

Features of the activities of the first Gymnastic Society in the Kharkov province at the end of the XIX and beginning of the XX century

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Purpose: to establish the features and areas of activity for the development of physical culture and sports in the territory of the Kharkov province of the 1st Gymnastic Society.

Material & Methods: the research material was preserved in rare editions – reports on the activities of the Kharkov Gymnastic Society for 1895, 1896, 1900, 1909. Research methods: analysis and synthesis of scientific literature data, problem-search, historical-systemic and logical methods.

Results: revealed that at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, sports spread in large cities, and educational institutions and sports societies became the basis for the development of physical culture and sports. Kharkov 1st Gymnastic Society began to work one of the first in the Kharkov region. The use of various forms of organization of classes made it possible to carry out extensive campaigning among the population of Kharkov to attract physical education and sports, including women and children; contribute to the development of sports that the Society has cultivated.

Conclusions: as a result of the study, the year of foundation and founders of the 1st Gymnastic Society was established. The results of previous scientific studies on the functioning of societies at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries were expanded in the following areas: organizational structure and composition, functions of a teacher (trainer), attracting women and children to physical education, sources of income and expense items, timetable and forms of organization of classes, activities for the development of physical education and individual sports in the territory of Kharkov province, the 1st Gymnastic Society.

Keywords: Gymnastic Society, sports movement, physical education, sport, Kharkov province.

Introduction

Studying and analyzing the surviving rare publications allows us to highlight the features of the development and formation of physical culture and sports in different regions of Ukraine at a time when it was a part of the Russian Empire. The research results enrich the historical heritage of the region, the study of which is a prerequisite for the development of Ukrainian society, its national identity and self-identification in the context of integration into the European Union.

The work of many scientists is devoted to the study of the development of sports movement in different regions of Ukraine in the late XIX and early XX centuries.

The monograph by A. Waceba (1997) established that the first Ukrainian sports societies appeared in Galicia at the beginning of the XX century. A characteristic sign of their development was that most of them worked within the framework of purely national structures. Other sports clubs have joined the official structures of Polish sports. Among the most common sports of the time – football, athletics, gymnastics, skiing, boxing, sports.

The legal foundations of physical culture and sports, and in particular, sports organizations of the late XIX – early XX centuries, were considered in the works of L. Vostroknutov (2001), I. Gasyuk (2009). According to information covered by L. Vostroknutov (2001), one can come to the following conclusions – the spread of sports and the creation of societies

were facilitated by: a high percentage of the urban population in Ukraine; the availability of educational institutions (universities, gymnasiums, schools); active position of the advanced public – the organizers were representatives of the intelligentsia, the growth of the international sports movement and its influence.

The monograph of M. Oleinik and Yu. Grot (2002) is devoted to the study of the development of individual sports, the creation of sports societies in the Kharkov region, starting in the second half of the XIX century.

In the scientific work of A. Lyakh-Porodka (2009), the formation of the Sokolsky movement on the territory of Ukrainian lands that were part of the Russian Empire at the beginning of the XX century is disclosed.

The publication by A. Bondar (2012) highlights that the creation of sports societies, clubs, and circles in Slobozhanshchina at the indicated time contributed to the emergence of a number of popular sports in the present – gymnastics, weightlifting, wrestling, boxing, football, cycling.

T. Ustinova (2012) investigated the development of the gymnastic movement in the context of physical education in Europe (the second half of the XIX century – the 30s of the XX century). It is established that the development of the gymnastic movement is determined by the main directions of physical education – gymnastics, sports and games, and military-physical.

The peculiarities of the origin and formation of the physical culture and sports movement in the Ekaterinoslav region (now Dnepropetrovsk) in the pre-revolutionary period (late XIX century – 1917) are studied. The work of the authors I. Baldzhi, G. Salenko (2016) is devoted. Among the first sports organizations, the Yekaterinoslav Society of Cyclists (1894), Yekaterinoslavsky (1897) and Kamenskaya (1898) Yacht Clubs were created.

The scientific work of G. Griban (2018) is devoted to the history of the activities of sports societies in the Zhytomyr region in 1893–1922. According to the established data, educational institutions made a great contribution to the development of physical culture in the Zhytomyr region. One of the first sports societies was opened Zhytomyr society of amateur cyclists (1893).

