

Sport for All: Challenge and Chance for Military Sport

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With Sport for All we hold a tool in our hands to make this world a little better. To make it more joyful, more healthy, more interactive, more social. To give more smiles, more sweat, more life. To more people.

If the human body and the development of its capacities are an elementary condition for living a true life, then Sport for All is an essential approach to a more human life in the future. When we learn that sport is not just a physical activity which can be measured in points or seconds, but it is an interhuman act, a social process, a stimulus to health, a resource of joy, a chance to play conflicts instead to fight conflicts: then indeed Sport for All is a message to the world. It is a message for politicians, for scientists, for city planners, for educators, military leaders, for doctors, social street workers, environmentalists and many more.

The contribution of Sport to a lifeworthy world goes much further indeed than its effect on the body alone. Environment begins inside of all of us, our bodies are part of environment. It is the total system of this planet, it's plants and animals and human beings that make up our world. This world is in danger. The pollution that we produce, the blindness with which we tolerate the extinction of hundreds of thousands of kinds of plants and animals makes us fear for a dying globe. This globe is not just an environment for factories, for cars and products.

Our globe is in first hand the world of life.

Life in its millions of forms must be protected against damage and distraction.

One fine example of nature is present in our bodies.

And our bodies need an environment in which to move.

So, when we are speaking of sport in the future we must understand our role in keeping the world a space in which human mobility does not destroy but celebrate life.

Therefore Sport for All is a natural and logical partner of the environmental movement. Both indeed depend in the most elementary way upon each other. Both are life protectors.

Standing at the threshold of the 21st century we are confident that sport will contribute to a moderate but definite improvement of human life.

It is this new and by far wider understanding of Sport for All as the contemporary synonym of "playing man" of "homo ludens" what we have to manifest. We need evidence. There has in the meanwhile sufficient scientific prove been assembled. Yes, sport can have a definite impact on health, wellness, social life and culture. Science has made it a certainty.

So the physiologist assures us on the definite positive influences of physical activity upon the cardiovascular system, the hormone transfer, the cell's processes.

The orthopedian confirms the impact of activity on bone structure, on ligaments, joints and the slowdown of the aging processes.

The psychologist and the psychiatrist have found definite relationships between physical activity and emotional well-being, stress-reduction and even mental problems.

Sociologists are examining the interpersonal processes in play and sport and their role in the socialization of the human being.

Ethnologists have explored the roles of games and other physical cultures in the development and self-understanding of societies. There is a strong support that the traditional sports of the world belong to the cultural heritage of mankind. UNESCO as the highest cultural authority in the world has granted patronage to the second World Festival of Traditional Sports in Bangkok.

The research of economists has revealed that in our contemporary society sport has created new markets. In highly industrialized countries the sport and fitness products and services establish a major field of the leisure industry which for instance in the United States with equipment facilities, services, travel etc. measure more than 80 billion US Dollars annually.

We have the proof in our hand that the role of Sport in our present and future society is essential to well-being and improving living conditions. Without hesitation we can address health ministers, defense ministers, industrialists, media tycoons and other representatives of this society who hold power in their hand. We can give them the convincing arguments for support.

We are in a politically convincing position of sport in a future oriented society because of:

- the cost reduction in national health care,
- the contribution of sport as a counter-measure to social conflicts as a basis for peace work,
- the role of sport in contemporary popular culture,
- the development of a market of leisure goods and services with a growing importance for the national economy.

This is one side of the medal. The promising side.

However, the sports system developed in the last hundred years as all countries of the world originally was not developed to solve the task of Sport for All. On the contrary it was developed for the opposite task: to give the necessary organizational background for the sport of the better and best performers. The traditional sport organization is a minority system from its interior logic. In the local sport club or training unit, in companies with sport ambitions, universities, the military etc. up to the national sports governing body the central focus is on improving performance and providing opportunities to find the best in a competitive event.

The Sport for All movement aims to give a better balance between the Sport of the best and the sport for the rest.

Sport for All is indeed one of the latest utopias which the human mind has produced (PALM 1991). Reinforced by the biological dangers of sedentarism and challenged by the indestructible pursuit for more happiness this utopia has begun to change the reality of sport. Whereas the concept of competitive sport means a selection of better and the best it is here the access for all the others to the benefits of sport and physical activity which is proclaimed.

The short history of "Trim and Fitness International Sport for All Association" - abbreviated TAFISA - is in itself an example for a success story. This organization founded 1991 by 32 national Sport for All campaigns has grown in just four years into a world spanning umbrella organization of 106 countries and 124 member organizations: Sport Federations, Olympic Committees, Ministries, National Councils, Special Organizations.

We have good reasons to believe that the driving force that makes TAFISA the fastest growing sport organization of our time is a new and more balanced view of sport: the understanding that Sport for All should be given as much support as elite sport already receives.

Here is the challenge and the chance for military sport: to extend it's programs beyond the best talented to all: to all the military, to their families, their network, their neighborhood, their communities. Military sport as a Sport for All would be more than an new generation in sport development, it would be a strong contribution to a new peace culture, a new lifestyle pattern.

The attendance of national Sport Directors at the biannual conferences of TAFISA, the growth of the International Challenge Day, the World Walking Day, the Festival of Traditional Sports are giving prove that there is an evolutionary change in our vision of sport in contemporary world. This is not true alone for the highly industrialized belt of the world. National Sport for All concepts have been established or are under preparation now in many developing nations. (Palm, 1995).

