU World University Championship concept is a unique one. It is one of the best ways, and possibly the last stage, to spot a talent for professional sport.”**

*Marian Dymalski*

**Which sports do you think are most important for students worldwide?**

We are facing ever more challenges to get youth moving so any physical activity should be welcomed. As our lifestyle is changing, any sport that a person can afford to do, can do regularly, and can do without risk to health is good. It is just worth mentioning that their goals should be achieved with fair play and respect for others. Sport is good when it fosters development in body and spirit.

**Why is it important to maintain the programme of the Championships in FISU?**

FISU World University Championships introduce FISU to both athletes and organisers. It is easier to host a single sporting event and learn about the subtleties and details of planning, which can be valuable for a federation, a sports club, or an organising committee. It is also easier to spot talent at such events. Ultimately this is at the heart of the idea of university sport – single sport clubs where we gather athletes and sport lovers and build a vast structure called FISU.

**Tell us more about the example of Poland.**

Poland has a long tradition of organising FISU World University Championships. The Polish University Sport Association (AZS) has hosted more than 30 in different sports – rowing, shooting, mind sports, futsal, cycling, speed skating, cross country, archery, badminton, table tennis, bridge, canoe, cheerleading, chess, floorball, handball, karate, weightlifting, and wrestling. In 2024, Gdansk is hosting FISU World University Championship Triathlon.

**How have FISU World University Championships historically influenced, and influence today, the organisation of university sport on national and local levels?**

FISU, given its oversight of the World University Championships, imposes certain standards, which reach out to 170 member federations. If a federation wants to host an event, they should align with these guidelines. This is how we raise the standard of university sport events worldwide. There is an educational programme for FISU World University Championships organisers where they share their experiences and deepen their knowledge. Through



this we raise new generations of sport managers who keep growing and may find their way into other sport federations.

**What has driven Poland's interest in organising so many FISU World University Championships?**

AZS is one of the oldest FISU member federations. It is a vast organisation with about 50,000 members and 200 university sports clubs around the country. There is so much potential here with many young people training to compete along with wonderful facilities, experienced staff, and a network of volunteers to assist at events. Sports clubs reach out to our headquarters to host events and strive to gather the best world practices when it comes to international competitions.

**Can you remember one or a few of the most successful editions of the FISU World University Championships organised in Poland?**

I wouldn't stress the word successful as I am sure every organising committee does its best. Success depends on complex factors such as experience in hosting, medal tally, marketing, smooth operation, and many others. AZS has always tried to organise FISU World University Championships at a high level. I would like to highlight two cities which have hosted quite a number of FISU Championships in different sports, Poznan and Wroclaw. I recall the 2010 FISU World University Championship Shooting in Wroclaw when the weapons were detained at Warsaw Airport. The organisers from Wroclaw had to use their institutional contacts to locate them, find out what had happened, and to efficiently deliver them to Wroclaw. Although it was a challenge for the organisers, this matter

united a team and showed how many sport lovers and AZS friends are there in Poland.

**What about other countries and continents?**

I think every organiser wants to do their best and host an unforgettable event. However, in my case, there is one FISU World University Championship I will always remember because it has become personal to me. I went to a FISU Championship in Rugby 7s in Namibia with my son. He met a girl from the organising committee and fell in love at first sight. Since then, she has moved to Poland and they got married. Thus, I have gained a daughter-in-law from a FISU Championship.

**In your opinion, what does the future hold for the global development of the FISU World University Championships?**

I believe the FISU World University Championship concept is a unique one. It is one of the best ways, and possibly the last stage, to spot a talent for professional sport. It is supported by the drive of youth, and we are happy to create opportunities for young people to come up with ideas, take the lead, and shine. ●

• Marian Dymalski at the 2018 FISU World University Championship Rugby Sevens in Swakopmund, Namibia



# FISU Championships by number of editions



CROSS-COUNTRY  
ORIENTEERING

JUDO  
FUTSAL  
CANOE SPORTS  
*Canoe Slalom / Wildwater*

ROWING  
TABLE TENNIS  
TRIATHLON

WRESTLING

KARATE  
SQUASH



## EDITIONS

26

HANDBALL



23

19

GOLF



18

17

CHESS



16

15

BADMINTON

14

13

TAEKWONDO



12

11

ARCHERY  
EQUESTRIAN  
BRIDGE

BOXING  
CYCLING



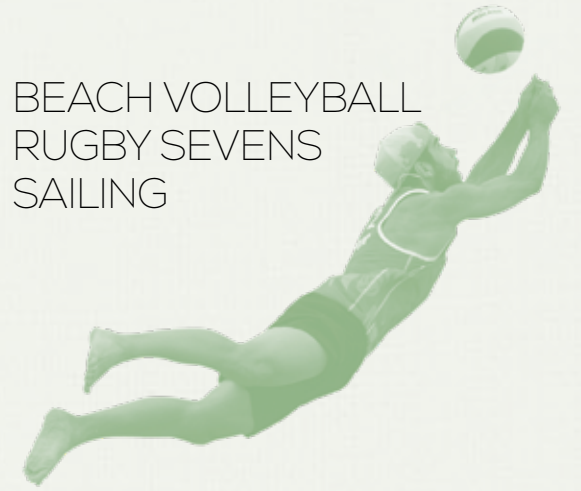
SPEED SKATING  
WEIGHTLIFTING  
WINDSURFING  
BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

SPORT CLIMBING  
WATERSKI

CHEERLEADING  
FINSWIMMING  
MODERN PENTATHLON  
MUAYTHAI  
SAMBO  
WUSHU

10

BEACH VOLLEYBALL  
RUGBY SEVENS  
SAILING



09

08

FLOORBALL  
SHOOTING SPORT



06

05

SKI ORIENTEERING

04

03

AMERICAN FOOTBALL  
NETBALL

02

01

BEACH SPORTS  
POWERLIFTING  
SAVATE





# World University Championships



The participants lived in a student residence and benefited from a rich social and cultural programme including evening receptions and excursions to historical locations.

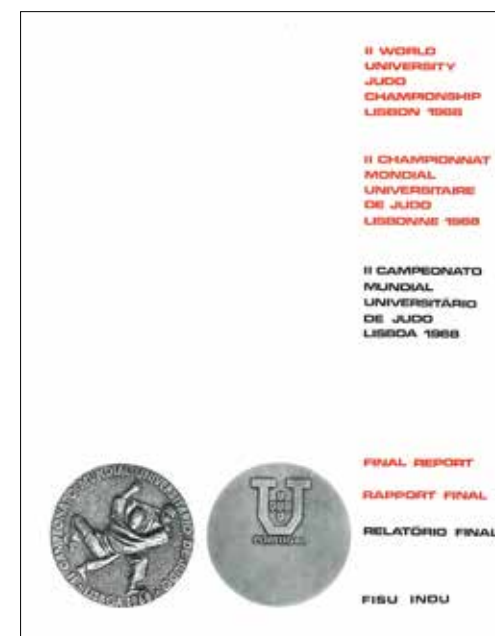
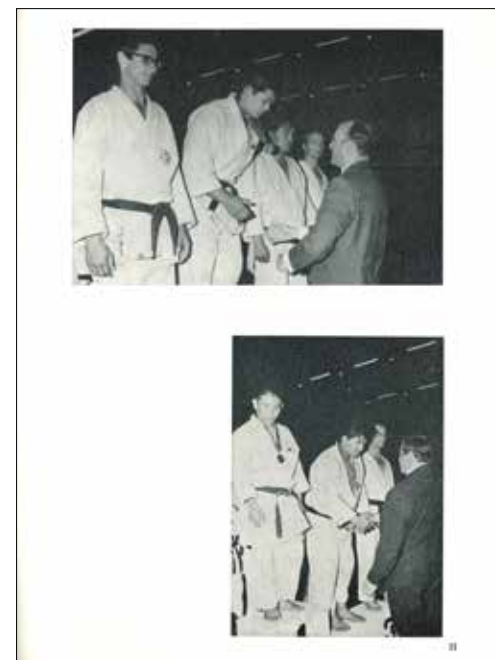
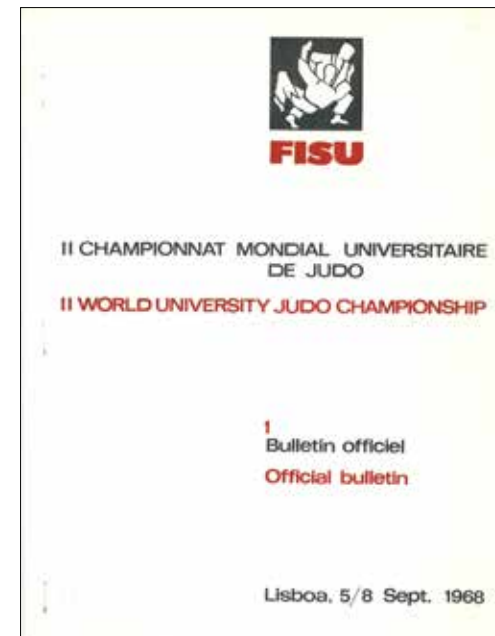
**A**fter launching Universiade in 1959, FISU then immediately dedicated its efforts to enlarging its sports offer and providing more students the opportunity to compete on the international stage.

## HANDBALL

In January 1963, 126 athletes from seven countries competed in the first FISU World University Championship Handball in Lund, Sweden. The hosts beat West Germany in the final, while Romania won the bronze medal over Denmark. Also participating in Lund were Japan, Norway, and Spain, which after negotiations was given the right to host the next championship in 1965. After its first two successful editions in Lund and Madrid, the FISU Championship regularly took place across Europe and has had women's teams since 1994.

