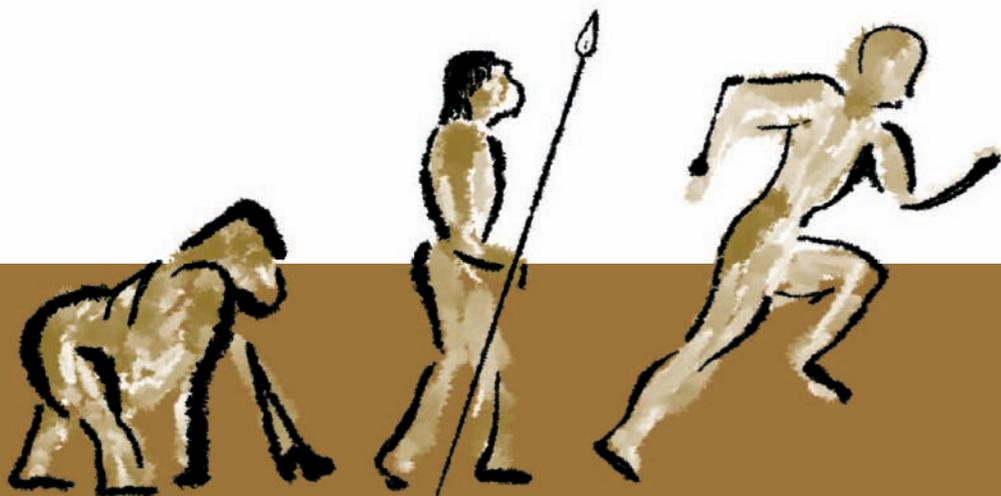




PANATHLON INTERNATIONAL
LUDIS IUNGIT

Carlo Alberto Magi

60 years in the world of sport
60 ans dans le sport



FrancoAngeli

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The Author

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Preface

by Enrico Prandi

Everything in nature is in a state of flux,
and to maintain the use of things,
even the most useful, they often
have to be related to man's memory, if we don't want
their importance to diminish
Napoléon Laisné

Historia est testis temporum, lux veritatis,
vitae memoriae, magister vitae...
History is the witness of the times, the light of truth, the life of memory, the
teacher
Cicero

It gives me great pleasure to present this important book that reviews in loving detail, the history of our association, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of the first club, in Venice.

The book guarantees a continuity, thanks to the generous, qualified collaboration of Carlo Alberto Magi, who resumed the task of "exploring old sources", assisted by Maurizio Monego for the Scientific-Cultural Commission, by Henrique Nicolini, Jean Presset and Antonio Spallino - all P.I. honorary members - and by Secretary General Sergio Allegrini.

This work allows us to consolidate that "fil rouge" that links us to our past, well aware that, as affirmed by Antonio Spallino in the previous edition, "an organisation that loses the memory of its roots, is a mutilated body, as it ignores the reasons and doubts, the suffering and hopes that moulded it. We can fully exist only if we have a memory"

Similarly we cannot ignore that another important work "Sport, Ethics and Cultures" published at the dawn of the third millennium, for the 50th

anniversary celebrations, already raised significant issues on the “profound changes” in the world of sport and on how Panathlon reacted to them.

Nor can we neglect the debate and the amount of documents produced at our international congresses from 2001 to 2010, that led to an intense publishing activity clearly illustrating the studies, analysis and lines of action Panathlon intends to develop.

Panathlon’s presence today is resulting from our work and attention, always focusing on the important role played by sport in society, therefore preventing this 60-year-old movement from retiring from its activity. This event has to be seen as a stage in our development, since we believe we still have a lot to say and express.

Introduction

Living in the present without considering the past, being aware of it and criticising it, is a rather short-sighted attitude.

Memory, at any time in man's life, is meaningful for the present and helps plan the future.

Questioning oneself and looking back at the past is fundamental. We don't intend to look back at the past with nostalgia or to suggest models that have been surpassed in the course of time, but we wish to follow the progress that has led us to the present day. Without this operation we would end up sailing by using only our sight and just a few lights, with the risk of being stranded due to the low sea bottom.

