

WHO IS M. J. SIGFRID EDSTRÖM?

(EXTRACT OF SWEDISH SPORT DICTIONARY.)

J. Sigfrid Edström (born 21st November 1870) is one of the most prominent persons of the sport movement of the world. After studies in Gothenburg and Zürich Edström worked in electrical factories and power works in U. S. A. and after 4 years in Switzerland 1900 he became chief of the city tramways of Gothenburg and in 1903 director of the Asea Electric Company in Västerås. 1934 he became chairman of the council of the same company and settled down in Stockholm.

During the time of studies in Gothenburg Edström was a good sprinter. In 1891 he obtained Swedish record in running 150 m. in 16,4 seconds. He also ran 100 m. in 11 seconds. During his time of studies in Zürich he belonged to the (Nordiska) Rowing Club and during his time in the U. S. A. he was a member of the Pittsburg Athletic Club and competed for them.

At his return to Sweden 1900 he again contacted Swedish sport and he never since gave up this contact.

Edström's qualities as a leader and his knowledge in the details of sport made him fitted for important tasks in the young Swedish sport movement. In 1901 he was elected chairman of the Swedish Amateur Athletic Association and in the same year he and Viktor Balck took the initiative to the great gymnastic and athletic competitions in Jönköping where the different branches of Swedish Athlets were united, and where in 1903 the foundation was laid to the Swedish National Gymnastic and Sporting Association. Edström remained as one of its leaders until 1940. He is now honorary member of the organisation.

The greatest services that Edström has done to the sport has, however, been in the international life. He was one of the driving forces for the Olympic Games in Stockholm 1912. Conducted by him were the rules for different sports combined, amongst others athletics and the fundamental part of these rules is still in use. Before the games 1912 international rules for competition were missing for many branches of sports.

At the Olympic Games 1912 Edström took initiative to the International Amateur Federation. This organisation was formed the next year in Berlin. Edström was elected chairman, a position he has filled with skill, power, integrity and power of judgement. He left this position at the congress of the I. A. A. F. in Oslo 1946.

In connection with the Olympic Games in Stockholm, Edström participated in the meetings of the International Olympic Committee at Luxembourg 1910 and at Budapest 1911. In 1920 Edström was elected member of the I. O. C., 1921 he was elected member of its executive commission and 1931 he became vice president of the I. O. C. In January 1942 after the death of Count Baillet-Latour, the former president of the I. O. C., Edström became active president and 1946 was elected ordinary president.

At the Olympic Games 1920, 1924, 1928, 1932 and 1936 Edström was conductor of the competitions in field and track in the olympic stadion. Edström presided at the olympic congresses in Lausanne and Prag 1921 and 1925. He has also led a number of international congresses in Athletics, Swimming and Wrestling.