

## A Commemoration to Giulio Onesti 1912-1981

*"Sport is not only a show of the foremost athletes; it is not merely an Olympic Games, which signifies the highest peak of hopes and rewards. Sport is an activity involving hundreds of millions of young people who need to find an outlet for their exuberance and personality."*

(from an interview with "La Gazzetta dello sport")

by *Juan Antonio Samaranch*

*President of the IOC*



Giulio Onesti. President of the Italian Olympic Committee for thirty-four years (1944-1978), died at the age of 69, the 11th of December, 1981.

A member of the IOC since 1964, Mr. Onesti fought an indefatigable battle for the growth and independence of Italian sport. He played an eminent role in the promotion of sports both in his country and world-wide. In 1946, after World War II and the destruction it produced, he was crucial as President of CONI in his successful efforts in creating and renovating Italian sports. He had a hand in implementing sport at school and organised a centre for training coaches and the Institutes of Sports Medicine. One of his most progressive accomplishments was the creation in 1969 of the "Youth Games", a series of annual sporting events in Italy aimed at motivating children to take an interest in competition.

Mr. Onesti showed initiative and character within the co-ordination and supervising



committee for IOC-NOC relations and was elemental in the creation of the General Assembly of National Olympic Committees which later became the Association of National Olympic Committees. He presided the subcommittee for IOC membership, relations IOC, NOCs, annual meetings and Olympic Congresses. He was President of the Executive Committee of the Winter Games at Cortina d'Ampezzo (1956) and the Olympic Games in Rome (1960). With Lord Killanin he was Co-ordinator for the Olympic Solidarity, a programme which gives technical aid, in the form of scholarships and seminars, to athletes and coaches.

He dedicated a great deal of his time to exploring methods of enhancing both sport and culture by their integration. At the Games in Rome in 1960 a splendid exhibition of works of art was displayed entitled "Sport in Art and History" and Mr. Onesti's labor here was prodigious. He was appointed President of the Cultural Commission of the IOC at the end of 1980. He was responsible for organising many artistic and cultural events in the context of sports and one of his ideas that met with great success was to offer works of art as prizes for sports awards.

As a young man, Mr. Onesti competed in many regional and national Italian rowing events and was a prominent sportsman in hunting and submarine fishing. He acquired Bachelor degrees' in Arts and Laws and was

a lawyer by profession. He was the Director of the review "Sport Law" and had published various articles on that subject and educational matters of youth. He was fascinated with art and antiques and his favorite hobby was the collection of antique earthenware.

At the service of his funeral, Mr. Onesti was paid homage by Cardinal Ugo Poletti, Mr. Sandro Pertini, President of the Italian Republic, CONI President Franco Carraro and Bepe Croce, one-time CONI Vice-President. He was noted for his hospitality, ability to put thought into action, his availability to all and his willingness to be of help at any circumstance. He succeeded always in creating an atmosphere of cordial understanding and is remembered for his unforgettable smile. The death of Giulio Onesti is not only a loss for Italy. It is a sorrow for the sport world. And especially for Olympism.

The IOC wishes to express its most sincere condolences to Mrs. Giulio Onesti and her son, Massimo, and its promise that her husband, along with the progressive and massive work he has contributed to the world of sport will be remembered and appreciated always.

*J. A. S.*

