

Geoffrey Miller World Class Journalist

7 h. 30. It was the exact moment at which, since the day before the opening of the Games in Sarajevo, Geoffrey Miller would take his seat in the Hotel Holiday Inn dining room.

At breakfast he would join Albert Riethausen, Michele Verdier and members of the IOC Press Sub Commission - at least those who did not have to cover the first events of the morning.

The long, exciting day teeming with incident and work was just beginning.

And - may I add without launching into excessive praise that this was fully in keeping with this modest and hardworking Englishman's professional life ! The outset was capturing the attention of the 2,000 accredited special envoys in the Olympic village.

Tomorrow who should the special tickets be distributed to ? How should the pools be made up? Who to settle for in such a melee of photographers

None of the decisions duly taken will raise the slightest objection.

7.55. 17th February's breakfast is coming to a close. For the first time, Geoffrey Miller who is always there before the others, has not appeared. Everyone wonders what's happened, "for two days I've felt that he's been really tired" says Riethausen. "He had difficulty in climbing the stairs", "he must have decided to sleep in for an extra hour" adds Tsuyoshi Miyakawa. "Yeah, we'd better dash along as quickly as possible to the Press Centre, there's the biathlon 4 x 7.5 km. relay."

9 h. 30. With unforgettable tact, Ahmed Karabegovic, Secretary General of the Organising Committee informed me that Geoffrey Miller has just been found, pyjama-clad, dead in his bathroom.

Heart attack, around 6 h. 30. Tired or not, he had got up as usual in order to keep his rendez-vous.

So many shared memories, throughout the years, the world over.

16th February, 8 h. 45. "Marvellous !" It's Geoffrey Miller who's hailing me in his clear and sharp voice. A tone with a dull resonance which, strangely enough, is heard above the hubbub of the crowd.

His supple, short and stocky body ploughs a way through the crowd in the hotel foyer. He hands me three sheets : the article I had asked of him for the Olympic Review on Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean, gold medallists in ice-dancing.

"Here it is !", he chants with his way of prodding his interlocutor with his index finger in a persuasive gesture.,

"What punctuality ! Geoffrey, you're the number one !"

In a flash a smile lights up his clean shaven face with its forceful jawline, well chiselled around the broad and straight bridge of his nose. An open countenance enhanced by sky-blue eyes.

Beneath his wavy hair, white rather than black, his face no longer contrasts with his pink complexion. We should have more or less consciously noticed a pallor which is now apparent in our memory. But, at the height of the Winter Games, how would the gathering stress and exertion not leave its mark ? Particularly since like Geoffrey Miller, you direct the European Associated Press team.

He has already left, with his characteristic gait which would be sufficient to identify him by in the midst of a crowd : those steps which slide along rapidly as if he were on skis. An occupied air. A well-set, forthright figure. Robust...

Apart from agency telegrams the lines you are about to read are the last to be written by the world class journalist, Geoffrey Miller.

Monique Berlioux