So, the question of the development of the sports movement and the creation of sports societies at the end of the 19th century in Ukraine is of interest to scientists in order to disseminate little-known historical facts. The activities of the 1st gymnastic society need to be clarified regarding the year of its creation and the founders; they require a comprehensive study of the features of its functioning as one of the leading sports centers of that time.

Purpose of the study: to establish the features and areas of activity for the development of physical culture and sports in the territory of the Kharkov province of the 1st gymnastic society.

Material and Methods of the research

The research material was preserved rare editions – “reports on the activities of the Kharkiv Gymnastic Society for 1895, 1896, 1900, 1909”. Research methods: analysis and synthesis of scientific literature data, problem-search, historical-systemic and logical methods.

Results of the research

At the end of the 19th century, sport began to develop rapidly in many countries, which was facilitated by certain conditions. The sports movement takes shape organizationally – the international federations of gymnastics (1881), rugby (1886), rowing (1892) and the international skating union (1892) were created. Gradually, certain sports are gaining popularity in the Russian Empire, which included the Kharkov province.

As S. Fily [13] notes, the gymnastic movement in the country in the second half of the 19th century develops along the lines of Western states, that is, mainly for wealthy and close citizens. The main sign is that sport is spreading in large cities. As a rule, sports clubs (most often as honorary ones) were led by powerful bankers, factory owners, and the like.

Contributed to the formation and development of sports in many cases, foreign experts, namely representatives of Germany, the Czech Republic and other European countries. This is due to the lack of special institutions in the country for the training of specialists of the corresponding profile. Educational institutions and sports societies became the basis for the development of physical culture and sports in those days.

The Kharkov Society of Amateur Cyclists (1887), the Kharkov 1st Gymnastic Society (1894), the Kharkov Gymnastic Society Sokol (1907) and others were among the first to operate in the Kharkov region.

On November 17, 1893, the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Empire approved the *Charter of the Gymnastics Society* at number 514, which was founded in 1894 with the goal of promoting “... the goals of the physical development of our youth and maintaining health among the population of Kharkov” [9].

The calendar year began on February 1. Annual activity reports were submitted to the Governor, under whose supervision it was, and to the Medical Department.

From the *history of the creation of the gymnastic society* “Many of you remember very well how our Society was born. Having originally appeared, according to the thought of five people, in a private house, on one of the remote udivs of Kharkov, where few admirers and connoisseurs of physical development visited, it existed for only one year, as it became immediately obvious that the framework in which business initiators thought to conclude their task and activities, they are getting close. Following this, recognizing the urgent need to develop and strengthen our thoughts on a wider and more correct basis, several individuals from the original gymnastics club, among whom G. Gelferikh, Toffer, Meyer, Grozber, Goltsgjut’yr, Benjamin, took part, Pilstrem, Cherevko, Wilgalm, Kurze and others, decided to establish a Gymnastic Society in Kharkov, similar to those that already existed abroad and in Russia, such as Petersburg, Moscow and Odessa” [9]. This fact from the report on the activities of the Company for 1895 allows us to name its founders and testifies that it was created from a circle of gymnastics lovers.

Also, according to M. Oleinik, Yu. Grot [8], involved in the organization of the gymnastic society is mentioned Karl Augustovich bashing, who was engaged in successful entrepreneurial and charitable activities in the city.

From 1895 to 1901, as noted in the financial report of the created organization, it rented a room for classes in the Roman Catholic Church on Kokoshkinsky Street No. 4 (modern address is Gogol Street, 4) for an annual fee of 600 rubles. Subsequently, the premises of the Real School were rented along Staromoskovskoye Street (modern address is Moskovsky Prospekt), while the fee was 200 rubles in 1909–1911.

The *gymnastics society* included: chairman, secretary, cashier, members of the council or board, teachers, doctors, honorary guardian of the society (governor), honorary members and full members. Doctor of Medicine Alexander Mikhailovich Cherevko is noted as the Chairman of the Society in the surviving reports of 1895-1901, and Pavel Karlovich bashing in the report for 1909.

The main *teacher*, or gymnasium of the Society (in the modern sense of the trainer), was Nikolai Fedorovich Wilgalm (a native of Kharkov, graduated from the Berlin Gymnastics Society. In 1913, at the All-Russian take-off of gymnasts for the successful performance of athletes of the Kharkov school district, Emperor Nicholas II awarded M. F. Vilgalm the title “Grammar School of All Russia”). Its functions included observing gymnastic exercises, placing visitors in departments, assigning

a sequence of various gymnastic exercises and monitoring their exact performance, setting a rest time, avoiding excessive cooling of the body, etc.

