

THE HISTORY OF GYMNASTICS IN THE TERRITORY OF SLOVAKIA FROM 1918 TO 1980

Michal Bábel

Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Slovak Republic

Original article

DOI: 10.52165/sgj.15.3.299-321

Abstract

Gymnastics has been practised in the territory of Slovakia for over a century. During this period, Slovak gymnasts have achieved significant sports successes. This manuscript focuses on the emergence and development of gymnastics in the territory of Slovakia from the beginning of the 20th century to the early 1980s, looking at the main reasons and factors that influenced the emergence, development and direction of gymnastics in the territory of Slovakia during this period. The article also features the most successful gymnasts born on the territory of Slovakia who achieved significant sports success at the international level between 1918 and 1980. The basic criterion for including Slovak gymnasts among successful athletes was their representative participation in top international gymnastics competitions, with final placements in all-around and individual gymnastics events, up to a maximum of 10th place. Information detailing the significant achievements of Slovak gymnasts can be found in the attached tables, which list the greatest sports accomplishments of Slovak gymnasts at the Olympic Games, World Championships, and European Championships.

Regarding the methodology employed in this manuscript, we adhered to standard historical research methods. Our primary focus was on collecting materials related to the subject matter. We diligently searched for primary sources, including diaries, newspapers, books, speeches, historical records, and electronic data. We then categorized these facts and examined their relationships using the comparative method as our foundation. Based on our analysis of this information, we prepared the manuscript.

Keywords: *history, Slovakia, apparatus gymnastics, artistic gymnastics, sports results.*

BEGINNINGS OF GYMNASTICS IN THE TERRITORY OF SLOVAKIA

Gymnastics, known as the "Mother of Sports", started in Slovakia based on the principles of the Sokol movement (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003). The Sokol movement, known as the Sokol, was founded by Dr. Miroslav Tyrš and Dr.

Jindřich Fügner in Bohemia (today Czech Republic) in Prague on February 16, 1862 (Sak, 2012). The first Sokol Slovak branch was founded on November 14, 1918, in Uhorská Skalica (today Skalica, western Slovakia). This can be considered the very

first organizational structure of gymnastics in the territory of Slovakia (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

In the early days, apparatus gymnastics held a prominent position within the Sokol movement. Apparatus gymnastics made its way into Slovak schools, particularly in the first Slovak grammar schools. The Revúca grammar school (1862-1874) distinguished itself by maintaining an excellent standard of physical education and gymnastics, with the notable presence of Dr. Ivan Branislav Zoch, a prominent Slovak educator. In 1873, Dr. I. B. Zoch authored a work titled "Krátky návod k vyučovaniu telocviku hlavne pre národné školy" ("A Short Guide to Teaching Physical Education, Primarily for National Schools"), wherein he

meticulously described and provided graphical illustrations of 140 fundamental physical exercises, including basic gymnastic routines. Dr. Zoch also introduced his own terminology for gymnastic exercises, employing words such as "prieč" for the horizontal bar and "máre" for parallel bars. Furthermore, he innovatively designed various gymnastic apparatuses, which he comprehensively documented and illustrated in the aforementioned work. In addition to apparatus gymnastics, the publication incorporated progressive exercises in running, jumping, and folk dances, marking a significant contribution to physical education (Semáková et al., 2019).



Figure 1. Ivan Branislav Zoch and his work "Short Guide to Teaching Physical Education, Primarily for National Schools" (Internet: www.sportency.sk).

Gymnastics gained widespread popularity in Slovakia during the latter half of the 20th century, particularly within the school environment. However, before 1914, Slovak gymnasts only sporadically participated in top-level competitions. A notable exception occurred at the the 5th Olympic Games held in Stockholm in 1912 when the sole athlete from Slovakia,

Ludovít Kmet'ko (March 22, 1884 – †1952), hailing from Košice in eastern Slovakia, competed as part of the 16-member gymnastics team representing Hungary. In the team all-around exercises, he secured a silver medal, emerging as the most valuable gymnast within the Hungarian gymnastics delegation (Souček, 2010). The Hungarian team amassed a total

score of 227.25 points at these Olympic Games. In addition to Kmeťko, the Hungarian silver-winning team comprised non-Slovak gymnasts such as Berkes-Bittenbinder, Erdődy, Fóti, Gellért, Halmos-Haberfeld, Helmich, Herczeg, Keresztessy, Karponai-Krizmanich, Pászty, Pétery, Réti-Rittich, Szűcs, Téry, and Tuli (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003). Ľ. Kmeťko was an ardent advocate of the Swedish gymnastics school and the author of the work "Boj telovýchovných systémov" ("The Battle of Physical Education Systems") (Souček, 2010).

The significant development of apparatus gymnastics as the first form of gymnastics in Slovakia occurred after the end of World War I, i.e., after 1918, mainly due to the merit and support of the Sokol movement. Among the important personalities who contributed to the development of the Sokol movement and thus also the development of gymnastics in the territory of Slovakia were Vavro Šrobár¹, Pavel Blaho², Samuel Zoch³, and Kornel Stodola⁴ (Sportency.sk, 2010). With their significant support, Sokol units began to emerge gradually in other Slovak cities, such as Holíč, Predmier, Stupava, Trenčianske Teplice, Ružomberok, Nitra, Nové Mesto nad Váhom, Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš, Žilina, and Turčiansky Svätý

Martin. On February 16, 1919, the first independent Sokol organization, Sokolská župa Masarykova (The Sokol District of Masaryk), was established, with headquarters in Bratislava and managed by Vavro Šrobár (Perútka, 1980).

From the perspective of gymnastics, apparatus gymnastics was predominantly favored within these Sokol units. Moreover, apparatus gymnastics found its place in various other organizations across Slovakia, including Orol⁵, Robotnícka telocvičná jednota (The Workers' Gymnastics Union)⁶, Federácia robotníckych telocvičných jednôt (The Federation of Workers' Gymnastics Unions)⁷, Deutscher Turnverband (The German Physical Education Association) in Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian Physical Education Association in Czechoslovakia, and Maccabi (the Jewish Physical Education Association) in Czechoslovakia (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1980).

The first official men's gymnastics competition took place in 1921 in Levice in western Slovakia. Female gymnasts entered the competitive scene a bit later, in 1923 (Sportency.sk, 2010). Initially, women's gymnastics encompassed a range of disciplines, including rings, parallel bars, horse vaulting with pommel handles, and long horse jumping.

¹ Vavro Šrobár (1867 - 1950) was a Slovak physician, politician, educator, and editor. He played a prominent role in interwar Slovak politics in Czechoslovakia, first as the Minister Plenipotentiary for the Administration of Slovakia, and later as a professor at Comenius University in Bratislava, from 1935 onward. He advocated for the national unity of Czechs and Slovaks (Maťovčík et al., 1999).

² Pavel Blaho (1867 - 1927) was a Slovak physician, journalist, builder, politician, and national activist (Maťovčík et al., 1999).

³ Samuel Zoch (1882 - 1928) was a Slovak Lutheran pastor, public figure, politician, church dignitary, and writer (Maťovčík et al., 1999).

⁴ Kornel Stodola was a Slovak politician, secretary of a hospital in Vienna, and a prominent figure in Slovak economy (Maťovčík et al., 1999).