Legend says that when Swedish members suggested in an informal discussion the idea of hosting the event, they mentioned two sports, handball and orienteering, both largely practiced in the Nordic countries. Unlike handball, orienteering was still lesser known elsewhere, which, along with translation difficulties, is why the suggestion was not well understood by other FISU colleagues. This is how handball was chosen to inaugurate the FISU World University Championships era and now leads as the sport with the most championships organised.

Last, but not least, handball was not new for university sport. Matches were played during the World University Games in 1937 in 1939, with two



Medal from the 1972 FISU World University Championship Judo held in London, United Kingdom



versions of the sport existing at that time (seven or eleven players). After the war, the growing popularity of team sports among students made handball an essential part of university sports competitions. The 1963 FISU Championship offered an additional opportunity for it to be internationally recognised and ultimately become an Olympic sport in Munich in 1972.

## JUDO

Judo became the second sport to enter the FISU World University Championships calendar in 1966 (after three successful European editions of the tournament), with the first edition held in Prague, Czechoslovakia. The second championship in 1968 brought to Lisbon, Portugal 99 judokas from 15 countries from Americas, Asia, and Europe. The participants lived in a student residence and benefited from a rich social and cultural programme including evening receptions and excursions to historical locations. It is also interesting to note that organisers created a communications campaign; besides printing posters, the event booklet, and an information bulletin, they invited the local press, radio, and TV to cover the event. Ten years later, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, hosted the first edition of the judo championship outside Europe. Knowing the important role of judo in Japan, it was also added to the programme of the Tokyo 1967 Summer Universiade, but the championship was maintained in parallel to the Universiade until 2006. Female judoka first participated in 1984.



Finally, the decade of the 1960s also saw the first FISU Championship Wrestling in Istanbul, Türkiye. At the event in 1968, 31 athletes from six countries competed in eight weight categories. Interestingly, the FISU delegate's report stated that the United States arrived right before the athlete weigh-in, creating "a dramatic situation", that did not seem to be the only one related to US participation. The delegation expected a refund of its travel expenses, according to a verbal promise FISU President Nebiolo had given on behalf of organisers. After a threat to cease participating in future FISU events, negotiations took place with FISU leaders and various Turkish authorities, but in the end, the Americans were not granted their request. Despite the high quality of organisation, and also highlighted in the report, wrestling did not seem to gain popularity among students, so the event obtained a regular place on the calendar only after its second edition held in 1996 in Teheran, Iran. In 2022, wrestling was among seven sports included in the FISU University World Cup Combat Sports hosted by Türkiye.

During the 1970s, strengthening the championship programme became especially important when two editions of the Universiade (1969 and 1975) were cancelled by their respective organising committees. The reports delivered by FISU delegates after each championship demonstrated the progress made over this period in enhancing the technical regulations for each sport and in aligning with international sports federations' requirements. This decade saw a flurry of activity in European events, ultimately leading to the staging of World University Championships in five new sports: table tennis in 1971, football in 1976, and cross country, cycling, and orienteering all in 1978.



Opening ceremony of the Lisbon 1968 FISU World University Championship Judo in Portugal



Poster from the Sankt-Gallen 1980 FISU World University Championship Orienteering in Switzerland



## TABLE TENNIS

At the first international university table tennis tournament in Bucharest, Romania, 50 male and 26 female student athletes registered. 23 NUSFs initially intended to participate, but only 14 sent teams because of the timing of the Nagoya World Championship. The presence of players from Cuba, Israel, the United Arab Republic, and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea gave the event a real worldwide character. The six-day tournament included competition for seven gold medals, with games played simultaneously on six tables under a best-of-five format. Participants additionally had the opportunity to visit Bucharest University and Romania's most famous mountain resorts. Luxembourg's NUSF offered to organise the second edition, open to female players only, but the proposal was rejected and Hannover, West Germany was then chosen to host the next event, ultimately considered as the first official FISU Championship. Considering its popularity in China, table tennis was chosen as an optional sport for the Beijing 2001 Summer Universiade, with it becoming compulsory in 2007. The last edition of the FISU Championship Table Tennis took place in 2006.

## ORIENTEERING

The misunderstanding that occurred in 1963 around orienteering did not prevent it from growing its popularity to become, equal with cross country, the second most organised FISU Championship after handball. At its first edition in 1978 in Jyväskylä, Finland, 129 male and female student athletes competed for four titles in individual and relay races. The second edition followed in 1980 in St. Gallen, Switzerland, with 20 countries competing for titles and 70 women and 96 men participating.



Finally, the decade of the 1960s also saw the first FISU Championship Wrestling in Istanbul, Türkiye.



Medal from the 1978 FISU World University Championship Table Tennis in Fortaleza, Brazil





**CROSS COUNTRY**

Also in 1978, the Olympic capital Lausanne, Switzerland was home to the first FISU Championship Cross Country. English athletes dominated the race showing a high level of development of cross country running in the United Kingdom, and also helping it to be the home for the second edition in 1980. Since then, the championship has been organised every two years, mainly in the countries of Central, Eastern and Northern Europe.



• Bologna 1988 FISU World University Championship Cross-Country medals

**FOOTBALL**

The world's most played sport was initially included by FISU as a European Championship in Spain in 1966, but in 1970, the Executive Committee decided to make it an "open" tournament and to admit non-European countries. The explosive increase in registrations, which was not surprising considering football's popularity, showed the need to create a real worldwide event. In 1976, the FISU World University Championship Football gathered student athletes in Montevideo, Uruguay, the historical homeland of the first FIFA World Cup in 1930.

This FISU Championship was the first to take place in the Americas. Mexico and Brazil then hosted the second and third editions, in 1982 and 1984 respectively, with the latter a Futsal Championship. In parallel, the European Championship continued and a football tournament was also held at the Mexico 1979 Universiade, as the sport became part of the Universiade compulsory programme from 1985 to 2019.

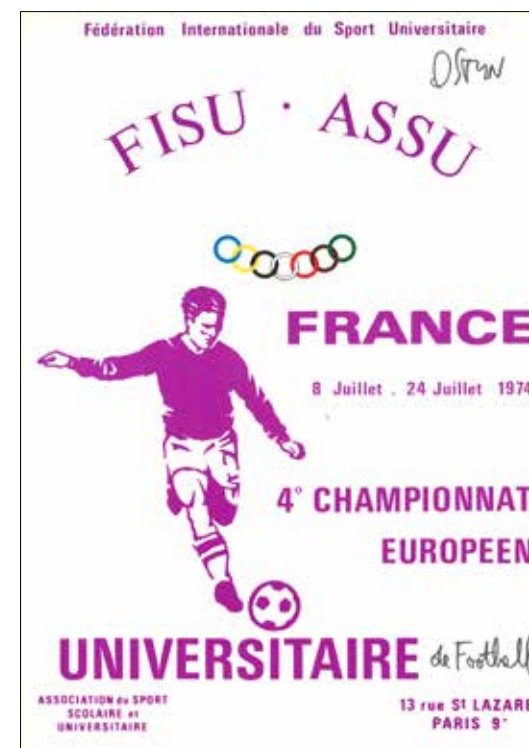
1978 was rich in new events as the first FISU World University Championship Cycling entered the scene in Antwerp, Belgium as "a well organised and successful sports event, which must be continued" and where a FISU delegate noted "the relaxed and friendly atmosphere" prevalent throughout the races. Apart from the host country, ten nations were represented, including the People's Republic of China, which had joined FISU just a year before. The event was planned under the local leadership of Roch Campana, who would become FISU Secretary General one year later. Cycling was added as an optional sport at the Summer



• Medal from the Antwerp 1978 FISU World University Championship Cycling in Belgium

Universiades of 1983 and 2011, but also remained in the FISU Championship calendar. At the 1986 edition, racers (male only) were welcomed by the Soviet Union, which had previously organised a European University Cycling Championship in 1974. On his home velodrome built for the Moscow 1980 Summer Olympics, and leveraging the electronic photo-finish system, Viacheslav Ekimov set the world record at FISU Championship, while his compatriots dominated in other events. This FISU Championship highlighted the success of the Soviet team in the 1970s as it topped the medal tables at all nine Universiades and the led in overall Universiade medal count.

Following two decades of growth, FISU World University Championships were showing their fundamental role in the international university sports movement. During the 1980s, 6,122 student athletes travelled to 20 countries to participate in 32 championships in 13 sports. Six new sports - rowing, golf, futsal, taekwondo, equestrian, and windsurfing - enriched the programme. ●●●



**The explosive increase in registrations, which was not surprising considering football's popularity, showed the need to create a real worldwide event.**



●●● In the 1990s, FISU Championships demonstrated remarkable progress in terms of organisation, development, and geography, establishing their place on the international sports calendar. This decade saw them become a biennial event, taking place in the even years between the Universiades. This decade was crucial for shaping the current programme of FISU World University Championships on a global scale. During the 1990s, Africa, Asia, and Oceania welcomed championships for the first time, with eight new sports introduced and wrestling returning after 28 years.

The 2000s marked a period of a major stability for the FISU Championship programme, as it met the turn of the century as a fully mature sports property. After 76 events in the previous decade, FISU World University Championships continued to grow by adding 52 championships to that tally. 13 new sports were also added while two, table tennis and judo, moved to the Summer Universiade programme. As had often been previously the case, Europe hosted the majority of events in 2000, with championships taking place in 11 countries. Just two years later there was the remarkable introduction of no less than six new sports to the programme. The only one event hosted in Americas this year saw futsal return to its Championship birthplace of Brazil, 16 years following the inaugural edition.

