

Readers' correspondence

The development of African sport

Mr. R. W. Grant Stuart, President of the National Olympic Committee of Rhodesia (of which the IOC has withdrawn recognition), has asked us to use his right of reply following the article by Mr. Ganga (see "Olympic Review" No. 119). This we gladly agree to.

In Mr. Ganga's article "The Development of African sport" he makes the statement : "we want the sportsmen of South Africa and Rhodesia to be judged by their performances and not the colour of their skin". This statement implies quite categorically that Rhodesia has selected its athletes on the basis of colour.

I must raise a very forceful protest at this quite untrue statement, apparently made with the intent to promote ill-feeling against Rhodesia, in support of Mr. Ganga's quite open hostility to this country.

I would like your readers to be made aware of the findings of the international Olympic Committee's Commission of Enquiry which visited Rhodesia in 1974. This report made it quite clear that the National Olympic Committee of Rhodesia did not in any way breach the rules of the IOC.

The members of this Commission were quite satisfied that selection of athletes for Rhodesian Olympic teams was purely on performance.

It is unfortunate that the basic principles of the founder of the Olympic movement seem to be fading into the background in the wake of forceful and bitter political aspirations. Let us please get back to sport for the sake of sport.



For the respect of Olympic principles

Reply to Professor Rappaport (Reader's correspondence, "Olympic Review" No. 120)

Letter from Mr. Benjamin Lowe

Your letter to the International Olympic Committee, published in the "Olympic Review" No. 120, has inspired me to write directly to you on this occasion.

Although I am only half your years in age, I believe in the principles which you stated in your letter. Indeed, I addressed this same point in my recent 'book, *The Beauty of Sport* (Prentice-Hall, Inc.), under the discussion' of the difference between expressive and instrumental values.

It is my firm belief that many athletes wish to be known for their honest endeavours in sport, and that their greatest efforts for sports success of high level performance are not inspired by national concerns, nor by a need for recognition or pecuniary (financial) reward.

You are correct when you abjure the International Olympic Committee to look to its principles. There is a danger that a process of rule adjustments, on the pretext of meeting the needs of a modernising society, will in fact lead to compromises that attack and undermine the basic principles of the Olympic movement—the spirit of Olympism. An analysis of rule changes over the last eighty years would prove to be a fruitful research venture, the results of which should be brought to the International Olympic Committee.

Besides the rule analysis, there should be research done on the executive membership of the IOC, with a view to understanding how it has changed over the years. It is my belief that such an inquiry would begin to cast light on why governments are becoming increasingly influential in the re-writing of rules. The fundamental danger of government influence in the IOC can be stated in a number of ways. Firstly, politics and sport do not mix at the purest expressive level of competition. Secondly, the role of politics is to engage the influence of power (in whatever form that may be expressed), and this is fundamentally against much of the spirit of Olympism as bequeathed to us by Baron Pierre de Coubertin.

I share with you in the observation of the encroachment of politics into the Olympic movement, but I also share with you a sense of outrage that this should be allowed to happen to so fine an institution. I want to bring to you my support for your principles, to express to you my support of your fine stand on behalf of sport and Olympism, and to assure you that I shall continue to fight for the principles that you espouse in the name of sport.

B.L.



(Non) anonymous journalists...

I was intrigued to read "a comparative study of Olympic newspaper coverage" in the November-December issue of the "Olympic Review". Messrs. Scott Crawford and Kerry Grace of the University of Otago came up with some interesting facts and figures on the coverage of the Games in Montreal.

The sentence of the story that really intrigued me however read: "The articles were written by an anonymous group of New Zealand writers stationed in Montreal for the New Zealand Press Association."

Just to put the record straight for readers of the "Olympic Review"—and the authors of the article—the four NZPA correspondents at the Games did not send their despatches anonymously. The two New Zealand newspapers surveyed, along with a number of others in this country, carefully excise the bylines of agency correspondents as a matter of policy.

The NZPA staff correspondents at Montreal were the writer (also in attendance at Helsinki, Melbourne, Tokyo and Munich), Alan Graham (Munich), Max Lambert and Ron Palenski.

Not anonymously
Graeme Jenkins
Wellington (NZL)