⁵ Orol was a Catholic sports club founded in 1909. The first Orol unit was established in 1919 in Malacky. This sports club favoured the practice of compulsory floor exercises, apparatus gymnastics and physical games (Vejvar, 2014).

⁶ Robotnícka telocvičná jednota (*The Workers' Gymnastics Union*) was founded on August 22, 1897, in Prague (territory of Bohemia). The first *Workers' Gymnastics Union* in Slovakia was established on February 22 in Ružomberok. In 1903, the organization merged and transformed into the *Zväz robotníckej telocvičnej jednoty* (Association of *Workers' Gymnastics Union*). From a sports perspective, the philosophy of this organization was based on the Sokol movement and the Tyrš' system of gymnastics was preferred (Perútka et al., 1980).

⁷ Federácia robotníckych telocvičných jednôt (*The Federation of Workers' Gymnastics Unions*) was founded on 8 May, 1921. In Slovakia, this organization had the most significant activity in Vrútky, Trnava, Banská Bystrica, and Košice. In 1926, the FRTJ merged with revolutionary workers' sports and tourist organizations to form the Federation of Proletarian Physical Education. This organization focused on public performances (Worker's Spartakiads) combined with gymnastics, sports games, athletics and scouting (Perútka et al., 1980).

Between 1928 and 1948, women's gymnastics competitions were characterized by compulsory routines that constituted the core of the program. These routines were kept secret, meaning that gymnasts were provided with a list of assigned routines before the competition, and each female gymnast had the opportunity to practice her designated

routine twice. The program for female gymnasts also featured floor exercises and apparatus gymnastics, with restrictions on acrobatic elements. These competitions primarily revolved around assessing general physical fitness, with the inclusion of free gymnastics routines only emerging toward the end of the 1930s (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988).

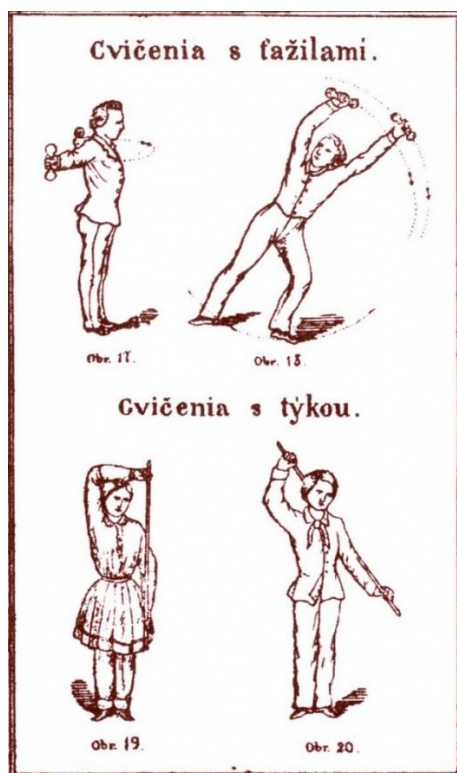


Figure 2. Example of an exercise from I.B. Zoch's work "The Short Guide to Teaching Physical Education, Primarily for National Schools" (Internet: www.podvihorlatskenoviny.sk).



Figure 3. 7th All-Sokol Slet in 1920 in Prague (Bohemia, today Czech Republic). Mass gymnastics exercise of men (Internet: <http://www.smirice.eu/spolky/sokol1/sokol.htm>).

In the 1920s, the Sokol movement was relatively less widespread in Slovakia. In 1920, the number of members in Slovak Sokol units was 18 494, while in Czech Sokol units, there were 562 651 members. (Perútka et al., 1980). The level of training in Slovak Sokol units was generally lower than in the Sokol movement in Bohemia, which is why Czech athletes achieved better results in competitions. (Sportency.sk, 2010). Slovak gymnasts from the Sokol movement participated for the first time in the *VII. All-Sokol Slet in 1920*⁸. In the competition, the most successful performances were achieved by Sokol members from Liptovský Mikuláš (northern Slovakia). Among the female gymnasts, the most successful were *Grubová*, who took 3rd place and *Cimráková*, who took 14th place. In the following decade, Slovak athletes did not achieve significant success in gymnastics events due to the smaller representation of Slovaks in the Sokol movement. Overall, in 1929, only 0.6 percent of the Slovak population was organized in the Sokol movement, and its influence was minimal (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988).

Slovak gymnasts achieved more notable success in gymnastics at the 9th All-Sokol Slet in 1932. In the team competition of the middle division, the squad representing Zvolen, situated in central Slovakia, secured a commendable 7th place. This accomplished team consisted of gymnasts Vychodil, Štancel, Pízl, Muránsky, Devečka, Trnka, and Laska. Alongside these male gymnasts, the 1930s

also witnessed the emergence of other outstanding gymnasts in Slovakia, including Chovan, Výboch, Severíny, Šotkovský, Gonda, Štedrucker, Jurek, and Urban, who contributed significantly to the gymnastics scene in Slovakia (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988).

The most accomplished female gymnast from Slovakia prior to World War II was Matilda Pálffyová, born on March 3, 1912, in Kostol'any nad Hornádom in eastern Slovakia. She was a member of Sokol Košice and had risen to become one of the world's top athletes by 1935. At the Olympic Games held in Berlin in 1936, representing Czechoslovakia, she achieved an impressive 2nd place in the combined team exercises (team all-around). The Czechoslovak female gymnastics team, which included Pálffyová, secured a total score of 503.60 points. This silver medal-winning Olympic team also featured Foltová, Děkanová, Veřmiřovská, Hřebřinová, Dobešová, Větrovská, and Bajerová. The German athletes claimed the Olympic championship, which was significantly influenced by the atmosphere of Nazi Germany.

Matilda Pálffyová continued to shine at the World Championships in Prague (Czech Republic) in 1938, where she achieved 1st place in the team all-around and earned the title of World Champion alongside her fellow gymnasts. The Czechoslovak female gymnastics team garnered a total score of 552.76 points, with Pálffyová's contributions being pivotal. Her teammates in this victorious effort included Nežerková, Děkanová, Dobešová, Foltová,

⁸ The Sokol Slets were public events including gymnastics, competitions of males and females, parades, and the arts, that lasted several days (Sokolomuseum.org). Over 100 000 gymnasts participated at VII. All-Sokol Slet (slet.sokol.eu, n.d.). The program of the VII. All-Sokol Slet also included rhythmic gymnastics, performances by teenage girls, and competitions for

women and teenage girls (Strachová, 2020). The Sokol Slet – this technical name of the mass gymnastics exercise literally means in the Czech language “The falcons have flown to a certain place”, therefore “Sokol Slet” (“Falcon Flight”). This metaphor is difficult to translate into any language (own note).

Hendrychová, Skálová, and Veřmiřovská (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

During this period, female gymnasts did not compete in individual apparatus disciplines officially. However, Matilda Pálffyová unofficially achieved the highest scores on the rings and the vault. In the individual all-around competition, she secured the 3rd place with a total score of 81.98 points. Pálffyová is historically the

first woman from Slovakia to have participated in the Olympic Games and, at the same time, she is the very first Slovak Olympic medalist. In her honor, the Slovak Olympic and Sports Committee annually presents the Matilda Pálffyová Award, recognizing women for their outstanding sports achievements, contributions to sports, and dedication to the Olympic movement (Souček, 2010).



