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Women's World Games (1922–1934)

Abstract

After the World War I, women took action to have broader rights to do sports and participate in the Olympics. In 1921 they established International Women's Sports Federation. On the initiative of International Women's Sports Federation the first Women's Olympic Games were held in Paris in 1922. The next ones – under the name of Women's World Games – were held in 1926 (Gothenburg), in 1930 (Prague) and in 1934 (London). The greatest achievement of the Women's World Games was promoting women's sports and obtaining the consent of the International Olympic Committee for inclusion of track and field events for women in the programme of the Olympic Games.

The programme of the Women's World Games consisted of the following disciplines: sports games (Czech handball, basketball, volleyball, handball), athletics and fencing. In the 1922 competition sportswomen from the following 5 countries participated: Czechoslovakia, France, Switzerland, the USA and the United Kingdom. In the next – Women's World Games – the participation of countries and athletes was on the increase. In team classification of the Women's World Games, the best national teams included those of: France, Germany, Poland, Sweden, the USA and the United Kingdom.

Keywords: Women's World Games, sport, athletics, sports games, fencing.

Aim of the paper

The paper will discuss the competition of women during the Women's World Games (WWG) in the years 1922–1934. The first games – under the name Women's Olympic Games – were held in 1922 in Paris. The programme of the games included competitions in sports games, athletics and fencing. As far as the present state of research is concerned – in the light of Polish publications – the issue of the Women's World Games has been treated in a fairly fragmentary way. The most important informative works are those by T. Drozdek-

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-Małolepsza, T. Socha and M. Rotkiewicz¹. Superficial information on the Women's World Games can be found in the works of Slovak and Belorussian historians of physical education and sports². The paper has been prepared on the basis of the preliminary research into the Polish sporting press of the interwar period³.

Methods and research problems

The paper uses the following research methods: analysis of historical sources, the methods of synthesis, induction, deduction, and a comparative method. The following research areas have been put forward:

1. What role did the Women's World Games play in the promotion and popularization of women's sports activities?
2. Did the years 1922–1934 see the development of women's sports level?
3. What were the greatest sporting achievements of women from individual countries participating in the Women's World Games?

Research results

In the interwar period women endeavoured to build international structures of women's sport. In 1921 the 1st International Congress of Women's Sport was held which established the International Women's Sports Federation (IWSF)⁴.

¹ T. Drozdek-Małolepsza, *Wychowanie fizyczne i sport kobiet w krajach słowiańskich w świetle czasopisma "Start" (1927–1936). Zarys dziejów*. [Women's Physical Education And Sport In Slavic Countries In The Light Of The "Start" Magazine (1927–1936). Outline History] [in Polish], [in:] *Спортивные и подвижные игры и единоборства в современной системе физического воспитания. Сборник научных статей*, Гродно 2012, s. 66–71; T. Drozdek-Małolepsza, *Women's Sport in Czechoslovakia as Commented on by the "Start" Magazine (1927–1936)*, [in:] J. Oborny, F. Seman (ed.), *Estetika tela, telesnosti a športového pohybu*, Bratislava 2013, pp. 41–47; T. Socha, *Sport kobiet. Historia. Teoria. Praktyka* [Women's Sport. History. Theory. Practice], Warsaw 2002 [in Polish]; M. Rotkiewicz, *Rozwój sportu kobiet w Polsce okresu międzywojennego* [Development Of Women's Sport In The Interwar Period], „Sport Wyczynowy” [Professional Sport] 1979, No. 3–4, pp. 3–21 [in Polish]; M. Rotkiewicz, *Igrzyska Nordyckie* [Nordic Games], „Sport Wyczynowy” [Professional Sport], 2005 no. 11–12, pp. 53–63 [in Polish].

² J. Perutka, J. Marek, J. Grexa, J. Kossel, L. Reitmayer, *Dejiny telesnej kultury*, Bratislava 1988, pp. 125–126; В.В. Григоревич, *Всеобщая история физической культуры и спорта*, Москва 2008, с.147.

³ „Przegląd Sportowy” [Sports Review] 1922–1934; „Start” 1927–1936 [in Polish].

