



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

FOCUS

WOMEN AND SPORT

JUNE 2011

The 2011 IOC Women and Sport Awards

On the occasion of the 2011 IOC Women and Sport Awards, held on Olympic Day (23 June), it is worth considering the increasing prominence of women at Olympic level and the International Olympic Committee (IOC)'s continued efforts in placing gender equality high on the agenda. Women have participated in the Olympic Games since 1900 in Paris, which were the second Games of the modern era. However, providing equal opportunities for women has become a priority only in the last few decades. Today, the IOC has made women's participation in sporting activities and administration one of its key concerns.

The participation of women at the Games has almost doubled from 23 per cent in 1984 in Los Angeles to nearly 43 per cent at the 2008 Beijing Games. And at the inaugural Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in Singapore last summer, 46 per cent of the athletes were girls – with that figure expected to be even closer to the 50 per cent milestone for the first Winter Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck in 2012. Furthermore, with the addition of women's boxing to the Olympic programme, the 2012 Games in London will have women competing in every sport on the Olympic programme for the first time in Olympic history. Through partnerships with more than 20 UN organisations, the IOC's commitment to the cause is making a real difference to the lives of women across the globe. These include UNHCR, in a project that discourages violence against women, not to mention a host of initiatives involving young people, who offer the best hope for advancing gender equality over the long term because they will one day be able to challenge outdated notions of the role of women in society.

There is, of course, a long way to go. But progress is made every day as evidenced by the work of inspirational individuals such as our 2011 IOC Women and Sport World Trophy winner, Tegla Loroupe (see sidebar).

DID YOU KNOW?

The IOC's commitment to equality extends well beyond its efforts to increase women's participation at the Games. Among the initiatives are training programmes and financial support to National Olympic Committees (NOCs) in the developing world for projects that promote equality. The IOC also sponsors a world conference every four years to assess progress and prioritise future action. The last conference, held in Jordan in 2008, attracted more than 600 participants from 116 countries. The next edition will be held in February 2012 in Los Angeles, United States.

The IOC also recognises and celebrates the efforts made by men and women in this field through the IOC Women and Sport Awards. This year on Olympic Day, 23 June, six awards (one world, five continental) are given to exceptional personalities who have all made a significant difference to boosting the development, participation and involvement of women and girls in sport around the world.

World Trophy – Tegla Loroupe

She may come from a humble background, but today Kenyan Tegla Loroupe is an international sports icon. An inspirational role model for women not only in her country, but also the world, it is an achievement she managed through humility, patience, hard work and team spirit.

Ms Loroupe is the founder and President of the Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation, which, working towards the vision of a "peaceful, prosperous and just world in which sport is a unifying factor", educates, empowers and gives women and communities in conflict opportunities in life. She is vociferous about the issues these women face and is a strong advocate for change.

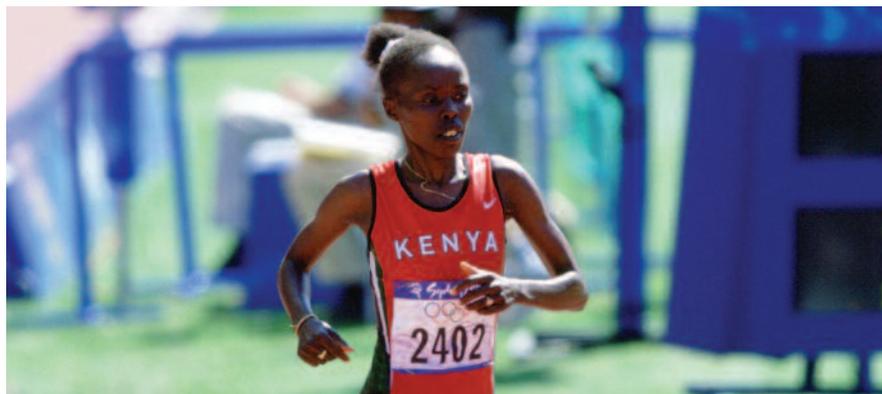
Through her Foundation, which she has mostly funded herself, she has organised numerous peace races for warring communities to be involved in with the aim of building trust and breaking down the stereotypes they may have about each other. Increasing numbers of women and girls are taking part. The cash prizes they win empower them economically, allowing them to become equal partners with the men in catering and fending for their families.

The Foundation has also created opportunities for women and girls to be trained and coached for both local and international sport.

Tegla Loroupe currently holds the post of athletes' representative on the National Olympic Committee of Kenya. Through her efforts, two female former athletes were accepted onto the executive board of Athletics Kenya, which previously comprised only men.

A former world-class athlete herself – she was a marathon world record holder, Olympian and the first African woman to win the New York Marathon – Ms Loroupe has inspired an abundance of women.

