

Olympic retrospect

Values and aspirations of the Olympics

By M. GEE and L. TIMPF

Fire is a powerful symbol which carries a number of different associations. Anthropologists believe that the ability to use and control fire was a key in man's development. According to Greek myth, fire was a sacred element which Prometheus stole from the hearth of Zeus to give to Man.

It is not surprising, given the symbolic impact of fire, that the lighting of the Olympic flame evokes powerful emotion.

The Olympic flame symbolizes the aspirations and hopes of the organizers and participants, and represents a link between the ancient Olympics celebrated by the Greeks, and the modern Games.

The Olympics of the ancient Greeks strove to express six basic values. The Games were a celebration of the majesty of the Gods and of the cultural unity of all Greeks.

They emphasized the importance of the contest as an exhibition of excellence. The educational value of physical activity was also an important facet. The kinship of athletics and the visual and performing arts was seen in an emphasis on grace and harmony as well as strength and speed, and in the creating of artistic artifacts depicting athletic feats or celebrating the beauty of the human body.

Cheating was held to be disgraceful, and a sign of disrespect to the Gods to whom the Games were dedicated.

Values can be either "posted" (voiced but not followed) or "operationalized" (executed in action). The values of the early Greek games were operationalized at first, but with the passage of time, less strict observance was seen.

Specialization and professionalization crept into the Games in an insidious and gradual process. Eventually the Olympics declined into the quasi-athletic entertainment spectacle of the Roman colosseum, complete with gladiators, animals and plenty of bloodshed.

The founders of the modern-day Olympics envisioned the Games as a focal point for the broader social movement of "Olympism". Its purpose was to enhance human development and create a better world through the medium of sport and physical activity. To this end, they posted six values or aspirations. Some are still operative and highly emphasized. Others have become less prominent in the 1980's with the plurality of ideological systems now interacting.

The first aspiration of Olympism is mass participation. This involves the expansion of opportunities for youth throughout the world to take part in sport, creating what founder Pierre de Coubertin termed, "the democracy of youth".

The educational value of sport is also stressed. De Coubertin hoped that sport would provide opportunities to facilitate the process of self-discovery and acquisition of knowledge for individuals and groups.

Sportsmanship is the third value

of Olympism. It is hoped that the Olympics display a high standard of fair play and sportsmanship, designated by de Coubertin as, "the new code of chivalry".

The fourth aspiration of Olympism is cultural exchange. This relates to the artistic program, a mandatory part of the Olympics. It involves the integration of music, film, theatre, dance and the visual arts into the Olympic celebrations.

International understanding, with the aim on contributing to world peace, is another value. The founders of the modern Olympic movement expressed the desire to transcend barriers of race, religion, political affiliation, and nationality through the medium of sport.

The last aspiration is excellence, to be encouraged through performance in sport and all other areas of life.

How far do the modern Olympics go in making these values operative? Certainly, they provide an educational experience for athletes and for spectators through the

mass media. No doubt they foster excellence in performance and, perhaps, contribute to international understanding. Furthermore, although cultural events are not always highlighted in media coverage of the Games, they are present and a requirement for any city hosting the Games.

But what is the current situation in regard to mass participation? The Olympics may offer inspiration for sport involvement in the weeks and months following them. Their focus, however, is elitism.

Moreover, the concept of sportsmanship based on the "gentleman-amateur" of 1896, is no longer completely applicable. One has only to examine the routine testing mechanisms for drugs and gender to see that cheating is continually suspect.

If it seems that the values of Olympism are not being met in the Games of the 1980's, perhaps they are still viable as a symbol of the sort of values in sport that we can integrate into our lives at a personal level.

Despite the downfalls of the present Games, it would seem that if the Olympic flame were to be permanently doused, mankind would have lost a powerful symbol of the best that can be aspired to in athletics. □

With acknowledgements to Bruce Kidd and the Olympic Academy of Canada.

Volleyball team wins Atlantic Invitational

The Dalhousie Tigers Men's Volleyball Team, playing their first matches of the year against Atlantic competition, captured the top spot at the UNB Atlantic Invitational Tournament held at Fredericton, N.B. over the weekend (Oct. 26, 27).

The Tigers, led by tournament MVP and All-Star Brian Rourke, defeated the Fredericton Volleyball Club, 15-12, 11-15, 15-11 in the championship game to claim the title.

The Tigers had defeated the host club, UNB, 15-9, 15-8 in one semi-final match while Fredericton edged the University of Moncton 2-1 in the other.

The only loss suffered by the Tigers was in their opening match to Fredericton 6-15, 15-12, 15-10.

Rourke led the Tigers with 47 kills, 19 blocking points, 9 ace serves and a 63% kill percentage.

Jeff Bredin, who was also selected a tournament All Star recorded 44 kills, 14 blocking points, four ace serves, a spike efficiency of 51% and a service return ratio of 76%.

The Tigers next see action this coming weekend when they host the first AUAA Tournament of the season, featuring all four AUAA teams in regular season competition. The tournament takes place on Friday, Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 3 at noon and at 4:00 p.m., with all games being played at the Dalplex.

The Tigers will take on UDM on Friday, UNB at 12:00 p.m. on Saturday and Memorial at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. □

Cross country Tigers

The Dalhousie Tigers Men's and Women's Cross Country Teams both placed second at the AUAA Championships held at the University of Moncton over the weekend.

