



triathlons, gymnastics, karate, fencing, water polo and squash among many others.

Golf is currently widespread attention in the Saudi media for the first time thanks to the use of Saudi-British events to introduce the sport to local journalists.

Training sports coaches has now become one of the salient areas of achievement. 900 Saudi coaches have a Level I pass from Sports Coach UK. A further 125 have passed the Level II qualification.

Since 2002, materials for this Level I coach training have existed in Arabic, which has made it possible to run the courses in Saudi Arabia. A number of Saudis have qualified as tutors.

Since 1999, it has been possible for Saudi medical specialists to study various aspects of sports medicine to MSc level, as a result of the country-to-country agreement.

Some 20 physicians, 40 physiotherapists and 12 nutritionists follow the MSc sports medicine programme. Courses are held at the Prince Faisal Sports Medicine Hospital in Riyadh with visiting lecturers from universities in Bath, Manchester and Loughborough.

Over 1,000 Saudi students have attended workshops in team management, facilities management and sports media development.

A famous British sports commentator, Barry Davies, has run workshops in Riyadh for Saudi commentators and journalists.

British experts have conducted lectures for teachers in Saudi schools to emphasis

the importance of promoting an interest in sport and fitness among children from a very early age.

The countries have exchanged experience in anti-doping, in the regulation of individual sports and in the planning for the future development of excellence in sport.

In 1998, a football match was organised as a result of the agreement at Wembley at which the Saudi and English teams fought to a draw. The game was watched live by 72,000 people at the stadium and millions more on television.

BAE SYSTEMS

The role of BAE Systems

As a community relations initiative in 1989 BAE Systems employed Peter Waddell as a full-time programme director to handle day-to-day planning and implementation. With a background in sports education in both the UK and Saudi Arabia, Peter had the vital experience of both countries that was needed for success.

BAE Systems also provide significant funding to the initiative along with HM Government and the Saudi Arabian General Presidency of Youth Welfare.

In 2002, Peter Waddell was awarded an MBE by the British authorities for his role in building Saudi-British ties.

The future

Plans for 2006 include the continuation of the MSc courses in sports medicine; it is expected that the first to graduate will do so early in the year.

Coaching the coaches will retain its high priority during the year.

A special programme is to be launched aimed at supporting qualification for the 2008 Olympics.

Discussion is advanced on staging matches between national football teams at adult and youth levels.

Swaps of referees for games in either country are also planned.

Cooperation in training camps and tournaments is to be held in track and field athletics, squash, table tennis, cycling, swimming, tennis, archery, gymnastics, snooker, martial arts, fencing and golf. Fishing, diving and sailing also enter the agenda.

Co-operation in sporting and cultural matters between Saudi Arabia and Britain will continue for many years to come, helping to foster appreciation of what these societies and their people have to offer. This is now enshrined in the development plans of both countries.

"Sporting and cultural ties with Britain, fostered under the sports MoU are the most successful area of foreign co-operation engaged in by the Saudi sporting establishment," said HRH Prince Sultan bin Fahd bin Abdulaziz, President of Youth Welfare.

This was endorsed by Mr. John Steele, Chief Executive, UK Sport when he reported to the 15th Joint Higher Committee Meeting on 28 September 2005 that the Saudi British Sports Co-operation Programme was the most active and valuable initiative of its kind. This achievement could not have been possible without the contribution of BAE Systems by providing significant funding and management expertise.