

by Tony Bijkerk



Martinus OSENDARP

ISOH's oldest member, Dr. Paul Yogi Mayer has mailed me a photocopy of an article published on September 15, 2000 in the magazine: *Medals & Martyrs, Australian Jewish News*.

"Two bronze medals in Berlin", written by Shira Sebban, tells the story of a fifteen year old athlete David COHEN, who under the pseudonym of OSENDAARP should have won two bronze medals in sprinting (100 and 200 metres) during the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin.

David COHEN was born in the Dutch East Indies in 1921, brought up in a strictly Jewish home before being sent to boarding-school in Holland.

According to his daughter, Jewishcare community relations officier Annamarie COHEN, David was determined to participate in the Olympics, but knowing HITLER didn't like Jews, decided to change his name into OSENDAARP. The story continues telling that his mother encouraged him and even paid for the trip. David arrived in Berlin to compete as an independent – ostensibly because at 15 he was too young to be part of the Dutch team. *"The Dutch were worried not only because of his age, which they could have falsified, but because of his Jewishness",* Ms COHEN stated. *"But when he won the bronze in the 100 and 200, they claimed him as one of their own".*

"He became good friends with Jesse Owens because they were both facing adversity. The Olympics were a chance for Hitler to prove Aryan superiority and they both proved Hitler wrong."

COHEN returned to Holland after the Games. During World War II, he joined the Dutch Air Force in the Dutch East Indies, escaping the Holocaust. He died in 1993.

When I first read this story, I could not believe my eyes! I never saw a story with a bigger

historical lie than this one! I do not know anything about David COHEN. He may have existed and his daughter seems to be the living truth that he did!

However, David COHEN could never scarcely have been more different, just as black is different to white. The real "Tinus" OSENDARP died 20 June 2002 in Heerlen. In the August/September 2002 issue of the *Olympic Review*, I published the following OBITUARY on OSENDARP:

June 20, 2002, in Heerlen, The Netherlands,
"Martinus Bernardus "Tinus" Osendarp (1916-2002), twice bronze medal winner at the Games of the XIth Olympiad in Berlin in 1936, passed away after a short illness at the age of 86 years. In 1936 Osendarp was called 'the fastest white man in the world' because he lost from famous Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalfe in the 100 metres and again from Owens and Robinson in the 200 metres, all of them black athletes. In the 4x100 metres relay, the Dutch team [Osendarp] lost the baton and as a consequence was disqualified. It would have been a possible third medal for Osendarp. During World War II Osendarp became known for his collaboration with the German occupation forces. He became a member of the German SS and took part in the hunt for members of the Dutch resistance. He was sentenced to twelve years jail after the end of the war, but was released from prison in 1952. With the help of the president of the Royal Netherlands Athletic Union Frans Jutte, Osendarp got a job working in the coalmines in Limburg. He literary went underground for a long period. After his retirement, he remained incommunicado for the media, but broke his silence a few years ago, when he was interviewed on television. During the interview he showed to have little repentance for his war past. 'I only did what I was ordered to do', was his excuse."

This obituary clearly shows that the real OSENDARP persecuted his Jewish countrymen and in fact never repented for his past. Also his appearance is completely different to the photograph. shown in the Australian article for David COHEN. Tinus OSENDARP was a strapping guy with strawcoloured hair, while David COHEN was darkhaired as can



David COHEN

be seen from the photograph.

I do not know why this story was ever published. Any editor of a serious magazine

should have checked the contents of the story first of all. A simple call to the Netherlands Olympic Committee could have informed them about the real facts: that is that the real Tinus OSENDARP was still alive at the time (2002). It is surprising how much Olympic history can be distorted by this kind of false report.

The problem is that this might be the beginning of another "Genesis of Legends"!

BOOK PRESENTATION



Stephan WASSONG:
Pierre de Coubertin's US-amerikanische Studien und ihre Bedeutung für die Analyse seiner frühen Erziehungskampagne (Sport, Kultur und Gesellschaft, vol. III). Wüzburg 2002, Ergon

Verlag, pp. 256 (€29)

(STEPHAN WASSONG: *Pierre de Coubertin's US-American studies and their importance for his early educational campaign*. English version; published by the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles in autumn 2003)

Although it is well known in sport history and sport pedagogy that COUBERTIN travelled in the USA in 1889 and 1893 for a number of months, this fact is treated with a lot of reserve in current research. This lack of research has been successfully filled with the monograph Pierre de COUBERTIN'S studies in the USA and their importance for his early educational campaign. As sources not only COUBERTIN'S books *Universités transatlantiques* (1890) and *Souvenirs d'Amérique et de Grèce* (1897) were used which he published on his two study trips in the USA but also almost unknown and unconsidered articles by COUBERTIN. In addition the correspondence between

COUBERTIN and US-American educators, scholars, journalists and university presidents have been analysed.

In the monograph COUBERTIN'S travels in the USA are not only investigated from the Olympic perspective through which it is only stressed that COUBERTIN travelled to the USA to find allies for his attempt to re-establish the Olympic Games. It is demonstrated that COUBERTIN gained a deep insight into the educational aims of US-American higher education and into the educational utilisation of sport and gymnastics at universities, schools, as well as public and private sport clubs in the USA. A detailed interpretation of COUBERTIN'S statements about these areas stresses COUBERTIN'S profile as a progressive-minded educator. In completion to COUBERTIN'S experiences with athletic education at English public schools it is shown by COUBERTIN'S attraction to the aims of US-American higher education that in his educational concept the French Baron aimed not only at a moral, intellectual and physical education of the youth but that he also propagated guidelines for a universal political education of which the aims were the consolidation of republicanism and the development of a peaceful internationalism.

Particularly by analysing COUBERTIN'S concept of political education his intentions to revive the Olympic Games can be outlined. In this context traditional research results are challenged like the overvaluing of the role that the ancient Olympic Games seemed to have