

An Olympic Mosaic

Multidisciplinary Research and Dissemination of Olympic Studies
CEO-UAB: 20 Years

Editors

Emilio Fernández Peña
Berta Cerezuela
Miquel Gómez Benosa
Chris Kennett
Miquel de Moragas Spà



Centre d'Estudis Olímpics
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona



Ajuntament de Barcelona

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Origins and Evolution of an Olympic Studies Centre



The Origins of CEO-UAB, 1989-1994

Muriel Ladrón de Guevara

General Coordinator of the Olympic Studies Centre (CEO-UAB), 1989-1994

1. CEO-UAB: An example of interaction between university and society

I had just finished my degree in Political Science with a focus on public management when in June of 1989 professors Miquel de Moragas and Gabriel Colomé offered me the fantastic chance to coordinate the Olympic Studies Centre at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (CEO-UAB). The creation of this new university research centre had been approved by the presidency of the UAB that same month, with these basic objectives: to work with COOB'92 and the different national and international bodies on academic and scientific factors and the cultural dissemination of the Olympic programme; to train experts in the Olympic Games and sports; and to create an Olympic and sports documentation centre to support research and promote the societal dissemination of the studies performed. The last objective was to ask the IOC, after the Barcelona Olympics, to confer on the centre the title of 'Barcelona'92 Olympic Documentation Centre'.

These objectives were fully part of the policy to stimulate research and interaction between the university and society, and I became keenly interested in the topic of the university's relations with society and enterprise during my bachelor's degree programme. Thus, I was immediately enthused with the project since it dealt with putting the vast potential of the university at the service of the needs of Barcelona'92.

University programmes do not (nor should they necessarily) fill certain specific demands by society, such as the ones that arise from organising and hosting the Olympics. Fulfilling this kind of demand is not the usual product of the university; rather it is a by-product that is complementary to its teaching and research activities. To generate this by-product, an intermediary is needed that is capable of both defining society's needs (anticipating possible demands) and explaining the university's offerings (university marketing). And this is the role that CEO-UAB aimed to play in the Barcelona'92 project: to serve as a bridge, a meeting point, a translator between the UAB's programmes and the needs of the actors in the Barcelona'92 project.

At the same time, the centre also wanted to take advantage of the impetus of the Olympics to promote university research on sports, especially from the viewpoint of social sciences. There was already a tradition of research at the UAB, especially in issues more closely related to health and training. However, sports viewed as a social and cultural phenomenon did not yet occupy a prominent place as a topic of analysis. The centre wanted to elevate research on sports and the Olympics to the university level.

During the years prior to Barcelona'92, the goal was also to make the most of the enormous synergy of interests and positive circumstances regarding the Olympics and sports to create a stable, economically sustainable infrastructure that could help to consolidate the future of the centre. Since it was founded, the centre aimed to not only survive past Barcelona'92, but also to become a benchmark in studies on the Olympics as a phenomenon and on sports.

2. The initial stage: June 1989-March 1991

The initial staff of CEO-UAB included a director (UAB professor), an academic secretary (UAB lecture), a manager or general coordinator, an administrative assistant (two starting in 1990) and an intern in documentation (plus a documentalist starting in 1990).

Our job during this first period consisted of constructing our identity as a university research centre:

- Spreading the word about the centre within UAB departments.
- Creating a board of directors to enlist the active support of all the decision-making authorities and institutions in the sports administration of the Government of Catalonia, the City Council and the Provincial Council of Barcelona.
- Creating a brand for the centre.
- Creating a documentation centre (this point is dealt with extensively in the chapter written by Berta Cerezuela and Pilar Cid).

2.1. Forging ties with the university

The centre was founded with the mission of promoting university interest in the Olympics and sports, especially from the viewpoint of social sciences. However, we wanted the centre to encompass the largest number of university disciplines possible, since knowledge does not need unnecessary divisions, but rather is enriched by an inter-disciplinary approach.