Panathlon, as a cultural movement celebrates its 60th anniversary. The changes that have taken place both within society and in the world of sport are constantly discussed and recollected by many Panathletes. Knowledge and understanding, however, are not given for granted and if an idea is to be developed, young people must understand its most significant aspects.

Revisiting Panathlon's history is not an exercise for nostalgic people or a purely celebrative operation, but a duty.

Anthropologist Marc Augè affirmed the need to reset ourselves in order to be able to listen to time and regain conscience of History, and to believe in history. Clubs, in particular, should believe in history, as they have been, are and shall always be the protagonists of this adventure. Their actions are not reported here, despite the fact that it would be interesting to write about their precious, qualified activities, but we fear we would have to fill an excessive number of pages, even if it were only to report the most significant events. Traces are found in Panathlon website (www.panathlon.net) where the actions are collected starting from 2006. A work, divided into 4 books, had been published "*Sport, Ethics, Cultures*" reporting numerous services performed by Clubs. This work focuses in particular on the contribution of experts who examined fifty years in the world of sport from its different

facets, and highlighting the cultural aims of this movement since its origins. We can easily explain why our association looks back to its origins. There can't be a history of the last 20 years without a detailed reference to the first 40 years, as we have to ensure the continuity of that period and avoid a fracture that would not offer a complete overview of Panathlon's 60 years of life. For this specific reason great care was taken to publish the story of the first 40 years in the life of Panathlon, unanimously approved by Clubs. In this way the basic principle of our 'Founding fathers' was not lost. They believed that "any organisation is crippled if it does not preserve its memory and this implies big responsibilities". Central Board Member, Carlo Alberto Magi, was entrusted with this exacting task, implying great responsibility, and after thorough research among old documents, he wrote the Story published in the volume "40 Years in the World of Sport" translated into five languages and presented for Panathlon's 40th anniversary celebrations at the Venice Doge's Palace, where Domenico Chiesa, the only survived member of the original group of "Founding Fathers", with a trembling voice caused by great emotion, expressed his satisfaction for the glorious development of what he still considered to be 'His Creature'. The Story of the first forty years ended here, by affirming that the events of the last months had to be considered part of a "chronicle". This principle, this very thin line between "story" and "chronicle" was resumed and re-examined in detail as part of the history of the last 20 years.

This is the principle that was considered fundamental when drafting the second part of our History and this is a brief summary of the first part: that of the first forty years.

The First Forty Years

Development of an idea

It was 1951 and Italy was recovering from the critical, difficult post-war time. Sport had not fully freed itself from the label of regime sport. CONI, the Italian Olympic Committee, was headed by Giulio Onesti. The Olympic cycle had resumed its course with the London Games of 1948. There were many problems that the recently reformed CONI had to face. This country did not have sports facilities and Sport had to be supported. On 19 September 1948 the first pools coupons were created that through betting were to fund not only football but national sport in general. In this new climate of freedom and hope, a group of friends from Venice decided to create in Venice a cultural movement focusing on sports clubs and on new generations in order to disseminate the values of Olympism that they had learned and put into practice as former athletes and managers.

On 12 June 1951, the new adventure promoted by Mario Viali - at that time CONI provincial delegate - and his most faithful friends, many of whom Rotary Club members, who became his precious collaborators in developing this project, was launched. Domenico Chiesa stood out among them for his moral calibre and for his clear vision on the role this movement could play.

“Starting from Italy and expanding to Europe and the World” the founders had proclaimed in their Constitution. The Club name, selected at the 4th meeting, among all those that had been suggested, was “Panathlon”, evoking the unity of all sports. Count Ludovico Foscari coined the motto “ludis iungit” that was later approved, so that the expression “Panathlon ludis iungit” summarised the movement aims: Panathlon unites through the games”.

The first expansion

Expansion was immediately started: Brescia, Genoa, Milan, Naples, Sondrio, Vicenza followed the idea launched in Venice. These seven Clubs formed the Italian Panathlon founded on 21 November 1953.

In 1955, when the first Assembly was held in Venice, there were 18 Clubs; by the end of the year they amounted to 23. In that Assembly Mario Viali left the presidency to Fernando Pozzani, President of the Milan Club, and he was appointed Honorary President. Two new members, who were to have a strong impact on the life of this Association, joined the Board: Aldo Mairano and Domenico Chiesa, who thus left his position of Secretary.