⁴ T. Socha, *Sport kobiet. Historia. Teoria. Praktyka* [Women's Sport. History. Theory. Practice], Warsaw 2002, p. 10 [in Polish]; T. Drozdek-Małolepsza, *Uwarunkowania rozwoju ruchu sportowego kobiet w Polsce w latach 1919–1939. Zarys problematyki* [Determinants Of The Deve-

As M. Rotkiewicz writes, “The purpose of the Federation was to: popularize sport among women – maintain continuous contact between sportswomen of all countries – create sports centres in countries that had not had independent women’s sports organizations yet; develop rules and regulations of sports competitions; determine and approve records and every 4 years organize «Women’s Olympic Games», which were to be the equivalent of the Olympic Games”⁵. Starting from 1922, on the initiative of the federation – in the four-year cycle – Women’s World Games were held. The first competition of this kind took place in Paris. The event was called Women’s Olympic Games. It should be noted, however, that the International Olympic Committee (IOC), opposed to the organization of women’s games under the name Women’s Olympic Games⁶. The official ban on the use of the name “Olympic Games” in relation to the international women’s games was issued by International Federation of Athletics⁷. Polish Association of Athletics (PAA) received a circular prohibiting players of the Association from participating, among others, in the so-called “Students’ Olympic Games” and “Women’s Olympic Games”. The editors of “Przegląd Sportowy” [Sports Review] magazine in a commentary on this decision wrote: “This is because the Olympic Games are in fact only one, and the ones that are held by the International Committee every four years, not dividing the athletes according to races, social classes, scientific census, age or sex [...]. This is precisely the power of the idea of the Olympics”⁸. From 1926, women’s games used the name Women’s World Games.

IWSF was initially composed of: Czechoslovakia, France, the USA, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. In 1928, the following countries were members of IWSF: Belgium, Estonia, France, Japan, Luxembourg, the USA, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Italy – in these countries there were independent state federations of women; Argentina, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Greece, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Canada, Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Poland, South Africa, Sweden – were represented by men’s national athletics associations⁹.

lopment Of Women's Sports Movement In Poland In The Years 1919–1939. Outline Of The Issues, [in:] T. Drozdek-Małołepsza (ed.), *Z najnowszych dziejów kultury fizycznej i turystyki w Polsce* [Recent History Of Physical Education And Tourism In Poland], vol. 1: *Dzieje kultury fizycznej i turystyki w Polsce w końcu XIX i XX w.* [History Of Physical Culture And Tourism In Poland In The Late 19th And Early 20th Centuries], Częstochowa 2011, pp. 150–151 [in Polish].

⁵ M. Rotkiewicz, *Rozwój sportu kobiet w Polsce okresu międzywojennego* [Development Of Women's Sport In The Interwar Poland], „Sport Wyczynowy” [Professional Sport], 1979 No. 3–4, p. 3 [in Polish].

⁶ T. Socha, op. cit., p.10.

⁷ „Przegląd Sportowy” [Sports Review] 1926, No. 1, p. 8 [in Polish].

⁸ Ibidem.

⁹ T. Drozdek-Małołepsza, *Women's physical education and sport in Slavic countries in the light of the magazine “Start” (1927–1936). Outline history*, [in:] *Спортивные и подвижные игры*

Sportswomen from the following 5 countries participated in the Women's Olympic Games held in August 1922. They were Czechoslovakia, France, Switzerland, the USA and the United Kingdom¹⁰. Only those countries were then the members of IWSF. The programme of the 1st Olympic Games included track and field events. Individual competitions were won by: in the 60-m sprint – Marie Mejzlikova (Czechoslovakia) – 7.6 s; in the 100-yard sprint (91.43 m) – Nora Callebout (United Kingdom) – 12.0 s; in the 300-m race – Mary Lines (United Kingdom) – 44.8 s; in the 1000-m race – Lucie Breard (France) – 3 min. 12 s; in the 100-yard hurdle race¹¹ – Sabie (USA) – 14.4 s.; in the high jump – Nancy Voorhees (USA) – 1 m 45 cm, in the long jump – M. Lines – 5 m 06 cm; in the standing long jump – Camille Sabie – 2 m 48 cm; in the shot put (with both hands) – Lucile Godbold (USA) – 20 m 22 cm; in the javelin throw – Francesca Pianzola (Switzerland) – 43 m 24 cm; in the 4×100 yards relay – the United Kingdom – 51.8 s.¹² Outside the women's games two competitions were played. The winner in the 100-m sprint was M. Lines, and in the 4×100 m relay – the United Kingdom (M. Lines, N. Callebout, Daisy Leach, Muriel Porter) – 51.8 s. The competitions were on the high sporting level, which resulted in the establishment of 10 world records. In team classification the United Kingdom team was the winner (50 points) ahead of the USA (31 points) and France (29 points). Further places in team classification were taken by the teams of Czechoslovakia and Switzerland.

