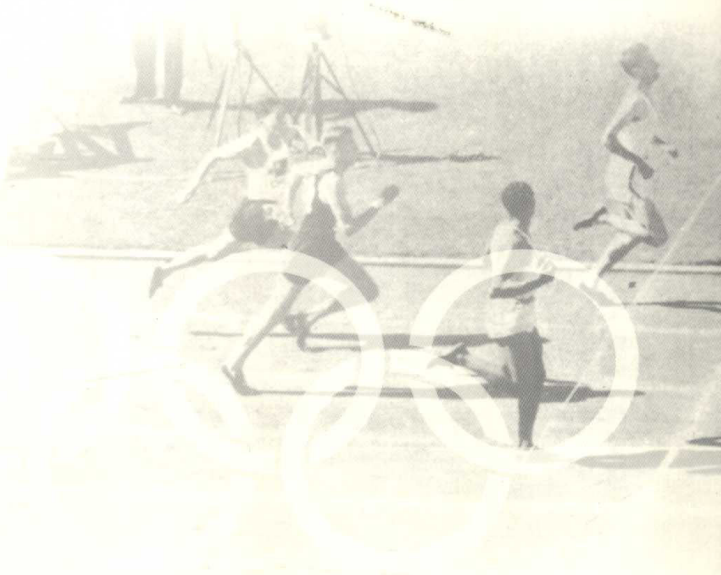


THE MAN WHO BROUGHT THE OLYMPICS TO CHINA

THE STORY OF ZHANG BOLING

Compiled by Sun Hailin



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—The Story of Zhang Boling

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INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

**Message from
the President of the International Olympic Committee
Jacques Rogge**

for 'Chinese Olympic Pioneer - Zhang Boling'

In August 2008, the people of Beijing and China invite the citizens of the world to come together to celebrate "One World, One Dream". These first ever Games in Beijing will thus respond to the vision of a man, Zhang Boling, who, a century ago, expressed his dream of seeing his home country being part of the Olympic Movement.

I should like to express my thanks to the former Vice Mayor of Tianjin, Sun Hailin, and People's Press for their initiative in publishing "Chinese Olympic Pioneer - Zhang Boling", in recognition of Boling's tireless commitment and contribution to promoting the Olympic ideals in China.

Like his contemporary Pierre de Coubertin, who a few years earlier re-established the modern Olympic Games, Zhang Boling was above all an educator - he was one of the founders of Tianjin Nankai Middle School - but also a sports expert. Like Coubertin, he saw the value of combining education and sport while promoting universality and participation. He had the foresight of advocating China's entry into the Olympic Movement.

His formulation of China's "one hundred year Olympic dream" will become reality with the celebration of the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing. Tianjin will be also part of this unique experience as the Tianjin Olympic Centre Stadium will host the preliminary football matches thus witnessing the Olympic values and ideals in action - first hand excellence, friendship and respect.

I trust that each of you will enjoy "Chinese Olympic Pioneer - Zhang Boling", an inspiring publication about the story of a man of passion and conviction for whom also "Olympism is more than just a question of competition sport: it is a state of mind"

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*This Message was written by Jacques Rogge
for the Chinese version of this book.*

Foreword I

The 29th Olympic Games are set to start in Beijing on August 8, 2008. All the Chinese people around the globe are looking forward to this great sports gala. As we are stepping up preparations for the Olympiad under the guideline of “Welcome the Olympics, Promote Civility and Create a Sound Social Environment”, the publication of this book *The Man Who Brought the Olympics to China — The Story of Zhang Boling* compiled by Mr. Sun Hailin, comes just in time and acquires a special significance.

This book, with detailed historical facts, conveys a message to us that the modern Olympic concept is the real treasure owned by the entire human race. As early as a century ago, in 1907, Zhang Boling who had received advanced education and Western concepts, proposed, in spite of the harsh social environment at that moment, that China take part in the Olympics and even host this great event. This fully illustrates that Chinese people are in line with the rest of the world in our pursuit and popularization of the modern Olympic spirit.

The Olympic Charter points out that “Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.” Thus, Olympism has greatly enriched the meaning of sports and entrusted it with the mission of maintaining world peace, enhancing friendship and promoting civilization.