Among the teachers who helped M. F. Vilgalm, the names were B. Kraevsky (fencing teacher, 1895), Gasselbrring, Gutiar, Rings (heads of departments, 1896), Ms. M. E. Krushel (head of women's gymnastics since 1896)

The Society included doctors – Dr. A. M. Cherevko, Yu. G. Pensky, M. E. Krushel, thanks to which visitors were under control and could use the necessary advice from them.

As indicated in the extract to the charter of the Company, it consisted, in addition to honorary and full members, of visitors. There were certain age restrictions for full members and visitors. Full members could be at least 21 years old, and the age of visitors should have been 8 years or older. The number of full members of the Company, according to reports on its activities [9; 10, 11; 14] is gradually growing (Fig. 1). Since September 1896, women have been included in the full membership due to the fact that the society has opened gymnastics courses for women.

The Gymnastic Society existed on a voluntary basis, as indicated by the following quote: "... free service to all members of our Society in such a good intention ..." [9]. The only one who received a salary was gymnastics instructor M. F. Wilgalm.

The *main sources of income of the Society* include the following: contributions of full members, visitors, organization of public evenings, donations to the Society.

Gymnastics classes in the Society were organized on a paid basis. So, for full members it cost 10 rubles a year and 3 rubles once, subject to a payment for six months. For visitors, the payment was 1 ruble per month or 10 rubles per year, subject to a semi-annual contribution.

The largest donations came from an honorary member of the Society, Maximilian Khristianovich Gelferikh. Among those who helped the Society financially or with sports equipment, the names of G. A. Pilstrem, B. A. Kraevsky, P. A. Noskov, N. I. Kudryachevsky, M. S. Navratil, R. K. Meyer, V. I. Pidde.

The *expenses of the Society* were related to renting a room, paying a salary to a teacher and a minister, purchasing and repairing sports equipment, holding public evenings, prizes for competitions, subscribing to magazines and so on.

The report of the Society for 1909 [14] provides a timetable or lesson plan for the various groups included in its composition (Table 1). According to the schedule, only full members could practice daily (except Saturday and Sunday) at 2:00. For oth-

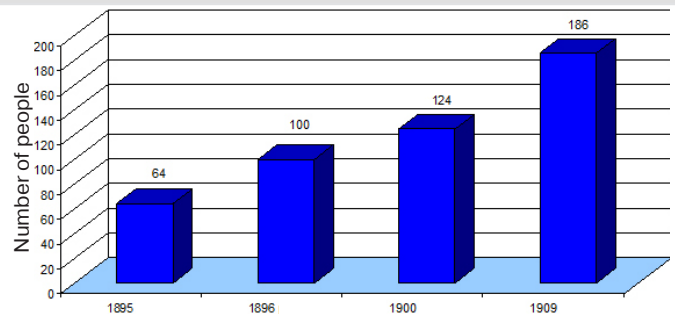


Fig. 1. Number of full members of the first gymnastic society in 1895, 1896, 1900, 1909

er groups of visitors, two classes of different durations were planned per week: adult visitors (men) studied for two hours, ladies and girls had one and a half hours, and children of both sexes had one hour.

At the same time, there were "Rules for members and visitors of the Kharkov Gymnastic Society", which noted that "... for more experienced people, floor exercises do not last more than half an hour, after which no one should do more gymnastics".

Certain requirements existed before the sportswear of people who were engaged in gymnastics: "... were whenever possible in uniform gymnastic clean suits, that is, in blue trousers and a white sweatshirt. Gymnastic sweatshirt and shoes (or shoes) are mandatory, because without them, no one is allowed to exercise" [14].

Along with gymnastics, the Society developed sports such as fencing, weightlifting, and wrestling [8].

The forms of organization of classes that were used in the Society were quite diverse: gymnastic evenings (training sessions), gymnastic evenings "to test the results of the busy", public and family evenings, children's games, a tree for children, theater performances, country walks, public summer competitions, competitions in the Missouri circus, performances with charity, performances at the gymnastic saints, competitions for prizes "for gymnastics", "for athletics", "for wrestling". The application of such forms of work by the Society made it possible to carry out wide propaganda work among the population of Kharkov to attract physical education and sports, including women and children; contribute to the development of sports that the Society has cultivated.

