

A Tribute to Lord Exeter



David Cecil, better known as Lord Burghley, 6th Marquess of Exeter, died on October 21 at the age of 76. He dedicated his life to the world of sports and actively promoted the ideals of amateurism and Olympism for more than 50 years.

As an athlete his career included winning over 100 hurdling races, 3 British Commonwealth gold medals and 8 British championships. He participated in three Olympiads, taking a Gold medal at the 1928 Games (Amsterdam) for the 400 m. hurdles and in the 1932 Olympics (Los Angeles) he won a Silver medal for the 4x400 m. hurdles, placed 4th in the 400 m. hurdles and 5th in the 110 m. hurdles.

At the age of 28 Lord Burghley entered the IOC and three years later became Chairman of his country's NOC. He was the President of the Amateur Athletic Association (1936-1976) and was elected President of the International Amateur Athletic Federation in 1946 and remained so until 1976. He was Chairman of the British Olympic Association beginning in 1936 and was elected President

Lord Exeter and David Hemery were both winners of the 400 meter hurdles at the Olympic Games - one in 1928, the other forty years later in Mexico. Here in Munich, Lord Exeter rewards his young compatriot third again in 1972.



in 1966. He was elected Vice-President of the IOC (1954-1966) and at the most recent IOC Session at Baden-Baden, his last appearance in a practically faultless attendance record, he was awarded honorary Vice-President and given the gold medal of the Olympic Order.

He was the principal organiser of the 1948 Olympic Games in London and was eminently responsible for the success of the Games and the organisation of an event so closely following the devastation left over from World War II.

It is difficult to put into words the importance and significance of Lord Exeter's roles in these organisations, for he was overwhelming and influential in his dedication to athletics. He was considered modern in his thinking and was capable of "hearing one out" despite his social position and firm convictions. He indeed possessed a keen sense of what was considered amateurism and yet was open to opinions and ready to accept change in the sports world as long as the true concepts of amateurism would not be endangered.

In his later years Lord Exeter was troubled with illness yet he continued to work and succeeded to overcome any debilities. He remained true to the principles of the Olympic movement and played an important role morally to its growth and unity. Respected and admired by all involved in the sports world, he was a man of great dignity—a wonderful and rare blend of qualities such as humour and principle, honour and humanity, and his death is a very great loss to the Olympic movement and the world of athletics.

The Olympic family would like to offer its sincere and heartfelt condolences to Lady Exeter, who was the perfect complement to this great man. She supported him, and stood beside him and her presence at the Olympic Sessions and on all other occasions was always helpful and her contributions were continually estimable.

Juan Antonio Samaranch