The International Status

The international status was reached thanks to the constant work of the Genoese member Aldo Mairano, who succeeded Pozzani at the Assembly held in Sirmione on 6th and 7th April 1957. In his 11 years of Presidency Mairano promoted the formation of 70 Clubs.

One Club was created in Lugano way back in 1954, followed by the Lausanne Club in 1956. The presence of this Club in the Olympic town opened the doors of IOC, thanks to Board Member, Otto Mayer. Geneva had increased to 3 the number of Swiss Clubs in 1959.

Knowing that the Madrid, Barcelona and Paris Clubs were being formed, Mairano without further ado turned Panathlon international.

On 14th May 1960, with a solemn ceremony held in the Foscolo Hall of the University of Pavia, *Panathlon International* was created.

“The constitution was underwritten in the presence of notary public Cesare Rognoni from Pavia. From the former Italian Panathlon Board, Aldo Mairano was confirmed as President, Mario Viali as Honorary President and Demetrio Balestra as Vice President, to acknowledge the fact that he had been the President of the first Swiss Club. IOC President Avery Brundage was appointed Honorary Member.”

The dream of Mario Viali and of the Venetian Founding Members had come true after only nine years.

Aldo Mairano's never-ending work aroused enthusiasm. Panathlon's magazine, the official organ, was enriched with new contents and design so as to favour mutual knowledge among Clubs.

Characteristic features of the first Clubs

The activity of Clubs was prevalingly based on dinner-meetings. Members met to listen and discuss reports by Panathletes who referred on their Federations and proposed often important themes such as the delicate dilemma amateur/pro sport and later on also Olympic gigantism, or antidoping campaigns that in subsequent years was to become a crucial issue for the very survival of sport.

If social meetings had always been Panathlon characteristic feature, like all other service Clubs, cultural issues and the promotion of all sports had always played an important role. The sporting origin of its members characterised this association whose main aim was to acculturate the sporting world.

In the first years Club meetings were often attended by local authorities. Panathlon had originated and been developed as an elite movement - as recalled by Domenico Chiesa in his celebrative speech at the Club 40th anniversary celebrations - and represented, just like the Rotary or Lions club and other associations that emerged or re-emerged after the war, a *status symbol* but also an opportunity to highlight sport requirements. In the first 4 years of life Panathlon explicitly took the Rotary club as a model for its constitution. This was due to the fact that many founding members came from the Rotary club. Up to 1955 it also maintained the separate caption to the side of the name Panathlon, that of "Sports People's Rotary Club". This came to an end with the Board meeting held in Milan on 12th June 1955, on the day of Panathlon's 4th year of life.

A defect that characterised Panathlon activity in its early years consisted in the fact that it was confined within its Club, even when its actions were of interest for the whole community. This mentality gradually changed as we shall stress further on.

Some of the congresses that have been organised were very interesting. At the first congress of the Italian Panathlon members, held in Florence on 13 - 15 October 1956, featuring 135 Panathletes from 28 Clubs, Engineer Ottorino Barassi discussed "Amateur and Pro Sport", Engineer Sergio Brusa Pasquè delivered a speech on "Sports Facilities and their Function" and Prof. Giuseppe La Cava discussed "Health Promotion Rules". The Florence Club organised a "National Art and Sport Exhibition" inspired by De Coubertin's idea to hold art shows alongside sporting events.

Relationships with the International Olympic Committee (IOC)

In 1959 the Italian Panathlon was awarded by Otto Mayer, in Lausanne, the Olympic Cup for its services promoting sport and the Olympic ideal, an award that favoured expansion in the early 1960s even if Panathlon's attempt to visibly take part in the organisation of the Rome Olympic Games fell short of expectations. The only task Panathlon was entrusted with was the appointment of Mairano as chairman of the Olympic torch Relay Committee which implied organising and accompanying the Torch relay from Lido di Ostia up to Rome.