The second Games, already under the name of Women's World Games, were held in Gothenburg on 27th – 29th August 1926. The programme of the games included 12 track and field events. The participants in the competitions were 80 female competitors from the following countries: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Japan, Latvia, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

In sprints the best results were achieved by the representatives of France and the United Kingdom, among others in the 60-m sprint the 1st place was taken by Marguerite Radideau (France), the 2nd place by Florence Haynes (United Kingdom), the 3rd one – by Rose Thompson (United Kingdom); in the 100-yard sprint the winner was M. Radideau – 11.8 s. ahead of R. Thompson and Kinue Hitomi (Japan); in the 250-m run the best runner was Eillen Edwards (the United Kingdom) – 33.4 s. ahead of Vera Palmer (the United Kingdom) and M. Radideau¹³. The athlete of Czechoslovakia – Ludmila Sychrova won the 100-yard hurdle race (14.4 s), outdistancing competitors from the United Kingdom – Edith White and Hilda Hatt. In the 1000-m race Edith Trickey (the United King-

и единоборства в современной системе физического воспитания. Сборник научных статей, Гродно 2012, с. 69.

¹⁰ „Przegląd Sportowy” [Sports Review], 1930, no. 18, p. 6 [in Polish].

¹¹ In the 100-yard hurdle race 8 hurdles 76 cm high were put up.

¹² „Start”, 1928, no. 2, p. 8 [in Polish].

¹³ Ibidem.

dom) was the winner, ahead of Inga Getzel (Sweden) and Louise Bellon (France).

In competitions of the long jump and standing long jump the winner was K. Hitomi, who in the run-up long jump scored 5.50 m (world record). In the long jump competitions in addition to K. Hitomi, the competitor of Czechoslovakia – Zdena Smolova gave a good performance. Z. Smolova took the 2nd place in the standing long jump and the 3rd place in the run-up long jump. In the high jump the 1st place was taken by Helene Bons (France) – 150 cm, ahead of H. Hatt (145 cm) and Inga Broman (Sweden) – 145 cm. Female athletes from Sweden gave a good performance in throwing competitions. In the javelin throw the winner was Anne-Lise Adelskold – 49 m 15 cm, ahead of Louise Fawcett (United Kingdom) and Marta Hallgren¹⁴. Another competitor of Sweden – E. Svenson took the 2nd place in the competition of shot put with both hands and the 3rd place in the discus throw. The competitors from Slavic countries were successful in throwing competitions. The representative of Czechoslovakia – Maria Vidlakova won the shot put with both hands, while Halina Konopacka won the first medals for the Polish national team. She won the discus throw competition (37 m 71 cm) and took the 3rd place in the shot put with both hands.

The representative of the French government – present at the games Bernard, granted Konopacka an honorary award in the form of “excellent plaque”¹⁵. The result obtained by H. Konopacka in the discus throw would have been a new world record. However, the result was not recognized as the world record due to the dimensions of the discus which were incompatible with the regulations¹⁶. As we read on the pages of “Start”: “The discus was incompatible with the regulations, our delegates did not take care to examine its size before the competition and to demand a discus in accordance with the regulations. The record was not recognised. Konopacka’s work was in vain”¹⁷. In addition to H. Konopacka another Pole – Antonina Taborowicz gave a good performance in the track and field competitions. She took the 6th place in the high jump, setting a Polish record (140 cm).

