

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF UZBEK SPORTS TO STRENGTHENING
INTERSTATE RELATIONS DURING THE FORMER SOVIET UNION**

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Abstract

As is known, in all republics of the former Soviet Union, along with the restoration of devastated economies in the first decades of the post-war period, certain developments occurred in physical education and sports. In particular, several laws were adopted in the post-World War II period aimed at radically improving the management of public and sports affairs to enter the world sports arena. One of the most significant achievements of the first post-war years was the admission of the USSR to the International Olympic Committee in 1951 and the establishment of the National Olympic Committee in the country.

Keywords. USSR, International Olympic Committee, World War II period, Uzbekistan, sport, sports delegation, international relations of Soviet sports organizations.

Introduction

During this period, international relations of Soviet sports organizations were established to expand cultural ties with the peoples of the world and strengthen the unity of democratic sports movements. However, it is worth noting that the activities of Uzbek sports in international cultural relations from the years after World War II until the period of independence were recognized in all foreign countries as "Soviet athletes".

It is worth noting that in the years after World War II, cultural relations in the field of sports also acquired an ideological nature. Namely, this process is interpreted as "the historical changes brought about by the victory of socialism, the formation of the world socialist system and the collapse of colonialism found their full expression in the development of the international sports movement". (Yarotsky A.I. Poddubny. 1980)

Literature Review

In the second half of the 20th century, the former Soviet Union had various sports relations with 90 countries on all continents of the world in 60 sports. (Yarotsky A.I. Poddubny. 1980)

There is almost no mention of Uzbek sports. However, the entry of Uzbek athletes into the national teams of the All-Union sports is a worthy contribution of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan Sh.R. Rashidov to the establishment of sports relations between Uzbekistan and more than 60 countries of the world. By this time, sports organizations of Uzbekistan, which are developing sports relations with more than 60 countries of the world, have played an important role in the development of cultural relations with foreign countries.

These relations help to further strengthen the position of Soviet sports in the international sports movement, ensure its leading role, and promote the achievements of socialism in the development of the sports movement in the country, taking into account the advantages of the political and social system of the Soviet state. (Yarotsky A.I. Poddubny. 1980)

Experience shows that the scale of sports relations with foreign sports organizations, along with other indicators, depends on the level of development of physical culture and sports in the republic. Uzbekistan's participation in international sports events was established on October 4, 1931, when Uzbek athletes met with a Norwegian sports delegation consisting of footballers, track and field athletes, and swimmers. After that, sports ties with other countries began to expand, but these ties were interrupted by World War II.

Discussion

After the war, in 1948, the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR adopted a special resolution "On the improvement of physical education and sports in the Uzbek SSR". This resolution contributed to the development of physical education and sports activities and the resumption and growth of sports relations with foreign countries. These relations began to be implemented on a much broader basis, through the exchange of sports delegations and the holding of bilateral competitions. In particular, in 1958, the Pakhtakor team met with the team of the People's Republic of China, and in 1960 with the team of Japan. At the same time, athletes from Japan, Finland, the DPRK, the GDR and other countries began to visit the republic. Uzbek athletes began to show good results, often participating in competitions held abroad as part of the USSR national team. In particular, in 1947, A. Kashaev took third place as part of the Soviet team at the European and Finnish championships and was the first Uzbek athlete to bring a bronze medal to Tashkent. In general, relations were established between the sports organizations of our republic and almost all socialist countries. In addition, the names of the following Uzbek athletes were recognized in the international sports relations established with Asian countries: A. Alimov and E. Kondratyev (shooting), S. Kurbanov (sambo), R. Prokopenko (basketball), O. Rudenko (archery), K. Fathulin (classical wrestling), M. Ismoilov (equestrian sports), A. Abduramanov (classical wrestling) and the names of other Uzbek athletes took a worthy place. G. Gamaryuk (wrestling), S. Diamidov (gymnastics), R. Prokopenko (basketball), M. Kolyushev (track cycling), R. Kazakov (classical wrestling), V. Duyunova (volleyball), R. Riskiev (boxing), S. Khodiev (classical wrestling), S. Ruziev (fencing), S. Kurbanov (sambo) and others were awarded the titles of world champions.

