OFFICIAL YEAR BOOK

Special Olympics

Gibraltar

Summer Games 2011

"Still achieving... still pursuing"

Special Olympics

Gibraltar

Would like to thank the sponsors of this year's local games

who have gained a

Gold Sponsorship Award

for their continued support of Special Olympics Gibraltar

We have crossed many boundaries of acceptance, acknowledgement and respect.

Dear Athletes, Family Members, Volunteers, Sponsors and Friends of Special Olympics Gibraltar.

Another year has gone by after our successful 25th anniversary games which brought together such a cross section of our community, all rising to the challenge of supporting and providing the best games ever. The wonder of these games is that families, coaches, volunteers, Torch Runners, and the community, pitch in together with the ultimate goal of supporting and making the three day event run smoothly and be a source of joy for all you athletes.

Sometimes we need to take a step back and consider what the achievements have been and what our future holds. In 1985 we provided training in two different sports. In 1993 we offered four sports and in 2002 we went up to five and to date we now offer our athletes eight sports including two winter sports.

In these years we have also crossed many boundaries. Boundaries of acceptance, acknowledgment, respect and this has only happened thanks to you the athletes by your performance on and off the pitch. Your joy of participation is forever present on your faces. Your dedication and wanting to excel in competition is well known.

This year we are looking forward to competing in the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2011, to be held in Athens, Greece, Games that figure very highly in all Special Olympics Programmes calendar. Gibraltar will be sending the largest team in its history and will be competing in six different summer Sports.

For Special Olympics Athens it is a great honour to be hosting these World Games as in the words of Joanna Despotopoulou, President Organising Committee "It is bringing the Games home".

The Opening/Closing ceremonies are being held in the Panathenean Stadium which hosted the first modern Olympics in 1896. This was attended at the time by 40.000 spectators. The roar would have been tremendous as the roar will be when more than 180 nations parade in with our little Gibraltar among them. This will be an extremely proud moment which we are all looking forward to.

It is fitting to end with the Special Olympics oath:
"Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt".

Our athletes will definitely make the whole of Gibraltar proud.

Annie M. Risso MBE
Programme Chief Executive
Special Olympics Gibraltar.

Greetings from the Minister for Culture, Heritage and Sport the Hon. Edwin J Reyes

The athletes deserve full credit

Special Olympics Gibraltar has undoubtedly demonstrated great vision, motivation and will-power to get to the stage we are at today.

The Government of Gibraltar recognises the benefits derived from participation in sports and recreation activities and, therefore, wholeheartedly supports the many events organised by Special Olympics Gibraltar throughout the year as an integral part of this philosophy. It continues to be a privilege for me, both as Minister for Sport and Chairman of the Sports and Leisure Authority, to assure everyone of our continued support towards Special Olympics Gibraltar.

Primarily, it is the athletes themselves who deserve full credit as they have personally exemplified the phrase "where there is a will there is a way". However, this success is only possible as there are always volunteers who contribute in a most dedicated and yet unassuming manner.

My most sincere thanks to everybody involved with Special Olympics through whose personal efforts much has been achieved.

I have no doubt that Special Olympics' goals will continue to be achieved but, above all, I wish to unreservedly associate myself yet again with the Movement's oath: "Let me win, but if I cannot win let me be brave in the attempt".

Once again, I wish you all the very best for this year's Games and for the future.

Edwin J Reyes

The Road to Athens

by Anne Mesilio

Special Olympics Gibraltar will be participating at the forthcoming World Summer Games in Athens, Greece, the place where it all began over 3,000 years ago. These are now known as 'modern' games after a lapse of 2,700 years when in 393AD the Roman Emperor Theodosius declared the games corrupt.

In ancient Greece during the Games, truces were made to allow travellers and spectators to travel safely and vestiges of this tradition will be evident as Special Olympics athletes from over 180 countries, accompanied by coaches, volunteers and families will gather in the Panathenaic Stadium, which hosted the first 'modern' Olympics in 1896. These Games know no boundaries as Special Olympics transcends all geographical, nationality, political philosophy, gender, race, age or religious borders. When Eunice Kennedy Shriver started Special Olympics in 1968 it was to offer people with intellectual disabilities everywhere 'the chance to play, to compete and the chance to grow'.

Twenty seven athletes will travel to represent Gibraltar in Athletics, Aquatics, Bocce, Bowling, Equestrian and Football. A contingent of forty people will make this trip, the largest ever from Gibraltar to attend Games.