Figure 4. Matilda Pálffyová, the first Slovak Olympic medallist from the Summer Olympics in Berlin in 1936 (Slovak Gymnastics Federation).

SLOVAK GYMNASTICS IN THE YEARS 1939-1945

The World War II period (1939-1945) significantly influenced further development of gymnastics in Slovakia. While Slovakia gained independence as an autonomous state, it fell under the influence of a totalitarian regime that had a detrimental impact on physical education in the country. All physical education associations and organizations, including Sokol, were disbanded in Slovakia and integrated into the Hlinkova garda. (Hlinka's Guard)⁹ (Bučka, 2007). As for

gymnastics, during the years of the wartime Slovak State (1939-1945), gymnastics was a part of physical education organizations, especially the Hlinka's Guard Physical Education Organization. Seman does not mention any national sports association related to gymnastics within the governing body of sports (Slovak Central Sports Council) (Seman, 2018).

Apart from Matilda Pálffyová (see the previous page for her detailed sports results), Gejza Romančík from Žilina (northwest Slovakia) achieved significant gymnastics success during these years. He

⁹ The Hlinka's Guard (HG) operated as a semi-military organization of the Hlinka Slovak People's Party (HSĽS) from 1938 to 1945. The Emergency Units of the Hlinka Guard (POHG) played a special role within its framework and were deployed at the end of World War II in police and military operations

alongside the German armed forces against military and civilian targets in the territory of the Slovak Republic (Ústav pamäti národa, 2017).

was included in the training team for the 12th Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1940, which did not take place due to the ongoing World War II. However, Romančík continued to train and became the Slovak gymnastics champion in 1941. It was an elimination competition where competitors competed in free routines on parallel bars, horizontal bar, rings, vault, and pommel horse jumping (Perútka et al., 1980). In 1942, he became the leader of the Slovak gymnastics team, which participated in inter-state gymnastics competition with Germany. The Slovak national team was represented by Faga, Severíny, Búrka, Štoder, Janečka, Muránsky, Murček, Romančík, Gonda. The Slovak gymnastics team lost to Germany gaining 489 points vs. 550.5 points won by Germany, i.e., by a difference of 61.5 points. The best Slovak gymnast was Romančík, who scored 73.8 points out of possible 80. (Maar, 1942).

During World War II, Pavel Mudroch (August 31, 1910 – †1944) from Sotina

(today Senica, western Slovakia) was also one of the pioneers of Slovak male gymnastics (Senica.sk, 2017). He was the deputy commander of the Oddiel armádnych pretekárov (the Army Athletes Unit)¹⁰, where he trained several gymnasts. His coaching ambitions were interrupted by his joining the Slovak National Uprising in 1944, where he perished (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988).

From the conclusion of World War II in 1945 until February 1948, sports gymnastics in Slovakia did not exist as an independent sport. Instead, it functioned as an extension of apparatus gymnastics, primarily practiced within Sokol, RTJ, and Orel. Numerous sports officials and coaches either relocated to the Czech Republic or ceased their active involvement in the field. Some sports clubs even contended that apparatus gymnastics had detrimental effects on health and advocated for its exclusion from physical education. (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988).



Figure 5. Official poster of an international gymnastics competition including Slovak State and Germany, in Žilina in 1942 (Slovak Gymnastics Federation).

¹⁰ Oddiel armádnych pretekárov (OAP) was established in 1941. This military-sports organization during the time of the Slovak

State (1939 -1945) gathered skilled soldiers, athletes (Perútka, 1967).

SLOVAK GYMNASTICS IN THE 1950s, 1960s AND 1970s

In 1951, a shift in terminology occurred, replacing the conventional term "apparatus gymnastics" with the designation "sports gymnastics." Gymnastics classes were introduced in accordance with a unified sports classification system (Krejčoves, 2006). Up until 1951, Slovakia had only one division dedicated to sports gymnastics, situated in Kremnica, which is located in central Slovakia (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

The resurgence of sports gymnastics development took place subsequent to the consolidation of physical education. From 1951 onward, Slovak gymnasts actively participated in national competitions. During the 1950s, several coaches and officials played pivotal roles in advancing gymnastics in Slovakia. Noteworthy contributions came from Štancel and Pížl in Bratislava, Buksan in Košice, the Dajč brothers, Zavadin in Prešov, Burko and Severíny in Zvolen, and the elder Novák in Trnava (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988).

The enactment of the law governing the organization of physical education and sports in 1952 had a profound impact on the development of physical education and sports, including sport gymnastics, in Slovakia. This legislation elevated sport gymnastics to one of the eight primary sports, garnering increased attention and fostering a high-quality sports training environment for athletes (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

Another pivotal moment for sport gymnastics in Slovakia occurred with the establishment of the Sports Youth Games (SYG), the Sports Youth Schools (SYS), and the Sports Juveniles Schools (SJS) in 1952 (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988). The Sports

Youth Schools system comprised five sports gymnastics divisions in Bratislava, Košice, Žilina, Prešov, and Banská Bystrica. Additionally, the system recorded 23 club sections in the Sports Juveniles Schools, with the most prominent clubs located in Bratislava, Žilina, Prešov, Trnava, Michalovce, Topoľčany, Komárno, and Zvolen. The cumulative membership of gymnasts in these units (SYS, SJS) in 1952 reached a total of 847 individuals (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003). Consequently, it is evident that the establishment of the Sports Youth Schools and Sports Juveniles Schools made a substantial contribution to the promotion of sports gymnastics in Slovakia and played a pivotal role in expanding the pool of young athletes for the gymnastics program in Slovakia.

The catalyst for the development of gymnastics in Slovakia was the establishment of the Gymnastics Sports Section within the Slovak Committee for Physical Education and Sport in 1953. The first chairman was an enthusiastic promoter of gymnastics, a distinguished coach, a gymnastics judge, and an associate professor, Július Štancel (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988). In 1953, the sports gymnastics section of the Slovak Committee of Physical Education and Sports organized the first Slovak championships in the city of Svit, which took place from December 19 to 20. There were over 140 athletes from almost all Slovak regions, including men, women, and youth gymnastics competitions. The best gymnasts in the women's competition were Černohlávková-Čížiková (1st place) from Bratislava, Xénia Rovná (2nd place), Škrabáková (3rd place), while in men's gymnastics the best gymnasts were Kolár (1st place), Kaštánek (2nd place) and David (3rd place). Among the best youth competitors were Pavel

Gajdoš from Michalovce (1st place), J. Juras (2nd place) from Bratislava and T. Svitok (3rd place) from Nitra. The best young female gymnasts were Ružicková (1st place), Odstrčilová (2nd place) and Schmidtová (3rd place) (Sportency.sk, 2010)

Pavel Gajdoš (1.8.1936 - †2022), hailing from Veľké Berezné, which was then part of Czechoslovakia (now within the territory of Ukraine), stood out as one of the most accomplished gymnasts during the 1950s and 1960s. His notable achievements at the World Championships and the Olympic Games are as follows:

During the World Championships in Moscow in 1958 (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), he secured the 3rd position in the team all-around and ranked 28th in the individual all-around.

At the Olympic Games in Rome in 1960 (Italy), his national team achieved a commendable 4th place in the all-around team competition, amassing a score of 557.15 points. In the individual all-around, he secured the 28th position (Ondík & Dobrovodský, 1961).