We consulted the UAB Research Report from 1989 and were pleased to note that the range of disciplines interested in sports and the Olympics at the UAB was extensive and diverse, and included modern history, classical history, political science, international relations, sociology, legal studies, business economics, classical philology, Spanish philology, translation and interpreting, journalism, audiovisual communication, educational psychology, social psychology, education and teaching, documentation, art, medicine, physiology, pharmacology and physical anthropology. We introduced ourselves to these departments and called a general meeting where we outlined our goals of promoting research and support for Barcelona'92 and made our scientific, technical and documentation services available to them. The response was extraordinarily positive, and 42 instructors joined the centre as research staff. Furthermore, an Academic Commission was put together with 20 UAB professors who were supervising studies on sports. We then set up the centre's avenues of research with the priority of assembling the critical mass needed to rise to the challenge of Barcelona'92.

CEO-UAB encouraged the submission of research projects to the Sports Programme that the National Research Plan opened on an exceptional basis during this period (exceptional because the programme was shuttered in 1992). These resources made it possible to perform quite a few studies and projects and were a major aid. For example, CEO-UAB launched its Documentation Centre on the Olympics and Sports thanks to an endowment from this fund.

CEO-UAB also stimulated research by seeking other sources of funding, such as the Spanish National Sports Council and other research programmes.

There was a great deal of enthusiasm and motivation. The Barcelona Olympics were the stimulus that detonated a desire to carry out research, which had already existed at the UAB for years. During that very same academic year, 1989-1990, 18 research projects were submitted to CEO-UAB.

During this initial stage, too, we sought, contacted and worked with experts from other Catalan universities and from the National Physical Education Institute of Catalonia. The international nature of the Olympics, and thus of studies on the Olympics, led us to create an International Advisory Committee made up of eight renowned experts in the field.

2.2. Forging ties with society: The CEOiE Consortium

In order to establish a stable framework of communication with the institutions participating in the Barcelona'92 Olympic Organising Committee (COOB'92), in the autumn of 1989 the Rector of the UAB, Dr Ramon Pascual, launched the proposal to set up a foundation made up of the institutions linked to the organisation of the Barcelona'92 Olympics. This institutional support would also ensure the consolidation and continuity of CEO-UAB. The initial proposal was to set up a private foundation called the "Lucius Natalius Olympic Study Centre Foundation" in memory of the man regarded as the first Barcelonan to win an Olympic medal in the ancient world. The Secretary General of Sports of the Government of Catalonia and the Departments of Sports of Barcelona City Council and Barcelona Provincial Council, in conjunction with the Spanish Olympic Committee and the Spanish National Sports Council, were early adherents to the project.

In May 1990, at the suggestion of the Legal Services of the Government of Catalonia, the administrative personality was amended, and it was proposed that a consortium be set up instead of a foundation. It was also decided to change the name (Centre of Olympic and Sports Studies) in order to clarify the fact that our scope of interest also included sports for everyone. Through the Secretary General of Sports, Josep Lluís Vilaseca, the Legal Services of the Government of Catalonia spearheaded the drafting of the consortium's bylaws, whose creation had to be approved by the Government of Catalonia through a decree. It first had to be formally ratified by each of the institutions that were members of the consortium. This delayed the paperwork until early 1991. When the decree creating the consortium was finally ready for approval by the Executive Council of the Government of Catalonia, it refused to ratify it. The UAB interpreted this decision as the temporary political juncture within the Government of Catalonia, which was unwilling to sign agreements with Barcelona Provincial Council as they were enmeshed in a political dispute over the Barcelona Metropolitan Area.

Finally, on 8 March 1991, the proceeding that set up the 'Sport and Olympic Studies Centre' was signed by the Rector of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Josep Maria Vallès i Casadevall; the President of the Spanish Olympic Committee, Carlos Ferrer i Salat; the Councillor of Sports of Barcelona City Council, Enric Truñó i Lagarés (on behalf of the Mayor, Pasqual Maragall i Mira); and the Deputy-President of the Department of Sports of Barcelona Provincial Council, Frederic Prieto i Caballé (on behalf of the President, Manuel Royes i Vila).