The 25 events of 2002 were attended by 4,489 participants, breaking the existing record and then by 2008, totals reached 6,652 setting another new record and showing incredible growth in participation in a short time. Weightlifting also debuted as a FISU Championship in 2008, with the first edition organised in Komotini, Greece.

Following a decade of development and positioning in the international arena, FISU Championships continued to grow steadily during the 2010s. However, for the first time since their debut over five decades earlier, there was the need for key strategic reorganisation. This was not only a consequence of its own success but in equal measure to best manage the next steps in the lifespan of this property. Asia set a record by hosting seven events over the decade, including three in Chinese Taipei, though events were held in diverse parts of the world. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the FISU Championship Squash was in Melbourne, Australia, Africa held the 4<sup>th</sup> Woodball Championship in Kampala, Uganda, and the 17<sup>th</sup> Cross-Country Championship was in Kingston, Canada.

This decade started with what was arguably one of the best FISU World University Championship seasons. A record-breaking 27 events were held in 2010 and saw 6,000 participants from 105 countries attend. The average of 222 participants per Championship, was a figure way ahead of its time, and again highlighted the development of world university sport. In the five seasons following 2010, 12 new sports were added to the

programme, while 13 no longer held FISU World University Championships. Three of those, however, migrated to the Summer Universiade programme – taekwondo, archery, and badminton – adding to the growth of that event. Records were set across the board, namely in terms of continental representation – 2010 is to date still the only FISU Championship season where all five continents hosted at least one event.

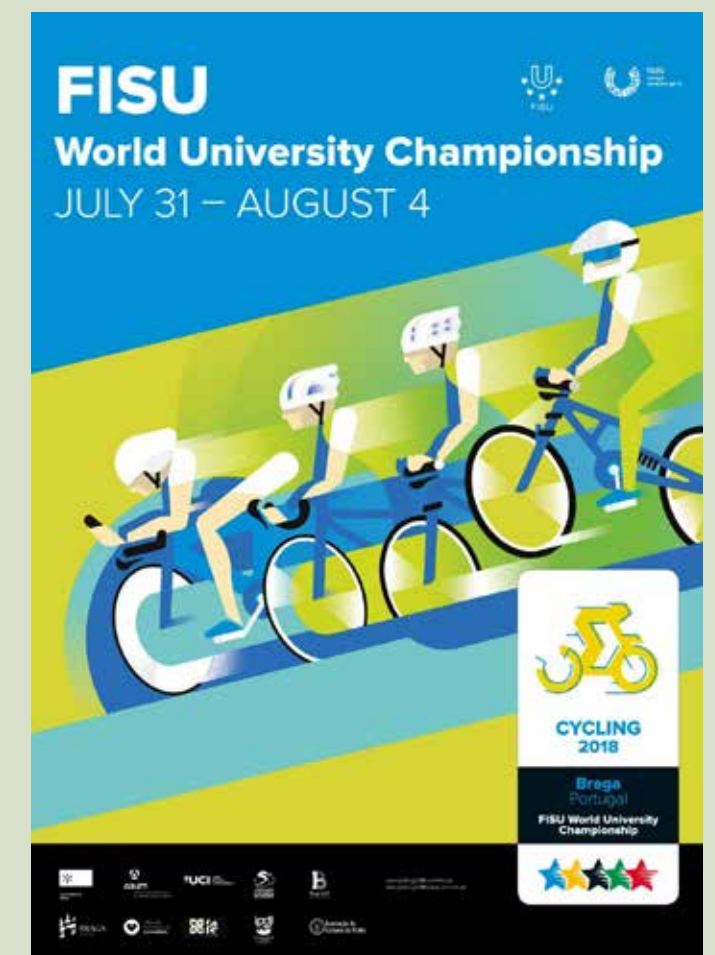
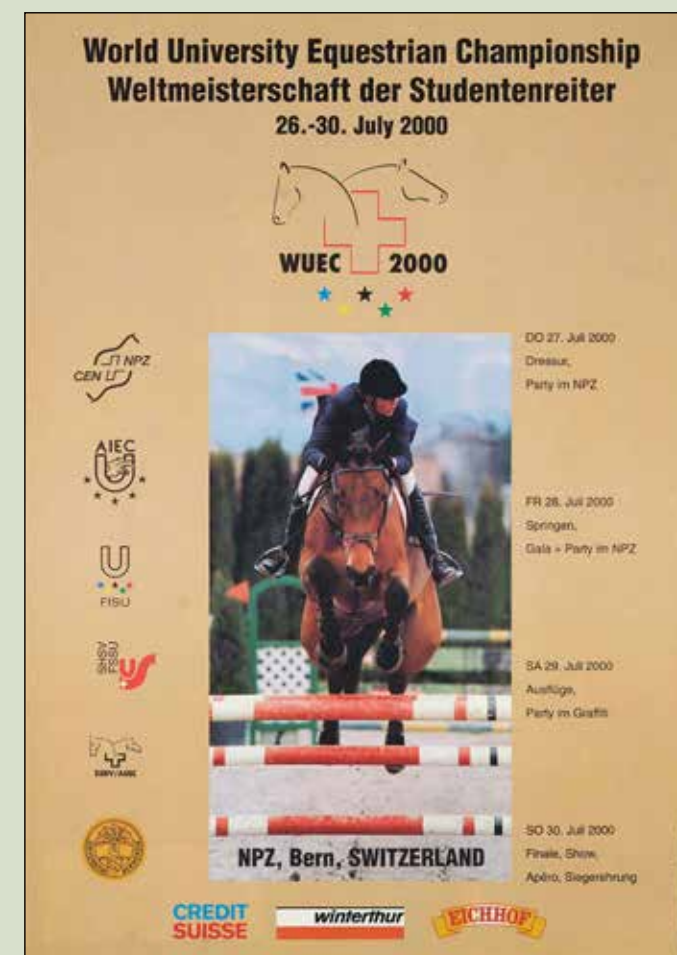
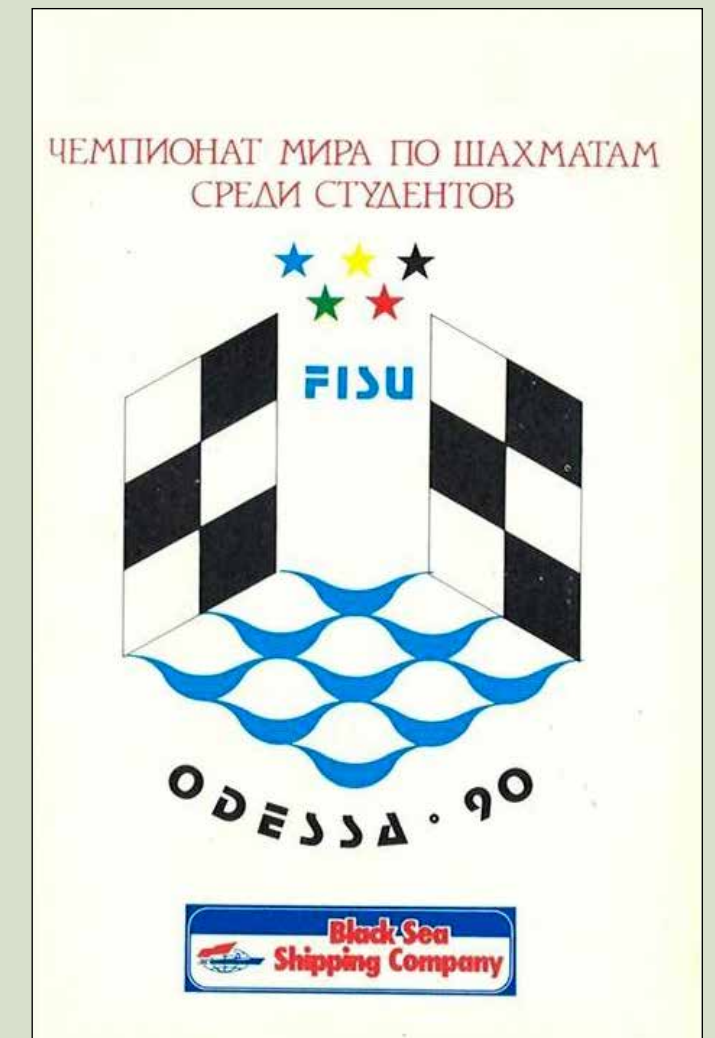
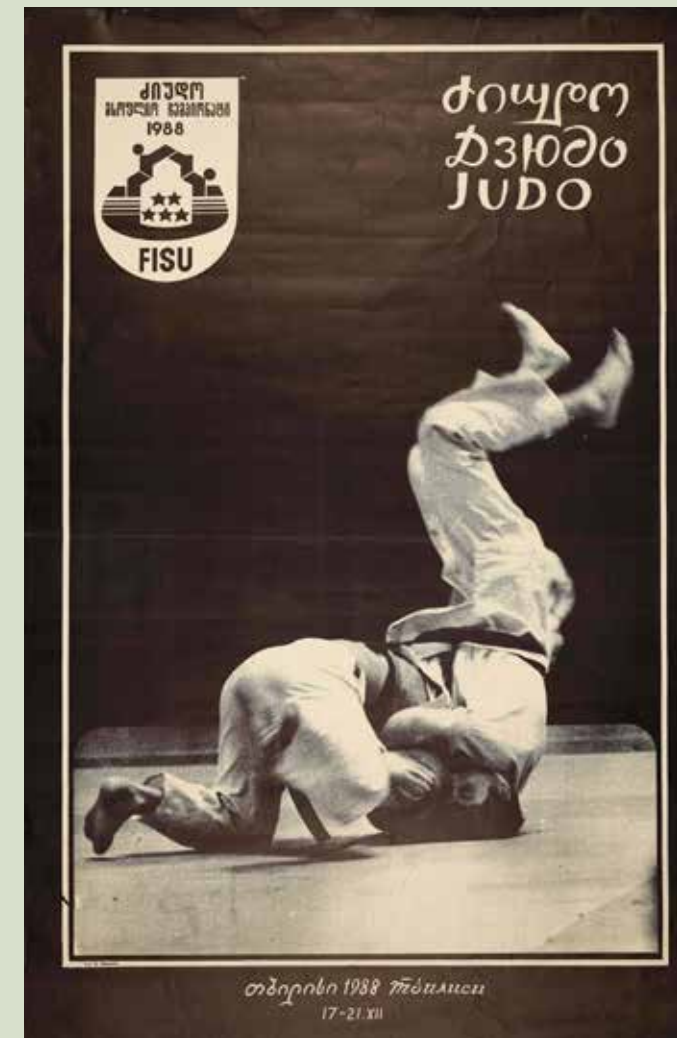
The 2018 season saw a record number of participants (6,792) attend the 32 events held. The year will additionally be remembered as one with four new sports introduced, while eight ended their FISU Championship run, at least in terms of format. Two of those, chess and bridge, merged into a mind sport cluster, with a similar situation happening with six other sports becoming a combat sports cluster. Asia, meanwhile, continued its strong support of FISU Championships hosting 11 events in 2018.