In the European Championship held in Luxembourg in 1961 (Luxembourg), he

secured the 15th position in the individual all-around.

His most outstanding sports performance came at the World Championships in Prague in 1962 (Czechoslovakia), where his national team clinched the 3rd place in the team all-around, and he reached the 25th position in the individual all-around (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

At the Games of the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1964 (Japan), his team achieved the 6th position in the team all-around, earning a total score of 558.15 points, while he secured the 106th position in the individual all-around (Bureš & Žurman, 1965).

Subsequent to his retirement from competitive gymnastics, P. Gajdoš, a two-time Olympian, embarked on a career as a professional gymnastics coach and an international gymnastics judge (Gajdoš & Jašek, 1988). In recognition of his remarkable sporting accomplishments, he was honored with the Bronze Rings Award by the Slovak Olympic Committee in 2007 (Gajdoš, A., 2010).



Figure 6. Pavel Gajdoš on the parallel bars (Internet: www.sportency.sk).

Among the successful gymnasts was also Ferdinand Daniš (January 1, 1929) from Opatová I in western Slovakia (Gajdoš, A., 2010). At the Olympic Games in Helsinki in 1952 (Finland), he attained 7th place in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team scored a total of 555.55 points. In the individual all-around, Daniš placed 13th, and in the final on the pommel horse he placed 6th with a score of 19.30 points. He achieved another sports success at the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956 (Australia), where he placed fourth in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team scored 554.10 points. In the individual all-around, Daniš placed 13th, and in the floor exercise, he placed 6th with a final score of 18.80 points (Novotný & Žurman, 1957). At the Olympic Games in Rome in 1960 (Italy), he achieved the 6th position in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team, which included another Slovak, Pavel Gajdoš, achieved a final score of 557.15 points. In the individual all-around, Daniš achieved the 15th position (Ondík & Dobrovodský, 1961).

During the World Championships in Rome in 1954 (Italy), he secured the 5th

position in the team all-around, with the Czechoslovak team accumulating a total score of 661.40 points. In the individual all-around, he attained the 29th position.

However, Daniš's most remarkable success materialized at the World Championships in Moscow in 1958 (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), where he claimed the 3rd place in the team all-around, with the Czechoslovak team garnering a score of 549.30 points. In the individual all-around, he secured the 12th position.

Furthermore, he was successful at the European Championships in Copenhagen in 1959 (Denmark), where he achieved the 4th place in the individual all-around. On the pommel horse, he delivered an impressive performance, clinching the 2nd place with a score of 18.95 points. Additionally, he secured the 5th position on the rings and the 5th position on the horizontal bar (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

Based on his remarkable sports achievements, it is evident that Ferdinand Daniš was the most distinguished Slovak and Czechoslovak gymnast of the 1950s.



Figure 7. Ferdinand Daniš on the rings (Internet: www.sportency.sk).

Anna Marejková, born on October 24, 1933, in Turzovka, northern Slovakia, stood as a prominent figure in Czechoslovak gymnastics during the 1950s. Her notable achievements are as follows:

At the Games of the XVI. Olympiad in Melbourne in 1956 (Australia), she secured the 5th position in the team all-around, with the Czechoslovak team accumulating a total score of 435.36 points. In the individual all-around, she attained the 11th position. On the balance beam, she delivered an impressive performance, clinching the 4th place with a score of 18.55 points (Novotný, Brdíčková & Matlochová, 1959).

During the World Championships in Rome in 1954 (Italy), she achieved the 3rd place in the team all-around, with the Czechoslovak team scoring 211.75 points. In the individual all-around, she secured the 22nd position.

However, her most outstanding sporting achievement materialized at the World Championships in Moscow in 1958 (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), where she claimed the 2nd place in the team all-around, with the Czechoslovak team amassing a total score of 371.855 points. In the individual all-around, she secured the 14th position (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

The concept of sports in Slovakia, including gymnastics, changed in 1957 with the establishment of the Czechoslovakian Union of Physical Education (ČSZTV)¹¹. This resulted in the dissolution of Sports Juveniles Schools (SJS). However, in 1961, five gymnastics sports schools were established in Bratislava, Martin, Žilina, Košice and Prešov. Here, gymnastics

experts nurtured Slovakian gymnastic talents, and nearly 300 gymnasts attended these schools (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003). The quality of sports gymnastics was further improved by the creation of jobs for the first professional gymnastics coaches in 1957, with Ladislav Kornoš becoming the professional coach for male gymnasts and Ján Čížik for female gymnasts (Sportency.sk, 2010).

As a part of college sports, the Independent Section of Sport Gymnastics was established in 1962. This development occurred following the establishment of the Physical Education Unity Slávia at Comenius University in Bratislava, and the aforementioned section dedicated to sports gymnastics was also founded as a part of this organization (Section of Sport and Artistic Gymnastics TJ Slavia UK). In 1967, two separate divisions were formed from this section, one for sports gymnastics and one for artistic gymnastics (later modern gymnastics) (Bobřík & Seman, 2012). In the mid-1960s, there were 133 clubs of sports gymnastics in Slovakia with a base of 6,179 members, including 135 professional trainers and 135 qualified judges (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

In the early 1970s, the development of sports gymnastics was significantly influenced by the new structure of the sports system. Centers of elite sports for adults and youth, training centers for youth, and residential sports schools were established. The federal state arrangement enabled the formation of Slovak representative teams in gymnastics. *Anton Gajdoš* led the men's national gymnastics team, and *Ján Čížik* led the women's national gymnastics team. The

¹¹ The Czechoslovak Association of Physical Education (ČSZTV) was founded on March 4, 1957. On April 2 and 3, 1957, the Slovak founding convention of ČSZTV was held in Bratislava,

which became the highest authority responsible for the development of basic physical education, sports and tourism in Slovakia (Perútka, 1980, p. 176).

most significant gymnastics centres were situated in Bratislava, Prievidza, Detva, Trnava, Banská Bystrica, and Košice (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003). These favourable conditions in the organization and structure of gymnastics naturally led to sporting success for Slovak gymnasts at major gymnastics events.

The best results in women's gymnastics during the 1960s were achieved by Mariana Krajčírová (June 1, 1948) from Košice (Eastern Slovakia). At the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1964 (Japan), she placed 2nd in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team attained a total score of 379.989 points. She finished 22nd in the individual all-around (Bureš & Žurman, 1965). Krajčírová won her second silver Olympic medal at the Olympic Games in Mexico City in 1968, where the Czechoslovak female gymnasts placed 2nd in the team all-around with a score of 382.20 points. She finished 9th in the individual all-around and 4th on the vault (Červinka & Pacina, 1968). Together with M. Krajčírová, the phenomenal Czech gymnast Věra Čáslavská represented Czechoslovakia team at the Olympic Games in Mexico, where she won silver medal in the team all-around, silver medal on the balance beam and four gold medals in the individual all-around, in the floor exercise, vault, and on uneven bars. With four Olympic gold medals and two silver Olympic medals, she became the best female athlete at the Olympic Games in Mexico in 1968 (Reinhardt, 2008). At the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972, Krajčírová secured the 5th position in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team achieved a score of

365.00 points. In the individual all-around, she finished 11th (Hornáček, 1973).