The primacy of Soviet ideology in the system of international cultural relations can be seen in the fact that during this period, international sports relations with Asian countries were almost exclusively carried out with athletes from the Republic of Uzbekistan. The main reason for this was the promotion of the "positive impact of the achievements of socialism on sports relations" (Archive Fund of Uzbekistan. 1980) to Asian countries. If we pay attention to the following historical data, we can see the proof of our above opinion:

Uzbekistan became a real torch of socialism in the East. Its experience became a school of struggle for development for developing countries. This can also be explained by the fact that many delegations from these countries visit our republic every year. They emphasize the

progressive influence of the Uzbek experience and say that it is necessary to imitate it and learn from it. (Archive Fund of Uzbekistan. (1980)

Accordingly, Uzbek sports organizations attach great importance to expanding and developing the republic's relations with the countries of Asia, Africa, the Near and Middle East. For example, since 1965, Uzbek athletes have visited India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, the DPRK, Syria, Kenya, Ethiopia, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and others. Many athletes from these countries have visited Uzbekistan and received assistance in the development of certain types of sports.

In October 1976, the Uzbek volleyball delegation visited Afghanistan and demonstrated high sportsmanship. When referring to the reports of the press about this meeting, it can be seen that an effort was made to demonstrate the achievements of Soviet sports as much as possible through international sports contacts. In particular, as a practical result of these efforts, the mass media reported that the leaders of the Afghan National Olympic Committee expressed their satisfaction with the many useful lessons learned from these meetings: Afghan athletes are interested in the development of sports in our republic, the achievements of our people in the economy and culture. It is worth noting that all of them unanimously expressed their support for the development of traditional friendship and cooperation with the USSR.

From May 7 to May 21, 1975, the Uzbek men's basketball team visited Burma. After returning to Tashkent, they soon received a letter from the USSR Embassy in Burma. The letter noted that the skills of Uzbek basketball players were highly appreciated by Burmese sports leaders and the local press. According to Burmese officials, the games of Uzbek basketball players helped popularize basketball in Burma. This played a positive role in the further development of friendly relations between the members of the Uzbek sports delegation and the employees of the Burmese Sports Committee. The successful performances of Uzbek basketball players attracted the attention of the Burmese public and contributed to the strengthening of Soviet-Burmese relations. Similar letters were received from the USSR Embassy in the Republic of Nigeria after the arrival of the Uzbek boxing delegation in June 1975, and from Afghanistan after the Uzbek delegation on freestyle wrestling returned from Kabul.

This indicates that the trips of Uzbek athletes abroad help to demonstrate and spread the achievements of the country in foreign countries, strengthen friendships between peoples, and better understand each other.

At one time, the relevant authorities of Turkey, Burma, the Syrian Arab Republic and other countries appealed to the State Committee for Physical Culture and Sports under the USSR Council of Ministers and agreed on the long-term sending of several Uzbek specialists to assist in the development of certain types of sports.

Sh. Zokirov and A. Koneev were sent to the Syrian Arab Republic, E. A. Granatkin and M. Mukhitdinov to Afghanistan and several trainers and skilled athletes to other countries.

As is known, in the years before World War II, the sports movement in Uzbekistan began to achieve some rapid growth in its development, but in this regard, there was a lack of qualified physical culture workers and sports schools, and the existing material and technical base did not allow for the widespread involvement of the population in physical culture and sports.

All this to a certain extent limited the participation of Uzbek athletes in the international sports arena. Sports contacts with foreign athletes were of a random nature and were mainly associated with bilateral meetings of working sports delegations on football.

In the post-war period, relying on the economic and cultural developments of the republic, the mass physical education movement in Uzbekistan developed significantly. All the results of these movements are interpreted as being directly and closely related to the policy of the Communist Party, and international sports relations are recognized as the most important link in communist ideology.