The presentation will illustrate three programs in which the impact of the Sport for All movement has become a reality. These three programs are the International Challenge Day, the World Walking Day and the World Festival of Traditional Sport.

Our first example is the International Challenge Day. It is a contribution of Canada's PARTICIPACTION campaign to the world. First it reached many communities in Canada. Then it extended all over the world.

Let me show you now a part of the video "Sport for All around the World" in which the first chapter is presenting the Challenge Day.

As you have seen the Challenge Day is a community competition (BAUMANN, 1995). The idea is simple and strikingly successful. On the same day pairs of cities compete to prove which of the two has the highest participation in sport and physical activity in their respective populations. So Sorocaba in Brazil is playing against Manado in Indonesia, Pusan in Korea has Kosice/Slovakia. as partner, Laprida in Argentina wants to win against Dunggarvan/Rep. of Ireland, Djibouti in Africa challenges Jakarta in Indonesia.

In the International Challenge Day it is Mr. and Mrs. Everybody that give his or her best for the hometown. It is not the sports stars, not the national soccer team and Olympic athletes, it is the general public. The Kindergarten kids as well as the inhabitants of senior citizen homes. The schools as well as the sport clubs, the fire brigade and the symphony orchestra. The idea stimulates the people by the millions. Coubertin's goal that participation is more important than victory is finally becoming possible. Would you have imagined that there could be a metropolis where on one and the same day 4.8 million sportparticipations would be

registered? Hong Kong did it. Is there another prove that sport has gained an enormous active popularity than in one year the International Challenge Day in 2.000 communities all over the world made more than 20 million people active. The Challenge Day has become the world's largest one day sport event. Every ccountry, every community is invited to join.

The simplicity of the concept - the same day worldwide, a minimum of 15 minutes of activity, the inclusion of all groups of the population - contribute as well to the success as the sense of being an active citizen and representing one's community.

I come to the second model of TAFISAs international Sport for All movement, the World Walking Day is held in some 30 countries.

And again I show you a video first.

Walking is existential, it can be considered in every one of our individual lives as the first great step into the world in which we exist. We have to consider for just a minute to be handicapped and not able to walk in order to understand which enormous gift it is to be able to walk in this world.

Walking also is free. Everybody who is healthy can use his or her legs, can do this without additional costs. You can walk on streets, in parks, on the beach, in the village or in the metropolis.

To walk is the basic physical activity. Everybody can do it and it can be done nearly everywhere.

In contrast to using automobiles, trucks or airplanes, walking does no harm to the environment. Walking is both healthy for the inner "environment" of my body as the exterior environment of the surrounding world. Walking is in a small but pure dimension a positive answer to pollution.

It was with this background that TAFISA held the model event of the World Walking Day at the Ecological Summit in Rio de Janeiro 1992. 250.000 walkers then demonstrated with their feet on Cobacabana for a healthy movement - healthy for our body and healthy for our ecology.

With the World Walking Day TAFISA keeps also in mind that a large majority of today's populations around the world cannot effort to buy expensive sport equipment. A volleyball costs a fortune for the people of Bangladesh, and tennis rackets, golf cubs and scuba diving equipment are out of the reach of the average person. Walking is not and jet it is enjoyably social and healthy.

TAFISA has declared third weekend in October every year to be World Walking Day. a million participants on their feet.

There is another aspect of sport which we must take into consideration. It would be wrong to define as "sport" only the forms which are in the news media. Those 27 Olympic sports and those other 30 which are played in worldwide competition are just one and certainly an important side of sport. But they are not the only ones (Dieckert, 1992). There is the other side the enormous diversity of traditional physical cultures, indigeneous sports, which has

been developed in many distinctive forms in the regions of the world. Who knows of Yabusame, of Capoeira or of the Malakamb? Who has ever seen Fierljeppen, Hornussen or Pato? In a world where the last peaks of the highest mountains have been mastered discoveries (seem no more possible but they are still possible? Like the races of the Mongolian riders and the strength of the Basks or the super long distance runs of Mexican Indians, the agility of the Alaskan Inutis or the skill of the Thai Lop Takraw players.

The third model program is the World Festival of Traditional Sports. Held 1992 in Bonn, 1996 in Bangkok, it will have its 3rd realization 2000 in the framework of EXPO in Hannover and present more than 100 indigeneous sports as a cultural heritage and a resource of Sport for All.

The coming video will introduce you into this mostly unknown world and it's fascinating physical cultures. These truly enchanting scenes come from the 1st World Festival of Traditional Sports, held 1992 in Bonn/Germany, were teams of 34 countries from all continents displayed their sport traditions and found an audience of over 120.000 people. The World Festival of Traditional Sports is not trying to become the alternative Olympic Games. But it can be seen as a truly valuable counterbalance to our present focus on the limited world of the normed and uniformed Olympic sports. More than 500.000 attendants gathered around the 2nd World Festival in Bangkok 1996. And a new global setting will be provided in the year 2000, when the 3rd World Festival will be held at the occasion of the World Exhibition in Hannover, Germany.

Here is the video.

I do hope that these scenes and my words have evoked in your memories that in your home countries you also have traditional sports. And I do hope that you will give your best to keep these indigeneous activities a place in your concept of sport.

These were just three examples for the fascinating world of Sport for All. I see CISM as a leading global sport organization which can through the medium of Sport for All can help millions of lives more healthy, more active, more joyful and peaceful.