Krajčírová achieved significant success at the World Championships in Dortmund, Germany, in 1966, where she clinched the first place in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak female gymnasts garnered an overall score of 383.625 points. In the individual all-around, she attained the seventh position and also placed seventh in the vault final.

At the World Championships in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in 1970, she secured the third position in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team achieved an overall score of 371.900 points. She finished 4th in the uneven bars final.

Krajčírová achieved her sports success at the European Championships in Amsterdam in 1967 (Netherlands), where she earned the 3rd place in the individual all-around with a final score of 38.199 points. She also claimed the 3rd position in the uneven bars final, 4th in the floor exercise final, 4th in the vault final, and 5th in the beam final (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

In the poll for the Slovak Gymnast of the 20th Century, M. Krajčírová took the first place (Gajdoš, 2010). By securing two silver Olympic medals in 1964 and 1968, a gold medal in 1966 from the World Championship, a bronze medal in 1970 from the World Championships, and another bronze medal from the 1967 European Championships, Mariana Krajčírová established herself as the most successful female gymnast in the history of Slovak gymnastics. To this day, no other Slovak female gymnast has achieved such sporting success.

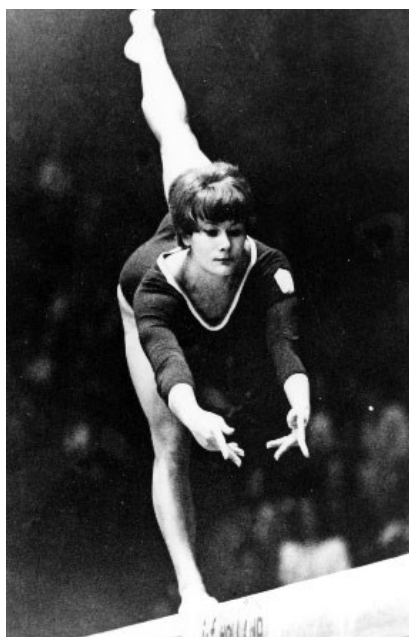


Figure 8. Mariana Krajčírová on the beam. The best Slovak female gymnast is a two-time Olympic silver medallist from the Olympic Games in 1964 and 1968 and she is a gold medallist from the World Championships in 1966 (Internet: www.sportency.sk).

Among the best Slovak male gymnasts in the 1960s were Karol Feč, Anton Gajdoš, Stanislav Fiala, Karol Tomaškovič, Milan Barborík, and František Bočko (Sportency.sk, 2010). František Bočko (born on July 7, 1941) from Šenkvice in western Slovakia achieved the most significant sports accomplishments among these male gymnasts. Bočko participated in the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1964 as a substitute in the Czechoslovak team (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003). He achieved a notable success at the Olympic Games in Mexico City in 1968, finishing in 4th place in the team all-around with a score of 557.10 points. In the individual all-around, he secured the 22nd place (Červinka & Pacina, 1968). At the World Championships in Dortmund in 1966, he achieved the 4th place in the team all-around with a score of 551.20 points. In the individual all-around, he finished in the 50th place (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

In the 1970s, outstanding achievements were recorded by Slovak

female gymnast Ľubica Krásna (born on March 21, 1953) from Bratislava. She secured the 3rd place in the team all-around at the World Championships in Ljubljana in 1970 (Olympic.sk, 2017).

Another accomplished Slovak gymnast, Zdenka Bujnáčková (born on April 25, 1955, in Bratislava), played a pivotal role in helping the Czechoslovak team achieve the 5th position in the team all-around at the Games of the XX. Olympiad in Munich in 1972. At the World Championships in Varna, Bulgaria, in 1974, she secured the 5th place in the team all-around. In the individual all-around, she finished in the 33rd position.

Bujnáčková etched her name in the annals of world gymnastics through her originality in the floor exercise, as she became the first gymnast in the world to incorporate a back handspring with a 720-degree turn and two sideways somersaults on the balance beam into her routines (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

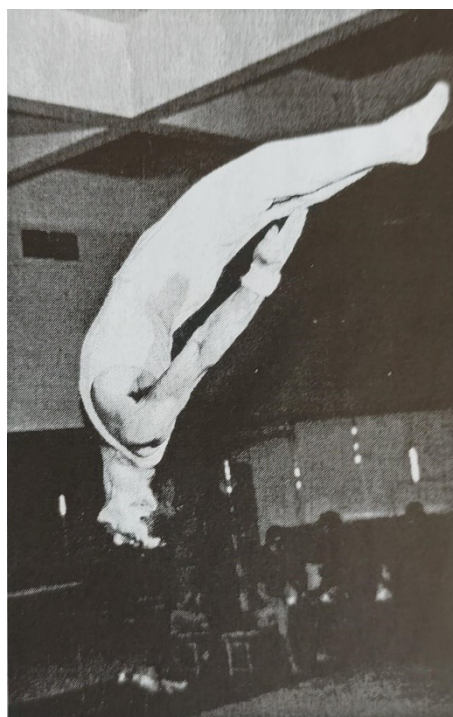


Figure 9. František Bočko during gymnastics exercise (Internet: www.sportency.sk).



Figure 10. Zdenka Bujnáčková during gymnastics exercise. She was the first gymnast in the world to incorporate a back handspring with a 720-degree turn and two sideways somersaults on the balance beam into her routines (Internet: www.sportency.sk).

Slovak female gymnast *Ingrid Holkovičová* (December 12, 1959) from Bratislava successfully represented Czechoslovakia at the *Olympic Games in Montreal, Canada, in 1976* (Olympic.sk, n.d.). She contributed to the Czechoslovak team's 5th-place finish in the team all-

around and achieved the 16th position in the individual all-around (Dobrovodský, 1977).

In addition to her Olympic achievements, she also garnered remarkable success at the European Championships in Prague in 1977. In the individual all-around, she secured the 8th place and earned a position in the finals on three gymnastics

apparatuses. She finished 5th in both the uneven bars and balance beam events, and she clinched the 4th position in the floor exercise (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

The most remarkable sports achievements in Slovak men's gymnastics during the 1970s were reached by Jozef Konečný, born on December 2, 1953, from Bratislava (Gajdoš, 2010).

At the Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980, he secured the 6th place in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team garnered a score of 569.80 points. In the individual all-around, he finished in the 43rd position (Dobrovodský, 1981).

During the World Championships in Strasbourg, France, in 1978, he achieved the 9th place in the team all-around and

finished 61st in the individual all-around. Similarly, at the World Championships in Fort Worth, USA, in 1979, he secured the 10th place in the team all-around and the 31st position in the individual all-around.

However, his most significant sports success materialized at the European Championships in Essen, Germany, in 1979, where he clinched a silver medal (2nd place) on the vault, earning a score of 19.475 points. In the individual all-around, he finished in the 24th position.

In 1981, he further solidified his standing in gymnastics by becoming the absolute champion of Czechoslovakia in the individual all-around (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).



Figure 11. Jozef Konečný on the rings (Internet: www.sportency.sk).

At the Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980, another Slovak male gymnast, Rudolf Babiak, (April 12, 1956, †2020) from Banská Bystrica in central Slovakia, successfully represented the Czechoslovak team. Babiak, along with J. Konečný,

finished 6th in the team all-around, 10th on the rings and 21st in the individual all-around (Dobrovodský, 1981).

