

## The San Francisco Story

Dr. Tom Waddell placed sixth in the decathlon in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. It was his dream that there be a gay equivalent open to unrecognized athletes everywhere. So in October of 1981, an announcement was made of an attempt to form a Gay Olympics Games in San Francisco for the following summer.

By December, a monthly newsletter was started and mailed to anyone who submitted a written request to the newly formed Gay Olympic Committee. Benefits have been held at least weekly at all sorts of places in San Francisco since that time to pay for the projected quarter of a million dollars budget for the games.

The city has been very responsive to the concept, so large athletic facilities have been made available for the events. Kezar Stadium will be used for the opening and closing events. Kezar used to be the home of the San Francisco Giants baseball team and seats over 60,000 people. Other facilities include Kezar pavilion and local college gymnasiums.

The sports extravaganza will take place August 27 through September 5. There are mens and womens divisions in most sports. The sports are basketball, billiards, bowling, boxing, cycling, golf, marathon, physique, powerlifting, rugby (women only), soccer, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, volleyball, and wrestling (men only).

A torch has been carried across the country from Stonewall in New York City and arrived in the Bay City August 22. A special anthem has been written for the games and will be performed at the opening and closing ceremonies. Tina Turner will perform at the opening ceremony. Gold, silver, and bronze medallions will be presented at the closing ceremony.

There has never been a gay athletic event of this magnitude in world history. Only individual sports have ever had any interregional competition before. These competitions should be appreciated for the positive gay image that reflects on us all.

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