

## After the Basketball incidents in Helsinki

M. Avery Brundage, President of the I. O. C. has given to the Executiv Committee a full report on this question. Hereafter we give an extract of this report:

You will remember that one of the few unsportsmanlike incidents at the recent Games in Helsinki was the disgraceful attack on the referee by members of the Basketball Team from Uruguay after the match which they lost to France by a close score.

I asked for reports from the referee himself, the President of the « Fédération Internationale de Basketball Amateur » and our colleague from Uruguay, Senor Joaquin Serratos Cibils, in order to determine what had been done and whether any further action should be taken by the International Olympic Committee.

(Here comes the detailed referee's report which would be too long to be published. *The Editor.*)

This man is known as one of the best American officials and has had considerable international experience, having officiated at both Pan American and Central American Games.

The following is taken from the report of the President of the F. I. B. A.:

« As President of the F. I. B. A. I called those members of the Bureau (Executiv Committee) present in Helsinki and proposed that no action be taken until the next morning. All agreed to this proposal. We reconvened the next morning to consider the matter. The representatives from Uruguay were present and indicated that the two players who struck and shoked the referee had been identified but the person who kicked him had not been identified (the referee thought the kicker was in street shoes). These officials:

- a) apologised profusely, orally and in writting to the F. I. B. A. and to the referee,
- b) removed these two players from their roster,
- c) withdrew all Olympic Privileges from the two players,
- d) promised to have the Uruguayan Basketball Federation consider the case upon their return to Uruguay and perhaps disqualify the players for life,
- e) agreed to try to ascertain the identity of the person doing the kicking. »

Our colleague, Senor Joaquin Serratos Cibils, has sent a translation of the statement issued by the Comite Olimpico Uruguayo, from which he quote:

« This Committee censures severely the transgressions committed by some of the members of the Basketball delegation during the match with the French team.

This Committee considers the extenuating circumstances arose from the nervous strain caused by the development of the game,

but this does not exclude the responsibility of those who expressed their protest by attacking the referee, an attitude punished with utmost severity.

The report only identifies as responsible the players Wilfredo Pelaez and Carlos Rosello, to whom the following penalties have been applied:

- a) cancellation of the International License,
- b) provisional separation from the team,
- c) loss of the medals corresponding to the third place,
- d) cancellation of the Olympic Certificate.

These penalties mean a severe punishment on account of its international significance. This Committee confirms its approval of the measures taken by the President and Chief of Mission of the Delegation in accordance with the Delegate of the Uruguayan Basketball Federation. The following punishments have been added to those specified above:

- a) these precedents will be taken into account in future designations and delegations,
- b) the pertinent part of the Report of this Resolution will be forwarded to the Uruguayan Basketball Federation to be acted upon as it sees fit, having special consideration of the steps taken by the Delegate of the Uruguayan Basketball Federation. »

Finally, the International Olympic Committee has written following letter to the International Amateur Basketball Federation:

Lausanne, January 31st 1953.

Mr. R. William Jones  
Secretary of the F. I. B. A.

Berne.

Dear Sir,

We note that the players involved in the disgraceful assault on the referee by some members of the Uruguay team after the basketball game which they lost to France in Helsinki at the Games of the XVth. Olympiad, have been suspended and that they did not receive the Olympic medals won by their team.

We hope that you have notified all members of your organisation of the action taken and requested them to take steps to avoid such scandalous occurrences in the future. Players must be taught to control their tempers and behave as sportsmen. This is one of the obligations of all those administering amateur sport. Teams which offend a second time should be barred from the Olympic Games and International tournaments.

Yours sincerely,

Avery Brundage, President.  
Otto Mayer, chancellor.