In women's gymnastics competitions in the 1970s, Czechoslovakia was successfully represented by Eva Marečková

(May 28, 1964) from Detva in Central Slovakia (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003). She achieved significant success at *the Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980* where she secured the 4th place in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team achieved a final score of 388.80 points (Schubert et al., 1981). In the individual all-around, she placed 12th. She placed 7th on the uneven bars and 7th on the vault (Olympic.sk, n.d.). At *the World Championships in Strasbourg in 1978*, she finished 6th in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team scored 388.75 points. In the individual all-around, she placed 16th. At the World Championships in Fort Worth in 1979, she attained the 5th place in the team all-around. The Czechoslovak team achieved a score of 382.300 points. In the individual all-around, she placed 10th, and in the individual apparatus final on the balance beam she came 4th. At the European Championships in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1979, she secured the 6th place in the individual all-around and attained notable success by advancing to the finals on three gymnastics apparatuses. Specifically, she finished 5th on the uneven bars, 7th on the balance beam, and 6th in the floor exercise.

She also achieved significant successes at the World Cup in Sao Paulo in 1978 (Brazil), where she placed 5th in the individual competition on the balance beam, and at the World Cup in Tokyo in 1979 (Japan), where she secured the 5th position in the individual competition in the floor exercise.

Marečková emerged as the most prominent Slovak female gymnast of the 1970s, as evidenced by her ranking in the "World Gymnastics" poll for the best gymnast globally, where she achieved the 4th position (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

At the Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980, Slovakia was represented in the Czechoslovak team by Jana Labáková (born on January 26, 1966) from Detva. In addition to the 4th place in the team all-around competition, she secured the 11th position in the individual all-around, finished 7th on the vault, and achieved the 6th place in the floor exercise final (Grexa & Souček, 2007).

Labáková achieved significant success at the World Cup in Toronto in 1980, where she earned the 2nd place on the vault and placed 4th in the individual all-around. Another notable accomplishment came at the European Championships in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1983, where she secured the 8th place in the individual all-around, finished 8th on the balance beam, and claimed the 3rd position on the uneven bars (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

The last successful Slovak female gymnast to reach sporting success in the 1980s was Katarína Šarišská, born on September 28, 1965, from Košice in eastern Slovakia. At the Olympics in Moscow in 1980, she, alongside Marečková and Labáková, secured the 4th place in the team all-around and finished 19th in the individual all-around (Dobrovodský, 1981). At the World Championships in Fort Worth in 1979, she secured the 5th place in the team all-around and the 33rd position in the individual all-around (Gajdoš, Novák & Račko, 2003).

CONCLUSION

Following the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, the development of gymnastics in Slovakia was notably influenced by the Sokol movement, which originated in the Czech Republic (Bohemia). Within the Sokol units

established in Slovakia, apparatus gymnastics took precedence. A significant contribution to the development of gymnastics in Slovakia came from the Slovak figure Ivan Branislav Zoch, who summarized and innovated gymnastic exercises in his work titled "The Short Guide to Teaching Gymnastics Mainly for National Schools."

During that era, the first male gymnast from the territory of Slovakia who successfully represented Austria-Hungary was Ľudovít Kmeťko. Kmeťko earned a silver medal at the Games of the V. Olympiad in Stockholm in 1912, marking the first historical medal won by a Slovak athlete at a top-level men's gymnastics competition.

The first successful female gymnast representing independent Slovakia (Slovak State) was Matilda Pálffyová, who won a silver Olympic medal at the Olympic Games of the XI. Olympiad in Berlin in 1936 and became the first Slovak Olympic medallist in history.

A pivotal moment in the development of gymnastics in Slovakia occurred with the approval of the Law on the organization of physical education and sports in 1952. This law elevated artistic gymnastics to one of the eight main sports in Slovakia, resulting in increased attention, enhanced athlete support, and high-quality sports training. These changes were clearly reflected in the representation of Slovak male and female gymnasts on the international stage.

In the same year, Slovakia established the Sports Games of Youth and Sports Schools of Youth, further highlighting the growing interest in gymnastics. The system of Sports Schools of Youth included five sections for sports gymnastics (located in Bratislava, Košice, Žilina, Prešov, and Banská Bystrica), with 23 gymnastics

sections registered in the Sports Schools of Adolescents, underscoring the sport's rising popularity.

A significant shift in the approach to sports in Slovakia, including gymnastics, occurred in 1957 with the establishment of the Czechoslovak Union of Physical Education (ČSZTV). In 1961, five gymnastic sports camps were established in Bratislava, Martin, Žilina, Košice, and Prešov, where gymnastics experts nurtured the talents of Slovak gymnasts. These camps attracted nearly 300 gymnasts. By 1961, the gymnastics community had expanded to 102 sections with 4,267 members.

The early 1970s witnessed a major influence on the development of gymnastics with the introduction of the so-called socialist system of sports. This led to the creation of centres of excellence for both adult and youth sports, training centres for youth, and residential sports schools. These institutions served as focal points where future successful Slovak gymnastics representatives concentrated under the guidance of professional Slovak coaches.

Despite more complicated socio-political periods such as World War I, World War II, and the totalitarian communist regime, Slovak gymnasts were able to deliver excellent sports results at the top international gymnastic competitions even during these challenging times. The most successful Slovak gymnasts include Matilda Pálffyová, Anna Marejková, Mariana Krajčírová, Ľubica Krásna, Zdena Bujnáčková, Jana Gajdošová, Eva Marečková, Ingrid Holkovičová, Jana Labáková and Katarína Šarišská. Successful Slovak male gymnasts include Ľudovít Kmeťko Ferdinand Daniš, Pavel Gajdoš, František Bočko, Jozef Konečný and Rudolf Babiak.

Table 1

Successful Slovak sportsmen in the years 1912-1980 – Artistic Gymnastics – Male – Olympic Games.

Name and surname	Olympic Games	Category/Discipline	Final result
Eudovít Kmeťko	Olympic Games in Stockholm (Sweden) in 1912	Combined Team exercises (Team All-Around)	2 nd
Ferdinand Daniš	Olympic Games in Helsinki (Finland) in 1952	Team All-Around	7 th
		Individual All-Around/ Pommel horse	6 th
Ferdinand Daniš	Olympic Games in Melbourne (Australia) in 1956	Team All-Around	4 th
		Individual All-Around/ Pommel horse	6 th
Ferdinand Daniš	Olympic Games in Rome (Italy) in 1960	Team All-Around	4 th
Pavel Gajdoš	Olympic Games in Rome (Italy) in 1960	Team All-Around	4 th
Pavel Gajdoš	Olympic Games in Tokyo (Japan) in 1964	Team All-Around	6 th
František Bočko	Olympic Games in Mexico City (Mexico) in 1968	Team All-Around	4 th
Jozef Konečný	Olympic Games in Moscow (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) in 1980	Team All-Around	6 th
Rudolf Babiak	Olympic Games in Moscow (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) in 1980	Team All-Around	6 th
		Individual All-Around	21 st
		Individual/Rings	10 th

Table 2

Successful Slovak sportsmen in the years 1912-1980 – Artistic Gymnastics – Female – Olympic Games.

