



EXPLOIT

As another year of outstanding sporting achievements drew to its close, 300 athletes from 19 different countries established - at Eloy, near Phoenix, USA - a stunning new world record mark in Formation Skydiving.

Led by two former World Games Champions (1997 Lahti), Jack Jeffries and Dan Brodsky-Chenfeld (USA), an international team embarked on a series of assaults on the existing world record for the largest freefall formation: 282 set in 1999.

On December 12, 2002, at 23:30 h UTC, it all fell into place: 300 skydivers hooked up in freefall to build the largest formation ever. In compliance with the World Air Sports Federation's (FAI) regulations for this type of record, they built the formation exactly as planned - with every single skydiver entering his or her assigned slot - and held it for 7.02 seconds. With the final ratification of the world record claim by FAI still pending, photographic proof that 'the record stands' - superb video and still shots by renowned freefall cameramen Norman Kent, Jason Peters, Bruno Brokken, Mike McGowan, e.a. - made its way around the world. As seen on CNN: a truly international collaborative effort, performed in a spirit of unity among sportsmen and sportswomen, and certainly in strong contrast to the more depressing news which closed out 2002.



IWGA HEADQUARTER

Since the landmark decision by the members of the IWGA - taken during the 2002 Annual General Meeting in November - to open the association's first permanently staffed headquarter in premises belonging to the El Pomar Foundation in Colorado Springs, USA, progress on its implementation has been steady.

IWGA President Ron Froehlich recently met with Marty Mankamyer, President of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), to discuss further support to IWGA setting up its offices in America's capital of amateur sports. President Froehlich hopes that IWGA will be able to benefit from value-in-kind donations from some of USOC's OPUS sponsors and suppliers. No one better to ask for advice and guidance in how to get settled in the Rockies than the long-time residents! The USOC, two International Federations (bowling and racquetball; both IWGA members) and 42 national sports organizations consider Colorado Springs their 'mountain home'.

President Froehlich liaised regularly throughout the past two months with the future 'landlord', the chairman and CEO of the El Pomar Foundation, Bill Hybl, on several issues. Among them: the recruitment of an executive director. Several applications have already reached the IWGA Secretary General Co Koren.



INSPIRATION

Irina Karavaeva (RUS) won Olympic gold in individual trampoline at Sydney 2000, she came in third in the syncho trampoline event of The World Games 2001 Akita, and she is currently (December 2002) ranked the world's # 1 by the International Gymnastics Federation - FIG. Somewhere along her outstanding career, Irina won a world championship that she did not deserve. Due to a human error in transmitting and computing scores she was declared world champion - when in fact the title should have gone to a fellow competitor.

Irina spontaneously and in good sportsmanship surrendered her title. Now, on January 13, 2003, Irina received an award from UNESCO's International Committee for Fair Play. At the UNESCO seat in Paris, FRA, in the presence of UN Secretary General Kofi Anan, UNESCO General Director Koichiro Matura, UNESCO Advisor for Sport Adolf Ogi, and the President of the International Olympic Committee, Jacques Rogge, she was honored for her exemplary conduct in the practice of a sport.

Irina was moved by the laudation; still, she declared that her act was a matter of pure justice. One which will hopefully serve others in the international sports community as an inspiration!



2005 DUISBURG

In a recent letter to the German NOC President, Klaus Steinbach, the President of the IOC, Jacques Rogge, expressed his hopes for continued collaboration between the National Olympic Committee for Germany and the Duisburg Organizing Committee (DOC). Walter Tröger, Klaus Steinbach's predecessor in the presidency of the German NOC, had already initiated contacts with the DOC in this matter.

An organizing committee being able to benefit from NOC expertise proved to be crucial to the success of The 6th World Games 2001. Under the guidance of IOC member Chiharu Igaya, Japanese Olympic Committee representatives worked closely with key staffers in Akita to ensure that the first edition held in Asia would end up well deserving of the label 'best ever'.

Jacques Rogge's letter was followed up by Ron Froehlich, IWGA President, inviting Klaus Steinbach to take part in the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee (IWGA - DOC) to be held in early April.

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