

KBS goes to the summit of Annapurna

The news that Korean woman climber Oh EunSen, the first woman to summit all 14 of the world's highest peaks, was about to climb Mount Annapurna in Nepal in April as her final peak to break the world's record, interested broadcasters from around the world.

The world's 10th highest summit, which stands at 8,091 meters, did not stop broadcasters from having their footage aired to their audiences.

Korea's national broadcaster, KBS, together with four other sponsors, commissioned GlobeCast Australia (GCA) to provide the satellite transmission and uplink to AsiaSat 5 for the reception between Seoul and Mount Annapurna.

While most of the expedition team members camped at the base camp at 4,190 meters, the Sherpas and several KBS crew members followed Ms Oh to the peak.

During the delivery of the daily footage, the CGA team faced the challenges of carrying out the



Photos by David Tan, Oh Eun Sen

The GlobeCast team hiking up the mountain

visual-delivery job on uneven ground as well as surrounding mountains which hindered the 'line of sight' to the satellite.

There was also no access to the Internet and the only telecommunication channel was via a few satellite phones.

The trip began on 26 March and ended in the middle of May. GCA sourced and hired the dish from Nepal Television for the job. ●



Climber Oh EunSun (second from left), GlobeCast's David Tan (far right) and two Nepal TV staff at the broadcasting site

New AIBD Director appointed



Yang Binyuan

A new Director has been appointed for the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), the Kuala Lumpur-based training institute.

He is Yang Binyuan, Deputy Director, Office of International Cooperation and Head of the Chinese Language Promotion Division of China Radio International (CRI).

The decision was made at an AIBD executive board meeting in Kuala Lumpur in June.

Mr Yang has 18 years of national and international experience in broadcasting and media/communications.

He worked at the English Service of CRI for 13 years as an editor, reporter and anchor, and was its bureau chief in Australia from 2000 to 2003.

From 2004 to 2005 he was the English Service's Director of News and Reports. He became the first director of CRI NewsRadio in 2005.

From 2006 to 2008 Mr Yang was Head of the Broadcast Division, Media Operations of the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2008 Olympic Games, as well as Deputy Venue Manager and Secretary-General of the International Broadcast Centre for the games.

At the AIBD he succeeds Javad Mottaghi, who took up the post of ABU Secretary-General on 3 May.

FIFA World Cup goes back to ABU

The recently concluded FIFA World Cup in South Africa was a milestone for ABU Sport.

For the first time since 1998 the ABU was a rights holder representing seven territories. They were: Timor, Laos, Democratic Republic of Korea, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

"It was a big breakthrough," said John Barton, ABU Director Sport, and one he said was the result of years of building up a strong relationship with FIFA and their agents.

"FIFA's policy has for a long time

excluded deals with broadcast unions such as ours. Their preference was to deal with territories individually where the financial rewards were often the greatest," he said.

But the ABU had successfully argued over the years that it was best positioned to look after the interests of medium to smaller broadcasters, especially in far flung lands where sports federations traditionally had difficulty.

"The benefit for FIFA is that we are in touch with our members on a regular basis and we can easily communicate with them regarding

sports events and issues," Mr Barton added.

That had been particularly relevant in the deal that was reached for the World Cup in South Africa.

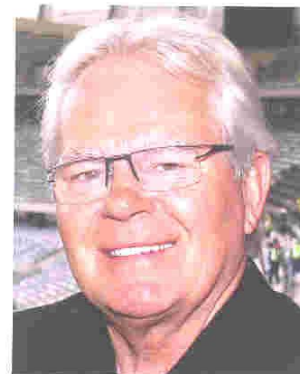
The ABU Sports Group Chairman, Les Murray of SBS-Australia, said the breakthrough with FIFA had confirmed that maintaining close ties with sports federations even when there had been little prospect of a rights deal in the immediate future would ultimately pay off.

"We had consistently sought to invite senior FIFA executives to our sports group meetings and they have been only too happy to attend and make presentations.

"Now is the time for us to enhance that bond even further as we look towards the next edition of the FIFA World Cup in Brazil in four years time.

"I expect that our Sports Department will sustain the initiative that has been gained and add even more territories to our pool going forward," said Mr Murray.