At the end of the games, a showpiece competition was held of the “ball with strap” shot. The winner in this competition was H. Konopacka¹⁸. The competition organizers gave H. Konopacka a reward for obtaining the best score in the games. In an interview with the editorial of “Sports Review”, H. Konopacka said: “I felt perfectly that day. But the score of more than 37 meters was a surprise even for myself. [...] My ideal [...] is to throw the discus at 40 m”¹⁹.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁵ “Przegląd Sportowy” [Sports Review] 1926, no. 36, p. 1 [in Polish].

¹⁶ “Przegląd Sportowy” [Sports Review] 1926, no. 36, p. 1; “Start” 1927 no. 6, p. 2 [in Polish].

¹⁷ “Start”, 1927, no. 6, p. 2 [in Polish].

¹⁸ “Przegląd Sportowy” [Sports Review] 1926, no. 36, p. 1 [in Polish].

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 3.

The United Kingdom representatives won the team classification (50 points), followed by France (27 points), Sweden (20 points), Czechoslovakia (19 points) and Japan (15 points)²⁰. Polish athletes took the 6th place with 7 points scored. The German team, whose athletes represented a high sports level, did not participate in WWG.

The participants in the meeting of the 24th session of IOC in Lisbon in 1926 made a decision to extend the programme of the Olympic Games to include women's competitions in athletics and gymnastics²¹. During the Olympic Games in Amsterdam in 1928 the following women's track and field events were to be held: 100-m sprint, 800-m race, high jump, discus throw and 4 × 100 m relay²².

In May 1930, F. Sterba – a representative of Poland, was present at a meeting of the board of IWSF²³. During the meeting, it was decided by way of a resolution that Women's World Games would be held on 6th–8th September 1930 in Prague at Letenský Stadium. A committee of the Olympic referees was appointed which consisted of Messrs: Milliat (France), Bergmann (Germany), Gruss (Czechoslovakia), Karchant (United Kingdom), F. Sterba (Poland). The programme of the games in addition to athletics included finals of sports games (Czech handball, basketball). During the meeting, the board of IWSF approved the world records in athletics set by S. Walasiewicz (60 m sprint – 7.6 s) and H. Konopacka (discus throw with both hands – 66.48 m).

In the 3rd WWG, athletes from 17 countries participated, including: Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, France, the Netherlands, Japan, Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Polish, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Italy²⁴. The programme of WWG included 12 track and field events, sports games and fencing²⁵.

One of the best competitors of the games was a representative of Poland – Stanisława Walasiewicz, who won 3 gold medals and 1 bronze medal. She took the 1st place in the 60-m sprint (7.7 s), ahead of Lisa Gelius (Germany) and K. Hitomi; she won in the 100-m sprint (12.5 s.), ahead of Tollien Schuurman (the Netherlands) and L. Gelius, as well as in the 200-m sprint (25.7 s.), ahead of T. Schuurman and Nellie Halstead (United Kingdom)²⁶. S. Walasiewicz won the bronze medal in the 4 × 100 m relay together with Alina Hulanicka, Maryla

²⁰ "Start" 1930, no. 18, p. 6 [in Polish].

²¹ Z. Porada, *Starożytne i Nowożytne Igrzyska Olimpijskie [Ancient And Modern Olympic Games]*, Cracow n.d., p. 97 [in Polish].

²² "Start" 1928, no. 2, p. 8 [in Polish].

²³ "Start" 1930, no. 9, p. 10 [in Polish].

²⁴ "Start" 1930, no. 18, p. 7 [in Polish].

²⁵ Track and field events: 60-m run, 100-m run, 200-m run, 800-m run, 80-m hurdle race, 4 × 100 m relay, shot put, discus throw, javelin throw, long jump, high jump, athletic triathlon; sports games: basketball, handball, Czech handball. Organizers of the games did not include results of sports games and fencing in team classification.

²⁶ "Przegląd Sportowy" [Sports Review] 1926, no. 73, p.1; 1930, no. 74, p. 2 [in Polish].