The beginning of the 2020 Championship season coincided exactly with the breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic. In March of 2020, 127 years after the very first World Speed Skating Championship took place in Amsterdam in 1893, the 2<sup>nd</sup> FISU World University Championship was staged in the city. This first and only event of the 2020 FISU Championship season ended abruptly on the advice of Dutch health authorities, cancelling the last day of competition. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition organised in 2022 served as a test event for the Lake Placid 2023 World University Games.

Including speed skating, 2022 represented the post-pandemic revival of international sport activity making it again possible for FISU to stage championships. 13 sports took place around the world with Jachymov, Czechia providing the venue for ski orienteering and the first FISU World University Championship since 2020. The FISU Championship Mind Sports in Antwerp, Belgium concluded the season.

FISU's 75<sup>th</sup> year of 2024 has continued the great tradition of FISU Championships with events held in 22 sports. Handball, the first ever FISU Championship, carried on its significant role in the FISU programme with the event in Antequera, Spain, while a new FISU sport, sport climbing, first introduced in 2016, held its 4<sup>th</sup> ever Championship in Koper, Slovenia. ●

**During the 1990s, Africa, Asia, and Oceania welcomed championships for the first time, with eight new sports introduced and wrestling returning after 28 years.**





# FISU University World Cups

Beijing Normal University (CHN) vs Paulista University (BRA) during the Final of Jinjiang 2023 FISU World Cup Football



amongst classmates at an international level, is an experience that cannot be found anywhere else in sports. The FISU University World Cups have caught the imagination of students and universities alike.

The first FISU University World Cup 3×3 Basketball was launched with great success in 2015 (then named World University League) and was followed by the first-ever FISU University World Cup Football event in 2019. Both events have become mainstays on the international sports calendar.

The FISU Cup Football, one that FISU previously held in the format of a FISU Championship from the 1970s, was organised twice in Jinjiang, China. Of the eight editions of the FISU Cup 3x3 Basketball, China has organised six of them, with the exceptions of 2022 and 2023. The capital of the FIFA 2022 World Cup, Doha, Qatar, was home to the 2023 edition of the FISU Cup 3×3 Basketball, while Istanbul, Türkiye hosted the 2022 edition.

Türkiye, the pioneer of the FISU wrestling championship back in 1968, also hosted the FISU University World Cup Combat Sports in 2022, which brought together the sports of karate, boxing, muaythai, sambo, wrestling, and wushu all at one event. Each of these sports previously featured individually as FISU World University Championships, or in some cases as part of past FISU World University Games. This inaugural edition welcomed 943 athletes from 46 countries. ●

**Through continental qualifiers and aligned events at national, regional, continental and global levels, the FISU Cups establish new pathways to high-end international tournaments.**

## FISU WORLD CUPS

The FISU University World Cups are university sport's newest event properties, created to bring ever more student-athletes into the fold, including those who might not otherwise have an opportunity to compete on the international university sports scene.

Through continental qualifiers and aligned events at national, regional, continental and global levels, the FISU Cups establish new pathways to high-end international tournaments. Through these series of events, FISU aims to change the role and impact of university sport on the lives of student-athletes.

FISU Cup events embrace a university-versus-university format instead of one made up of national delegations and thus are game-changers. Putting on university colours and competing



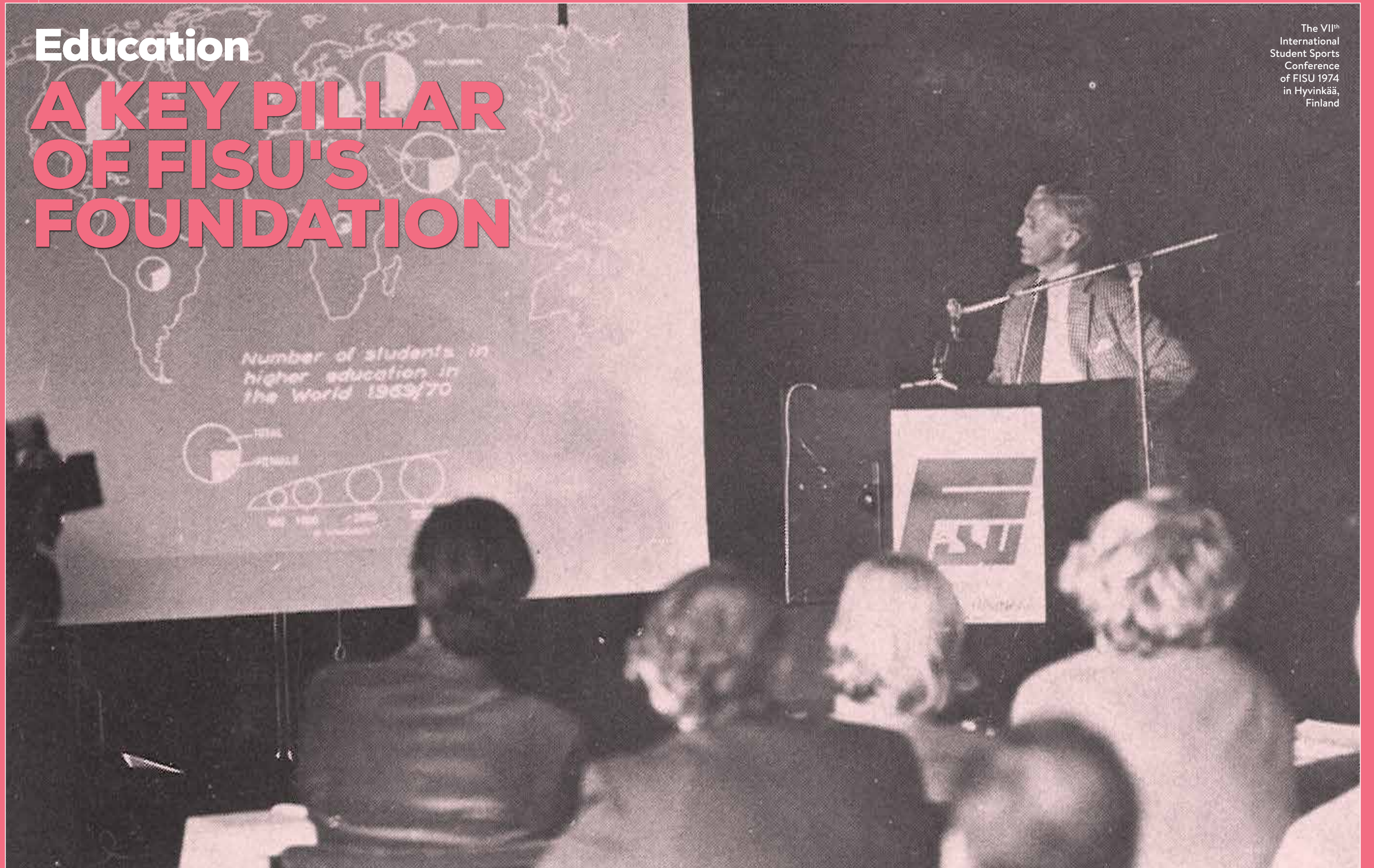
Vytautas Magnus University (LIT) team celebrate on the podium after winning the Doha 2023 FISU World Cup 3X3 Basketball



# Education

# A KEY PILLAR OF FISU'S FOUNDATION

The VII<sup>th</sup> International Student Sports Conference of FISU 1974 in Hyvinkää, Finland







**VERENA BURK**  
FISU Vice-President

**E**ducation has long been a key element for FISU in parallel to our sports programme. For decades, we have seen the FISU Forum (now FISU World Forum) and the FISU Conference (now FISU World Conference) hosted around the world and grow themselves as key components of the FISU brand. These are recognised as important events by FISU member federations, partners of FISU (International Olympic Committee, International Federations, International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, International Fairplay Committee, etc.) and scholars around the globe.

In recent years, what has become evident is the need for our activities to evolve with our target audience, namely students. We should never forget that everything we do is done for students. In parallel, newly created activities are a legacy of our past events, showing the link between FISU's sport events and education, at the service of young people.