After Panathlon acquired an international status it no longer worked on a local and national level. The attention was focused on the Olympic Games. Technical and cultural developments in the Olympic Games were to be followed, through the systematic examination of relationships with a rapidly evolving Society. The conflict between amateur and pro sport, as well as the Gigantism of the Games became topical issues both at the Tokyo and Mexico City Games and even more so at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

These were the topics discussed at the first Panathlon Congress held in Venice for the 10th anniversary of the founding of this Club. In the course of the works held at the Doge's Palace in the presence of 500 participants, IOC Chancellor, Otto Mayer, discussed Future Trends in Olympism and two well known sports reporters, Gino Palumbo and Aldo Bardelli, discussed the topics: "Should the Olympics Programme be Reduced?" and "The Problem of Amateurism at the Olympic Games".

1966 was a disappointing year. The Madrid, Barcelona and Paris Clubs had not taken off. Internationality was at risk. Despite Mairano's efforts, Panathlon was not attractive outside Italy, except for Switzerland. In April of the same year the San Marino Club was formed, but President Mairano was not at peace with himself for the fact that countries like France or Spain, so similar to Italy in culture, could not be penetrated. This situation is not totally solved even today. Fortunately there were prospects for expansion in Latin America, following a meeting the Milan Club President, Saverio Giulini, had in this city with the delegate of the Argentine Olympic Committee, Bernardo Dino Gorla. The latter was fascinated by this idea and immediately started working. On 14th September 1967 the Buenos Aires Club was inaugurated.

At the same time, thanks to the excellent work of board members Pistolesi and Travain, the Innsbruck and Malta clubs were formed – the latter has repeatedly appeared and disappeared in the history of Panathlon. In Switzerland expansion continued thanks to the work of Demetrio Balestra.

Giulini and Balestra as Presidents

In 1968 Mairano left the Presidency. He did not give in to the pressure made on him to continue with his mandate, as he was convinced that nobody “was to have a monopoly on this association”. Demetrio Balestra, fully agreed with him and declined the invitation to replace him by affirming that “offices mean responsibility, but responsibility has to be distributed”.

The Perugia Assembly elected Saverio Giulini as President.

Giulini immediately organised the Association by distributing the whole territory into Districts managed by “Governors” whose task was to coordinate and guide Clubs, but also to report local problems and refer local requests and problems to the central bodies.

The allotment of the Districts was decided at the Central Board meeting of 13th December 1969 as follows: 1st District: Emilia Romagna, San Marino, Veneto, Friuli and Trentino; 2nd District: Lombardy, Piedmont, Valle D’Aosta; 3rd District: Liguria, Tuscany, Marche, Umbria; 4th District: Lazio, Abruzzi and Molise, Sardinia, Campania; 5th District: Apulia, Lucania, Calabria, Sicily, Malta; 6th District: Switzerland, Austria, Luxembourg; plus a Presidential District formed by Clubs scattered in other countries.

Governors formed an intermediate body between the Central Board and Clubs that continued appointing members to institutional offices. That first group of Governors interpreted the role that entrusted them with responsibility and decentralised some functions, with great spirit of service and collaboration with the Central Board.

Another novelty introduced by Giulini was to organise the work of the Central Board into Commissions. At the Sanremo Congress held on 4 - 8 June 1969 the Youth-Sport report stood out with great international echo. “Introducing Young People to Sport” discussed by Count Cesare Bonacossa and “Youth and Sport” dealt by Fritz Pieth, Panathlon Board Member and Director of the Institute of Physical Education at the University of Basel prompted Panathlon Movement from that moment onward to focus on “Young People”.

Demetrio Balestra was elected President of Panathlon International at the Naples Assembly of 12th May 1972. He was the first non-Italian President, even though being from the Ticino canton he used the same language. The resulting Central Board included among its members Paolo Cappabianca, from Naples, Vice President of the Italian Rowing Federation. The first Central Board meeting convened by Balestra was held in Munich on 24th June 1972.

The tragic events of the Munich Games were discussed at the following Central Board meeting held in Bologna on 28th October 1972.

In that climate the need was strongly felt to highlight the presence of Panathlon within the international sporting arena. Sisto Favre was then asked to organise an international meet that resulted in a conference to be held in Rome and featuring top, world sporting authorities, with an award to be presented to three personalities who had stood out for their actions and work promoting the Olympic ideal through cultural and promotional events.