The Spanish government's initial support of CEO-UAB finally took shape, not in participation in the consortium project (the Legal Services of the State Administration determined that it could not take part in a consortium) but through the signing of a framework cooperation agreement in January 1991 with the Spanish National Sports Council, which was run by Javier Gómez Navarro at that time.

That same day, 8 March, two new offices were officially opened at an event that was attended by the then-president of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch. Many representatives of the institutions involved in the Barcelona'92 project and university researchers also attended the opening. Contact, knowledge transfer and experiences thus commenced.

After several invitations that the governing council of CEO-UAB sent to the Government of Catalonia to join the centre, it was not until 2002 that the then Secretary General of Sports of the Government of Catalonia, Joan Anton Camuñas, signed a first framework cooperation agreement with CEO-UAB. The Government of Catalonia's permanent membership in CEO-UAB on equal status with the other institutions was negotiated based on this agreement. The process was formalised with the new Secretary General of Sports, Josep Maldonado, through a multi-year agreement (for the period 2003-2007).

2.3. The academic Cobi: An original brand

In late 1989, we asked Xavier Mariscal (the designer of the Barcelona'92 mascot, nicknamed Cobi), whether he could design for us a version of this mascot that would represent all scholars and researchers of the Olympics. He responded promptly with a letter that included a sketch of what would be the first academic mascot, complete with a graduation cap and diploma, in the entire history of the Olympics: 'Academic Cobi'.

After preliminary talks, in November 1990, an agreement was formalised in which COOB'92 granted CEO-UAB free of charge the use of the mascot of the Barcelona'92 Olympics, Cobi, in its Academic Cobi version with an exclusively institutional nature and for non-commercial purposes.

This addition of the Barcelona'92 brand had extremely positive consequences for the visibility and recognition of the centre. Researchers, professors, documentalists, interns, students and technical staff later became the 'Cobi Troupe', as we were christened by Korean anthropologist Kang Shin-Pyo, the indirect inspiration behind CEO-UAB.

After the Olympics, in March 1996, CEO-UAB asked the IOC to formally authorise Academic Cobi to continue to be used to identify the centre. The Director of Legal Affairs of the IOC, Howard M. Stupp, and the Secretary General of the IOC, Françoise Zweifel, responded positively to the request, and the IOC expressly authorised CEO-UAB to continue using this mascot.

3. The pre-Olympic stage: March 1991-June 1992

This was a fruitful stage when the centre was bustling with projects and initiatives. After two years of work, CEO-UAB had an extraordinary human capital that came from both university and Olympic institutions. This capital enabled us to launch courses, symposia, projects and more.

Human capital is the main asset of universities, not only their professors (full professors, associate professors, PhD candidates, etc.) but also other technical staff (from the university press, IT experts, documentalists, etc.). The goal was to place this capital at the service of Barcelona'92 and for it to serve as a bridge between the university's potential and the needs of the society facing the challenge of Barcelona'92.

The first educational project we launched was the course on University in the Olympics (February 1991) targeted at people involved in organising and managing the Olympics, specialised journalists and scholars in the sciences applied to sports. The course provided specialised information on the Olympics in its diverse facets: history, politics, economics, culture and society, with special reference to the organisational needs of the Barcelona'92 Olympics. In addition to the scholars' analysis, several heads of division within COOB'92 shared their experiences with students on the course, which was held at the College of Journalists.

We organised the International University Course on Barcelona: The City and the Olympics in conjunction with the Department of Geography at the UAB and the Institute of Metropolitan Studies of Barcelona. The course analysed the urban planning and territorial implications of the Olympics and was particularly targeted at Erasmus students studying in Catalonia during academic year 1991-1992. We also organised tours and contacts at the headquarters and branches of the Olympics.