Since 2016, the FISU Volunteer Leader Academy, a legacy of 2013 Summer Universiade in Kazan has provided opportunities for students from around the world to learn about FISU while developing

leadership skills to support their career progress. This contributes to the university sports movement by creating capacity and growing the pool of future talent who will run the movement in the future. In training the next generation of sports leaders, FISU strengthens itself in the short term by developing people who can work with and contribute to the growth of its member associations, and in the long term by training young leaders and offering them a chance to develop their own networks. This is complemented by the FISU Student Springboard programme in which several of those students receive additional mentoring, allowing them

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**“Helping student-athletes pursue both their athletic and academic careers by advocating to all stakeholders is a crucial theme for FISU.”**

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personal growth and the chance to gain valuable knowledge to becoming a university sports leader.

Along with its educational events, FISU, as the international governing body for university sports has a strong role to play in dual career, one of the eight pillars of the FISU Global Strategy. Helping student-athletes pursue both their athletic and academic careers by advocating to all stakeholders is a crucial theme for FISU. This becomes important for if FISU wants to guarantee its sport events are well attended, it needs to ensure that athletes can study, and students can train in their chosen sports. Using FISU's leading role and platform to encourage universities and sports federations around the world to support this on their campuses and in their countries is vital. This can be achieved through the development of good practices, guidelines, and also by acting as a resource for our member associations to share their experiences, their projects and to build synergies within the university sports movement.

From past developments, and with the need to stay current with FISU's target audience, we need to listen and ensure our activities respond to what our members expect from their international governing body. Themes such as leadership, well-being, ethics, good governance, as well as sustainability are likely to be core elements of new projects or of existing activities, though this will be determined by the decisions FISU takes to fulfill its role as an international institution. Nevertheless, it is crucial to primarily strengthen existing properties prior to developing new initiatives, so as not to risk quantity over quality.

Therefore, we would like to invite all students, FISU members, commission members, as well as FISU partners to work with us on the further development of the FISU Education programme. This will then be one which equally meets the needs of the target groups as well as the challenges of the university sports movement and societies worldwide. ●



Alison Odell, Verena Burk, and Peninah Kabenge presenting the “Women and Sport” award in 2009, Belgrade, Serbia





## FISU Conference

**A**s the driver of the university sports movement, providing opportunities for leadership, education, and growth are vital elements on FISU's agenda. FISU's Education Committee encourages the study and enhancement of university sport through educational events, but also with studies and publications, lectures, and other activities.

Held in conjunction with the FISU World University Games, the FISU World Conference aims to stimulate research and scientific exchange on university sport within sports organisations as well as academic and student communities. Its themes focus on the study of university sport and are further complemented with keynote addresses, parallel workshops, poster sessions, and roundtables. This tradition, dating back to the 1950s, provides student-athletes and university sports stakeholders the opportunity to attend an international scientific conference on university sport with no registration fee to pay.

**“The totality of the use and development of education is a key pillar strategically in any international sport federation, but most especially in FISU as a body founded within higher education. It is not just invaluable; it is essential and indispensable.”**

*Alison Odell*

### THE FISU WORLD CONFERENCE ON STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPORT

This event is held during the summer edition of the FISU World University Games, and is a collaboration with the highest level of local academia. This unique experience is open to all accredited FISU Games participants.

One of the conference's key objectives is the promotion of talented junior scientists and the fostering of state-of-the-art research. Accordingly, the FISU Young Researcher Award recognises young leaders in university sport research. The award winner is invited to present their research project and paper at the next FISU World Forum where they have the opportunity to exchange with members of the world's national university sports federations, and to discuss the relevance of their project for university sport worldwide.

### THE FISU WORLD CONFERENCE ON INNOVATION – EDUCATION – SPORT

Since 2009, and in conjunction with the winter edition of FISU World University Games, the FISU World Conference on Innovation – Education – Sport invites participants to present their research and interact on scientific innovations and sustainable development in winter sports. This two-day event creates a social atmosphere for scientists, youth, and young at heart, who present and promote research on scientific innovations – all while enhancing the sustainable development of winter sports.

The FISU Education Committee is currently composed of 12 members and the genders are equally

represented. It is the only FISU Committee with this stipulation. It was at the instigation of Claude-Louis Gallien, who was the CESU Chair from 1995 to 2011, that this policy came into force in 1999. Alison Odell was the first woman to occupy the position of the CESU Chair from 2011 to 2015.

### CESU WAS ONE OF THE FIRST PERMANENT COMMITTEES OF FISU

In the early 1950s, the federation launched its first project in the field of education, which would later transform into the FISU Conference. By October 1952, the Executive Committee had considered the programme of a conference that would “discuss the functions sport should assume in educational training, especially in universities”. The topics selected for the conference covered physical education as a means of general education and sports culture, the place of sport and recreational activities in the university, and the educational aim of universities.

Considering the federation's willingness to support harmonious development of intellectual and physical capacities of university students, this later formed the basis of FISU's motto of “excellence in mind and body”.

FISU organised its second university sports conference during the Summer Week in San Sebastian, Spain, that welcomed 612 participants from 26 countries. Franz Lotz, a professor at Wurzburg University, Germany took the lead of the “conference committee”, which became the Committee for the Study of University Sport



**“Our committee is of fundamental importance to our federation, because sport must be an integral part of the life of the university student at both elite and mass levels. We particularly encourage lifelong physical activity and the development of women's sport.”**

*Austria's Werner Czisek, CESU Chair from 1976 to 1987*

(CESU) in 1957. Due to changes happening around the planning of FISU events, the conference saw only two editions before being relaunched in 1960 under a new format.

The International University Sports Days took place for the first time in Macolin, Switzerland under the guidance of former FISU Secretary General Carl Schneider, and the federation's Vice-President at the time, Rudolf Bosshard. The event was designed for student athletes active in organising university sport, managers of university sports associations, physical education teachers, and sports doctors from universities.

The discussion focused on “sport as an element of recreation in student life”, delivering on FISU's goal to develop reflection on sociological, psychological, and medical aspects of university sport and the general conditions for organising sport at universities. To support this, participants were asked to bring documents and films about university sport from their own countries, while the leisure programme included compulsory sports activity and the watching of films and shows. Participation in this first edition was limited to 100 people, and students from almost 20 countries attended.

FISU's biennial International University Sports Days (sometimes also called “congress” or “conference”) was its core educational event until 1974. In parallel, an international study seminar on university sport was regularly organised until the mid-1970s, in addition to the sports programme during Summer and Winter Universiades. In that period, the first FISU Conference adopted its current format, with the inaugural edition held during the Sofia 1977 Summer Universiade and focused on “the development of university sport”. The following decade saw topics diversify, from sports medicine and quality of life, to sport legislation and environmental problems. ●



# FISU World Forum

**E**very two years since 1992, the FISU World Forum brings together students, officials, and other key partners involved in the university sport movement from FISU member associations. It combines educational sessions with cultural, networking and sporting activities, making it a powerful communication platform for the various university sports communities. The Forum is the second largest FISU event in terms of participation.

## IN 2022 THE FISU WORLD FORUM CELEBRATED ITS 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

The adventure started in September 1992 on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus when a small group of volunteers moved to the seaside resort of Paralimni to help with the organisation of a “FISU Forum”. With the support from the Cyprus government, organisers made the event a success. During five days, 89 delegates from 21 countries participated in educational, cultural and recreational programmes, which soon became a permanent fixture. Interestingly, the very first forum was initially planned for Bulgaria in the summer of 1990, but adverse weather conditions made it impossible to hold.

Since the first edition in 1992, the FISU World Forum has brought together around 3,000 participants to exchange ideas and best practices



## The adventure started in September 1992 on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus when a small group of volunteers moved to Paralimni to help with the organisation of a FISU Forum.



for university sport. The event has travelled the world. While the first editions of the Forum took place in Europe, the new millennium marked wider global distribution of FISU events and activities. The wish of CESU was to organise the Forum in as many continents as possible to allow participants to immerse themselves in different cultures and systems. Attendees have had the opportunity to discover Cyprus, Italy, France, Poland, Portugal, Spain (the only country to host it twice, in 1996 and 2010), Sweden, Russia, Croatia, Chinese Taipei, Korea, Mexico, Costa Rica, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates.

## THE CREATION OF THE FISU STUDENT COMMITTEE

From the memories of FISU Honorary Member and former CESU Chair Alison Odell, who has attended FISU Forums since 1998, the 2002 edition in Capetown, South Africa was the first occasion when one felt strong student desire to engage in the direction development and decision-making aspects of FISU. The headline theme for this Forum was “Challenges facing student sport at the beginning of the new millennium”.

The Forum outcome was the declaration to offer more responsibility to students and to constitute an International Student Sport Council. The CESU, under the Chairmanship of Claude-Louis Gallien was supportive of this proposal.

The eventual compromise, which was adopted between CESU and the FISU Executive Committee, with the latter still cautious about allowing ‘the



student voice’ to participate directly within its bounds, was for the Student Committee to be structurally placed under CESU. From this position, it would receive support and guidance, and its ambitions could then be expressed at the Executive Committee level. It was a significant step forward at the time, even though it took until 2012 to formally establish a Student Committee.

The Lisbon Forum in 2004, that focused on “Education through University Sport”, concluded that FISU should utilise its international links with members and partners to develop a capacity-building platform for accreditation and lifelong learning through university sport.

## PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

In Vigo, Spain in 2010, with 71 countries in attendance, gender equality was introduced for the first time at the FISU Forum and has been present ever since. Organisers now invite member associations to participate on the condition that one female and one male from each organisation attends.