Special Olympics is a non profit making organisation and to send our athletes abroad we depend on sponsorship. Working together Special Olympics and its sponsors help change lives around the world.

You, by your generous sponsorship help our inspiring athletes achieve their goals (read Malcolm's story) and your partnership with Special Olympics will help raise awareness in the community thus enabling inclusion and acceptance of people with intellectual disabilities. "Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged by man". (Rabindramath Tagore, (1861-1941).

The love and loyalty of our sponsors over the past twenty five years has enabled us to provide year round training where athletes learn the skills that take them to World Games. With achievement comes courage and confidence and Special Olympics is a place of welcome, acceptance and the chance to live the Oath, "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be braver in the attempt".

By your sponsorship, you are helping build a safer more accepting world for everyone, and this power to connect people and promote inclusion is greatly valued by Special Olympics.

Thank you. Sometimes these words do not say enough and silent gratitude hardly counts, but thanks is the highest form of thought and to this add the joy of achievement, the spirit of sharing, a place to grow and the opportunity to try, which you provide and you have more than words could ever say.

Thank you.

Special Olympics European Summer Games 2010. Warsaw, Poland

by Annie Risso

Gibraltar was represented at these Games by four athletes, Sally Anne Mauro, Malcolm Miel, Miguel Rubio and Francis Mauro.

Newcomer Darren Robba stood in for Athletic head coach Caine Sanchez and heading the team was Annie Risso. As in all European or World Games the team participated in the Host Town Project. This required the team to arrive four days prior to the Games. This is a great opportunity for the athletes to learn about Polish culture and at the same time share their own Gibraltarian culture.

Our host town was a pretty town called Lowicz where the team stayed in a small hotel near the Sports Academy of Lowicz. Heading the steering committee for the towns welcome was Kamil Sobol and what a welcome that proved to be. Children from different schools congregated in the village square and the athletes' were treated to traditional music and dances in beautiful costumes of the region. The welcome was officiated by the Mayor of Lowicz ably assisted by the Head of Police who promised the stay would be a memorable one. The Final Leg of the Law Enforcement Torch Run arrived in the village and among the runners were Francis Williams and Guillermo Mascarenhas from Gibraltar.

The team were able to train in the mornings but the afternoons were taken up with learning about, and cooking traditional Polish food as well as visiting museums to absorb the great Polish culture.

As exciting as this was the athletes were raring to go and soon it was time for the Opening Ceremony. This was held in the new Legia Warszawa football stadium and though not completely finished was magnificently decorated for the occasion. The production was first class and one of the singers was Simply Red who was leading the Great Britain team which was directly behind Gibraltar in the parade.

Our athletes blossom at these Games and there are opportunities to meet up with friends made at other Games. Francis Mauro, who had trained diligently both in Gibraltar and Lowicz for the 5000mt marathon achieved a credible 3rd place in his first attempt at international level. Well done Francis! Sally Anne Mauro achieved a 2nd place Silver medal in her 200mt sprint and her consistent pace in the 100mt sprint saw her 'sprint' from 3rd to 2nd place, achieving another silver medal. Well done Sally! Miguel Rubio faced tough competition and achieved 4th place in his 200mt sprint, followed by 5th place in his 100mt sprint. Well done Miguel as he discovered he had broken his personal best record. The athletes are aware that they do not always win medals but checking their times is a good indicator of their progress.

Malcolm Miel, normally a swimmer, has for years wanted to participate in athletics and his opportunity arose in Warsaw. He achieved a third place Bronze Medal in his 50mt sprint making a dream come true. Well done Malcolm!

Congratulations to all the athletes who always make us proud.

Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg: Poland

by Guillermo Masceranhas

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Gibraltar is always busy raising awareness and funds for the local Programme and 2010 was no exception.

On national Games day they hold a run around Gibraltar but last year it took on a new dimension when they intrepidly ran in the June heat up, up to over a 1,000ft above sea level to our historic St. Michael's Cave where we were holding celebrations in honour of our 25th anniversary. This was an exciting year as Gibraltar had been included as host city for the "Flame of Hope" in its journey through several European cities on its way to Poland for the European Summer Games. During this final Leg, two runners from Gibraltar would take part, Francis Williams and Guillermo Masceranhas whose story follows.