Freiwald and Felicja Schabińska (50.80 s.). The German relay team (49.90 s.) the 2nd place was taken by the United Kingdom (50.50 s.). In the 800-m run the winner was Gladys Lunn from the United Kingdom (2 minutes 21.9 s.), the 2nd place was taken by Marie Dollinger (Germany), the 3rd – by Brita Loden (Sweden), and the 4th – by Gertruda Kilos (Poland)²⁷. In the competition of the 80-m hurdle race, the best was Maj Jacobson from Sweden (12.4 s.), ahead of Gerda Pirch and Ursula Birkholz from Germany and Maryla Freiwald from Poland.



Photo. 1. III World Women's Olympics in Prague (1930). Medalists of 100-metre sprint, Stanisława Walasiewicz (Poland) – gold medal, Tollien Schuurman (Netherlands) – silver medal, Lisa Gelius (Germany) – bronze medal.

Source: National Digital Archive (NAC), Ref. 1-M-1163-3.

H. Konopacka (36.80 m) won the fourth title of the world champion for the national colours of Poland in the discus throw competition, ahead of Tilly Fleischer from Germany (35.82 m) and Vittorina Vivenza from Italy (35.23 m). The German competitors triumphed in the shot put and the javelin throw. In the shot put the winner was Grete Heublein (12.49 m) ahead of Gustel Herman and the representative of Austria – Liesl Perkaus. The 4th place was taken by Sonia Lewin, and the 5th by Wanda Jasińska. In the javelin throw competition the 1st place was taken by Liesel Schumann (42.32 m), ahead of Augustine Argus (Germany) and K. Hitomi from Japan²⁸. The result achieved by L. Schumann was a new world record.

²⁷ "Start" 1930, no. 18, pp. 8–9 [in Polish].

²⁸ Ibidem.

In the high jump competition the winner was Inge Braummüller (Germany) – 157 cm, ahead of Carolina Gisolf (the Netherlands) and Helma Notte (Germany). In the long jump competition the winner was K. Hitomi from Japan with her 590 cm, ahead of Muriel Cornell from the United Kingdom and Selma Grieme from Germany²⁹. For the first time during the WWG the track and field triathlon (100-m sprint, high jump, javelin throw) was held. I. Braummüller appeared to be the best track and field athlete, the 2nd place was taken by K. Hitomi, the 3rd – by Ruth Svedberg (Sweden).

The representations of Czechoslovakia, France, Poland, Sweden, Italy signed in for the basketball tournament in the European zone³⁰. The team of Czechoslovakia presented the following players: Brabcova, Capova, Houskova, Jandourkova, Topolcanova, Ulbrichova; the team of France: Lunet, Marinat, Moreau, Radideau, Rocle; the team of Poland: Helena Czerska, Celina Gapińska, Irena Jaśnikowska („Jasna”), Maria Kwaśniewska, Bogumiła Połomska, Jadwiga Wolicka, Helena Woynarowska³¹. The teams of Canada and the USA competed in the American zone. In the first qualifying match the basketball players from France defeated the team from Italy 34:8. In the second match, played on 29th June 1930 in Cracow, Polish team defeated Sweden 30:13³². In the next match in Strasbourg (played on 12th July 1930) Poland won against the team of Czechoslovakia (14:8). On the next day – 13th July 1930 – in the European zone finals Polish players were beaten by France (17:33)³³. The team of Canada reached the finals in the American zone. During the WWG in Prague, In the final match of the WWG in Prague, Canada defeated France (18:14). A commentary on the final match, published in “Start”, reads: “The basketball game made an excellent impression. [...] Both teams played very well tactically and technically speaking. An excellent accuracy of “shots” to the basket, demonstrated by the Canadians with great precision, was striking [...]. Speed, harmony and accuracy – these are supreme qualities of the Canadians. But technically weaker French players dominated with ambition and devotion”³⁴.

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ “Start” 1930, No. 9, p. 11 [in Polish].

³¹ “Start” 1930, No. 14, p. 11 [in Polish]; Rotkiewicz M., Latek A., op. cit., pp. 83–84.

