

EDUCATION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN SERBIA FROM 1908 TO 2013

(Preliminary communication)

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Abstract

Successful realization of physical education instruction, beside valid curricula and material conditions for classes, requires also professionally educated teaching staff. In the long term history of this kind of instruction in Serbia, great efforts were put to open relevant institutions, to educate physical education teachers. Education of physical education teachers in Serbia has a long tradition. This year three important anniversaries should be properly marked: 105 years from the establishment and work of the School of Gymnastics in Belgrade (1908); 85 years from the completed „One-year course for gymnastics teachers“ in Belgrade (1928); 75 years of the Faculty of Sport and Physical Education (1938-2013). The analysis of the period since the establishment of the first educational institution in the field of physical culture indicates that the School of Gymnastics in Belgrade (1908) represents an institutional beginning of the teachers' education and the Faculty of Sport and Physical Education in Belgrade (1938) is the institution with uninterrupted 75-year tradition in education of the physical culture professionals.

Keywords: *School of Gymnastics, course for gymnastics teachers, courses for primary school teachers, State Institute for Physical Culture (DIF), Advanced School for Physical Education, Faculty of physical culture (FFK), Faculty of Sport and Physical Education, historical method,*

INTRODUCTION

For the successful realization of physical education teaching, in addition to appropriate curricula and material conditions for teaching, professionally educated teachers are also necessary. During the long history of the physical education teaching in Serbia, great efforts were made to establish the appropriate institutions, to educate the teachers of physical education.

Development of education is of the utmost importance for every country, so considerable attention has been paid to it ever since. In this line, its origins have often been sought, i.e. the emergence of the first institutions which have performed this significant activity. For all of us who work in the field of physical education it is also important to know where the roots are and when the institutions which started the education of the staff for this purpose were founded.

Education of the physical education teachers in Serbia has a long tradition. This year there are three significant anniversaries which should be properly marked. They are:

- 105 years from the establishment of the *Gym-*

nastics School in Belgrade (1908).

- 85 years from the completion of the „*One-year course for gymnastics teachers*“ held in Belgrade (1928).
- 75 years of the work of the *Faculty of Sport and Physical Education (1938-2013).*

Analyzing the period from the emergence of the first educational institutions in the field of physical culture, it may be stated that the *Gymnastics School in Belgrade (1908)* represents the institutional beginning of the education of teachers, and the *Faculty of Sport and Physical Education in Belgrade (1938)* is the institution which in its 75 years of operation has been continuously working on educating its staff for the needs of physical culture.

METHOD

A historical method was applied in this study.

DISCUSSION

I. The roots of the institutional education of physical culture teachers

Searching for the roots of the institutional education of the physical culture teaching staff we find the

following forms of their education:

1. Training teachers to teach gymnastics classes (140 years ago) in *the first courses for primary school teachers*, held in Kragujevac in 1872 and 1873. According to the lectures held in these courses, Petar Predragovic wrote a manual titled „*A Brief Guide for Teaching Gymnastics in Primary Schools*“ whose publication was approved by the Ministry of Education in 1873. It was printed in 1.000 copies and it represented a valuable professional assistance to the primary school teachers in the following decades (140 years ago), since Dimitrije Matic had decided to introduce gymnastics as a compulsory subject in primary schools (1868).

2. Education of gymnastics teachers in Serbia (105 years ago) in the *Gymnastic School* in Belgrade in 1908 represents the beginning of the institutional education.

In January 1908 the Ministry of Education approved the Curriculum according to which the operation of the Gymnastics School was launched on *May 1st, 1908* in Belgrade. The first course enrolled 20 attendants including two women. The lectures ended on October 29th and the exam was held from November 1st to November 5th, 1908. Out of 20 candidates enrolled, 10 candidates finished the School, including those two women.

The economic difficulties and the political situation in the Kingdom of Serbia prevented the opening of the second course of the Gymnastics School, i.e. its further continued work on creating its own qualified professional staff for this school subject.

3. „*One-year courses for gymnastics teachers*“ in Belgrade in the academic 1927/28 also represents the beginning of the systematic education of the PE teachers; because the engagement of the Sokol's representatives in secondary school PE teaching was not sufficient (85 years ago).

4. „*One-year course for gymnastics teachers*“ was attended by 33 participants, out of whom 9 were girls. It was a generation of teachers who graduated from the teachers' training school then. (85 years ago).

II. The beginning and the development of the institutional education of the physical culture teaching staff

The Faculty of Sport and Physical Education of Belgrade is the first institution founded in the field of the education of PE (physical culture) teachers in Serbia, which has been working continuously for 75 years (1938-2013).

The establishment and the development of the Faculty passed through the following institutions:

1. It started as „*One-year preparation course for PE teachers in schools*“, whose opening ceremony was performed on September 15th, 1938 in the small hall of the Sokol House Belgrade in 27 Deligradska Street. The Curriculum was prescribed and it included 25 subjects (75 years ago).

Adolf Pihler, PhD was appointed the administrator of this One-year course. The entrance exam was orga-

nized from September 11th to September 14th, 1938 and on the basis of the results achieved, 51 participants were enrolled. The school worked for two semesters, and the final exams were carried out from June 25th to July 17th, 1939, and after that most of the 49 participants who completed this One-year course became the PE teachers in secondary schools and teachers' training schools.