Another activity aimed at training experts in the Olympics was the Visit to Empúries. This was a guided tour of the ancient site in Empúries targeted at experts and professionals in fields related to sports and culture, the media and heads of regional and municipal governments through which the Olympic torch would pass. As many people recall, the Olympic torch reached Empúries by sea on 23 June 1992. From there it set out on a 5,000-kilometre tour through the 17 autonomous communities in Spain. The objective of the visit was to give informative, educational information on the ancient site in Empúries from both a historical and a cultural perspective, bearing in mind sports and the symbols and values of the classical Olympics. The visit turned into a forum of debate and communication on the Olympic event.

From 3 to 5 April 1991, CEO-UAB hosted the International Symposium on the Olympics, Communication and Cultural Exchanges. This symposium analysed the challenges inherent in organising the Olympic Games held in the previous 20 years (Montreal'76, Moscow'80, Los Angeles'84, Seoul'88 and Barcelona'92) and the role of the media in producing the symbolic values of the Olympics and in broadcasting each Olympic Games. Another of our goals with the symposium was to facilitate

contact and the exchange of knowledge among the heads and producers of the symbols of communication of Barcelona'92 and some of the most distinguished international scholars specialising in culture and the Olympics. In 1992, the proceedings of this symposium were published under the title of *Olympic Games, Communication and Cultural Exchanges: The Experience of the Past Four Summer Olympics* in Catalan, Spanish and English.

We also conducted actions aimed at a broader audience given the fact that the Barcelona'92 Olympics was seriously boosting interest in sports and the Olympics, as well as because of the cultural, social, political and urban planning scope of the Olympics. In order to respond to this demand for information, CEO-UAB, in conjunction with the Secretary General of Sports of the Government of Catalonia and the Sports and Culture Services of Barcelona Provincial Council, hosted the Olympic Library, which compiled a basic bibliography on these topics. The goal of this initiative was to spread a series of representative books and documents on the Olympic event for educational purposes. The "Olympic Library" was distributed to the 67 Teaching Resource Centres run by the Government of Catalonia and the 105 public libraries run by Barcelona Provincial Council.

Another of the most prominent projects in this period was the design and construction of a team of international researchers, which made it possible to perform a comparative analysis of the television coverage of Barcelona'92 in 28 different countries. More than 50 researchers participated in the 'Global Television and the Olympics Games. The experience of Barcelona'92' project.

In order to spread the result of the studies, we began a collection of working papers. By late 1992, the centre had published three books and 33 working papers on the Olympics and Barcelona'92.

4. The Olympic Games: July–September 1992

The Olympics came and CEO-UAB had become a benchmark research centre on Barcelona'92. International researchers from all over the globe and diverse disciplines came to the centre to engage in contact with other experts and use its documentation service. There was also a list of experts for occasional inquiries and journalistic interviews. CEO-UAB turned into a kind of hub of knowledge on Barcelona'92.

Another line of service and support for international researchers on Barcelona'92 was dealing with the IOC on the accreditation of nine international researchers as observers of the Barcelona'92 Olympics. These researchers were Miquel de Moragas, John Hargreaves, Muriel Ladrón de Guevara, James Larson, John MacAloon, Nancy Rivenburgh, Guadalupe Rodriguez, Kang Shin-Pyo and Magdeleine Yerlès. We once again made history with this event, just as we had with the academic mascot. It was the first time that the International Olympic Committee accredited researchers as a way of facilitating their research. Once again, the IOC gave us its support and trust. During their entire stay, CEO-UAB coordinated and facilitated the efforts of these researchers (providing documents, addresses, contacts, etc.) and managed to land them a personal welcome from the president of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, with whom they held a brief working meeting.

Just 15 days before the start of the Olympics, the centre's documentary collection and the technological equipment needed were moved to the Olympic headquarters. We actively participated in Operation Welcome, set up by Barcelona City Council in order to help promote Barcelona and Catalonia among the journalists and media who came to Barcelona for the Olympics.

