

Readers' correspondence

May 1978 be the year to free sport from all political, racial and religious discrimination

by Sir Ludwig Guttmann,

President of the International Stoke Mandeville Games Federation and of the International Sports Organisation for the Disabled.

I have read the views of "Olympic" journalists printed in the November-December 1977 edition of "Olympic Review", and I have been particularly encouraged, by the comments of those journalists, as well as by Lord Killanin's message, who have pleaded for the eradication of all political influences on the Olympic movement-i.e. to return to the fundamental principles and ideals of both the ancient and modern Olympics.

There is one great group of athletes, however, for whom the appeal to defend athletics from political—and I may add racial and religious—exploitation is even more important. I refer to the vast group of disabled athletes unable to compete in the Olympic Games and denied facilities by the organisers of the Olympic arenas and villages who have had to develop their own Olympics and in so doing have succeeded in overcoming prejudices and tremendous difficulties of accommodation and transport.

In 1976, when we held our Olympiad of the Physically Disabled in Toronto (Montreal being "out" for us), we also, like the Olympics in Montreal, were victims of political pressure because of the participation of our fully multi-racial integrated South African Sports Association for the Disabled. In loyalty to our constitution and indeed to the Olympic ideals which do not allow racial, religious or political discrimination, we have upheld both the United Nations' Resolution against apartheid in sport and the United Nations' Declaration on the rights of the disabled. These charters of humanity call upon all nations and governments to protect the rights of the disabled, without exception, against

exploitation of any kind and certainly do not single out the South African Sports Association for the Disabled (which succeeded in making the first breakthrough in apartheid in sport) or any other country for exclusion.

It is, however, becoming increasingly difficult for some of the member organisations of the ISMGF and ISOD to withstand political pressure from their national able-bodied sports organisations or from their governments. Our sports movement for the disabled has changed the whole outlook of millions of severely disabled in the world and has established recognition of their rightful place in society.

I appeal to the Olympic Committees in all countries and to all able-bodied sportsmen and women, for whom fairness is the highest ideal in sport, to comply with the declarations of the United Nations on humanity and fairness for the disabled sportsmen and sportswomen of all nations. May 1978 be the year to free sport from all political, racial and religious discrimination.

L.G.

An appeal to readers...

For a study on cycling, I should be grateful if anyone possessing information (date and place of birth, death, etc.) or documents (archives, newspapers, reviews, posters, etc.) on the following champions could send them to me :

Greece : A. Konstantinidis.

Great Britain : T. Green, Holbein, Keen, Howell, Stanton, Cann.

South Africa : R. Lewis, Meintjes.

Switzerland : Masi, Doerflinger, Theo, Champion, Metral.

France : M. Bardonneau, P. Masson, F. Canteloube, G. Taillandier, L. Bastien, Stephane.

Austria : Ad. Schmal, F. Gerger.

Germany: Paul Albert, A. Lehr, L. Opel, J. Fischer.

United States: Rynier van Est, Miss America, W. Sanger.

Netherlands : J. Eden, Rademacher, Scheltema-Beduin.

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