In the men's race, Paul McCloy of Memorial led his team to the championship by finishing first with a time of 30:41 over the 10 km course. McCloy, who is the defending national champion and the third fastest 20-year-old 10 km cross country runner ever in the world outran second place runner Norman Tinkham of Dalhousie by 28 seconds.

Other Dalhousie finishers were Craig Parsons (5th), David Layton (9th), Mike Armitage (11th), Derek Estabrook (14th) and Sandy Pirie (16th).

In the women's division, Nicola Will of Memorial placed first on the 5.4 km course with a time of 18:51 but UNB claimed the championship with only 24 points. Dalhousie placed second with 47; Memorial was third at 66 while UDM finished fourth.

Margaret MacDonald of UNB placed second at 19:18 while Annick de Gooyer of Dal finished third at 20:02.

Other Dal finishers were Janet Hoyt (8th), Elizabeth Condon (10th), Laurie Poole (12th), Pam Jones (14th), Susan Spargo (16th) and Heather Coutts (18th).

The two championship teams and the top three finishers will go on to compete in the CIAU Championships this coming weekend at the University of Guelph. □

Club sports

Dalhousie's club teams offer a competitive outlet for many individuals who either lack the talent or don't want to make the time commitment to varsity sport, or who perhaps play a sport which is not offered at the varsity level, but want to participate at a more organized level than intramurals.

Because club sport involves a number of Dal students, and being informed about club as well as varsity team games and results is therefore potentially of interest to the Dalhousie community, we would like to offer a weekly "club sport" section in the *Gazette*.

We try to keep our ear to the ground (a good way to get stepped on sometimes), but some information is unlikely to be printed unless you come to us. So if you are involved in a sport club, and would like to see something in print about upcoming games or results of past ones, drop up to 3rd floor of the SUB or give us a call.

We can't make any guarantees you'll see it in print (our editors are even now cringing at the thought of the sports pages encroaching on yet more space!) but it won't hurt to try.

Hockey club starts Sunday

The women's ice hockey club will be starting their season on Sunday, November 4th.

The team, which is playing against area junior high schools, will be squaring off against St. Catherine's Junior High.

Game time is 5:00 pm in the Dal Memorial Arena.

Dal club wins invitational

This past weekend was the last outing for the Halifax-Dalhousie rowing club this season. The two meets the club participated in were both on Sunday with the first one starting at 9 am. The team won the first match by about three seat lengths and placed third in the second.

The weekend's activities left the Dalhousie club with a record of three wins and two losses. The first race was the more important of the two, being the North West Arm Invitational which determines the local club champions.

The rowers from the Halifax-Dalhousie club were Marc Lizotte, Richard Cloutier, Michael Lahey, and Phil Alberstat, coxed by Sandy D'Arcy.

The race covered 1500 metres but it truly went down to the last 40. It was in these last meters that the second place team sprinted too early while the Halifax-Dalhousie club as much by her steady support, the race.

The success of this year's club is mainly due to Sandy D'Arcy, the cox for the team. She is a five foot, 100 pound dynamo who propels the club as much by her steady support and strategies for the races as do the rowers themselves. It is D'Arcy's first year with the team and she is expected to be back next year.

"She was like our mother, she made sure we were at practices and made it there on time. I don't know how we would have done it without her," commented one team member.

Sunday's second race was the Halifax-Dalhousie open, which was won by a very experienced crew consisting of Chipman Hall, Dr. Bob Schwatz, Chris VonMahlzen, Berry Burges, and Mark Schwartz, cox.

Broomball club to be formed

A meeting has been slated for November 6, at 4:30 pm in the Dalplex for anyone who would be interested in forming a women's broomball club. The club would offer an opportunity both to learn the game and to sharpen skills. Instructional and recreational activities would be offered, as well as an opportunity for those interested to play in a Halifax women's competitive league.

If you are unable to attend, but would like more information, please contact Lisa Timpf, 429-5211 (home), or 424-2507 (*Gazette*).

Basketball club begins action

The Dal women's basketball club will be warming up for league play in their second exhibition match on Tuesday, at 8:30, in the Dalplex.

Athletes of the week

MEN: Norman Tinkham, a fourth-year Commerce student and member of the Tigers Cross Country team, is Dalhousie's Male Athlete of the Week for the week of Oct. 22-28. Tinkham, a native of Yarmouth, placed second overall at the AUAA Championships held at the University of Moncton on Oct. 27.

Tinkham's time of 31:05 in the 10 km course was only 28 seconds slower than first place finisher Paul McCloy. Tinkham, who will now go on to compete in the Nationals at Guelph on Nov. 3rd, was also named an AUAA All-Conference runner. □

WOMEN: Annick de Gooyer, a second-year Physiotherapy student and member of the Tigers Cross Country team, is the Dalhousie Female Athlete of the Week for the week of Oct. 22-28. De Gooyer, a 5' 7" runner from Yarmouth, ran one of the strongest races by a female at Dalhousie in recent years at the AUAA Championships at the University of Moncton on Oct. 27.

De Gooyer, who placed third overall, was the top Dal finisher as the squad placed second to UNB. Her time of 20:02 on the 5.4 km was outstanding, and her third place finish qualified her for the National championships this weekend at the University of Guelph.