Analyzing the performance of visiting the hall, it should be noted that the work carried out had a positive impact (Table 2). Thus, the number of visits by adults over the study period is gradually growing, with the exception of 1900. The decrease in indicators in 1900 was due to the inconvenient classroom,

Table 1
Lesson plan for groups of the Kharkov 1st Gymnastics Society (1909–1910)

Group Society	Days of the week and time for classes				
	Monday	Thursday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Full members	20:30–22:30	20:30–22:30	20:30–22:30	20:30–22:30	20:30–22:30
Adult visitors of group I		20:30–22:30		20:30–22:30	
Adult visitors of group II			20:30–22:30		20:30–22:30
Ladies and damsels	18:30–20:00			18:30–20:00	
Children of both sexes		18:30–19:30			18:30–19:30

Table 2
Indices of the visit to the hall, held gymnastic evenings and competitions of the Kharkov 1st gymnastic society (1894–1896, 1900, 1909)

Indicators	Years				
	1894	1895	1896	1900	1909
hall visit					
(Number of times):	1872	3526	6279	5416	
– full members		566	1092	796	
– adult visitors	1872	2960	4585	3835	15336
– ladies and damsels			602	330	
– children (for children's games)				455	
Gymnastic evenings (number)	106	118	158	150	187
Competitions for prizes (number)				1	13

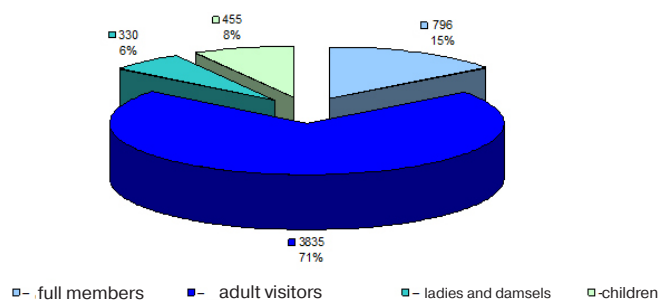


Fig. 2. Ratio of different categories of visitors by the number of times visiting the halls of the gymnastic society in 1900

because the Roman Catholic Church, in which it is rented, reduced the area of use for the Society.

Over the 15 years of the existence of the sports organization, the indicators of the number of visits to the hall by adult visitors have increased more than 8 times, and the number of gymnastic evenings – 1,7 times.

Among the various segments of the population who attended the Society's hall in 1896, the largest number of visits among adults was 73% (4,585 times), a member was 17% (1,092 times) and women were 10% (602 times). In 1900, the Society organized children's games [11]. Accordingly, the number of visits to the hall by children amounted to 8% of the total number (Figure 2).

The methodological basis for the work of the teaching staff was "... two magazines devoted to gymnastics and sports: Turner-Zeitung and Athleten-Zeitung", which were received by the society. Various gymnastic exercises were visually

presented in the form of "19 table of figures" [9]. Also at that time, translation works on physical education were published, bibliographic reviews of books on physical education published in Russia were published in magazines [4].

Conclusions / Discussion

As a result of the study, it was established that the Gymnastics Society was founded with a circle of gymnastics enthusiasts in 1894 with the participation of the honorary member of the Society Maximilian Khristianovich Gelferikh, a well-known entrepreneur in the city, philanthropist (who made the largest amount of donations) and other persons, complements the data of L. Vostroknutov and clarifies information M. Oleinik and Yu. Grot. The scientific search of A. Bondar, A. Waceba, G. Griban, A. Lyakh-Porodka, T. Ustinova, S. Fil and others from the history of the development of the sports movement in different regions of Ukraine at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries was extended. The data of I. Baldzhi, G. Salenko on financing the first sports organizations was confirmed. The results of previous scientific studies on the functioning of societies were expanded in the following areas: organizational structure and composition, functions of a teacher (trainer), attracting women and children to physical education, sources of income and expense items, timetable and forms of organization of classes, activities for the development of physical education and individual sports (gymnastics, fencing, wrestling, weightlifting) in the territory of the Kharkov province of the 1st gymnastic society.

Prospects for further research are related to the generalization of reports on the activities of societies in other sports, which were founded since then in the Kharkov province.

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