

# Olympics

## Corporations pay big bucks to sponsor athletes

United Press International  
 When the world's athletes march into the Los Angeles Coliseum on July 28, 1984, eight years will have passed between U.S. appearances in the Summer Olympics — a period highlighted by one of the darkest chapters in American sport.

But despite the upheaval wrought about by the 1980 boycott of the Moscow Games and the bitterness it created in the athletic community, the Olympic movement in the United States not only has made a quick recovery, but has flourished.

When things flourish, there is often money involved. And in this case, lots of money is involved.

The 1984 Summer Olympics will give corporations a chance to help American athletes, advertise their products and receive a tax break all at the same time, and a wave of financial support has arrived just when it is needed most.

— The operating budget of the United States Olympic Committee for the four years between Moscow and Los Angeles is \$77 million. Of that, an unprecedented 40 percent is coming from corporate entities.

— Millions of dollars are being doled out to various sports governing bodies by corporations and are being paid to athletes hired by companies so the young men and women can work part time, train full time and can afford to carry on their dream of Olympic participation.

— The sale of commemorative coins for the 1984 Olympics is expected to bring \$200 million to the USOC treasury, a once-in-a-lifetime windfall that will be used to set up a foundation designed to help meet the needs of American amateur sport for years to come.

— For the first and probably the last time the Summer Games are expected to turn a profit. And because the USOC is a partner with the Los Angeles Organizing Committee, a business arrangement previously unheard of in Olympic annals, more money will be forthcoming. The USOC will receive 40

percent of the Los Angeles profits.

A variety of causes have combined to bring about the deluge of financial support.

One school of thought inside the Olympic movement says that the publicity given the plight of

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the athlete during the boycott controversy of 1980 caused various corporations to realize that help was needed.

But most of all there seems to be the hard-core business fact that the 1984 Games, since they will be conducted on U.S. soil, will give businesses a chance to put their name before the American public on a huge scale.

"I'm not going to sit here and say all companies are putting money out there out of the goodness of their heart," said Bill Scott, a marketing director for the Dallas-based Southland Corp, which financed construction of the Olympic cycling stadium in Los Angeles and which is also chief sponsor of the American cycling team.

"Companies are taking advantage of the situation as a commercial benefit.

"Our attitude is that this is something that fits into our program of community relations. But at the same time we are trying to benefit the athlete.

"There are a lot of people coming onto the bandwagon. You can see other companies looking at what can be done from a marketing standpoint and figuring out which is a viable way for them to go.

"But the 1984 games are the catalyst. If there were no Olympics in the United States in 1984, personally I don't think you would see the involvement you are seeing."

And the involvement is immense.

In addition to Southland's financing the Olympic velodrome, the McDonald's hamburger people have underwritten the building of the Olympic swimming pool and the Atlantic Richfield Co. has paid for an overhaul of the track at the Coliseum and construction of six Olympic quality practice tracks around Los Angeles.

Clothing companies are supplying athletes with millions of dollars worth of uniforms, shoes and other wearing apparel.

The Miller Brewing Co., has guaranteed to pick up the cost for feeding and housing each athlete at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., during the four years leading up to Los Angeles. In the peak summer months, as many as 1,100 athletes are at the center, where their food and housing costs about \$15.50 a day.

In all, 27 major corporate sponsors are involved with the USOC. When it comes to money, however, it is seldom a case of simply turning on a tap and watching the cash flow out. Somebody usually has to prime the pump and the various sports organizations in the country, realizing the excellent opportunity the 1984 Games provide, have been doing just that.

"I think this began with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act in 1978," said Ray Essick, head of United States Swimming, Inc., the governing body for that sport.

"When that was passed, the governing bodies became independent (instead of being incorporated into the Amateur Athletic Union). As a result of that, the various sports became aware of the needs of independent marketing. There are a lot of people out on the streets (fund raising).

"You have three separate areas of marketing. You have the Los Angeles Organizing Committee marketing the Games, you have the Olympic Committee selling the Olympic teams and all the governing bodies selling their national teams.

"We, ourselves, have a marketing firm in New York we use. But we have tried to be conservative in our approach. McDonald's has been involved in swimming for years. Now they sponsor more than 200 meets a

year for us. They became involved in the building of the Olympic swimming stadium. It is a beautiful relationship."

The opportunity to draw corporate money into the Olympic programs has created a rare chance for some sports to emerge from the shadows.

Women's field hockey, for instance, was included in the Olympics for the first time in 1980 and the American team then was ranked third in the world.

They missed the chance for a medal that year because of the boycott, but now — with the Games being held in this country and the United States team having a chance for major success — women's field hockey has become a marketable item.

Those associated with the sport have sought out sponsors, found them, and now stand ready to make some noise on the international level. If the women's field hockey team can win a medal, the attending pub-

licity can only help the collegiate programs around the country which, in turn, should keep the American team strong internationally.

The financial windfall, whether it comes through motives of profit or because of a sincere effort to help, eventually trickles down to the athlete. It is manifested in uniforms, shoes, training facilities and the morale-boosting realization that a lot of people are putting money in the place of talk.

## 1st Spring '83 General Meeting

Thursday, February 10 8 p.m.

Texas A&M  
 Society of Fellows

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### MISA EN ESPANOL

Lugar: St. Mary's Church  
 Fecha: Sabado, Febrero 12  
 Hora: 7 p.m.

La asociacion de estudiantes Catolicos invita cordialmente a todos los interesados.

## WAR



FEBRUARY 11, 12, 13

REGISTRATION: FRIDAY THE 11TH AT 6 PM. IN ROOM 201 MSC

PREREGISTRATION: ANY TIME BEFORE FEB. 11TH IN ROOM 216 MSC RECREATION CUBICLE