

An Outsiders Opinion On IOC !

By Don Mayer - Small Dog Electronics - VT

Start Soapbox

Baseball Has Been Very Very Good to Me !

The relatively unnoticed announcement from the International Olympic Committee that baseball and softball would not be allowed as an Olympic sport in the 2012 Olympics is an outrage. Baseball and **softball** are team sports that are played all over the world. Softball and baseball are the first sports to be cut from the games since polo was cut in 1936. Cuba, Australia, Guatemala, Brazil, Spain, Canada, South Africa, and Taiwan all spoke up in favor of allowing the sports to continue on the Olympic level after their now-final appearance at the 2008 games in Beijing.

Baseball was a demonstration sport at the 1984 Los Angeles Games and 1988 Seoul Games and became a medal sport in 1992 at Barcelona, where Cuba won the gold. The Cubans beat Japan in the 1996 final at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, where the 32 games had an average attendance of 28,749.

While the sting for U.S. professional baseball is not very severe, the close association of **women's softball** with the men's game probably doomed that sport as well. The concern seemed to be that U.S. professional baseball players would not be participating in the games because they would occur during the middle of the major league baseball season. While not too many baseball players dream of an Olympic gold medal, for **women softball** players Olympic gold was the pinnacle of the sport.

Major league baseball is getting more and more international in its scope and one day the World Series may become a true world series with international competition. The Olympics could have been an important step in this direction, but MLB will probably work toward international competition without the IOCC.

The impact on the women is more severe. Croatian **softball** player Jelena Cusak said the decision will cut off crucial funding for youth **softball** programs around the world. "These kids won't have the Olympic dream anymore," she said. "They won't understand this decision. We can't explain it to them. They don't know the politics."

Baseball is played all over the world and there are certainly more baseball and **softball** fans than there are fans of other included sports such as archery, fencing, handball, and curling!

Shame on the IOCC. Baseball and softball belong in the Olympics!

What do you think about the IOCC decision to drop baseball and softball from the 2012 Olympics? Share your opinion at the Small Dog Soapbox:

<http://www.smalldog.com/PHPbb/viewforum.php?f=1>

End Soapbox