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2004 Olympics and Yachting in Greece

By Alexander M. Vournas

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Everybody knows that the Olympic Games are due to be held in Athens in 2004. Apart from the accepted consequences, positive and negative, for the city of Athens and Greece in general this sporting extravaganza will seriously affect the yachting fraternity from mid-July to mid-September.

Two major crises will afflict the greater Athens area i.e. transportation and accommodation. I will refer to certain aspects of transportation later but the accommodation problem will directly affect yachtsmen. How, you might ask ? I will tell you.

The Greek government is trying many ways to obviate the shortage of about 40,000 rooms. Athenians are being asked to offer rooms to visitors in their own homes and 11 cruise ships are being chartered and moored in Piraeus harbour for the duration of the Games. Not wishing to be left out of this possible bonanza, yacht owners will be offering their yachts as floating hotels in all the marinas along the Athens coastline, particularly Marina Alimos. Nor will this be restricted to Athenian yacht owners, as owners from all over Greece will be climbing on the bandwagon and will be moving their yachts into the Athens area for the Games. Many yachts are already booked to regular charterers and thus the prices for the period will go up to alarming levels, not to mention the shortage of available yachts.

Another serious problem will be the human waste from all these vessels. Piraeus harbour and all the marinas in the vicinity will become enormous sewage dumps. The people chartering these yachts as hotels are not yachties and will not know, or care, about the use of holding tanks and will simply dump the results of the exercising of normal human bodily functions into the sea. The shore facilities in these marinas will be nine times overstretched.

I promised to refer to transportation again because there will be massive shortages of flights over the period. Don't miss the boat – book early your flight aswell.

You must also realise that the influx of yachts into Athens will produce shortages all over Greece, not only for the period from mid-July to mid-September, but beyond because of the positioning and re-positioning times of the floating hotels.

My advice, therefore, is that if you are a yacht owner avoid Athens for the period, unless you are going to watch the Games, and if you are going to charter – DO IT EARLY, not forgetting to book your flights at the same time. The "last minute booking" syndrome is not going to work in 2004 for the crucial period of the Games and the immediate pre and post period – say 15 July to 15 September.

Finally – how early is early enough ? I would say by Christmas 2003, at the very latest. This way you will both enjoy the early booking discounts, which most of the charter companies are offering, and get the yacht of your choice from the base of your choice. Almi Yachts statistics are showing that by February all yachts will be booked for July/August 2004 and only dinghies will be available !

Alexander M. Vournas

Alex. Vournas is the owner and managing director of Almi Yachts Ltd, a yacht charter company in Greece. He is also the web designer and SEO for

The Olympic Games - The History Of The Olympic Games

By Lucy Bartlett

Olympics or The Olympic Games is a multi-sports event which takes place once in four years and comprises of winter and summer games. It is an international event and almost all the countries in the globe participate in the games.

The first Olympic game was held in the year 776 BC in Olympia, Greece. The games were held in Greece till 393 AD. Subsequently in 1896, Pierre Fredy, Baron de Coubertin, a French nobleman revived the games which heralded the beginning of the Modern Olympic Games.

Starting from 1896, Games of the Olympiad or The Summer Olympics were held once in four years except during the World War 1 and 2.

The Olympic Winter Games, a special edition of winter sports was first held in 1924. In the beginning, both summer and winter editions of The Olympic Games were held simultaneously. >From 1944 onwards the summer and winter games have been held two years apart.

The origin of the ancient Olympic Games was surrounded by many legends. The ancient Greek concept of Olympic Truce is one such legend associated with The Olympic Games. The Olympic Games reached their zenith during fifth and sixth century BC.

The Olympic Games were held in honour of Pelops a mythical king and divine hero of the Greeks. Poems were written and statues were created immortalizing the winners of the events in the Olympic

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Games. Milo of Croton, a wrestler in the sixth century BC, was the only victorious athlete in six Olympic Games.

After the Romans captured power in Greece, there was a gradual decline in the importance of the Olympic Games. The Emperor Theodosius banned the Olympic Games in 393 CE citing the games as a Pagan Festival not suitable for the Christian Ethics.

Even though the Greek ceremonies included the bearing of a torch as its integral aspect, it was not included in the ancient Olympic Games. This was introduced later as a part of the modern Olympic Games.

In the 2004 Summer Olympics held in Athens, nearly 11,100 contestants from 202 countries participated in various events whereas there were only 245 participants from 15 nations in the 1896 edition of the Olympic Games. The Olympic Games has become one of the biggest events for the media. In the Sydney Olympics held in 2000, more than 16,000 journalists presented the events in various media format while 3.8 billion people watched the games on Television.

Munich Olympics held in 1972 saw the first act of terrorism in the .Olympic Games. Subsequently the Summer Olympics held in Atlanta, Georgia in 1996, and the Winter Olympics held in Salt Lake City, Utah in 2002 were also subjected to acts of terrorism.

For the Olympic Games scheduled to take place in London in 2012, 26 sports are included.

Lucy Bartlett is a proud contributing author. Find more articles at

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