2. It continued its work as *the School for Physical Education (SPE)*, when the Minister of people's physical education prescribed „*The Regulation on School for physical education*“ on *March 24th, 1939*, pursuant to the Decision of the Ministerial Council, which established the School for Physical education, seated in Belgrade.

This newly established School was an advanced vocational school at the same level with the Teachers' Training College whose task was to prepare PE teachers for all kinds of schools as well as the experts in the specific branches of physical education.

The curriculum comprised 30 subjects.

Milivoje Vuk Aracic was appointed a rector.

In the academic 1939/40, 33 male and 25 female students were enrolled and in the academic 1940/41 there were 35 male and 21 female students enrolled.

However, the immediate war danger that threatened the Kingdom of Yugoslavia forced the Minister of people's physical education to make the decision on the dismissal of the School for physical education on March 31st, 1941. The April war in 1941 against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and consequently its occupation, interrupted the regular instruction for the students of physical education, but not the work of the School, which continued to exist administratively.

3. Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the School for physical education continued its work pursuant to the Decision of the Ministry of Education of the Democratic Federative Yugoslavia of July 18th, 1945 as *One-year Advanced Course*. The reduction in the duration of the course to one year was a consequence of the great and urgent necessity for rapid creation of the necessary professionals in the field of physical culture. Already on July 19th, 1945 the calls for the enrollment of the participants in this Course were announced.

During August and September the entrance exam was carried out and classes began in the academic 1945/46 with a definite curriculum adopted in early October as well as „The guidelines for the internal operations“ and the Decision on the admission of 61 candidates as full-time students of the School for physical education, with the number of students in November totaling 75.

Most of the teachers in this academic year were the teachers engaged in 1938 and 1939 (B. Polić, V. Smodlaka, V. Kavčić, M. Nisavić, M. Sepa, S. Radovanović, V. Stevanović, D. Stevanović), but some new teachers were also appointed (Olga Skovran, Radmilo Anastasijević, PhD, Zivojin Jovanović, Zoran Zujović, Stevan Englbreht, Kosta Popović, Anton Luksić).

4. Recognizing the need for more professional teaching staff in the field of physical education (physi-

cal culture) the Government of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia adopted „the Decree on the State Institute for Physical Culture (DIF) “on **July 16th, 1946** pursuant to which the School for physical education was dismissed and *the State Institute for Physical Culture (DIF)* was established.

Pursuant to this Decree the State Institute for Physical Culture was established as a *high vocational school of general public importance*, whose task was to prepare highly qualified PE managers and teachers. It was determined that the studies were to last for three years, and two years later (**1948**) the studies were prolonged to **four** years, which made this school equal in rank with other higher education organizations (65 years ago).

Starting from the academic 1951/1952 year the name of the State Institute for Physical Culture was changed into *the Institute for Physical culture*, in accordance with the existing socio-political and administrative changes, congruent with the initiated process of withering away of the state.

5. “The Law on the “*Advanced School for Physical Education*” emanated by the National Assembly of the People's Republic of Serbia on **October 12th, 1956** made equal the position of students of this School with the status of the students of other faculties with the provision that follows: “The Diplomas issued by the Advanced School have the same value as the Diplomas issued by the Faculties of the University”

The Advanced School for Physical education *became a member of the University of Belgrade on January 6th, 1963*. Thus, it was admitted that it reached the level and the range of other faculties of the University of Belgrade (50 years ago).

In September, **1968**, after 30 years of work in the building of the former Sokol House, of the Sokol society of Belgrade in 27 Deligradska street, the School moved to a new building at Kosutnjak (45 years ago).

6. The Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia emanated the Law on the *Faculty of Physical Education on December 11th, 1968* which read that “The Advanced School for Physical Education in Belgrade shall continue its work as the Faculty for Physical Education”.

The change of the name into the *Faculty of physical culture (FFK)* was made in **1990**, and in **2000** the name was changed into *the Faculty of Sport and Physical Education*.

CONCLUSION

Ever since the emergence and the running of the first educational institutions in the field of physical culture, it may be noticed that in 2013 there are several significant anniversaries to mark, especially of *the Faculty of Sport and Physical Education in Belgrade* and its many years of work on qualifying its teaching staff for the needs of physical culture. They are as follows:

1. 140 years

from the publication of *Petar Predragovic's manual „A Brief Guide for the Teaching of Gymnastics in primary schools“* – the first one in the Principality of Serbia

and *the course for teachers on teaching the gymnastics classes held in Kragujevac (1873-2013)*.

2. 105 years

from the establishment and the operation of the *Gymnastics school* in Belgrade (1908).

3. 85 years

from „*One-year course for gymnastics teachers*“ held in Belgrade (1928-2013).

4. 75 years

of the work of the *Faculty of Sport and Physical Education* (1938-2013), which started as „*One-year preparation course for the PE teachers in schools*“, on September 15th, 1938 in the building of the Sokol House Belgrade, in 27 Deligradska Street.

5. 65 years

from the State Institute for Physical Culture becoming a *four-year study* program (1948-2013).

6. 50 years

from the *admission* of High school for Physical education into the University of Belgrade on January 6th, 1963 (1963-2013).

7. 45 years

from the School moving into *a new building at Kosutnjak* (1968-2013)

8. 45 years

from the adoption of the Law on the *Faculty for Physical Education* on December 12th, 1968 (1968-2013).

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