As evidenced by periodicals, Sh.R. Rashidov, in his report to the 19th Congress of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan (Materials of the 19th Congress of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan. 1976), emphasized the following issues regarding the popularization of Uzbek sports and their promotion to the world:

"Physical education is of great importance in the work of comprehensively improving and developing a person. Party, Soviet, trade union and Komsomol organizations, the Committee for Physical Education and Sports, and workers' collectives should take measures to improve physical education and sports work in educational institutions and the places of residence of workers, and comprehensively develop all types of sports. "It is necessary to take all measures to ensure that physical education and sports are firmly embedded in people's everyday lives." (Materials of the 19th Congress of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan. 1976)

In the 1960s, the successes in the development of sports in Uzbekistan, and the expansion of the technical base of sports attracted the attention of the leaders of foreign sports associations. At their request, since 1960, international sports tournaments and competitions have been held more and more often in the republic. In particular, holding youth football tournaments in Tashkent (1974, 1975, 1976, 1978) has become a tradition.

By the 1980s, sports organizations of Uzbekistan had established friendly relations with 62 countries of the world, 40 of which were Asian countries. Athletes of the Republic of Uzbekistan have been to 75 countries on all continents, demonstrating their sports skills, and have managed to spread the glory of the republic with their sporting successes. However, it can be said that in many countries of the world, the numbers of which are listed above, the performances of Uzbek athletes are mostly recognized as "Soviet athletes" (in archival documents "советские спортсмены" - E.F.). Archive Fund of Uzbekistan. (1980) Thus, in 1970-1976, 24 teams as the national team of Uzbekistan travelled abroad, held 50 matches and won 47 matches, taking more than 120 prize-winning places.

As proof of our opinion, the following table is provided:

Dynamics of development of international relations of the Republic of Uzbekistan with foreign sports organizations in 1966-1976 (Archive Fund of Uzbekistan. 1980)

Year	Number of countries participating in sports	Sport touring sony	Number of people travelling	To socialist countries	To capitalist countries	To developing countries	The Uzbek national team are composed	USSR national team sostavida	In special groups	Foreign guests received	From socialist countries	From capitalist countries	From developing countries
1966-1970	34	11	283	134	80	69	145	129	9	362	165	53	144
1971-1976	75	25	836	445	218	173	439	343	54	383	162	99	122
Total			1139	579	298	242	584	472	63	745	327	152	266

In 1976, 116 athletes and coaches from Uzbekistan were abroad. That year, Uzbekistan received 8 delegations of 164 people from Bulgaria, the USA, Burma, Turkey, Afghanistan, Germany, and Japan. This is a fact that shows that the skills of the republic's athletes are growing and that Soviet Uzbekistan is entering the international sports arena.

The development of the material and technical base of physical education and sports, favourable geographical conditions for playing sports, and the expansion of sports ties with the countries of Asia, Africa, the Near and Middle East are factors in the further development of sports ties of the republic with foreign countries.

In 1966-1976, 317 representatives of Uzbekistan visited Asian and African countries through international sports ties, and 269 people from these regions were accepted into the Republic of Uzbekistan.

All this indicates that during the Soviet period, Uzbekistan remained an active force in the struggle to promote Soviet sports within the framework of world sports and raise the status of Soviet sports in the international sports arena. All the positive developments in the process of cultural exchange in the field of physical education and sports that took place during this period were interpreted as directly linked to the “stability of the world socialist system” and the “decisive influence of the international communist workers’ movement” and turned into a propaganda tool as one of the achievements of socialism. Moreover, although the documents recognize “Uzbek athletes,” the names of athletes belonging to indigenous ethnic groups in the list of national teams are extremely small or do not appear at all. (Archive Fund of Uzbekistan. 1980)

Such a political and ideological interpretation of cultural relations in the field of sports with Asian countries was especially intensified in the 1970s. According to archival data, in the early years of Soviet power, more precisely in 1925, 296 sports organizations operated in Uzbekistan, in which 29.8 thousand physical education workers worked, and international sports relations with other countries of the world were not conducted. (Archive Fund of Uzbekistan. 1980)

In the first decade after World War II, sports relations were mainly conducted with countries on the European continent.