It has been a whole century between Mr. Zhang's proposal of China's

participation in the Olympiad and the hosting of it in Beijing. The journey we traversed in practicing Olympic concepts is full of twists and turns. The old China was tangled with domestic problems and foreign invasion, and Chinese people were leading a miserable life and were looked down upon by the Western powers as “the sick men of East Asia”. Although China was invited to send athletes to the 10th, 11th, and 14th Olympics, the results in competitions were quite disappointing — without a single point to the delegation’s credit. In July 1952, the new China took part for the first time in the 15th Olympic Games in Helsinki. Afterwards, some international forces deliberately created a “two Chinas” situation and the IOC did not correct it turning a deaf ear to China’s protest. Under these circumstances the Chinese Olympic Committee was forced on August 19, 1958, to announce that it had decided to sever all ties with the IOC.

At a meeting held in Nagoya in November 1979, the IOC passed a resolution drafted by its Executive Board by 62 votes for, 17 votes against and 2 abstentions, on the restoration to China of its legitimate status in the IOC, and the Nagoya Resolution also confirmed that the China’s Olympic Committee is the representative of the Olympic Movement in China while the Olympic Committee in Taipei will remain in the IOC under the name of “Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee” as a regional committee with its flag, anthem, emblem and rules changed from the original ones. In 1981, the IOC and Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee signed an agreement in Lausanne, Switzerland and officially announced the latter’s new name, anthem, flag and emblem.

On July 1984, a Chinese athlete named Xu Haifeng won a gold medal in the men’s free pistol event, shattering China’s zero medal record at the Olympics. It was followed by more medals and honors scored by outstanding Chinese athletes in the Olympiads held in Seoul, Barcelona, Atlanta, Sydney, and Athens successively. China won 112 gold, 96 silver and 78 bronze medals, which is 286 medals in total. China has also competed in all the Olympic Winter Games and Paralympic Games since 1980, and was awarded the first gold medal in the Salt Lake City Olympic Winter Games 2002 smashing another zero record for China as well as many gold medals in the Paralympic Games. The remarkable achievements fully demonstrate the benefits that

China's reform and opening drive has brought to sports. At the same time, their success and prowess has greatly boosted the confidence of the younger sports talents in China to reach their own excellence, and therefore, helped lay down a solid foundation for sustainable development and further improvement of the nation's overall strength in competitive sports.

The development of the Olympic Movement in China in the past hundred years drives home the meaning of "Sports success is based on the prosperity of a nation". Today, Chinese government's efforts to fully implement the scientific outlook on development and to construct a harmonious society have secured a more favorable environment for the sports cause in China. As we all know, for the first time, the Olympiad, one of the greatest sports games and cultural galas around the world, is scheduled to be held in China. Our long history and splendid culture will make it special and unique. China is ready to turn it into an unprecedented Olympics, as an IOC Evaluation Commission report believes, a unique legacy for both China and sport as a whole.

When bidding for the Olympic Games, Beijing put forward three themes, namely "Green Olympics, High-tech Olympics and People's Olympics", as well as a pledge to hold an Olympiad characterized with distinctive Chinese features and high-qualities. We are making headway towards achieving this aim. This book, *The Man Who Brought the Olympics to China — The Story of Zhang Boling* is a refined present dedicated to the Beijing Olympics by Chinese historians and sports experts. We hereby express our delight and congratulations.

Liu Peng
Minister of the General Administration of Sports
President of the Chinese Olympic Committee
Executive President of the Beijing Organizing Committee
for the 29th Olympic Games
(BOCOG) Beijing
December 10, 2007

Foreword II

The 29th Olympic Games is scheduled to be held in Beijing on August 8, 2008. Reflecting on the present achievements and the past efforts we have made, we can never forget Mr. Zhang Boling, founder of the Nankai Schools in Tianjin, who devoted his life to the fulfillment of China's Olympic dream. As a witness and participant in China's sports affairs for more than five decades as well as a practitioner and observer of the IOC, I even respect and cherish the memory all the more of Mr. Zhang Boling, a modern educator, sports advocator and pioneer of Olympic movement in China.

