

PROBLEMS OF WINTER SPORT DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF LUGE)

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Introduction. Ukraine first participated in the Olympic Games as an independent country in 1994, and has sent athletes to compete in every Winter Olympic Games since then. Previously, athletes of modern Ukraine mostly competed as a part of the Russian Empire (1900–1912) and the Soviet Union (1952–1988), and till the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukrainian athletes were in the United Team.

Historically, there were few athletes of Ukraine who also defended colours of Romania, Poland, and other nations. Not all athletes who represent Ukraine at the competitions are ethnic Ukrainians. Independently, Ukraine has won a total of 8 medals at the Winter Olympics, 5 of them in biathlon, which turns out to be the highest-scoring sport among Ukrainian athletes.

The research aim is to determine the problems of winter sport in Ukraine.

Methods of research: literature analysis, comparative method and method of structural analysis.

Results and discussion. A luge is a small one- or two-persons sled on which one sleds supine with feet stretched first. A luger steers by using his/her calf muscles flexed or by exerting opposite shoulder pressure to the seat. There is only one sleigh track in Ukraine and it is located in Kremenets, Ternopil region. The track is wooden and, therefore, it is considered outdated. However, the new one has not been built yet. Another sleigh track one can find in Vyzhhorod. This track is considered to be extremely old one, therefore sportsmen do not use it for training. The track is wooden and half-ruined. In 1990 it was almost destroyed by fire. As a result, luge school in Vyzhhorod was closed. An important fact which leaves Ukraine behind on the sports arena is that in the developed countries tracks are constructed from reinforced concrete which is an artificial refrigeration to cool the track. In our country, this effect is reached by hiring people who make up the artificial refrigerator with their hands. This work might take few weeks to be done. So, sport underfunding is considered to be one of the main problems in Ukraine. Over the last year the government spent at total

6 million UAH to finance luge sport, which means that sportsmen will train abroad in order to participate in Olympics. The costs will be also allotted for track reconstructions (e. g. the money value for Kremenets track reconstruction stands for more than 10 million UAH).

Nowadays, the only possible way for Ukraine Luge Federation is to send our athletes to train abroad, since it is less expensive than to build or maintain advanced and up-to-date luge tracks.

Ways to solve the problem:

1. Provide funding for winter sports.
2. Attract investors.
3. Open new sports schools for children.
4. Organize advanced training courses for coaches.
5. Promote winter sports.

Conclusions. Ukraine possesses high potential in the field of winter sport. At the same time many qualified sportsmen and coaches have left Ukraine. Therefore, the issue of winter sport development in Ukraine has to be seriously reconsidered.

References

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