

# Olympic Medallists



## KEVAN GOSPER, A.O.

After winning the gold medal in the 400m at the Commonwealth Games of 1954 in Vancouver, Kevan Gosper went on to make an outstanding performance two years later for which he took the silver medal in the 4x400m relay during the Games of the XVI Olympiad in Melbourne. The national record holder in Australia from 1955 to 1960 for the 400m, he left track and field to enter sports administration. He has presided the Australian Institute of Sport from 1980 to 1985, the Australian Olympic Committee (Australian Olympic Federation) from 1985 to 1990, and the association of the

Oceania National Olympic Committees (OCON) since 1989. A financial analyst, he is often consulted by various government authorities, and he will finish his term as High Commissioner of his home city of Melbourne in March 1996. He has been an IOC member since 1977, and serves on a number of commissions, including the Press Commission, which he has chaired since 1989. He served on the Executive Board from 1986 to 1990, was vice-president from 1990 to 1994 and was re-elected to the Executive Board for a four-year term at the Session in Budapest in 1995.

**OR : What is your earliest image of the Olympic Games?**

When I was competing as a school boy athlete in the 'forties and began to set new records, my coach Eli Gregson, who had participated in the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, showed me photographs of the remarkable Jesse Owens winning the 100 metres Olympic title. He remains my sporting hero; he presented me with a winner's medal at the Ohio State Relays in 1954 and we met again and had our photo taken together when he visited Australia in the 'seventies.

**OR : What is your best memory or favourite anecdote from the Olympic Games?**



It would be impossible to describe a best memory or favourite anecdote. There are so many in my rich Olympic life, and they continue to grow. On a personal level, I would mention taking part in the Olympic Games, presiding over National Olympic Committees, serving as a member and vice-president of the International Olympic Committee with Juan Antonio Samaranch, serving on the MBaye Commission which brought the new South Africa back to the Olympic Family, participating in the team which will bring the Olympic Games back to Australia in the year 2000, and knowing that there are still many more opportunities to promote Olympism.

**OR : In your opinion, what is the significance of the Centenary of the Olympic Games?**

The significance of the Centenary of the Olympic Games is their permanence and universality. To have athletes competing in Atlanta from all 197 countries which have a recognized NOC is an astonishing testimonial to

the unity of sport. The Centennial Games will truly exemplify the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding, a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play as set out in the Fundamental Principles of the Olympic Charter.

**OR : What role do you feel sport and Olympism play in modern society?**

Sport is where the rules of life are learned. The valuable experience gained from play and competition in youth contributes to an orderly and peaceful society. Olympism provides the ideal model for the conduct and aspirations of all people who are involved in sport and culture. To be Olympic is special, and it must always remain so.

**OR : What message would you like to give to today's youth?**

Look for every opportunity to use your natural talent. Know when you are on your own and when you are part of the team. Be friendly with others, do your best; never give up.