Mr Barton said the ABU would be

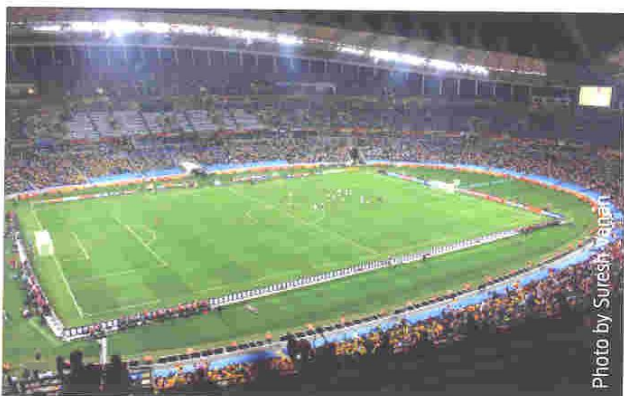


Les Murray

consulting with its membership about making a collective bid for the rights to 2014.

"We will be asking each member to consider bidding for the free to air rights for Brazil, but they should bear in mind the reason why the ABU lost the rights following France 1998. We did not value future events in the context of commercial opportunities that would develop.

"That was the window of opportunity for agents and third parties who took full advantage of the situation and brought in massive revenue for FIFA," said Mr Barton. ●



World Cup match in Durban

Bring in video technology to add fairness to results

by John Barton

The organisation of the World Cup could not have gone more smoothly for the organisers, vindicating the decision by FIFA to hold it in the African continent for the first time.

But the same could not be said for the refereeing which at times bordered on the absurd.

No better example than the goal that was scored by England against Germany – a yard over the

line – which was quickly disallowed by the referee. Both referee assistants were in no position to make a judgement. They could not keep up with the play.

So, in that event, where there was clearly a dispute that echoed around the ground the referee should have been in a position to call in the 'electronic eye'. It happens in many other sports, even in probably the most conservative sport of all: cricket. But in football no!

The explanation from the authorities is twofold.

One, by referring questionable decisions 'upstairs' it would interrupt the flow of the game (they obviously don't consider time wasting by pretend injuries in the same context); and two, sport is about human frailty, and not about fairness or justice!

In other words some authorities are willing to accept an outcome that is quite unfair and unjust to one of

the participants to support a tradition that lives in antiquity.

Football, like sport, is all about justice to the athlete and the team. It cannot be left to officials, totally, and how they can so easily be exposed in games that are now so lightning fast. They deserve better and not the opprobrium that will fall on those unfortunate souls who could not see what happened!

Bring on the video ref!

The London legacy:

A triumph for humanity

by John Barton

One of the more intriguing questions that can only be answered at the end of the Summer Olympics in London in 2012 is how the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Jacques Rogge, will describe the previous 16 days of competition when, at the end of the the 28th Olympiad, he asks the Olympians to gather in four years time.

Each host city in recent history is congratulated in some way that provides comfort and encouragement to the country, its peoples, the host city and organisers: "This was the most innovative games, this was the friendliest games, this was a beautiful games," and so on.

I suppose the highest acclamation that can come from the IOC is one which describes the summer games as the greatest ever staged.

Surely that falls to Beijing, where no expense was spared in bringing China and its people on centre stage for the world's television viewers to absorb a spectacle of theatre, history, sentiment and wonderful sporting achievements.

So what will the scriptwriters have in store for Dr Rogge? Maybe: "The Summer Games of the 30th Olympiad in London gave the Olympic family a lasting message that humanity will always triumph, that host cities are a source for redemption, and the individual is at the centre of the universe.."

The great English essayist, Samuel Johnson, writing in the mid 18th century, put it thus:

"Why, Sir, you find no man, at all intellectual, who is willing to leave London. No, Sir, when a man is tired

of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."

And that will be true for London when it shows itself to the world in two years time as it transforms its rundown eastern region into an Olympic Park that will provide a centuries long legacy in greening a part of the city which otherwise had resembled a wasteland, a dump.

The Chief Executive of the organising committee – LOCOG – Paul Deighton believes there will be other unique aspects to the games. In a recent interview with *The Guardian* newspaper he said that every team in London would have a big fan base as the city was such a big melting pot of nations.

"...so the atmosphere we create in welcoming the world is helped by the fact that the world is already here. There'll be an extraordinary celebration. Beijing had spectacular venues that were not situated anywhere particularly interesting. We have slightly quirkier venues built with value and legacy in mind.

That's very sensible and they're all situated in brilliant locations, from beach volleyball at Horse Guards Parade to archery at Lord's," he said.

Temporary venues are very much part of the London philosophy as they grapple with a budget that has risen almost by 300 percent from that which was outlined in their bid document.