Name and surname	Olympic Games	Category/Discipline	Final result
Matilda Pálffyová	Olympic Games in Berlin (Germany) in 1936	Combined Team exercises (Team All-Around)	2 nd
Anna Marejková	Olympic Games Olympiad in Melbourne (Australia) in 1956	Team All-Around	5 th
		Individual All-Around	11 th
		Individual/Balance beam	4 th
Mariana Krajčírová	Olympic Games in Tokyo (Japan) in 1964	Team All-Around	2 nd
		Individual All-Around	22 nd
Mariana Krajčírová	Olympic Games in Mexico City (Mexico) in 1968	Team All-Around	2 nd
		Individual All-Around	9 th
		Individual/Vault	4 th
Mariana Krajčírová	Olympic Games in Munich (Germany) in 1972	Team All-Around	5 th
		Individual All-Around	11 th
Eva Marečková	Olympic Games in Moscow (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) in 1980	Team All-Around	4 th
		Individual All-Around	14 th
Jana Labáková	Olympic Games in Moscow (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) in 1980	Team All-Around	4 th
		Individual All-Around	11 th
		Individual/Floor exercise	6 th
		Individual/Vault	7 th
Katarína Šarišská	Olympic Games in Moscow (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) in 1980	Team All-Around	4 th
		Individual All-Around	19 th

Table 3

Successful Slovak sportsmen in the years 1912-1980 – Artistic Gymnastics – Male – World Championships.

Name and surname	World Championship	Category/Discipline	Final result
Ferdinand Daniš	Rome 1954 (Italy)	Team All-Around	5 th
		Individual All-Around	29 th
Ferdinand Daniš	Moscow 1958 (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)	Team All-Around	3 rd
		Individual All-Around	12 th
Pavel Gajdoš	Moscow 1958 (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)	Team All-Around	3 rd
		Individual All-Around	28 th
Pavel Gajdoš	Prague 1962 (Czechoslovak Republic)	Team All-Around	3 rd
		Individual All-Around	25 th
František Bočko	Dortmund 1966 (Germany)	Team All-Around	4 th
Jozef Konečný	Strasbourg 1978 (France)	Team All-Around	9 th
		Individual All-Around	61 st
Rudolf Babiak	Strasbourg 1978 (France)	Team All-Around	9 th
		Individual All-Around	71 st
Jozef Konečný	Fort Worth 1979 (USA)	Team All-Around	10 th
		Individual All-Around	31 st
Rudolf Babiak	Fort Worth 1979 (USA)	Team All-Around	10 th
		Individual All-Around	71 st

Table 4

Successful Slovak sportsmen in the years 1912-1980 – Artistic Gymnastics – Female – World Championships.

Name and surname	World Championship	Category/Discipline	Final result
Matilda Pálffyová	Prague 1938 (Czechoslovak Republic)	Team All-Around	1 st
		Individual All-Around	3 rd
Anna Marejková	Rome 1954 (Italy)	Team All-Around	3 rd
		Individual All-Around	22 nd
Anna Marejková	Moskva 1958 (ZSSR)	Team All-Around	2 nd
		Individual All-Around	14 th
Mariana Krajčírová	Dortmund 1966 (Germany)	Team All-Around	1 st
		Individual All-Around	7 th
		Individual/Vault	7 th
Mariana Krajčírová	Ljubljana 1970 (Slovenia)	Team All-Around	4 th
		Individual All-Around	20 th
		Individual/Uneven bars	4 th
Ľubica Krásna	Ljubljana 1970 (Slovenia)	Team All-Around	4 th
		Individual All-Around	25 th
Zdenka Bujnáčková	Varna 1974 (Bulgaria)	Team All-Around	5 th
		Individual All-Around	33 rd
Eva Marečková	Strasbourg 1978 (France)	Team All-Around	6 th
		Individual All-Around	16 th
Jana Gajdošová	Strasbourg 1978 (France))	Team All-Around	6 th
		Individual All-Around	39 th
Eva Marečková	Fort Worth 1979 (USA)	Team All-Around	5 th
		Individual All-Around	10 th
		Individual/Beam	4 th
Katarína Šarišská	Fort Worth 1979 (USA)	Team All-Around	5 th
		Individual All-Around	33 rd

Table 5

Successful Slovak sportsmen in the years 1912-1980 – Artistic Gymnastics – Male – European Championships.

Name and surname	European Championship	Category/Discipline	Final result
Ferdinand Daniš	Copenhagen 1959 (Denmark)	Individual All-Around	4 th
		Individual/Rings	5 th
		Individual/Parallel bars	2 nd
		Individual/Horizontal bar	5 th
Pavel Gajdoš	Luxembourg 1961 (Luxembourg)	Individual All-Around	15 th
Jozef Konečný	Essen 1979 (Germany)	Individual All-Around	24 th
		Individual/Vault	2 nd
Rudolf Babiak	Rome 1981 (Italy)	Individual All-Around	16 th

Table 6

Successful Slovak sportsmen in the years 1912-1980 – Artistic Gymnastics – Female – European Championship.

Name and surname	European Championship	Category/Discipline	Final result
Mariana Krajčírová	Amsterdam 1967 (Netherlands)	Individual All-Around	3 rd
		Individual – Uneven bars	3 rd
		Individual – Vault	4 th
		Individual – Beam	5 th
		Individual – Floor exercise	4 th
Ingrid Holkovéčová	Prague 1977 (Czechoslovak Republic)	Individual All-Around	8 th
		Individual – Uneven bars	5 th
		Individual – Beam	5 th
		Individual – Floor exercise	4 th
Eva Marečková	Copenhagen 1979 (Denmark)	Individual All-Around	6 th
		Individual – Uneven bars	5 th
		Individual – Beam	7 th
		Individual – Floor exercise	6 th

REFERENCES

Bučka, P. (2007). *Od nárad'ového telocviku k športovej gymnastike* [From gymnastic apparatus to sports gymnastics]. Retrieved from <https://myzilina.sme.sk/c/3146235/od-naradoveho-telocviku-k-sportovej-gymnastike.html>

Bureš, K., Žurman, O. (1965). *XVII. Tokio 1964* [Tokio 1964]. Praha: Sportovní a turistické nakladatelství.

Červinka, O., Pacina, V. (1968). *Mexická dramata* [Mexican drama]. Praha:

Vydavatelství a nakladatelství Čs. novinář. (pp. 156-158)

Dobrovodský, V. (1977). *Olympijské hry 1976* [Olympic Games 1976]. Praha: Olympia.

Dobrovodský, V. (1981). *Olympijské hry 1980 Moskva – Lake Placid* [Olympic Games 1980 Moscow – Lake Placid]. Praha: Olympia – Šport. (p. 294)

Gajdoš, A. (2010). *Osobnosti slovenského športu 1896 – 2010* [Personalities of Slovak sports 1896 – 2010]. Martin: Matica slovenská. (pp.178, 179, 180, 182)

Gajdoš, A., Jašek, Z. (1988). *Športová gymnastika. História a súčasnosť* [Artistic gymnastics. Past and present]. Bratislava: Šport. (pp. 3, 27, 28, 37, 39, 41, 42, 43)

Gajdoš, A., Novák, J., Račko, P. (2003). *História gymnastiky na Slovensku (1918 – 2003)* [History of gymnastics in Slovakia (1918 - 2003)]. Bratislava: Slovenská gymnastická federácia. (pp. 4, 5, 6, 7, 28, 33, 38, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 71, 72, 77)

Grexa, J., Souček, L. (2007). *Slovensko v znamení piatich kruhov* [Slovakia in mark of five rings]. Bratislava: Slovenský olympijský výbor. (p. 293)

Hornáček, I. (1973). *Sapoporo – Mnichov 1972* [Sapoporo – Munich 1972]. Bratislava: Šport, slovenské telovýchovné nakladateľstvo. (p. 176)

Krejčoves, P. (2006). *Historický vývoj preskoků ve sportovní gymnastice a jeho současnost ve školní tělesné výchově* [Historical development of vault in sports gymnastics and its present in school physical education]. Bachelor thesis. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, Fakulta sportovních studií.

