



Claude-Louis Gallien is all smiles after being elected to his new role as the next FISU president.

EDMOND TANG / CHINA DAILY

# NEW FISU BOSS WANTS TO HAMMER HOME HIS ROLE

## FRENCHMAN THRILLED TO TAKE REINS OF ORGANIZATION FROM KILLIAN

By SHI YINGYING  
CHINA DAILY

**SHENZHEN** — As if things weren't hectic enough already!

Just three days before the start of the Universiade, the International University Sports Federation (FISU) elected France's Claude-Louis Gallien as its new president.

In contrast to longtime president George Killian, whose career began in coaching, Gallien holds a PhD in biology and a State Doctorate in natural sciences.

Not that Gallien is out of place on an athletic field.

"I was once a hammer thrower," said Gallien, 68. "I was big enough and people needed a big guy. I was pretty good in track and field, and also played a little bit of basketball."

A brief encounter during his hammer-throwing days started Gallien on a path that would eventually lead to his new office.

"Do you know why I want to become president of FISU?" Gallien asked. "About 100 years ago, there was a man in Paris who created the international sports movement and his

name was Mr Jean Petitjean. The movement later turned into the World University Games. I met him when I was in Universiade for the first time, as a student throwing the hammer.

"Coincidentally, this man used to be the president of the Paris University Club, and it turned out I became president of that club later on. I thought it was so nice that I could be elected as the president (of FISU) this time — it was my way of taking care of Mr Petitjean."

Gallien said he hopes the Universiade will become something more than a sports event and evolve into an international friendship and cultural festival. His experience with the Tokyo Summer Universiade in 1967 left a permanent impression.

"I went to Tokyo in 1967, and you cannot imagine how that experience affected me," he said.

"For a European, it was not so easy to go to Japan at that time. Apart from that, the village was the former village of the Olympic Games in 1964 — we felt so impressed. And then I met the world! We met the world! It was extremely important for me and how my life has been determined. So I hope it will determine more young people's (futures)."

Once a vice-president of the French National Olympic Committee, Gallien is well known for his involvement with anti-doping in Europe.

But he said the issue was not as serious in his new post.

"I've been the president of the French National Commission for Fighting Against Doping so I know what happens," Gallien said. "There is no heavy doping because those young people are not competing for money. They're students, and they know what they do."

The only doping Gallien says he's worried about is marijuana.

"There are three reasons why I'm a little afraid, to be frank," he said. "First of all, you sometimes think it's not really a drug when you take cannabis — it's just a companion in your life. Secondly, cannabis unfortunately remains three weeks in your body, so you will be detected immediately. And, thirdly, many people in weaker and remote countries, they're not well informed (that cannabis is forbidden).

"But I don't think it will be (a major) problem. It has never been a (major) problem at the Universiade," Gallien said.

## How to win international sport galas

By SHI YINGYING  
CHINA DAILY

**SHENZHEN** — One of the most frequently asked questions to organizations such as the International University Sports Federation (FISU) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is what qualifies a city to throw large-scale sports events.

Claude-Louis Gallien, the new president of FISU, provides the answer and it has little to do with money or facilities.

"I would say one of the first things is probably not only the financial resources, but also the human resources," Gallien said. "We get to see whether people are serious about it (sports).

"People can be happy to say they can do things, but then are not really able," he said. "We try to see who are the people in front of us and how serious they are. For example, when I came to Shenzhen, I could see the students here were really interested in having this Universiade."

Despite its roots in Europe, FISU is now expanding more quickly than ever before, especially in this region.

"Asia is becoming more and more important for us and it is willing to do as much as possible. So there is no reason that Asian countries can't hold more Universiades."

However, as a student organization, FISU needs financial support before throwing the event to other cities.

Therefore, money counts as well. "Three of the bidding cities for the 2017 Summer Universiade are Brazil's Brasilia, Turkey's Koceali and Taipei. We will see whether the Brazilians have lots of money, the Turkish have a strong economy or Taipei's citizens are rich," Gallien said.

Facing the argument that it may not be an even field given that some African countries are at a disadvantage economically, Gallien suggested a new solution.

"I do hope we will be able to hold it in Africa, but it's not just the question of money, it's also a matter of logistics and many other details," he said.

"The event could be organized in one region, one zone or even one country in Africa, rather than in an African city."

Another idea Gallien has for the future of the Universiade is to set competitions between different universities instead of countries.

"Sports competitions between nations will probably decrease interest, and I see the merging (of competition) between universities. Because universities are getting more and more powerful, they have the money, but they need identity. Sport gives identity," he said.