There was no doubt in the minds of the judging panel that these myriad achievements, in combination with Ms Loroupe's ongoing work in the fields of female empowerment and education, make her a worthy winner of the 2011 World Trophy and an outstanding example of how sport can make a real difference to people's lives.



THE CONTINENTAL WINNERS OF THE 2011 IOC WOMEN AND SPORT AWARDS



AFRICA
Nadouvi Lawson's
(Togo)

Nadouvi Lawson's devotion to the

development of basketball in Togo, and her involvement in sport in general, resulted in her being elected as the first female President of the national basketball federation and, subsequently, as Vice-President of the Togo National Olympic Committee (NOC). She regularly financed sport activities for women and has created a basketball tournament for women in celebration of Women's Day, using the tournament and the occasion to organise training for women coaches and umpires. She organised the selections for the African Woman Basketball Championship, and encouraged and supported women to put themselves forward for executive positions in sports federations. Thanks to her efforts and dedication, there is now a woman reporting on basketball on radio and TV on the programme, *40 minutes au Féminin*.

AMERICAS

The Women and Sport Commission of the Ecuadorian Olympic Committee

The Women and Sport Commission of the Ecuadorian Olympic Committee has been pivotal in promoting the active participation of women in sports mainly through the management of the Juan Antonio Samaranch Sports Centre for Women. Here,



women aged between 25 and 70 participate in aerobics, dance and other physical exercises to improve their health and fitness. In a mission to get women involved in the national sports infrastructure, the Commission also organises courses for women to increase their skills in administration and coaching, while actively campaigning for the inclusion of women in sports management. The Commission has also launched an annual women, sport and fashion event in the capital, Quito, with a view to promoting female athletes in particular. A further project, aimed at giving prominence to women in sport in the media, has been equally ground-breaking.



ASIA
Narin HAJTASS
(Jordan)

Narin Hajtass realised early on in life, after time spent competing at

national level in high jump and handball, that changes were necessary in her society if girls and women were to be encouraged to participate in sport. An inspirational and enthusiastic motivator, she has instilled self-

confidence in women, and is credited with contributing to the Jordanian Olympic team's success – in particular, that of its female members. The increasing number of members of the Al-Ahli Sports Club, of which she has been in charge since 2008, shows the extent of her success. As a member of the National Coaching Certification Programme she has worked tirelessly to involve more female coaches across all sports. A firm believer in the power of the media, she has been smart in using it to further the cause of women in sport. Her influence on girls and women has made a huge difference and her ambition in driving Olympic education generally, and to women and girls in particular, is an example to us all.



EUROPE
Sema KASAPOGLU
(Turkey)

A former swimmer, Sema Kasapoglu serves on the Executive Committee of the NOC of Turkey. Fuelled by a belief that every girl in Turkey should practise sport, she initiated a project whose objective is to encourage young girls to take part in sport and physical education. The project targets young girls who do not participate in sport at all, teaming them up with volunteer coaches who provide lessons for free. She also organises donations of equipment and appropriate sportswear for both the girls and the volunteers. She has been particularly active

in football, helping organise girls' tournaments, supervising training sessions and recruiting new players from neighbouring schools. Such is her enthusiasm and power of persuasion that she has even convinced a football TV channel to air a weekly programme on women's football and is working on a video project featuring female footballers.



OCEANIA
Daphne PIRIE
(Australia)

Daphne Pirie, a former track and field athlete and hockey champion for

Australia, is seen as a role model by her peers and noted for her devotion to promoting women in sport. Considered one of Australia's most successful female athletes of the 1950s, she has dedicated most of her retirement to supporting women and girls in sports activities and has been a great contributor to the development of women's sport, both in her home state of Queensland and at national and international level. A successful businesswoman, she also holds several respected positions in the Australian sports movement including: member of the Queensland Olympic Council, Board Member of the Queensland Academy of Sport, and founding President of Queensland Womensport. She is currently writing a book on Queensland's great sportswomen. Her involvement and influence have touched women at all levels.

"The 2011 IOC Women and Sport Award winners have all made a significant difference to the involvement of women and girls in sport by using the Olympic Movement's concepts of mutual respect and pursuit of excellence. As a former athlete, I strongly believe that sports are a birthright. I am also convinced that sport helps empower girls and women because it changes attitudes. It helps women competitors realise their own potential and it helps others see them in a new light. When a woman athlete triumphs, she often becomes a role model for her family, her community, or even her country." **Anita DeFrantz, IOC member and Chair of the IOC Women and Sport Commission**



"These 2011 IOC Women and Sport Awards are inspirational and show how far we have come since the 1980s when women first joined the IOC. But we all have much more to do, both to narrow the gap in sport between men and women; and between the developed and the developing worlds. We will redouble our efforts to place sport at the service of humanity — to inspire young and old, men and women alike; to give athletes the opportunity to lead by example; and promote the Olympic values of the pursuit of excellence, demonstrating respect and celebrating friendship." **Jacques Rogge, IOC President**