³² T. Drozdek-Małolepsza, *Gry sportowe kobiet w Polsce w latach 1919–1939* [Women's Sports Games in Poland In The Years 1919–1939], [in:] D. Dudek (ed.), *Polska kultura fizyczna i turystyka w czasach zaborów i II Rzeczypospolitej* [Polish Physical Culture And Tourism In The Time Of Partitions Of Poland And The Second Republic], Kraków 2009, p. 243 [in Polish]; M. Rotkiewicz, A. Latek, *Maria Germanówna i początki koszykówki kobiet w Polsce (do 1939 r.)*, [Maria Germanówna And The Beginnings Of Women's Basketball In Poland (Until 1939)]. “Sport Wyczynowy” [Professional Sport] 1995, No. 3–4, pp. 83–84 [in Polish]; B. Woltmann, J. Gaj, *Sport w Polsce 1919–1939* [Sport In Poland 1919–1939], Gorzów Wielkopolski 1997, p. 44 [in Polish].

³³ “Start” 1930, No. 16, p. 9 [in Polish].

³⁴ “Start” 1930, No. 19, p. 2 [in Polish].

With these results the title of world champions went to Canada, France became vice-champions, and the 3rd place was taken by the Polish national team. France won the European Championship rivalry ahead of Poland.

The Czech handball competition involved the teams of: Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Poland. In the tournament, Polish players lost to Czechoslovakia (0:17) and to Yugoslavia (2:9)³⁵. In the competition the Polish team was represented by: Krodowska (goalkeeper), C. Gapińska (defender), J. Spirit and Zdzisława Wiszniewska (halfback), H. Czerska, B. Połomska and Janina Wencel (forwards), Jaszczak and H. Grotowska (reserve players). In the decisive match the team of Czechoslovakia defeated Yugoslavia (9:5) and took the 1st place³⁶.

As Kazimiera Muszałówna writes in "Start", "The Czech handball tournament was a big disappointment to us (Poland). Our players slightly spoiled the great impression made by the great shape of our athletes. Not so embarrassing defeat in the match with Yugoslavians turned into an embarrassing defeat in the match with the Czech players"³⁷. K. Muszałówna was right pointing out that causes for a weaker performance of the Polish players were objective. The Czech handball traditions were significantly longer in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia than in Poland. In addition, the level of Polish sports teams differed significantly from that of clubs of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia³⁸.

In the final handball match the team of Austria defeated Germany (5:4)³⁹. Competitors from Czechoslovakia, Germany and Hungary participated in the fencing tournament. The best turned out to be the representative of Germany – Erna Sondheim, ahead of Ilona Elek (Hungary) and Kathe Cassel (Germany). The then world champion – Helene Mayer from Germany did not participate in the competition.

As regards the team classification (the team score included the results of track and field events), the winners were the athletes from Germany (57 points), ahead of Poland (26 points), the United Kingdom (19 points), Japan (13 points), Sweden (10 points), the Netherlands (9 points), Italy (2 points), Austria (2 points), Latvia (1 pt), France (1 pt)⁴⁰.

³⁵ "Start" 1930, No. 19, p. 2 [in Polish].

³⁶ "Przegląd Sportowy" [Sports Review] 1930, No. 37, p. 2 [in Polish].

³⁷ "Start" 1930, No. 19, p. 2 [in Polish].

³⁸ T. Drozdek-Małolepsza, *Women's Sport in Czechoslovakia as Commented on by the "Start" Magazine (1927–1936)*, [in:] J. Oborny, F. Seman (ed.): *Estetika tela, telesnosti a športového pohybu*. Bratislava 2013, p. 45.

³⁹ "Przegląd Sportowy" [Sports Review], 1930 No. 73, p. 2 [in Polish].

⁴⁰ "Start" 1930, No. 18, p. 10 [in Polish]. In each event the first four places were scored as follows: for taking the 1st place – 5 points, for taking the 2nd place – 3 points, 3rd place – 2 points, 4th place – 1 point; with the exception of the relay race, where the score was as follows: for taking the 1st place – 9 points, for taking the 2nd place – 6 points, for the 3rd place – 3 points, for the 4th place – 1 point.



Photo. 2. IV Women's World Olympics in London (1934). 60-metre race. First on the left – Stanisława Walasiewicz.

Source: NAC, Ref.1-M-1168-4.

