

Mr. Brundage you are right... But...

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At the Session held in Sofia by the International Olympic Committee last September, Mr. Avery Brundage, president of this Committee expressed his views in the following terms : The great difficulty in connection with defining amateurism is that it is a thing pertaining to the spirit. Amateur sport is a recreation, a diversion and not a profession : it is play and not work. Professionalism is not sport at all but a branch of the entertainment business like the circus ; it is for the spectators, whereas amateur sport is for the players themselves. A competitor who is paid is a workman and not a player. The professional takes from sport while the amateur gives to sport. Mr. Brundage added that these are fundamental truths. It is a fact that if things happen and truths are repeated during a half century, people come to accept them as facts without discussion. It is obvious that the young man who seeks to demonstrate his unselfishness in the practice of sport, who seeks no personal gain or advantage, nor to win laurels for himself but does it simply because sport appeals to him, gains the approval of his fellow-men. A halo adorns the head of those who act without thought of personal gain and who work for the good of others in preference to their own. This

is the case with amateur sportsmen, altruists, kindhearted, public spirited people who are capable of sacrifices, people who give instead of taking. One admires and respects men who are generous to the point of depriving themselves for the good of others but one despises those who take from others in order to increase their own possessions. It would seem that two rewards cannot happen at the same time : there is no alternative but to choose between esteem or gain.

Amateurs in order to be esteemed refuse to be paid ; professionals want to be paid and by so doing they renounce general esteem. The professional is admired while the amateur is loved. Humanity is made in such a way that it rises to the skies the saint who gives everything he owns for the love of his fellow-men, whereas it scorns the dictator who only thinks of filling his pocket and to increase his wealth at the expense of the people. It is an acknowledged fact that, in the world of sport, amateurism or the non-retributed athletic effort constitutes a form of idealism. Therefore the Olympic Games are opened only to this élite of young men who demand from their body an unpaid effort solely for the sake of a fine gesture and this is the main point.