On the 3rd of September I found myself going to Malaga Airport to start a 3 week journey across Europe taking part in the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics.

I have been involved locally with the Torch Run since the early years as a liaison officer for the DFRS and doing the annual local Run to raise money & awareness for Special Olympics but this was my first time at a European Final leg so I wasn't sure what to expect.

The Torch Run pre final leg started in Turkey visiting Slovenia, Gibraltar, Luxemburg, Paris Brussels and then travelling to Warsaw (Poland) to spend four days where the Special Olympics Summer Games were held.

Our team for the pre leg consisted of 15 people ,10 of which were runners the others were members of the support team, the whole team gelled from day one despite being a wide range of nationalities which included Dutch , Polish , Greek ,Turkish ,Irish ,Belgian ,American and of course Gibraltarian.

It was a great experience meeting people from different countries and cultures, we all got on very well with each other in all the places we visited. We also met very nice people working very hard in organising all the events, also our every need from the time they picked us up from the airport or train station, till they took us back when we had finished, was catered to for us to carry on with our fantastic journey. A great experience also was running with the Special Olympics athletes and seeing them enjoying holding the torch with the "Flame of Hope", you can see in their faces the enthusiasm and determination and the effort they put into the run, some of them not even wanting to hand over the Torch to another athlete no matter how long and how far they had been running, great to see.

The trip as a whole was great especially the pre leg, the Polish experience was different. To start with our arrival at Warsaw airport was great and we were picked up by a police van at the foot of the aircraft, and taken straight through to the luggage

continued page 15

Athlete Profile

Malcolm Miel

Malcolm will celebrate his 35th birthday on 3RD June, the penultimate day of the World Summer Games in Athens, Greece, then its back home to Gibraltar and shortly after that a visit to UK for one of his medical check ups.

That he will have been at the Games is a testament to his courage and tenacity of spirit which has helped him weather so many challenges in his short life. His commitment to being a Special Olympics athlete has given him 'a place to go, something to do and make friends'. His words speak volumes about the years he was feeling 'lost' when no one, least of all himself knew what he wanted, though the need to 'belong to something' was strong in him.

From the day of his birth, his mother Susan knew 'there was something wrong' and so began the heartache years before a diagnosis was finally arrived at in UK when he was around twelve years old.

Myotonic Dystrophy, two words which shed light but did not effect a cure as his mother so hoped for. He has a form of muscular dystrophy(wasting) which affects muscles and many other organs in the body. This is an inherited disorder, and Susan and Malcolm's two brothers all have been diagnosed with this to varying degrees.

Malcolm left school at fifteen years old, barely able to read or write after disrupted years of Dr's visits, being able to walk only on tip toes and often wearing a supportive brace, enduring his feet encased in plaster of paris to help

straighten them and when this did not work it was off to UK for more of the same. He could and did ride his bicycle everywhere but yearned to play football like his brother Miguel, also a Special Olympics athlete. He was now twenty four years old and as cycling was offered in Special Olympics he went along……. and learned to swim! This was to herald the end of his 'lost' years as he found an outlet for his energies in swimming and athletics despite needing several operations on his feet as the tendons were pulling and restricting growth. He continued to train and dream and last year at the European Summer Games in Poland he achieved a third place Bronze medal in his 50mt sprint. He had made his dream come true.

In between all of this he suffered a femoral blood clot and is now on Warfarin(blood thinning drug) for life. His heart gave trouble and he has been fitted with a cardiac pacemaker but his spirit never faltered. He is back and forth to hospitals for operations and check ups, and yet can be found in the swimming pool, on the track and at Bocce training for competition in Athens, and, oh yes, he has also fitted in a gall bladder operation somewhere in all of this! He only speaks of what he can do, what he wants to do, never what he cannot do and his mother agrees that 'Special Olympics is the best thing that ever happened to us'.

This cheerful little fellow portrays the motto for the Games delivering a dynamic message of optimism and determination which captures Malcolm's passion for life. It also epitomises the true spirit of Special Olympics which he has demonstrated over and over again. He is not alone; his story could be any one of millions of athletes, all overcoming, all striving to be the best, all united under the encouraging banner of Special Olympics. However, it is his unique story of triumph and he has been 'brave in the attempt'. His serious sense of purpose has demonstrated the principles of dignity and equality which makes us all equal.

