



Journalists: Guests or Partners?

by Victor Banciulescu

Victor Banciulescu, a sports journalist for 34 years and himself an ex-sportsman, has always been particularly interested in Olympism.

A lecturer at the Xth Session of the International Olympic Academy in 1970, we reproduced his address in No. 36 of the Olympic Review.

Although he has been a member of the Rumanian Olympic Committee for several years, it was as special reporter of Sportul that he attended the recent Xth Olympic Congress at Varna.

The following article is taken from an intervention by Mr. Banciulescu at the European Sports Congress held at Vienna in May 1973.

The news media indisputably attach prime and increased importance to top level sports competition. In doing so they follow a current trend because the sports event, the champion and the record are of course successful and reach a great audience with the public.

It would however be a shame to forget that the sports press is able — to the same extent and at the same time — to fulfil an educational mission by helping to spread the "sport for everybody" idea and its concrete application. In Rumania the sports press has taken on this task with conviction.

Yet we need to win over the huge number of sports journalists to this way of thinking. How can we set about it? First of all by beginning with ourselves, the sports leaders, by changing our mentality towards the servants of the press.

Very often sports institutions or the organisers of competitions treat sports journalists as guests, sometimes even awkward guests.

But in Rumania we believe that the sports journalist should be considered in every case as a close collaborator of sports organisations. The representatives of the press must be won over as partners — and how valuable they can be! — in the work of educating the masses in the Campaign to convince public opinion.

The Rumanian experience is very positive in this respect.

Unfortunately we are too often unaware of the fact that most sports journalists were themselves ardent sportsmen, and that they are all supposed to love sport. Attempts to convince them should therefore find the door wide open!

The day when the whole brotherhood of sports journalists is won over we won't have a better ally in the battle for the sound ideas of physical education and sport. On that day every country, in addition to national sports organisations, will have an additional public interest service for the cause of sport for everybody.

Improving the public and moral health of the population through a wide sports activity is a characteristic social task firmly established today in Rumania. The example of many other countries could also serve as a basis. Again in this sphere the sports press may bring a substantial contribution, either as a vehicle of fertile international exchanges of experience, or as an element pleading in favour of good relations between peoples through sport.

Sports journalists have both the gift of observation and the talent necessary to bring out sport's extraordinary quality of favouring mutual acquaintance and respect and establishing the spirit of friendship and peace. Life in our world can but profit from such an attitude and such activity through newspapers, radio or television broadcasts. The Rumanian sports press supports this conception of its mission.

The sports press is no doubt convinced of the nobility of promoting and defending humanist principles and the ideas serving the cause of human progress.

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