Modern Olympics was born at the end of the 19th century, representing advanced culture and leading the international sports fashion. It was introduced to China in the early 20th century. At that time, China, the nation with thousands of years of brilliant history, was reduced to a semi-feudalism and semi-colony status by the Opium War, the 1894 Sino-Japanese War and the subsequent unequal treaties which China was forced to sign with Western powers. The Chinese people were tortured by both the feudal government's corruption and weakness, and by the Western powers' unjustified demands on China to cede territory and pay huge indemnities. At that critical moment, many brilliant young Chinese people stood up and fought for their motherland. In spite of hardships and difficulties, they exerted great efforts on the reform and strengthening of Chinese society, fought against the dramatic and rapid fall of China into a subordinate international position, and tried their

best to make China strong enough to resist Western imperialism. Mr. Zhang Boling was just one of them. He held the strong belief that education was the foundation for building a strong nation, and practiced this belief all his life. He set up a series of schools, including the Nankai Middle School, Nankai University, Nankai Girls' Middle School, and Nankai Primary School. He equipped the schools with the famous motto, "Dedication to the public interests, acquisition of all-round capability, and aspiration for progress with each passing day", and fostered the Nankai tradition, "Patriotism, Devotion, Innovation and Cooperation". Zhang Boling, as one of the earliest elites who had received the modern education and advanced sports ideas, showed his own insights into the functions of sports. In his opinion, "to strengthen our nation, we should first make our people strong, which can only be achieved by exercising strong bodies." and "Education is incomplete without physical education." Therefore, "the principal with indifference to physical education can never be qualified for his job." Under his leadership, Nankai Schools were famous for their advanced sports facilities, very qualified teachers, comprehensive academic curriculum, extensive involvement and outstanding athletic skills. Mr. Dong Shouyi, famous Chinese educator of sports, once taught there too.

Focusing on the fostering of talents and rejuvenating China, Zhang Boling, this patriotic educator, had perceived the significance of Olympic Movement in character-building of individuals and social reform. Hence, he advocated China's participation in the Olympiad which was still little known in China as the Chinese were just beginning to understand athletic sports. On the prize awarding ceremony at the 5th Tianjin Interschool Sports Meet held on October 24, 1907, Zhang Boling delivered his famous speech about the Olympics. He introduced the revival of the modern Olympics, and pointed out that China should learn from European countries that had sent their athletes to compete in the Olympics, regardless of the results. It was for the first time that a Chinese public figure openly proposed China should also participate in the Olympics, which exerted a great social influence at the moment and afterwards.

Zhang Boling apart from disseminating the Olympic spirit also put it into

practice in real earnest. He established sports federations, organized sports meets as well as took part in various sporting events himself. He was one of the founders of the 1st National Sports Union of School Teams, the first ever nongovernmental sports organization in China, and was later elected president of the China National Amateur Athletic Federation. Zhang Boling played an important role in the organization and preparation of the North China Games, the China National Games, the Far Eastern Olympic Games and the 10th, 11th, and 14th Olympic Games. With lifelong struggle and pursuit, he spread the essence of the Olympic spirit, and promoted the development of sports in modern China. His outstanding achievements in the sports history of China made him the real pioneer of sports in modern China.

A whole century has elapsed since Mr. Zhang Boling's proposal of China's participation in the Olympics in 1907, and China has already become an integral part of the Olympic Games and of the world as a whole. Now, we are expecting the 29th Olympics in Beijing, the capital of China. At such a historical moment, the stories of the bond between Mr. Zhang Boling and the Olympic Movement are sure to promote the humanistic construction of the 2008 Beijing Olympics and consequently promote the nationwide physical education plan in China. Zhang Boling's efforts for participation in the Olympics and his achievements in enhancing Chinese people's Olympic awareness and involvement will go down in the annals of history and be cherished by all of us. I hope the present volume, *The Man Who Brought the Olympics to China — The Story of Zhang Boling*, will serve more than a history book tracing the centenary history of the Olympics and the Olympic spirit in China. It will also be seen as a textbook on patriotism which can play an active role in cultural construction of China and the promotion of China's position in the world.

He Zhenliang

(Former member of the International Olympic Committee;
Honorary President of the Chinese Olympic Committee)

Beijing

December 10, 2007

Introduction

22: 10, July 13, 2001

The 112th IOC Plenary Session in Moscow, Russia

After two rounds of votes, Samaranch, the President of IOC announced that Beijing won the bid for hosting the 29th Olympic Games in 2008. Members of the Beijing bid team burst into cheers and slapped each other's hands to express their immense joy.