In 2020, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, the FISU Forum took place online and attracted 1,500 participants, including 600 university students, from 105 countries. Thirty years after its first edition in Cyprus, the FISU World Forum was held in Costa Rica in December 2022, with this 16<sup>th</sup> edition having a special focus on sustainable development. The latest edition in Zagreb, Croatia in August of 2024 focused on “University sport: creating a better world”, with sub-themes of diversity and inclusion as well as sports diplomacy and global relations. ●



## FISU Ambassadors

**A**s part of its mission to be the leader of the global university sports movement, FISU has created two separate, but interconnected, programmes to support the development of emerging leaders and university sport across the world.

### FISU VOLUNTEER LEADERS ACADEMY

The FISU Volunteer Leaders Academy (FVLA) is a unique educational event designed to give emerging leaders a variety of lectures and seminars about international university sport, as well as how to manage volunteer programmes and then apply them in their national or continental university sport federations.

2013 marked the start of a new way of promoting university sport values as FISU acknowledged the importance of volunteers at large-scale sporting events. They used the opportunity of the Kazan 2013 Summer Universiade to create this new educational project.

Since its first edition in 2017, the FVLA has annually brought together 100 young people from all over the globe to work on projects and exchange valuable information and experiences learned from within their home university communities. Since 2020, the program has been delivered in an online format

and includes webinars, workshops, collaboration, and group projects.

### FISU STUDENT AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME

After taking part in the FVLA, delegates are appointed as FISU Student Ambassadors and are tasked with creating individual action plans, to deliver relevant and specific activities in support of the development of university sport in their home country or continent. The Ambassadors' role is to serve as an important link between FISU and student communities in the countries where FISU is present and to help to raise awareness about the university sport movement among students. FISU Student Ambassadors promote events organised by FISU, CUSFs, and NUSFs through social media and contribute to the organisation of different activities throughout the year, including the International Day of University Sport (IDUS) celebrated each year on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September.

Among others, the role of the FISU Students Ambassadors includes acknowledging the importance of university sports as a tool for promoting peace, cohesion, and unity, to spread the word about FISU, and to further encourage all students to be actively involved in sport and volunteer activities, while simultaneously promoting gender equality and tolerance. ●



## Joshua MIETHKE

Germany | FISU Student Ambassador 2018

**W**ithout knowing how it would later cross and influence my path, while watching TV as a teenager I stumbled across an event called the Universiade and a federation with the motto “Today’s stars, tomorrow’s leaders”. This early encounter with the world of university sports stayed with me so when I started my studies, university sport was known to me. I then had the chance to represent my university as a judoka but also to be part of the German University Sports Federation (adh).

Years later, when I was presented with the opportunity to attend the FISU Volunteer Leaders Academy (FVLA) 2018 in Kazan, Russia, I saw it as a chance to connect with the international sports federation I had glimpsed in that commercial. This prospect excited me and felt like a natural extension of my growing involvement in university sports.

The ten days I spent in Kazan in the summer of 2018 were intense and packed with many new experiences—challenging but also enriching. I met like-minded young people with a passion for university sports and gained knowledge about different facets of the field. Completing the FVLA also led to my attaining the status of FISU Student Ambassador, a programme designed to provide FISU and young, dedicated individuals from national university sports federations (NUSFs) with a platform for worldwide collaboration beyond the FVLA.

I was fortunate enough to attend the FVLA not only in 2018 but also to return the following year for a second edition, witnessing firsthand the immense development both the FVLA and FISU Student Ambassadors programme had undergone.

Attending the FVLA and being a FISU Student Ambassador has significantly shaped my personal and professional development over the past few years. It opened doors, such as being appointed to both FISU’s Student Committee and the Board of the adh, and eventually being offered a position at FISU’s General Secretariat in Lausanne to work on the very event whose commercial I had seen years ago on TV. Of course, the programmes have also profoundly influenced my personal development. The days in Kazan were characterised by cultural exchange, forging bonds between the participants which over time have proved to be a strong personal and professional network.

We were presented with many different perspectives on the same topics, finding sometimes unexpected similarities in what each of us was doing in our university environments, NUSFs, or



“The ten days I spent in Kazan in the summer of 2018 were intense and packed with many new experiences –challenging but also enriching.”

countries, as well as recognising the differences. I returned with new ideas and changed perceptions.

Being part of the FISU Student Ambassadors kept these ideas fresh and the spirit we created during the Academy alive. The FISU Student Ambassadors have also evolved into an impressive network of young leaders throughout the university movement, serving as a hub for educating the next generation of leaders both within and outside the university sports movement. From activities on campuses to developing federations, the marks and impact of FISU Student Ambassadors can be seen around the world.

The establishment, implementation, and development of the FVLA and the FISU Student Ambassadors is a great legacy of previous Universiades. With these programmes, FISU has identified the opportunities presented by an increasingly interconnected world and provided a platform to attract young individuals who otherwise would have never benefitted from the positive influence of the global university sport movement. ●



## Bridget UMUTONI\*

Uganda | FISU Student Ambassador 2018

**I**t was an incredible experience attending two editions of FISU Volunteer Leaders Academy. At the FISU Volunteer Leaders Academy 2018, I proudly represented the Association of Uganda University Sports at the Volga Center in Kazan. This opportunity was truly life-changing and paved the way for my career in the sports industry. Fast forward five years and I was absolutely thrilled to be part of FVLA once again, but this time as a recruiter and team leader. Over two months as a recruiter, I had the privilege of meeting inspiring and highly motivated young individuals who possess an incredible work ethic. I have no doubt that they will continue to drive university sport forward and make a significant impact on the collective sports industry.

I am immensely grateful for the network and opportunities that being part of the larger FISU Family has provided me. The spirit of collaboration nurtured by FVLA and the Student Ambassador program has truly transformed us as individuals and professionals.

In the same collaborative spirit, I was invited by the FISU Student Ambassadors from Korea to participate in the FISU Academy Korea, which took place just a day after FVLA 2023. I had the privilege of moderating a session on sharing experiences of the FISU World University Games. Hyemin Choi, an amazing individual, shared her story and inspired student athletes, demonstrating



that with dedication, the right support system, and focus, it is possible to excel both in sports and education.

I want to extend special kudos to the entire FISU Student Ambassador team from Korea, whose hard work and dedication made the event a reality. It's truly remarkable to witness the evolution of this program and the positive impact it continues to have.

Here's to the continued success of FVLA and the FISU Student Ambassador program! Let's keep pushing boundaries and creating a brighter future for sports and education. ●

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**“Over two months as a recruiter, I had the privilege of meeting inspiring and highly motivated young individuals who possess an incredible work ethic.”**

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\*In 2021, Bridget received a scholarship for the Dream Together Master (DTM) programme in Seoul. This unique programme provides students an opportunity to develop sport management skills to further their career plans in sport.



## Min Joo KIM

South Korea | FISU Student Ambassador 2021 & 2022 , Team Leader 2023

**T**he beginning of my FISU journey came when I represented my country, South Korea, at the 2021 FISU Volunteer Leaders Academy. Through the academy, I acquired a diverse set of skills essential for becoming a future leader, which laid the foundation for my role as a FISU Student Ambassador.

In my first year as an ambassador, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, I successfully celebrated IDUS by raising awareness about FISU within my university fencing community and campaigning to support Chungcheong's bid for the 2027 FISU World University Games. Due to my active participation, I was nominated for another season of the FVLA and the FISU Student Ambassador program.

In 2022, I was selected for the FISU Student Springboard pilot program, which offered me an opportunity to be mentored by a senior FISU mentor, allowing me to further grow in ways I never anticipated.

One of the highlights of my experience was when I participated at the Costa Rica 2022 FISU World Forum. I was extremely grateful to be one of the 12 student ambassadors to receive FISU funding and meet with students from all over the world offline. It was especially great to learn from experts and discuss diverse topics closely related to creating a more sustainable and better future through university sport.

In the following year, I further had the privilege to work as a delegation services intern for the Lake Placid 2023 FISU World University Games Winter, where I supervised my team's desk at one of the

largest athletes' villages. My time at the games was insightful and valuable in that it allowed me to gain firsthand experience working in a mega-sport event.

In addition to these opportunities I led a FISU-NUSF project in South Korea, organising the first ever national version of the FVLA in my own country. This project provided a platform for national students with a passion for sport to interact with each other, learn about diverse topics, and grow leadership skills through FISU's core values. This event was also meaningful in that it brought together FISU student ambassador alumni in Seoul to collaborate and share their own experiences at the event.

After my ambassador term, I was appointed as a team leader, where I guided new ambassadors, helping them navigate their journeys. At the same time, I also contributed as a speaker and moderator in the FISU monthly webinars and am currently part of the working group responsible for planning the future FVLA and FISU Student Ambassador program. I am very excited to be a part of this wonderful team and am looking forward to participating in the Zagreb 2024 FISU World Forum as well as what we will achieve together in the future.

All in all, I am filled with gratitude for FISU for providing constant opportunities that have not only helped me grow as an individual but have also enabled me to take on various responsibilities to help broaden my horizons and deepen my commitment to education and sport. I am proud to be part of this amazing community and look forward to further building on my experiences and knowledge throughout my journey. ●



Development  
**BUILDING  
A BROADER  
FISU  
COMMUNITY**







**STEFAN BERGH**  
FISU Development  
Committee Chair  
FISU Emeritus Honorary  
Member

**A**ll sports organisations are constantly in some form of change. That change may involve modifying competition rules, introducing new committees in the organisation or initiating new events in the program.

Since its formation in 1949, FISU is no exception. The activities and the organisation have grown both in quantity and quality. This can be measured in many ways – financial results, the volume of sporting events, the number of participants at these events, the scope of participating countries, the number of representatives in various committees, and in the number of employees in the FISU office.

I would like to say that the pursuit of development and the desire to constantly improve operations is part of FISU's DNA – a part of the culture that characterises the organisation.