Anne Mesilio

Pic 'r
Events from the

n' Mix
e Previous Year

Special Olympics

Special Olympics

The concept of Special Olympics was born in 1962 when Eunice Kennedy Shriver started a day camp for people with intellectual disabilities at her home.

Six years later the first international Special Olympics Games were held at Soldier Field, Chicago in the USA.
It was here she said in her opening address, "the fact that exceptional children-children with intellectual disabilities- can be exceptional athletes- through sports they can realize their potential for growth," and a new national programme, Special Olympics, was born. It was to offer people with intellectual disabilities everywhere "the chance to play, the chance to compete and the chance to grow."
Now, 43 years later it is a global movement, operating 30,000 events annually for 3.5 million persons with intellectual disabilities in more than 180 countries. It is a non profit organization dedicated to individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive and respected members of society through sports training and competition.
Research has shown significant improvement in athletes sense of self, social skills and interactions due to participation in Special Olympics.
The Spirit of Special Olympics, skill, courage, sharing and joy incorporates universal values which transcend all boundaries of geography, nationality, political philosophy, gender, age, race or religion.
Special Olympics and Paralympics are two separate organizations recognized by the International Olympic Committee.
Special Olympics provides sports opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities of all ability levels. Paralympics provides sports opportunities for elite-level athletes with disabilities.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES OATH

On her way to the first ever Opening Ceremony of the first Special Olympics World Games, Eunice Kennedy made the final draft of the Oath and opened the games with these words;

"In ancient Rome, the gladiators went into the arena with these words on their lips;

**"Let me win,
but if I cannot win,
let me be brave
in the attempt"**

**"Today, all of you young athletes are in the arena. Many of you will win, but even more important, I know you will all be brave, and bring credit to your parents and your country.
Let the games begin.
Thank you."**

Special Olympics Gibraltar National Summer Games Organising Committee 2011

DIRECTORS	
National Director/Director of Games	**Annie Risso**
Administration	**Marisa Henrich**
Public Relations	**Anne Mesilio**
Entertainment	**Francis Williams**
Volunteers	**Brian Fernandez**
Hospitality	**Paola Poggio**
Swimming	**John Golding, Ana Marie Golding**
Track and Field	**Caine Sanchez**
Football	**Brian Fernandez, Raphael Celecia, Steven Tosso**

For further information on Special Olympics and how to volunteer your time or help in any way, please contact Programme Chief Executive Annie Risso, tel no: +350 20050764, email walker@gibnet.gi
Visit our website: **specialolympicsgibraltar.org**

Special Olympics Gibraltar

Would like to thank

EuropeAxess Media

for the design and layout of the Special Olympics Yearbook

Special Olympics Gibraltar

26 Years of Success

1985 - In July that year Special Olympics Gibraltar was represented at the first ever Summer Olympics Games held in Dublin. Six athletes, two bowlers, three swimmers and five coaches travelled to Ireland. It was following the success of the local team at these games that a group of people decided to set up a Special Olympics Programme in Gibraltar.

1986 - The Special Olympics Gibraltar Programme is officially recognised by Special Olympics International.

1987 - A team of four athletes and two swimmers with coaches travelled to America to participate in the 1987 International Summer Special Olympics in South Bend, Indiana. This is the first time that Gibraltar is represented at International Special Olympics Games.

1988 - A team of 7 athletes and 2 coaches participate in the National Games of Portugal. Although the National Games have been held since 1985, Special Olympics Gibraltar is given the go ahead to enlarge the National Games. Two visiting teams from Special Olympics Portugal and from Spain compete against local athletes. In June, to coincide with the National Games, the First Emergency Services Torch Run is held in Gibraltar. Special Olympics Gibraltar is officially recognised as a sporting body in Gibraltar.

1990 - In March Special Olympics Gibraltar holds its first athletes/coach Training Camp. In July the largest ever team from Special Olympics Gibraltar with 14 athletes and seven coaches take part in the 1990 European Summer Special Olympics Games in Glasgow, Scotland. The team returned with a record number of medals.

1991 - In April the second athletes coach training camp is held. A team of 8 athletes participate in the International Special Olympics Games held in Minneapolis, St. Paul, in July. Gibraltar is represented in athletics, swimming and bowling. Admiral Sir Derek Reffell, Governor of Gibraltar took time to accompany the team to the Games.

1993 - Special Olympics Gibraltar participate in their 1st World Winter Games. A Floor Hockey team consisting of 12 athletes participated. Francis Williams represented Gibraltar as a torch runner.

