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INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY
OF DISASTER MEDICINE

الجمعية الدولية لطب الكوارث

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NEWSLETTER

MEDICAL RELIEF PLAN AND MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE EVENT OF A DISASTER IN A FOOTBALL STADIUM CONTAINING SOME 100,000 SPECTATORS

(by Dr Franco Enrico FIORENTINI)

I. INTRODUCTION

Dr FIORENTINI is a member of both the ISDM and the Italian Society of Disaster Medicine. In preparation for the World Football Championships which took place in Italy in 1990, Dr FIORENTINI had drawn up guidelines as early as 1989 for the medical services required to cope with a possible disaster during this international event. It should be borne in mind that in fairly recent years football matches have led to large-scale disasters, such as the Heysel stadium disaster on 29th May 1985 in which some 40 people were killed, the disaster in Moscow on 20th October 1982 during a match between Harlem and Spartak when 340 people died, or that of the Sheffield stadium which left 95 people dead and 180 severely injured, to mention but a few. The organizers of events assembling large crowds should plan relief operations well in advance.

II. NORMAL SITUATION AT THE SAN SIRO STADIUM IN MILAN

This stadium can take over 80,000 spectators. Usually there are two first-aid stations run by a nurse, with the help of a few first-aid workers. Generally four ambulances are parked within the stadium itself. The most frequent interventions are minor surgery and the administration of analgesics and tranquilizers. Acute pathologies (heart attacks, serious injuries) that require urgent hospitalization are rare during football matches.

Normally, outside the stadium there are no medical services, ambulances, nor fixed first-aid stations. It should be pointed out that the San Carlo Hospital, with extensive surgical capacity, is close to the San Siro Stadium.