Foreign friends extended their warm congratulations to the members of Beijing delegation.

The Chinese nationals were the happiest in that evening in Moscow.

When the good news traveled back to Beijing, the capital city as well as the whole China was thrown into a sea of joy.

Thousands of people went out into streets to celebrate. They waved the national flags and sounded car horns. Young people who were gathered at Tian'anmen Square erupted into cheers, singing and dancing, beating gongs and drums. Fireworks and green lasers lighted the night sky as the crowd shouted "Beijing won!" The square turned instantly into a sea of jubilant men and women and of the five-starred national flags.

China Central TV lost no time in announcing Beijing's successful bidding to the whole nation.

Yes! Chinese people won. Our Olympic conception won!

When China, a nation with a splendid history and civilization of over 5,000 years and a population of 1.3 billion, accounting for 1/5 of the world's total, was awarded the Games, opportunities are presented not only to this country but to the Olympic Movement. As an IOC Evaluation Commission report believes, China is ready to stage an unprecedented Olympics, leaving a unique legacy for both China and sports as a whole.

As time went by preparations for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad has been steaming ahead in full swing.

The Olympic emblem, slogan, mascots and the plan for torch relay have all been unveiled.

One competition venue after another has been completed on time.

A series of competition events themed "Good Luck Beijing" is staged leading to the 2008 Games.

China, as she has promised to the world, is on the road to the 2008 Games carrying through the ideas of "Green Olympics", "High-Tech Olympics" and "People's Olympics".

As the host country of the 29th Olympic Games, China also puts great emphasis on the humanistic aspect of the Games that is the review of the history of the Olympic Movement in China. Reliving the history, we could further promote the Olympic spirits and do our best to hold a high quality Olympiad of Chinese features.

One may ask: How did the Olympic Movement initiate in China? Who advocated and bought the Olympics to China?

As verified by historical evidence, Zhang Boling, the renowned patriotic educationist and one of the founders of Nankai Schools, was worthy of the title to be the founding father of China's Olympic Movement. Zhang Boling was not only the first Chinese who called for China's entry in the Olympic Movement on October 24, 1907, but also played a leading role in popularizing

the Olympic spirit and modern sports events in China.

Mr. Jacques Rogge, the President of the IOC, commented: “ Like his contemporary Pierre de Coubertin, who a few years earlier re-established the modern Olympic Games, Zhang Boling was above all an educator — he was one of the founders of Tianjin Nankai Middle School — but also a sports expert. Like Coubertin, he saw the value of combining education and sport while promoting universality and participation. He had the foresight of advocating China’s entry into the Olympic Movement.”

Thanks to what Zhang Boling had done for the Olympic Movement, he was always referred to, rightly so, as China’s Coubertin.

This volume, we hope, will give you the chance to retrace Mr. Zhang Boling’s steps and review the development of China’s Olympic Movement, so that we could have a better understanding of the significant contribution the Olympic Movement has made to the civilization of human beings and its vigor and vitality.

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1

Attending the Beiyang Naval Academy

In the history of modern China, the Beiyang Fleet was always shadowed with a combination of heroism and humiliation. Literature works sing the praises of the patriotic behaviors of the Beiyang naval officers and men such as Deng Shichang, but on the other hand, depict the Qing Government's corruption and weakness which humiliated China in the 1894 Sino-Japanese War.

In fact, although most of the officers and men of the Beiyang Fleet were unheard of, with great historical responsibilities on their shoulders they fought for the country, and some even sacrificed their lives for the cause. Our hero, Zhang Boling was just one of them.

Zhang Boling with a literary name Shouchun was born in Tianjin on April 5, 1876, the second year of the reign of Emperor Guangxu, Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). His father Zhang Jiu'an paid little attention to fame and wealth in his youth. He was keen on playing musical instruments, especially the *pipa* and was called "*Pipa* Zhang". But at the age of 43 when his son was born, this middle-aged man began to understand the meaning of life and paid great heed to his son's education. He decided not to train his son to play the *pipa*