The first “Flambeau d’Or” were thus awarded. On 29th January 1973 in the Horace and Curiace Hall of the Rome Capitol Hill, IOC President, Lord Killanin and Italian Prime Minister, Giulio Andreotti welcomed participants. The award winners were *Avery Brundage for culture*, *Willy Daume*, President of the West German Olympic Committee and *organiser* of the Munich Games, *Giulio Onesti* CONI President *for promotion*. Numerous authorities and personalities attended the ceremony. A remarkable success both for Panathlon and personally for Sisto Favre. The day after the whole Board was received at the Quirinale Palace by the Italian President, Giovanni Leone.

Expansion in Latin America

The death of Mario Viali on 11th July 1973, resulted in the appointment of Aldo Mairano as Honorary President in the Bolzano Elective Assembly (18th May 1974) that confirmed Demetrio Balestra as President.

Thanks to the work of the 3rd District Governor, optimism came from South America. In just nine months, in between 8th November 1973 and 7th August 1974, the Montevideo (Uruguay), Tucuman (Argentina), Lima (Peru), Santiago (Chile), Mexico Centre and Sao Paulo (Brazil) clubs were formed.

Latin American Clubs, in contrast with European Clubs, had right from the start the characteristic feature of being governmentally official, as required by the law in those Countries. The protagonists of expansion in the American continent were personalities from the swimming world: Roberto Monteverde in Buenos Aires, Herman Munoz Segura in Santiago, Sebastian Salinas Abril in Lima, Henrique Nicolini in Sao Paulo, Javier Ostos Mora in Mexico. Nicolini was the prophet who promoted Panathlon in Brazil and that since then has been generously and ethically working so hard as to deserve the appointment of Honorary Member of Panathlon International.

In 1976 the Winter Games were held for the second time in Innsbruck. The day prior to the official inauguration Panathlon International solemnly presented, in the Giant's Hall at the Hofburg, the following Flambeau D'Or awards. *Lord Killanin*, IOC President *for culture*, *Marc Hodler*, FIS President, *for promotion*, *Juan Antonio Samaranch*, IOC Vice President *for organisation*.

Demetrio Balestra announced that he no longer intended to submit his nomination for President at the Central Board meeting held in Bologna on 21 February, immediately after the Olympics. He ended his mandate with the successful expansion in Latin America and the exceptional formation of 173 Clubs, corresponding to around 9000 members.

Six Months with Favre and Cappabianca for President

The elective Assembly was held in Venice (23rd and 24th October 1976) coinciding with the 25th Anniversary of the Club. On that occasion a contribution was made by the Venice Patriarch, Albino Luciani, who less than two years later became Pope, for the shortest ever papacy in history.

Favre's Presidency only lasted six months. Favre resigned for health reasons and was replaced by Paolo Cappabianca (Assembly of Viterbo 10-12 June 1977), "a genuine Neapolitan", who remained in office for 11 years, marking a turning point within Panathlon.

Efficiency, practicality, pragmatism, just like simplicity and humbleness were his characteristic features. Journalist Giorgio Bazzali, was appointed head of the Press Office. He too, contributed in this turning point.

Paolo Cappabianca overcame distrust in politics by affirming that a dialogue with politicians and therefore with institutions was necessary and essential. Domenico Chiesa, in the role of substitute, and Luigi Medici Del Vascello were appointed as Vice Presidents.

The "theme of the year" was a greatly appreciated novelty that introduced Panathlon to debates on cultural issues. In 1978 the focus was on "The Future of the Olympic Games".

At the 1978 May Assembly in Naples a speech was delivered by Tunisian Sports Minister Mohamed Mzali, IOC Vice President and a personality that Panathlon was to meet on other occasions. "Revue Olimpique" provided wide coverage to Panathlon's Conference and published its final resolution.

International expansion was still one of the main targets. Other 5 Clubs were formed in Brazil, besides that of Sao Paulo, and the "Brazilian District" was thus created under the guide of elected member Henrique Nicolini, sports reporter and first President of the Sao Paulo Club.