

*Mr. Romulus BALABAN, whose article entitled "About Ethics" was published in the Olympic Review No. 36 (September, 1970) has been kind enough to send us the following interesting study.*

The world of sport with regard to being a world producer of cultural virtues, can be discussed in several ways. The polarity of the sporting act has rarely been studied to the very end. Generally it is more the exterior side which is observed. But the sporting act possess also, an interior finality. The human being feels and lives the sport with every fibre. Sport is an event and an adventure of the spirit. The physical processes have such an intensity and breadth that the anatomic and physiological processes for example, are still better known and discussed.

As in the idea of sport, the sporting act, the body and the spirit, build themselves and interpenetrate themselves like two reversible states of one indivisible reality.

It is in the indivisible half of the sporting act that the contact lies, the interpenetration, the mixture of the living boundaries of the human being with a sporting spirit.

It is the heavy pressure of consequences which will result in a constellation of ethic values and values of knowledge. For the sporting intermediary, the man comes first into contact with himself with his limitations and his virtues. He begins and he maintains a sincere and profound dialogue which involves not only coming to grips with his conscience but also with conflicts.

The awareness of conscience and the conflict of the man with his limitations, with his weaknesses, his pride, his aggressiveness, his sufferings, his anger, his egoism, his desires, his risks of being defeated, all these confrontations strengthen his personality, which must be the mistress of himself and circumstances. The desire to be strong, to be the first, the sense of honour, of fairness, of honesty, the desire to raise himself above himself, to pass beyond himself, the desire to go as far as possible along the road of perfection, these are the many meanings comprised in the idea of sport and the sporting act. Aspirations and perspectives which bombard all the reserves of energy of the being with neutrons of ambition. Potential energy rises to a temperature which make possible a stepping beyond one's self and the re-creation of the individual.

Sport makes all the intimate forces of the man concentrate, aiding the construction of his most difficult

victories. Aiding him to know himself, fight with himself, conquer himself, surpass himself and recreate himself constantly, not alone, of course, but in the atmosphere of all the other cultural factors, sport helps with a moral polishing, with the balance of the personality and other major benefits.

But the sporting ac? is most often a relationship with others, with adversaries and team mates, with men. After the confrontation with himself, the confrontation with others is the second major connection with which sport helps. The understanding of himself widens his knowledge of others which is the start of an understanding of the world. One learns to get on well with others, one learns more self-comprehension, the ability to learn everything one's self, one learns things about human existence and more particularly one's own worth, because this confrontation is active and very often dramatic.

Sport has generated a type of special rivalry between men. A rivalry which knows the existence of the right of the adversary.

A cultural, humane, rivalry as noble as most competitions of ideas.

The sporting competition was probably the first model which allowed men to wrestly without hate, to defeat without humiliation and destruction, to lose without being or feeling sad, threatened and scorned.

What is not realised is that sport could help enormously to humanise, widen and magnify our inner world.

Without it, the world of ideas would perhaps be the poorer, human understanding would be more limited and instincts would have longer teeth and greater greed.

Romulus BALABAN

