

## Editorial

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### Dreams

Billy Payne, an attorney in Atlanta, Georgia, had a dream that the Olympics could be held in his hometown. He discussed the dream with friends, business people and politicians. Largely with the force of his belief and personality, he obtained their commitment for time and money. Four years later, after first winning the right to be the designated United States city, the dream came to fruition in Tokyo when Juan Samaranch, the President of the International Olympic Committee, announced, 'and the city is Atlanta'—the home of the 1996 Olympics.

Others dream also. Sir Ludwig Guttmann, after starting the National Spinal Cord Injury Center in 1944, probably dreamed about starting the Wheelchair Games. This dream developed into the Guttmann Sports Center in Stoke Mandeville, a truly impressive facility, and led to the International Games for the Disabled.

Juan Samaranch, IOC President, dreamed of holding the Olympic Games in his hometown and that will happen in 1992 when the Summer Olympics take place in Barcelona, Spain. The Editor of this, the American Issue of *Paraplegia* had a dream of a Rehabilitation Center in Atlanta, Georgia which ultimately became a 100 bed spinal center after four expansions in 16 years.

Everyone dreams. The leaders of the Paralympics are dreaming of the day when the International Olympic Games will include the Paralympics. Prior to 1960, the International Wheelchair Games were held at Stoke Mandeville in the same year as the Olympics. In 1984 an attempt was made to hold the Games in North America but for various reasons, Los Angeles, the site of the Olympics, Ontario and Illinois, all did not work out. In 1988 with the financial help of the Korean government, the Paralympics were held in the sports venue two weeks after the Olympics were over at a cost of \$30 million. A similar format will occur in 1992 in Barcelona with the financial help of the Spanish government at an estimated cost of \$50 million.

What about 1996? At editorial time, the issue is not settled. The cost is estimated to be \$80 million. There is no government guarantee of help. However, there is widespread interest. Maybe the dreams of Billy Payne and the Paralympics will merge and a number of Paralympic events will be held concomitantly. After all that is the whole idea—to reduce the distinction between able and disable. I know Billy Payne is working for it; I hope his belief and personality, with the help of others, can elevate an underdog position one more time.

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*Associate Editor*