The history of international sports relations of Uzbekistan with other countries can be divided into periods as follows: (Yarotsky, Poddubny. 1980)

Period I. Sports relations during the period of restoration of the national economy (1946-1960)

During this period, international sports relations were mainly with countries on the European continent. Although the foundation stone for these relations was laid in the 1930s, these relations were temporarily suspended due to World War II. By the 1950s, international sports relations coincided with the process of cultural exchange in the field of sports with the countries of the former Soviet Union that were part of the European continent. This situation, without exception, occurred in connection with the influence of the dominant ideology and political system of the time. This historical period is recognized as the period of the implementation of the ideas of the communist party in foreign countries.

In the era when, in the ideology of the current political period, "socialism began to go beyond the borders of one country and become a world system" (Yarotsky, Poddubny, 1980), the sports relations of the USSR were mainly with European countries. Indirectly, Uzbek athletes also participated in this cooperation as part of the Union, or rather, as Soviet athletes. In the first half of the 1950s, international cultural ties with Asian countries in the field of sports were almost invisible.

Starting from the second half of the 1950s, Uzbekistan's international sports ties gradually began to develop cooperation with Asian countries. For example, in 1958, the Uzbek national football team "Pakhtakor" met with the team of the People's Republic of China, and in 1960 - with the Japanese national team. This situation grew stronger year by year and served as an important basis for the strengthening of international sports ties in the 1970s.

According to periodicals, Uzbek athletes participated in competitions held abroad as part of the USSR national team, including the Uzbek master of sports G. Gamarnik, who won the world champion title in wrestling in 1950, and the Tashkent gymnast G. Shamrai, who participated in the 1952 Helsinki Olympic Games and won a silver medal. (Yarotsky, Poddubny, 1980)

Even when looking at the list of Uzbek masters of sports in international sports relations from World War II to the 1960s, it can be said that the names of athletes of Uzbek nationality were not recorded. Accordingly, it is clear that until the 1960s, no athletes of Uzbek nationality or Uzbek sports entered the world sports arena, but rather artificialized and falsified, as well as the process of Sovietization of the sports sphere.

International sports relations during this period were directed not at the prospects of Uzbek sport, but at the prospects of Soviet sport. However, it can be said that as a result of the work carried out in the field of sports until the 1960s, talented masters of sports, albeit few, were formed among the local population, and in the following decades, a certain ground was created for Uzbek masters of sports to enter the world sports arenas. This made it possible to ensure the participation of Uzbek athletes in international sports competitions to a certain extent in the future. In this regard, it is appropriate to recognize this period as "the period of formation of Uzbek athletes for international sports competitions."

II period. International cultural relations in the field of sports in the 60s-70s

It is known from history that this period, in the words of the ruling ideology and political system, is interpreted as “the period of the complete and complete victory of socialism” (Yarotsky, Poddubny, 1980). During these years, although relatively few, some sportsmen from the local ethnic group in Uzbekistan managed to enter the world sports scene. In August 1966, the resolution “On the further development of physical culture and sports in our country (meaning the Soviet Union - E.F.)” was adopted, and attention was paid to the expansion of physical culture and sports in Uzbekistan, as well as to the revival of exchange activities in the field of sports.

Conclusion

The significant involvement of representatives of the local ethnic group in various sports institutions in the capital of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, and regional centres indicates a certain softening of political dominance in the current era, as well as a certain activation of local governance. In this regard, it is necessary to emphasize the invaluable services of Sh.R. Rashidov, who served as the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan. Despite the prevailing ideology and pressures of the political system of the time, he emphasized that “it is necessary to take all measures to develop physical culture and sports in our republic in all spheres of society,” which, without exception, was an unprecedented feat for that time.

References

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