The Summer Universiade organised in 1991 in Sheffield, United Kingdom, was the first that I experienced. As a delegation leader from the Swedish University Sports Federation, I became interested in the activities that FISU represents right from the start, and I decided to try to contribute with my commitment to the organisation.

In 1995 I was elected as a member of FISU's Executive Committee and with this I was able to be involved from the "inside" of the strategic agenda that the board managed. Of course, there were plans for the development of the activities within FISU, but during the first years in the Executive Committee I – and also some of the other EC members – felt that there was an unused potential in the movement that FISU represented.

At the end of the 90s, several of us in the Executive Committee more actively discussed the need to establish a long-term plan for FISU's development. Such a plan would need to be drawn up together with FISU's members – the national university sports federations – and it would also need to be approved by the FISU General Assembly.

When George Killian took office as FISU president in 1999, we raised the issue more actively. He was initially sceptical and did not really see the benefit of our wish to gather the federation behind the idea of a strategic plan.

At the General Assembly held in connection with the Summer Universiade in Beijing, China in 2001, a breakthrough took place. During the meeting – in the handling of the annual activity report – several delegates asked various questions about FISU's ambitions for the future. How did the Executive Committee look upon the idea of strengthening continental federations in student sports? How could FISU contribute to strengthening the national federations in a more concrete way? How could it be ensured that the federation's financial development would continue to be positive?

When all these questions were asked, of course, various members of the Executive Committee gave answers, but halfway into this question-and-answer session, George Killian exclaimed, "Come back to this meeting room tomorrow to talk about these questions in more detail. Stefan will be here then and will lead your meeting." The President probably didn't think so many people would show up, but the next day, about 100 people from more than 50 countries did.

The contributions that came from the participants at this open meeting demonstrated two things above all: a strong commitment to development of student sports and a desire to be involved in the process.

#### **A STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS STARTS – AND CONTINUES**

In the years that followed 2001, a strategic process was conducted that came to be known as "Challenge 21". The group appointed to drive this work consisted of: Alison Odell (United Kingdom), Pedro Dias (Portugal), Roberto Outeiriño (FISU Treasurer) Shadrack Adeoti (Nigeria), Chong Yang Kim (Korea), Roch Campana (FISU Secretary General) and myself (Chair).

**“An important parallel process during these years was the emergence of more robust continental federations for student sports. In Europe, Asia, America, Africa and Oceania, these federations were given a more distinct role in the FISU structure.”**

Together we drew up a strategic plan that was approved by the FISU Executive Committee and was then presented and approved by the FISU General Assembly in two stages – in Daegu, Korea in 2003 and in Izmir, Türkiye in 2005.

An important parallel process during these years was the emergence of more robust continental federations for student sports. In Europe, Asia, America, Africa and Oceania, these federations were given a more distinct role in the FISU structure. This was manifested by the fact that at the General Assembly in 2005 they were elected as associate members. This decision – in combination with FISU directing financial support to the continental federations – contributed significantly to strengthening their position. Since then, this part of the international student sports structure

has been important in supporting, together with FISU, to the development of the national student sports federations.

In the years following 2005, I saw FISU as a federation developing its ability to address strategic issues. In addition to the development committees that operated until 2015, there was a different attitude towards and an ability to address processes about changes and growth in the other FISU committees and among its employees.

Another step was taken when FISU established its "Global Strategy 2027" in 2017. That document signals a FISU with clear values, with a qualified ability to analyse its surrounding world, and with a desire to further strengthen its position in the international sports movement. ●





# FISU Global Strategy 2027

**S**ince its founding in 1949, FISU has been the key to the expansion and reach of university sport worldwide through sports values and sports practice — in perfect synergy with the concept of university spirit. Driving the continued work is the FISU Global Strategy 2027, which ensures the longevity of the organisation and values of the university sport movement. Approved by the FISU Executive Committee in 2017, this strategy is a ten year plan that outlines key focus areas, their strategic aims, and key outcomes for the period of 2017-2027.

The development of the strategy was a carefully planned activity, working with key stakeholders in university sport such as FISU Executive Committee members, members of other FISU committees, national university sports federations

(NUSF), continental university sports federations (CUSF), university and international sports federation (ISF) representatives, and FISU staff members. Involving key voices like these in the development of the strategy helps ensure its relevance, resilience, and effectiveness as the organisation progresses.

Although the FISU Global Strategy was developed as a ten year road map for global university sport, the evolution of FISU's priority areas resulted in major updates approved by the FISU Executive Committee in 2021:

- The merging of the formerly separate culture and education focus areas, leading to the creation of one area under the approved name of “Culture & Education”
- Creation of the “Legacy & Sustainability” focus area—brand new to the FISU Global Strategy given the increasing importance on these topics in recent years

The world is constantly evolving, and the way in which FISU conducts its activities must also adapt. As a result, with the ten year period of the strategy coming to an end, the year 2027 marks the beginning of a new era for today's students, tomorrow's leaders, and the university sport movement as a whole. ●

**“Approved by the FISU Executive Committee in 2017, this strategy is a ten year plan that outlines key focus areas, their strategic aims, and key outcomes for the period of 2017-2027.”**



**3 FISU POSITIONING**  
Positioning determines how FISU differentiates itself from competitors in the minds of key audiences.

... The only global organisation dedicated to providing international sport events for students, helping them become better leaders tomorrow.

**4 FISU VALUES**  
The values are a set of guiding principles applied across all functional areas of an organisation's operations. FISU follows the principles of equality in all of the Federation's actions. FISU does not discriminate against anyone based on their race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. FISU sets the values that shape and underpin all the work of Federations and FISU members.

**Excellence** – (in mind, body and lifestyle) – a passion for excellence in sport and education.

**Teamwork** – utilise individual capabilities in a coordinated effort to develop and promote the university sports movement.

**Innovation** – embrace new event formats and cutting edge technology to enhance entertainment value.

**Joy of Sport** – create excitement across student-athlete sport events and a global fan base.

**Integrity** – all that FISU does is honest, transparent, and promotes fair play. Athletes deserve the highest levels of integrity and ethics from those working in sport.



## Dual Career

**A**n area of focus in the FISU Global Strategy 2027 is dual career – the compatibility of elite sport and studies. The fact is a very small percentage of young athletes go on to make a living competing in sport. According to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in the United States – likely the strongest college sport system in the world – fewer than two percent of student-athletes go on to become professional athletes. For the rest, it is academics that prepare them for life after college. All athletes who compete in FISU sporting events try during their university days to combine their elite sporting activities with their studies. It is common for student-athletes to face challenges that can have a negative impact on either their sporting performance or their studies. To raise awareness of the issue and the special achievements student-athletes make at this stage of their careers, FISU has for some time integrated the discussion of dual career into educational events such as the FISU World Forum and at FISU World Conferences. There, experts from various scientific disciplines and representatives of national university sports federations exchange ideas and improve existing programmes in support of these student-athletes. Recently, specific workshops, seminars, and webinars held at the FISU World University Games have focused on this subject, where athletes were able to present about their careers and NUSFs about their support programmes.

In addition, FISU itself collects and publishes data on the dual careers of athletes participating in FISU events to generate and then disseminate

this knowledge. Through an online questionnaire used since the 2017 Universiade in Taipei, FISU has been asking participating athletes about their dual careers. This has highlighted the problems and challenges of combining studies and elite sport, but also the support services provided by universities, sports federations, and NUSFs, as well as athlete suggestions and wishes. The online questionnaire records student-athletes' experiences cross referenced with important demographic information like nationality, gender, and age.

A special project in this field is the FISU Dual Career Toolkit. This toolkit has been developed by the FISU Education Committee and provides a framework for implementing a dual career programme at all stages of development. The toolkit, which is available on the FISU website, provides information and guidance for student-athletes, universities, and national university sport federations and contains best practice examples as well as references to further reading and helpful templates. ●

**The fact is a very small percentage of young athletes go on to make a living competing in sport - fewer than two percent of student-athletes go on to become professional athletes.**



# FISU Healthy Campus Programme



**F**ormally introduced in 2020 after two years of development, the Healthy Campus Programme underwent rigorous validation by a panel of 30 renowned international experts, in collaboration with seven pilot universities. Today, it stands as a beacon of innovation, housed in a personalised digital platform that empowers universities to vigilantly monitor and enhance the health and well-being of their students and entire campus communities.

The FISU Healthy Campus Programme represents FISU's ongoing commitment to improving the health and well-being of students worldwide. This long-standing idea of FISU having a more targeted offering for the higher education community was facilitated with the integration of its headquarters onto the campus of the University of Lausanne. Collaborative efforts of two university interns from this institution propelled the programme to its current form, a testament to the swift action and dedication of those involved.

This initiative serves as an unparalleled network for universities to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and gather valuable insights. Employing a holistic framework, it meticulously assesses multiple facets of a student's health, including physical fitness, mental well-being, nutritional habits, social responsibility, and sustainability.



**The FISU Healthy Campus Programme represents FISU's ongoing commitment to improving the health and well-being of students worldwide.**

The Healthy Campus Programme is steadfast in its mission to elevate all well-being aspects of students and campus communities. By addressing the widespread trend of compromised health among young adults, primarily during their academic activities, this initiative has already begun to produce positive transformations in the lives of university students around the world.

At its core is the conviction that universities should act as catalysts for promoting healthy and sustainable lifestyles among all members of their communities, fostering collaboration with all stakeholders. By promoting a supportive environment that seamlessly integrates physical activity, health-conscious practices, and nutritional awareness into the fabric of campus life, the programme aims to instill lifelong habits in its participants.