The fourth edition of Women's World Games was held on 9th – 11th August 1934 in London. The track and field events included 12 competitions. In two women's sprint competitions the winner was an athlete from Germany, Kathe Krauss. In the 100-m sprint and in the 200-m sprint she came ahead of S. Walasiewicz and Eillen Hiscock (United Kingdom)⁴¹. In another women's sprint competition, in the 60-m sprint, the 1st place was taken by S. Walasiewicz (7.6 s), ahead of Grete Kuhlmann (Germany) and Ethel Johnson (United Kingdom). The world record in the 800-m run was set by an athlete of Czechoslovakia – Zdena Koubkova, with her time of 2 minutes 12.4 s. The second place in the competition was taken by Martha Wretman (Sweden), and the third – by Gladys Lunn (the United Kingdom). In another running competition – the 80-m hurdle race – an athlete of Germany – Ruth Engelhard (11.6 s) turned out to be the best, setting a new world record. The 4 × 100 m relay race was won by the German team (48.6 s), who defeated the Netherlands and Austria.

⁴¹ "Przegląd Sportowy" [Sports Review] 1934, No. 65, p. 3 [in Polish]; See also: B. Woltmann, J. Gaj, op. cit., p. 29.



Photo. 3. IV Women's World Olympics in London (1934). Gold medalist of 80-metres hurdles – Ruth Engelhard (Germany).

Source: NAC, Ref.1-M-1168-8.

Another world record during the WWG was set by Jadwiga Wajs in the discus throw competition (43.79 meters)⁴². The next places in the competition were taken by German competitors – Gisela Mauermayer and Kathe Krauss. In other throwing and jumping competitions the first places were granted to the representatives of Germany; in the javelin throw competition the winner was Lisa Gelius (42.33 m); in the high jump – Selma Grieme (153 cm); in the long jump – Trute Goppner (581 cm); in the shot put – Gisela Mauermayer (13 m 61 cm)⁴³. The most versatile participant of the track and field events proved to be a German, Gisela Mauermayer, who won the pentathlon (100-m sprint, shot put, javelin throw, long jump, high jump). The second place in the pentathlon was taken by Grete Busch (Germany), the 3rd – by Stepanka Pekarova (Czechoslovakia). The track and field events were dominated by Germans, who won 9 of 12 com-

⁴² "Przegląd Sportowy" [Sports Review] 1934, No. 65, pp. 2–3 [in Polish].

⁴³ Ibidem, p. 3.

petition games played. Two competitions were won by Poles, and one – by an athlete of Czechoslovakia.



Photo. 4. IV Women's World Olympics in Prague (1934). Medalists of discus throw, Jadwiga Wajs (Poland) – gold medal, Gisel Mauemayer (Germany) – silver medal, Kathe Krauss (Germany) – bronze medal.

Source: NAC, Ref. 1-M-1168-1.

The best player in the Polish athletics team proved to be S. Walasiewicz, who won 16 points for Poland (for the team classification). Within 2 days of the events she competed 9 times⁴⁴. Moreover, during the period before the WWG she had a one-month break in training due to a leg injury.

In sports games, as four years ago before the WWG in Prague, competitions rounds were organized. "Traditionally" three teams signed in for the Czech handball competition: Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Poland. The Polish team

⁴⁴ On the first day she participated in: qualifying runs at distances of 60 m, 100 m and 200 m, and a semi-final 60-m run (4 starts); On the second day: in semi-final runs at distances of 100 m and 200 m, finals run at distances of 60 m, 100 m and 200 m.

lost the qualifying match in Zagreb against Yugoslavia (3:10) and was eliminated from further competition⁴⁵. Polish players included: B. Cegielska, Z. Filipiak, Głazewska, Gruszczyńska, B. Połomska, Stefańska, Z. Wiszniewska. The Czech handball final match was played during WWG in London. It ended with a sensational victory of Yugoslavian players. In the final match Yugoslavians defeated the team of Czechoslovakia (6:4)⁴⁶. The final match was refereed by Lipiński (from Poland).

3 teams participated in basketball competitions during WWG in London: France, Poland and USA. On 8th August 1934, Poland played a semi-final match against the team of France. They suffered a defeat of 20:36 and were eventually classified in the 3rd place. The Polish team was represented by: B. Cegielska, H. Gruszczyńska, Zofia Filipiak, Irena Kamecka, H. Olczak i Z. Wiszniewska⁴⁷. Such an important meeting at WWG was refereed by a Frenchman, which met with the Polish team's protest. In the finals, the basketball players from France defeated the USA team 34:23. Similarly as in the previous match the competition was refereed by a referee from France.