As part of this operation, the Barcelona Press Service (BPS) was launched to tend to the needs of all the journalists lacking accreditation from COOB'92, as well as those who wanted to get complementary information to the news offered by COOB'92 press services. The participants included Barcelona City Council, the International Press Centre of Barcelona, Fira de Barcelona, the Olympic Holding, the Cultural Olympiad and CEO-UAB. The BPS was strategically located right next to the COOB'92 Olympic Accreditations Office in Barcelona's Plaça d'Espanya, and it was in operation from 6 July to 10 August, from 10 am to 10 pm, without interruptions.

The mission of CEO-UAB included managing the BPS' documentation and library service, facilitating contact between journalists and professors and researchers, and providing a quality service to national and international researchers specialising in the subject of the Olympics who were visiting Barcelona for the Olympics. A total of 2,300 inquiries were handled.

CEO-UAB also participated in the 1st Paralympic Congress Barcelona'92 as part of its Scientific Commission and Organising Committee, and by lending part of its staff to work at the event.

5. After the Olympics

5.1. Olympic projects

The Olympics were over and the CEO-UAB had worked hard to compile the experience of Barcelona'92 and gather documentation. Now it was time to analyse the information, finish up the studies underway and prepare for the Congress of the 1st Anniversary of the Barcelona'92 Olympics.

Thus, one year after the Olympics, as a way of commemorating the first anniversary of the event, take stock of the results and effects of the XXVth Olympiad and conduct a survey of the Olympics, we organised an international academic conference in which the heads of planning and managing Barcelona'92, and Olympic experts from both Spain and abroad could convey and share their experiences. The conference lasted three days and analysed the organisation of Barcelona'92 and its economic, political, cultural, sports and urban planning impacts. Later, in 1995, the results were published in Catalan, Spanish and English under the title of *The Keys to Success: Social, Sports, Economic and Communication Impacts of Barcelona'92*.

At the same time, CEO-UAB was working to strengthen its ties with the national and international Olympic institutions. In 1993, a cooperation agreement was signed with the International Olympic Academy, and in July we organised a Symposium on Television, the Olympics, Cultural Exchanges and Understanding of the Olympic Values at its headquarters in Olympia. At this symposium, different members of the Global Television and the Olympics Games international research team debated and reflected on the tentative results of the study with representatives from the Olympic Academy.

The number of cooperative actions with the IOC was on the rise. On 9 January 1995, a cooperation agreement between the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the International Olympic Committee was signed in Lausanne to create the International Chair in Olympism, to be managed by CEO-UAB, the first of its kind in the world. The signing was attended by both the President of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, and the Director of Sports, Pere Miró. The Rector of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Carles Solà, and the Director of CEO-UAB, Miquel de Moragas, attended on behalf of the UAB.

5.2. Other projects

In the post-Olympics period, we wanted to pour our efforts into preparing new projects and extending and strengthening the contacts and ties that had been forged during the Olympic period. The experience acquired over the years enabled us to organise and launch the first Master's in Communication and Sports in September 1993, which consisted of 300 classroom hours, a practicum and a research report guided by a counsellor, and the University Course in Sports Marketing and Sponsorship, which provided specialised training in commercialisation and securing economic resources for sports. The leading media and sports institutions in the country, along with several of the companies that had sponsored COOB'92, participated in the course. With the High Performance Centre and two departments from the Faculty of Economics at the UAB, we also prepared a continuing education course for athletes with the purpose of facilitating their professional integration.

CEO-UAB carried on; it had not come to an end with the Barcelona'92 Olympics. The Olympics had been the impetus for the creation of CEO-UAB and its driving force during the first years of its life. The support it provided for Barcelona'92 had served as a stimulus and pretext for the university to forge better ties with the leading players in the world of sports (sports institutions, the media, companies, associations), and new projects emerged from this mutual transfer of knowledge, experiences and concerns.