To meet the multifaceted needs of campus members, the programme adopts a comprehensive approach, encompassing not only physical activity, but also holistic campus management, mental and social well-being, nutritional education, disease prevention, risk mitigation, environmental management, social responsibility, and sustainability.

Through the Healthy Campus Programme, universities can incorporate tangible health and wellness resources into all facets of campus life, promoting a culture of vitality, resilience, and holistic well-being.

Since its inception, approximately 150 universities from more than 40 countries have registered for the programme, which has a global presence across five continents. ●





# FISU and Sustainability

**W**ith over 200 million university students worldwide, FISU has the opportunity to facilitate learning through sport to support students in having a truly global impact. Although these positive impacts help the current generation, sustainability is all about maintaining benefits over many years, to ensure the longevity of the university sport movement.

The United Nations defines sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” This also holds true for FISU in its work with so many young people who on a daily basis are not only passionate about sport, but also about their future as tomorrow’s leaders. These leaders will go on to have a great influence on society as decision makers, leaders, and policy creators, which is why FISU continues to place the utmost importance on the topic of sustainability.

In addition to meeting the broad aspects of the United Nations Sustainable Development

Goals, FISU has also made other sustainability commitments through: United Nations (UN) Sports for Climate Action Framework



The sport sector has been called upon to contribute to combatting the rise in global temperatures and innovate new strategies to minimise its footprint by reducing its greenhouse gas emissions. With help from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework is a guide to help sports organisations reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to achieve global climate goals.

In 2022, FISU not only became a signatory of this framework, committed to reducing organisational greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030, but also must adhere to and report annually on the following principles:



- Undertake systematic efforts to promote greater environmental responsibility
- Reduce overall climate impact
- Educate for climate action
- Promote sustainable and responsible consumption
- Advocate for climate action through communication

- Restore and regenerate nature wherever possible
- Understand and reduce risks to nature in supply chains
- Educate and inspire positive action for nature across and beyond sport.

## SPORTS FOR NATURE FRAMEWORK



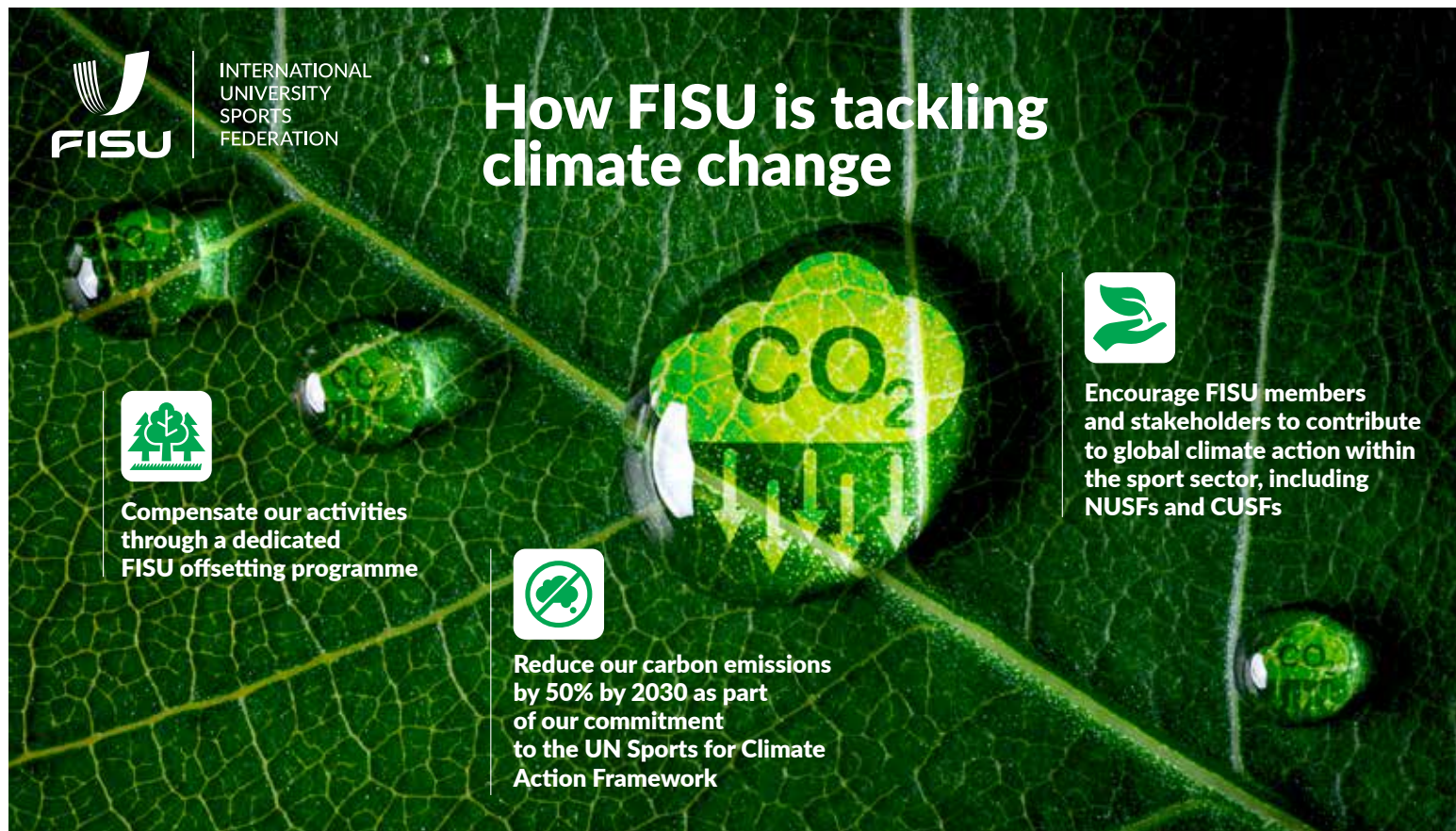
Also an important framework for sustainability in sport, FISU is a signatory of the Sports for Nature Framework. This is an initiative targeted at nature conservation and biodiversity led by the IOC, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and UN Environment Programme (UNEP). FISU was part of the initial working group, along with many international sports federations, helping develop the process by which nature conservation, restoration, and biodiversity could be addressed within the context of sport.

The framework relies on the following principles:

- Protect nature and avoid damage to natural

Starting with these frameworks, FISU is in a unique position to call on its member associations and universities to act by leading the way within and beyond the university sport movement. Furthermore, as FISU has taken a holistic approach to sustainability (financial, environmental, and social), it will continue to collaborate with experts and academia in the field to ensure that sustainability is embedded into all of its activities, and that the values of university sport remain for generations to come. ●

**The sport sector has been called upon to contribute to combatting the rise in global temperatures and innovate new strategies to minimise its footprint by reducing its greenhouse gas emissions.**







## International Day of University Sport (IDUS)

**A**n annual tradition since 2016, the International Day of University Sport (IDUS) is celebrated on 20 September. Officially proclaimed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), IDUS serves as a bridge between universities and their local communities, emphasising the importance of sport, physical activity, and healthy living.

FISU has been a driving force behind IDUS, engaging various stakeholders and member organisations in activities throughout September. These events not only promote sporting events and activities but also foster educational discussions about university sports, highlighting FISU's core values. IDUS acts as a platform for exchanging ideas, best practices, and addressing challenges and opportunities in college sports around the world.

**As a global celebration, IDUS is an opportunity to share knowledge on critical issues related to the development of sport and the university sports movement worldwide.**

As a global celebration, IDUS is an opportunity to share knowledge on critical issues related to the development of sport and the university sports movement worldwide. It raises awareness about the significance of sports in educational institutions and FISU's mission, current programs, policies, and priorities.

Although IDUS is officially celebrated on 20 September, universities, national, and continental university sports federations organise educational and sporting events throughout the month. These activities involve thousands of universities across more than 150 countries and five continents.

Today IDUS is a global celebration with local activation, aiming to reach over 200 million university community members worldwide, including students, professors, researchers, and staff. This initiative has also extended to local communities where higher education institutions are established, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose.

By continuing to support and expand initiatives like IDUS, FISU ensures that the positive impact of sports on education, health, and community cohesion is felt globally. FISU's dedication to fostering a vibrant and inclusive university sports culture will undoubtedly shape the future of college sports for generations to come. ●

## UNESCO and FISU

**I**n a significant development for the global promotion of sports and healthy living within university communities, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and FISU have formalised their long-standing relationship through a consultative partnership. This collaboration represents a pivotal moment in their shared mission to enhance the role of sports in educational environments worldwide.

The roots of this partnership trace back to the 1960s when several FISU educational events received active support from UNESCO. The collaboration later took on a new dimension with FISU's active participation in key UNESCO initiatives such as the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS) and the International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS), where FISU has served as an observer. The partnership deepened notably in 2016 with UNESCO's proclamation of the IDUS, placing emphasis on the contribution of universities as a vector for citizenship values through physical education.

The establishment of this official partnership enables FISU to engage more deeply with UNESCO's strategic initiatives, particularly in

**The partnership between UNESCO and FISU represents a significant milestone, with both organisations poised to make a lasting, global impact on university sports.**

the realms of sport and physical activity. With this new status, FISU can foster more dynamic collaboration, drawing upon its vast expertise and networks within higher education sport. This partnership will allow for greater alignment and cooperation, particularly in the dissemination of information and in contributing to UNESCO's operational initiatives where needed.

The partnership between UNESCO and FISU represents a significant milestone, with both organisations poised to make a lasting, global impact on university sports. Their combined efforts will continue to champion the critical role of sports in fostering healthy, active, and well-rounded university communities, ultimately contributing to the well-being of students worldwide. ●