1995 June/July - A team of athletes participated in the 9th International Special Olympics Games held in New Haven, Connecticut. Gibraltar's International celebrity songwriter/composer Albert Hammond led the team at the opening ceremony, while John Aonso represented Gibraltar as a torch runner.

1996 - A team of 6 athletes travelled overland to Monaco to participate in the 1st Jeux Des Petits Pays. Two coaches attend a training course in Luxembourg to re-instate Motor Activities programme in Gibraltar.

1997 - A coach from Gibraltar is selected by Special Olympics International to become a European instructor in MATP. 14 athletes and six coaches attend for the second time the World Winter Games to be held in Toronto, Canada. July saw a team of 11 athletes and five coaches attend the UK National Games held in Portsmouth in Swimming, Bowling and Track and Field. First time ever Special Olympics UK invites Gibraltar to its National Games. 11 athletes took part in swimming, track and field and bowling.

1998 - 2nd Jeux des Petits Etats take place in Diekrich, Luxembourg. First time ever MATP athletes are invited to participate, Karen Becerra and Michael Clinton received Gold Awards. Our six other athletes brought back 4 gold, 4 silver and 3 bronze.

1999 - Special Olympics Gibraltar emerged triumphant in the Special Olympics Summer Games '99 in North Carolina, USA, winning a total of 13 medals, 6 gold, 6 silver and 1 bronze.

2000 - Special Olympics European Games 2000 held in Groningen, Netherlands. Gibraltar won a grand total of 10 medals, 5 gold, 3 silver and 2 bronze. First time 5-a-side football team attend European Games.

continued from page 7

pick up and straight through outside were a small ceremony took place to receive the "Flame of Hope" in Poland.

I also had a great time in Poland although not in the beginning,

but it got better, I met some people from all over northern Europe it was a pity that most of them did not speak English so

we couldn't communicate very well ,but they tried, we had runs in small towns outside Warsaw where we were very well received by the towns authorities , all of them making presentations and speeches to the runners and Special Olympics athletes, who were also very happy to see us and had a great time during the runs.

After the run through the towns we were taken back to Warsaw for the opening ceremony of the Special Olympics European Summer Games, after the rehearsal for the ceremony we had a 10 k run around Warsaw.

In the Opening Ceremony we saw all the teams taking part in the games entering the stadium and we had pictures taken with the Gibraltar team, the ceremony was impressive and very well attended and very well organised, it was a great experience and a great honour representing Gibraltar and the local Torch Run and I have made some friends for life.

continued from previous page

2001- February/March Gibraltar participates in Special Olympics World Winter Games in Anchorage, Alaska in Floor Hockey. The team won a Bronze Medal. 1st time ever participation in Oslo for the Norway Cup. A unified 7-a-side football team travelled in July to participate.

2002 - After this experience the unified team participated in the Czech Republic in a single sport event 7-a-side football.

2003 - World Summer Games held in Dublin, Ireland. First time Chief Minister Peter Caruana attended a World Games.

2004 - Special Olympics World Winter Games 2005 Nagano, Japan.

Floor Hockey team participated, coming 4th. That year a group of lower mobility athletes travelled to Olomouc, Czech Republic, to participate in a single sport event, Track and Field. It was the first time away from Gibraltar for Virginia Wink with Graham Brooking and Christopher Joyce.

2006 - Andorra, 7-a-side football event. The team travelled overland in the brand new Lord's Taverners' minibus and achieved a silver medal.

-Special Olympics, Gibraltar reached a milestone when 20 years working in the International Programme was recognised with a successful Opening Ceremony at the National Games.

- Special Olympics Europe Eurasia CEO Mike Smith presented Programme Chief Exectuive Annie Risso with a plaque to Commemorate Gibraltar's 20th Anniversary.

-Athletes were invited by Special Olympics Spain to participate in Barcelona's 7th National Games.

