

OUR SPORT AND THE OLYMPICS



The Australian Olympic Federation will meet next month to lay down guiding lines for the size of the Australian team to go to the Munich Olympics in 1972 and it has already been rumoured that the Federation will think in terms of less than the 145 members who went to Mexico in 1968.

Australian chances of having a full team of pistol shooters in the 1972 Olympics will depend largely on the efforts of Australian Shooting Association delegates Peter Garrett and John Brook.

According to Peter Garrett they will be seeking better representation not only for shooters, but for other sports in a similar position . . . young in years and not yet regular International medal winners but willing to spend money on seeking International experience.

Pistol shooting entered the International arena only a short time ago, with its participation in the Melbourne Olympics when Len Tolhurst gained 9th position in free pistol.

SINCE THEN, OUR MOVEMENT HAS PROVIDED IN EXCESS OF \$100,000 TO SEND TEAMS TO INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS.

Not all of this came out of our Union funds. Indeed, much of it was provided by the shooters themselves and their supporters.

And the expenditure of money does not end with financing shooters to International competitions. Only recently the Victorian Amateur Pistol Association sent Tibor Gonczol to America to spend nearly a month with America's top shooting centre at Fort Benning, Georgia. An outlay of about \$2,000 on techniques and training procedures to be put into use here in Australia!

What the Australian Olympic Federation must take into account is that for our results to improve, we must have high level, nerve stretching competition and the height of this is at Olympic level

Our first teams acquitted themselves well, and later teams did even better.

Our chances of continuing this improvement to the stage when we can become automatic medal chances, depends entirely on our being able to enter International events regularly.

Our International competition has allowed our National events to achieve a level of scores which they would not otherwise have reached in the same period of time.

Olympic Team membership cannot be allowed to degenerate to the point where a sporting group can be allowed a "token" representation simply because the group exists.

The Australian Olympic Federation should consider carefully the overall improvement it would force in all sporting groups if it set a system of selection which paid heed to the overall interest, involvement and improvement of the sport.

Such a system of selection would force into the open those sporting bodies which rely on the Olympic Federations' "good fellowship" for an International trip every four years.

The Australian pistol movement has spent over \$100,000 since 1958!

It has had teams at International Competitions every two years and — on one occasion — a team travelled overseas for a major competition in an "off year." This was 1967 when the first Asian Shooting Championships were held.

Our participation hardly reads like that of people not worthy of full Olympic representation.

Olympic Games: Rome 1960, Tokyo 1964, Mexico 1976.

World Shooting Championships: Moscow 1958, Cairo 1962, Wiesbaden 1966, Phoenix 1970.

Jamaican Commonwealth Games 1966, Asian Championships 1967.

To meet a requirement of the Australian Olympic Federation for selection trial scores to be presented in February of 1972, the Australian pistol movement will almost certainly decide in Hobart next month to conduct a special elimination in December this year.

This will involve the Union in considerable re-organisation of its affairs, an alteration to its Constitution and last but not least, every shooter interested in taking part will be facing a personal outlay of anything up to \$800.00 in travelling, accommodation and loss of income . . . with the sure knowledge that the

same costs will be faced again at Easter 1972 when the Australian Championships are held. All this should be taken well into account by our Australian Olympic Federation when deciding on preliminary team numbers.

Unless we get a full team of pistol shooters into the Munich Olympic Games team, the Australian pistol movement and its members can count \$100,000 "down the drain".

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INVITATION FROM ROMANIA

An invitation has been received for the Australian Shooting Association to field a team in the Fourteenth International Shooting Championships of Romania.

The invitation was issued by the Romanian Shooting Federation and details have been provided to the "... Pistol Bulletin" by A.S.A. Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. P. R. Garrett.

Entry in each event is restricted to three competitors from each participating Nation.

The Championships will be conducted from June 6th to June 9th 1971, at the Bucharest shooting range.

Nations invited to participate are Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Monaco, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Soviet Union, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, United States, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, German Democratic Republic.

Pistol events on the programme are rapid fire and free pistol for men and sport pistol for women and juniors.

(Editor's Note: It is thought that "sport pistol" refers to the event known in Australia as standard pistol).