

VASANOC

1999 ANNUAL REPORT

GENERAL

VASANOC has made some progress in certain areas of sports development during the year. But as usual with limited resources and funding, it has not been possible to achieve some of the important commitments planned earlier in the year. Be that as it may, excellent results and better organised national selections from the Provincial Games, has in turn provided an improved standards in the Guam South Pacific Games. This is a complete change from the past where national reps were more or less selected at random, mostly on a preferential basis, rather than proper qualification requirements. This progress resulted in Vanuatu gaining the highest number of Medals to date at the Guam SP Games. And even then more medals came from some of the sports that were least expected such as Rugby Sevens, Table Tennis, Karate and Netball.

In other areas of development Vanuatu was host to some national and regional events with great success. These competitions fulfilled the aspirations of the respective sports federations that had planned their programmes ahead in good time. More emphasis are now being placed on junior sports programmes by some federations, and with the support of VASANOC. But a lot more needs to be done to provide links to the Primary School and Secondary School competitions.

The Vanuatu star athlete and holder of the South Pacific Games records for both 400m and 400m Hurdles, Marie Estelle Kapalu was awarded a Medal of Honor by the Head of State, in recognition for her achievement in sports at the 1999 Independence Anniversary celebrations. Such a national recognition provides a great impetus for all athletes throughout Vanuatu. This followed her appointment a few weeks earlier by VASANOC to the position of SDO within the organisation.

VASANOC would like to place on record its gratitude to the late Oceania SDO, Brian Wightman for his guidance, advice and personal efforts he contributed towards the establishment of VASANOC. Brian worked tirelessly to assist in drafting of the Constitution and ran sports training

programmes which laid the foundation of VASANOC in 1991. We will forever be grateful.

GUAM SOUTH PACIFIC GAMES

Vanuatu participated in this regional event with a large delegation of 100 athletes & officials. The Vanuatu Team consisted of Athletics, Boxing, Karate, Table Tennis, Weightlifting, Netball, Beach Volleyball, Rugby Sevens Golf and Basketball.

The delegation returned with 22 - Medals in total, which is a new record for Vanuatu. The delegation was given a well-deserved welcome by the Prime Minister, Donald Kalpokas and his Government.

However, whilst some sports improved and clearly showed determination to perform well, others that had built up some considerable expectations, did not perform so well. Some of these have always been in the forefront as medal-winning sport for Vanuatu. Now it is obvious more efforts must be put into better organised selection of athletes in good time, and improvement of standards well before the Norfolk SPMini Games in 2001 and FIJI SP Games in 2003.

MALAMPA PROVINCIAL GAMES

The inauguration of the first Games took place at SANMA Province in 1997 and was a great success. The second Games at MALAMPA Province in May 1999 achieved even better. Over 1,000 Athletes and Officials took part in Athletics, Soccer, Basketball, Volleyball, Boxing, Netball, Karate, and Petanque. Following the first event at such a high national level, it is now obvious that the Provincial Games will form the basic testing ground for future selection of athletes.

VASANOC is most grateful to ONOC for allowing Brian Minikin to assist once again with Programming and Results. But it was also an opportunity to utilise SDO's from the neighbouring countries, as part of their training programme. These assistants include two SDO's from Fiji, two from the Solomons and one from PNG. Thanks also to the IOC for its patronage of the Provincial Games, which now has a full provincial support, and that of the Government. It is the primary aim that the Provincial Games will become the main vehicle for improvement of standards in Vanuatu.