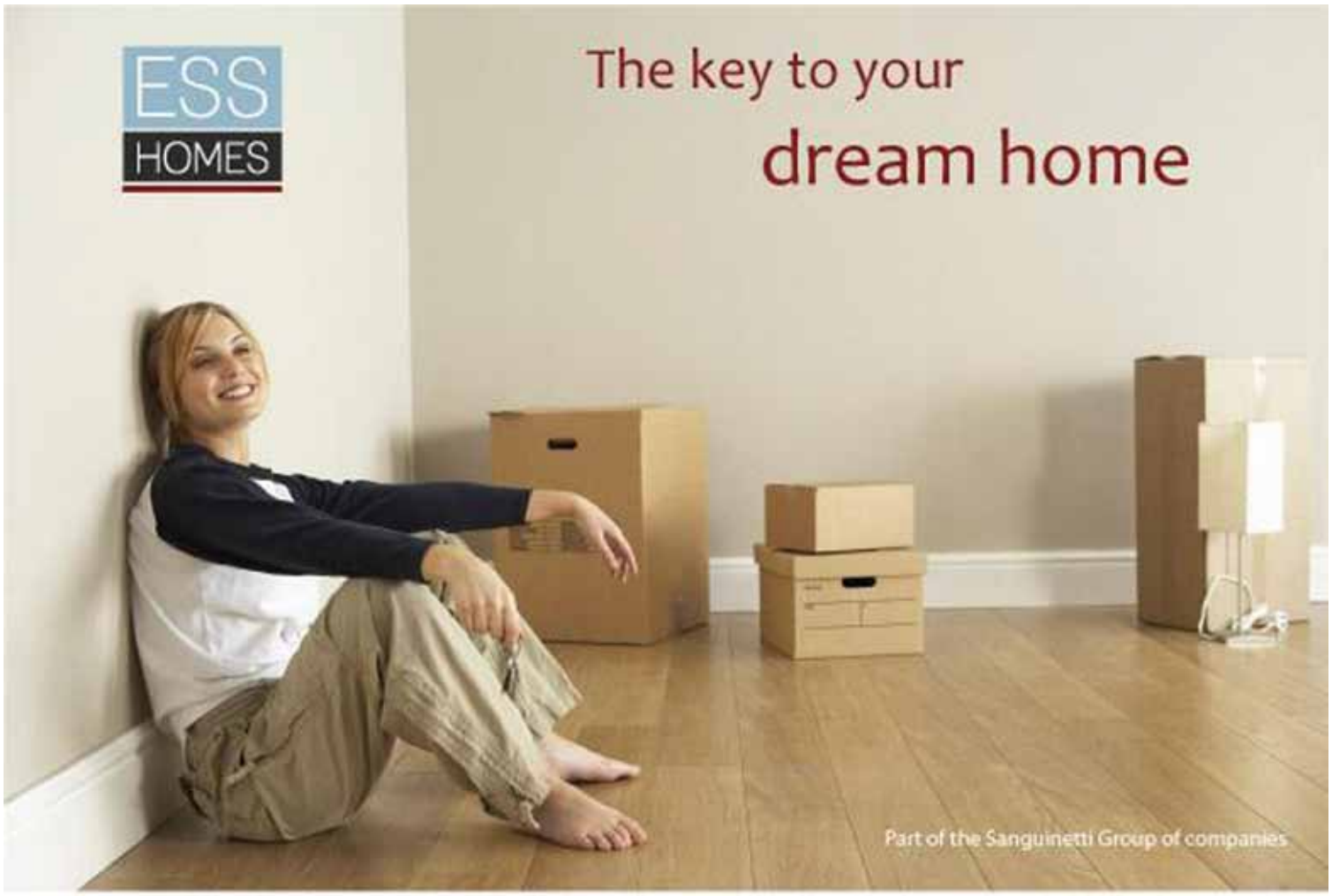
- First time ever European Youth Games were held in Rome. 2 athletes, Douglas Pitaluga and Dorrian Zamitt, participated in Aquatics.

2007. A team of 19 athletes and 10 coaches participated in the Special Olympics World Summer games held in Shanghai, China. The team brought back a record number of gold medals.

2008. February saw the floor hockey team participate in Innsbruck, Austria's National games. Football team travelled to Cyprus to participate in Small Nations football tournament.

2009. Special Olympics World Winter Games 2009, Boise, Idaho. A floor hockey team and 2 snowshoers participated at these games. They achieved a Bronze medal in floor hockey, and a Silver and Bronze in snowshoeing.

2010. Athletes competed in an Andora seven-a-side football tournament. They participated in the Isle of Man's first Summer Games and the European Summer Games in Poland.



14 Cornwall's Lane, Gibraltar +350 200 62211 www.esshomes.gi info@esshomes.gi