Maar, Š. (Redig.) (1942). *Veľká manifestácia gardistického športu v Žiline. In: Naša telovýchova. Dvojtyždenník pre slovenskú telovýchovu. Roč. III, Čís. 17-18.* [Big demonstration of guardistic sports in Žilina. In: Our physical education. Bi-weekly journal for Slovak physical education. Year III, No. 17-18.]. Bratislava: Hlinkova garda-Hlavné veľiteľstvo.

Maťovčík, A. et al. (1999). *Reprezentačný biografický lexikón Slovenska*. [Representative biographical lexicon of Slovakia]. Martin: Matica slovenská. (pp. 38, 310-311, 323, 380)

Novotný, J., Žurman, O. (1957). *Dopisy z Melbourne* [Letters from

Melbourne]. Praha: Sportovní a turistické nakladatelství. (p. 116)

Novotný, L., Brdíčková, M., Matlochová, J., Lylo, A. (1959). *Českoslovenští gymnasté na XVI. olympijských hrách v Melbourne r. 1956* [Czechoslovak gymnasts at Games of the XVI. Olympiad in Melbourne in 1956]. Praha: Sportovní a turistické nakladatelství.

Olympic.sk (2017). *Vo veku 64 rokov zomrela Ľubica Rísová-Krásna, členka bronzového družstva športových gymnastiek na MS 1970 a najuznávanejšia slovenská medzinárodná rozhodkyňa* [Ľubica Rísová-Krásna, a member of the bronze team of sports gymnasts at the 1970 World Championships and the most respected Slovak international judge, died at the age of 64]. Slovenský olympijský a športový výbor. Retrieved from <https://www.olympic.sk/clanok/vo-veku-64-rokov-zomrela-lubica-risova-krasna-clenka-bronzoveho-druzstva-sportovych>

Olympic.sk (n.d.). *Ingrid Holkovičová OLY* [Ingrid Holkovičová OLY]. Slovenský olympijský a športový výbor. Retrieved from <https://www.olympic.sk/sportovec/ingrid-holkovicova>

Olympic.sk (n.d.). *Eva Marečková OLY* [Eva Marečková OLY]. Slovenský olympijský a športový výbor. Retrieved from <https://www.olympic.sk/sportovec/eva-mareckova>

Ondík, A., Dobrovodský, V. (1961). *XVII. Olympijské hry, Řím 1960* [Games of the XVII Olympiad, Rome 1960]. Praha: Sportovní a turistické nakladatelství. Vydavatelství ÚV ČSTV.

Perútka, J. (1967). *Šport na Slovensku v rokoch 1946 - 1965* [Sport in Slovakia in the years 1946 -1965]. Bratislava: Šport.

Perútka, J. (1980). *Dejiny telesnej výchovy a športu na Slovensku* [History of physical education and sport in Slovakia]. Bratislava: Šport, slovenské telovýchovné vydavateľstvo. (pp. 46, 152, 219)

Perútka, J. et al. (1985). *Dejiny telesnej kultúry* [History of physical culture]. Bratislava: Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo. (p.118)

Perútka, J. et al. (1980). *Malá encyklopédia telesnej výchovy a športu*. [Small encyclopedia of physical education and sports]. Bratislava: Šport – Obzor. (p. 40)

Reinhardt, K.-W. (2008). *1000 Olympiasieger* [1000 Olympians]. Köln: Naumann & Göbel.

Sak, R. (2012). Miroslav Tyrš. Sokol, myslitel, výtvarný kritik [Miroslav Tyrš. Founder of the Sokol, thinker, art critic]. Praha: Vyšehrad.

Samáková, O. et al. (2019). *Vestník - Slávnostná športová akadémia pri 100. výročí založenia Sokolskej župy a TJ v Trenčíne* [Bulletin - Celebratory sports academy on the 100th anniversary of the founding of Sokolská župa and TJ in Trenčín]. Trenčín: Považská sokolská župa M. R. Štefánika.

Schubert, H. et al. (1981). *Spiele der XXII. Olympiade – Moskau 1980*. [Games of the XXII Olympiad – Moscow 1980]. German Democratic Republic: Sportverlag Berlin.

Senica.sk (2017). *Významné osobnosti mesta Senica* [Significant personalities of the town of Senica]. Retrieved from <https://senica.sk/clanok/vyznamne-osobnosti-mesta-senica>

Souček, Ľ. (2010). *Naši olympijskí medailisti a olympionici* [Our Olympic medalists and Olympians]. Slovenský olympijský výbor. (pp. 17, 19-20)

Sportency.sk (2010). *Národná encyklopédia športu Slovenska*. [National encyclopedia of sports in Slovakia]. Retrieved from <http://www.sportency.sk/encyclopedia/?q=content/vznik-a-v%C3%BDvoj-%C5%A1portovej-gymnastiky-na-slovensku>

Ústav pamäti národa (2009). *Hlinkova Garda* [Hlinka's Guard]. Retrieved from <https://www.upn.gov.sk/projekty/hlinkova-garda/>

Vejvar, S. (2014). *Dějiny tělovýchovné organizace Orel v Čechách 1909 – 1948* [History of sports organization Orel in Bohemia between 1909 - 1948]. Dissertation thesis. Praha: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy.

Seman, F. (2018a). *Slovenská ústredná športová rada vo vojnovnej Slovenskej republike (1939-1945)*. [The Slovak Central Sports Council during the wartime Slovak Republic (1939-1945)]. In: Telesná výchova a šport. (pp. 35-38)

Bobřík, M., Seman, F. (2012). *50 rokov histórie Telovýchovnej jednoty Slávia Univerzita Komenského*. [50 years of history of the Slavia University Sports Club of Comenius University]. Bratislava: Telovýchovná jednota Slávia UK Bratislava. (p.64)

Strachová, M. (2020). *Sokol Brno I 1862-1938. Dějiny elitní moravské jednoty* [Sokol Brno. History of elite Moravian unity]. Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

Sokolmuseum.org (n.d.). *History of Prague Slets*. Retrieved from [Slets in Prague - Sokol Museum](https://sokolmuseum.org/en/history-of-prague-slets)

Slet.sokol.eu (2017). *Historie všesokolských sletů* [History of All-Sokol Slets]. Retrieved from <https://slet.sokol.eu/informace/>

Corresponding author:

Michal Bábel
Faculty of Physical Education and Sports,
Comenius University in Bratislava
Nábřežie armádneho generála Ludvíka
Svobodu 9, 814 69 Bratislava
Email: michal.babela@uniba.sk
Tel: +421907 800 757

Article received: 2. 5. 2023

Article accepted: 18. 9. 2023