

Let us not overlook Acres of Diamonds within our reach. The Olympic Volunteers for Science, who will participate in this project, will leave, through their lifelong records, a heritage to benefit the health of future generations. It will be another victory for the human spirit.

The Olympic Medical Archives

**A Proposal of the Fédération Internationale de médecine sportive
Presented Before the International Olympic Committee
and the International Sports Federations**

by

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The concept

The Olympic Medical Archives is conceived as an avenue through which gigantic strides can be made to better the health of mankind. The causes and treatment of disease have been studied through the centuries. A concerted effort must now be made to also study HEALTH, its attainments and retention.

An important step toward this accomplishment would result from the studies of complete, standardized life-time medical records of Olympic contestants, who would volunteer to participate. We have ample records of the sick, but there is a dearth of life-time records of the finest group of physical specimens in the world... the Olympic athletes.

The absence of disease is no criteria for physical fitness

The histories of Olympic contestants, their physical examinations, chest x-rays, electrocardiograms, pertinent blood and urine examinations, and their continuous life-long anatomic physiological measurements will help establish adult norms for the highest level of physical fitness.

How the high level of fitness of the athlete is retained, and in some instances wasted, can be ascertained from their life-long records. Other pertinent questions also may be answered, such as:

Does continuous vigorous physical activity throughout life afford protection against, or postpone the so-called degenerative diseases such as those of the heart, arteriosclerosis, hypertension, and arthritis, which are constantly increasing among sedentary people?

How much physical activity is essential in order to keep physically fit?

To what extent do heredity, diet, climatic conditions, motivations, type of training and other factors influence the attainment of top level fitness?

How are athletic injuries guarded against and how are they cared for in various countries, and with what results?

The data gathered through the lifetime studies of Olympic athletes should help materially in finding the answers to these and many other questions.

In athletes, we have an important selected group as a valuable resource for scientific information, and it is regretful that we have not taken advantage of this resource to the fullest extent on the international co-operative level. There have been only sporadic, partial studies of athletes, and the findings of some of these have been published.

The Fédération Internationale de Médecine Sportive now proposes the collection of the standardized medical and related records of Olympic contestants in one international Repository.

The Role of the International Olympic Committee and the International Sports Federations

It is only with the co-operation and advice of such influential organizations as the International Olympic Committee and the International Sports Federations and their national member groups, that this important undertaking can be initiated and carried out with success.

What the Olympic Medical Archives will be

The Olympic Medical Archives will be a non-profit organization, international in scope and operation. It will provide permanent housing and facilities for the filing, analyzing, and classifying of the records of the Olympic athletes. The studies will be updated by means of periodic examinations on the same Olympians, and the data will be made available to qualified investigators from all parts of the world. A life-long registry of all athletes participating will be maintained to facilitate follow-up studies.

Suggested Organizational Steps

It is proposed that an Implementation Committee be formed to bring about the organization of the Olympic Medical Archives and to determine the steps necessary to organize and conduct the project on a world-wide basis. It is suggested that this Committee be comprised of representatives of the International Olympic Committee, the International Sports Federation, the World Health Organization, the Fédération Internationale de Médecine Sportive, and other pertinent agencies.

It is further suggested that in connection with the 1964 Olympic Games that the project be initiated on a demonstration, or pilot basis to assist in determining facility of operation.

How the Olympic Medical Archives will operate

It is proposed that examinations of a predetermined number of Olympic contestants be made in the country of their origin as soon as they are selected, rather than at the Olympic Games. The athletes, under these conditions, would be accustomed to their surroundings and unharassed and would be more likely to co-operate, thus assuring the best results.

The extent of the surveys would be determined by experts in the field, in co-operation with scientists of the World Health Organization. The examinations would be carried out by volunteer physicians and scientists, working jointly with coaches and trainers.

The studies to be made would be simple, inexpensive, and could be performed in general hospitals, clinics, and athletic centers.

Methodology and Standards

Methodology and standards for the examinations would be determined by a Committee of the Fédération Internationale de Médecine Sportive, in close co-operation with experts of the World Health Organization, who have kindly offered to assist in this project.

Volunteers for Science

Olympic athletes, physicians, organizers, coaches, trainers and others participating would be designated, Volunteers for Science. These volunteers would be distinguishable by a special lapel insignia and would receive an appropriate certificate. The histories and re-examinations of the Olympians would be recorded at indicated intervals for the remainder of their lives.

The Cost of the Undertaking

Two financial projections are involved:

I. The Examinations

Where there are no governmental appropriations for such studies, it is hoped that the Fédération Internationale de Médecine Sportive will seek, through its world-wide membership, the voluntary services of experts to carry out the examinations, and to obtain, without charge, the necessary facilities and materials.

II. The Operation and Housing of the Repository

It has been suggested that the funds for the staff and a permanent building for the repository may be obtained through:

- a) A tax on tickets of admission to the Olympic Games. (*Ed.:?*)
- b) Grants from various governments, individuals and foundations.

Chancellor Otto Mayer, of the International Olympic Committee, has suggested that the repository be temporarily housed in the Olympic Museum in Lausanne.

The Board of Trustees of the Valley Forge Heart Research Foundation, Norristown, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., has offered to make available its headquarters and staff for the project during the initial stage.

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The world will be deeply indebted to the athletes who 'Volunteer for Science'. Their contribution to the welfare of mankind through the Olympic Medical Archives project will be in keeping with the highest traditions of the Olympian.

The services of organizers, coaches, trainers, physicians and other participants will merit equal appreciation.