The team classification was won by the German team (95 points), before Poland (33 points), United Kingdom (31 points), Canada (22 points), Czechoslovakia (18 points), South Africa (14 p), Sweden (11 points), Japan (10 points), Austria (9 points), the Netherlands (6 points), France (2 points)⁴⁸.

On 12th August 1934 an IWSF Congress was held; it was chaired by the president of the Federation, Alice Milliat⁴⁹. Among the representatives of 12 countries, the Polish delegation was present and represented by: H. Konopacka-Matuszewska, Maria Miłobędzka and Col. Mysłowski. In terms of "Polish affairs", the Congress took a decision on the Polish Association of Sports Games withdrawing from IWSF. The reason for this decision was a dispute concerning refereeing a basketball game between France and Poland by a referee from France. The Austrian Handball Association acted in a similar way. IWSF authorities were selected. A. Milliat was re-elected President of IWSF, while Major Sterba became one of the four vice-presidents; H. Konopacka-Matuszewska was elected member of the Technical Committee. During the congress session a motion was proposed and addressed to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to extend the Olympic Games programme with regard to track and field competitions. A condition was imposed: a negative answer by IOC would lead to the organization of the WWG in 1938. In addition, the Congress approved new world records in the women's athletics, which included: the 80-m sprint world

⁴⁵ "Start" 1934, No. 14, p. 6 [in Polish].

⁴⁶ "Przegląd Sportowy" [Sports Review] 1934, No. 65, p. 3 [in Polish].

⁴⁷ M. Rotkiewicz, A. Latek, op. cit., p. 85.

⁴⁸ "Przegląd Sportowy" [Sports Review] 1934, No. 65, p. 3 [in Polish]. Only track and field events were included in team classification.

⁴⁹ "Przegląd Sportowy" [Sports Review] 1934, No. 65, p. 2 [in Polish].

record belonging to S. Walasiewicz (9.8 s); the 800-m race – to Zdenka Koubkova (2 minutes 12.4 s); the 80-m hurdle race – to Ruth Engelhard (11.6 s); in the discus throw – to J. Wajs (43.79 m)⁵⁰.

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⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 2.

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Streszczenie

Światowe Igrzyska Kobiect (1922–1934)

Po I wojnie światowej kobiety podjęły starania o szersze prawa do uprawiania sportu i uczestnictwa w igrzyskach olimpijskich. Powołały w 1921 r. Międzynarodową Sportową Federację Kobiet. Z inicjatywy Federacji w Paryżu w 1922 r. odbyły się po raz pierwszy Kobiect Igrzyska Olimpijskie. Kolejne – pod nazwą Światowe Igrzyska Kobiect – zostały przeprowadzone w 1926 r. (Goeteborg), w 1930 r. (Praga), w 1934 r. (Londyn). Największym osiągnięciem Światowych Igrzysk Kobiectych była propaganda sportu kobiecego oraz uzyskanie zgody Międzynarodowego Komitetu Olimpijskiego na zamieszczenie w programie igrzysk olimpijskich konkurencji lekkoatletycznych dla kobiet.

Program Światowych Igrzysk Kobiectych składał się z następujących dyscyplin: gry sportowe (hazena, koszykówka, piłka siatkowa, piłka ręczna), lekkoatletyka, szermierka. W zawodach rozegranych w 1922 r. uczestniczyły sportsmenki z 5 krajów: Czechosłowacji, Francji, Szwajcarii, USA, Wielkiej Brytanii. W kolejnych – Światowych Igrzyskach Kobiectych – udział państw oraz zawodniczek był coraz większy. W klasyfikacji drużynowej Światowych Igrzysk Kobiectych, do najlepszych reprezentacji należy zaliczyć: Francję, Niemcy, Polskę, Szwecję, USA, Wielką Brytanię.

Słowa kluczowe: Światowe Igrzyska Kobiect, sport, lekkoatletyka, gry sportowe, szermierka.