The beach volleyball structure at Horse Guard's parade will come and go, as will others including the main stadium which will be reduced from a venue seating 80,000 during games time to a less commanding structure with seating for 25,000.



London is the host city of the Summer Olympics 2012

And then there is the question of filling these rather large monuments to Olympic sport, if only for 16 days of competition. Too often Olympic venues, as magnificent as they are architecturally, become empty spaces as the wind blows through them sucked in by the many vacant seats.

Mr Deighton has a plan to counter this.

"We'll have 75 percent of the total tickets in the ballot for the general public. Compared to a football World Cup final or rugby World Cup that's a really high number. They've tended to have a much higher percentage of corporate tickets to get the yield up.

"Of the remaining 25 percent, about 16 percent will be sold to the international general public through the respective National Olympic Committees. The remaining 9 percent gets distributed to corporate hospitality, broadcasters and the IOC. So we're treating people right.

"One of the big disappointments in Beijing was that, even though they'd sold all the tickets, venues were far

from full. That's a travesty. We'll do everything we can to keep the stadiums full – and the way to do that is to place tickets with people who really want to come.

"In Beijing they also had six-hour sessions of beach volleyball. Now you might be the world's greatest beach volleyball fan but no one wants to sit through six hours. So we've shortened the sessions and we want to make tickets accessible and affordable."

London is in good hands. And it will be a memorable games. After all, they have had a lot of Olympic experience – London 1908; London 1948 and London 2012. Each time they inspired the Olympic movement. And gave voice to sport as a universal bond.

Maybe that will be Dr Rogge's final comment as he hands on the baton to Rio de Janeiro:

London has cemented for eternity the bond that is the essence of Olympism. ●

London Olympics to shine on TV

The London Olympic Games in 2012 would assume the title of being the most technologically superior multi-sports event in the history of television, delegates attending the 1st World Broadcasters Meeting were told in London.

The Managing Director of Olympic Broadcast Services (OBS), Manolo Romero, said the games would reflect the very latest in new technologies to greatly enhance the viewing experience.

"Once again OBS has been able to draw on past knowledge and experience from previous games as we shape our plans for London 2012. We will incorporate new technological enhancements designed to relay the passion of competition mixed with the inherent speed, strength, skill, teamwork, grace and beauty which makes the individual sports so special," he said.

A fair game

He added that the mission of OBS, the official host broadcaster, was to provide an uncompromisingly fair and unbiased coverage of Olympic competition with insightful informed storytelling through appropriate shot selection and replay options.

This would be done by using state-of-the-art cameras and systems which would capture all the emotion of an event and provide unique angles.

Among other technical innovations OBS would provide additional tracking systems, an end-to-end overhead wire cam at the aquatic venue, curved rail camera system for athletics and additional super slow motion cameras.



Manolo Romero (centre) speaking at the meeting

Animated experience

In the graphics area London will use extensive animations highlighting course maps for selected sports showing precise routes and significant course aspects and places of interest.

ABU Director of Sport, John Barton, said the broadcast 'look' of London would be an improvement over Beijing 2008 which is regarded as the benchmark for the production of a summer Olympics.

Raising standard

"OBS is moving the bar much higher and that will be welcomed by the viewer who will be at the heart of the action. They will also be given graphics, animations and virtual images which will allow them to absorb much more information than at previous games," he said.

All events in London would be produced in high definition with surround sound 5.1. There would be 91 feeds covering nearly 700 sessions and featuring competition for 302 gold medals and a total of nearly 6,000 hours of television.

There have been some key changes since Beijing:

- Baseball and softball have been dropped as Olympic sports
- An addition venue has been added for men's basketball for the quarters, semi and final
- Only one pitch will be used for hockey (Beijing 2)
- In tennis there would be five feeds (Beijing 3)

OBS would provide live coverage of all 26 Olympic sports but for some events not completely.

In those sports, such as sailing, archery, tennis, shooting, fencing, modern pentathlon, those elements not covered live would be shot on electronic news gathering and would be distributed to rights holders as summaries. ●

ABU to provide multilateral multi-channel transmission for members of the Olympics Pool

As in previous Summer Olympics the ABU would be producing a multi-channel coverage for its members, Mr Barton said.

"We are well-advanced in our planning for the multi-channel and have held discussions with OBS about accessing their proposed 12-channel feed.

"The ABU would co-produce the MC with OBS if negotiations with them came to a suitable conclusion," Mr Barton said.