

BOOK REVIEWS

Olympisches Tennis: Die Geschichte der olympischen Tennisturniere (1896-1992). by Heiner Gillmeister. (Published in Sankt Augustin, Germany, by Academia Verlag [Postfach 16 63, D-5205 Sankt Augustin 1, Germany], 1993. In German.) Reviewed by Volker Kluge.

This book, which appeared on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Deutscher Tennis Bund (DTB) as the first volume into a history of the Olympic sports, affords a fascinating insight into the chapter of Olympic tennis. Gillmeister describes all the Olympic tournaments in detail, employing comprehensive source material in the process. The section on 1896 in Athens is especially successful and is followed by the exciting biography of the first Germany Olympic champion in tennis, Friedrich Adolph (Adolf) "Fritz" Traun, who, in 1908, chose to commit suicide because of alleged bigamy. Particularly creditable: the author endeavoured to reconstruct the complete Athens results which up to now had not been published anywhere.

Equally detailed is the chapter on Stockholm in 1912 and the second German Olympic winner, Heinrich Schomburgk. As regards his partner, Dora Köring, it is perhaps worth noting that she died on 13 February 1945 during a bomb raid on Dresden.

The many and detailed footnotes are a real treasure trove of stories. Gillmeister's endeavours to provide authentic details are also revealed in the careful choice of the photos, many of which have not been published very frequently.

A shortcoming of the book is that it completely leaves aside the 1906 Olympics in Athens. Likewise the results of the demonstration competitions in Mexico City in 1968 and in Los Angeles in 1984 would have been a good addition.

Olympiaboken 1992. Officiel redogörelse i samråd med Sveriges Olympiska Kommitte. Edited by Ulf Pettersson. (Published in Stockholm by Strömbergs/Brunnhages Förlag [Idrottsförlaget Förlags AB], Box 65, S-16211 Vällingby, Sweden. 282 x 205mm. 432 pages. In Swedish.) Reviewed by Ture Widlund.

Olympiaboken has been published since 1948. It was founded by Lennart Brunnhage, Swedish high diver, 19 times Swedish champion, one time Nordic champion, 2nd at the 1947 European Championships and 4th at the 1948 Olympic Games. The original 244 pages in 1948 have become 432 in 1992. During that time the number of Olympic events has grown from 158 (22 winter and 136 summer) to 314 (57 winter and 257 summer). Had the number of pages kept pace with the number of events there should have been 484 pages in 1992. Thus, there is a deficit of 52 pages as compared to 1948.

The book is in the main made up of four parts, a leading article (the South Africa question), Albertville (114 pages), Barcelona (276 pages) and the 1988-1992 Report of the Swedish Olympic Committee (15 pages). The remaining space is devoted to tables, Olympic Records, explanations of abbreviations, smashing photos, etc.

The Albertville and Barcelona sections are both made up of a review of a columnist, a diary, a report by sport of all events, a presentation of the Swedish team and the official

results. According to my rough estimate there is about 50% each of text and pictures. The results are the gems, 19 pages for Albertville and 86 pages for Barcelona.

The goal was to record the full name of every participant and every performance, from the first round to the final. This has been achieved to an astonishing degree, e.g., all the runs in bobsleigh and luge are accounted for, all jumps in ski jumping, all matches in archery, badminton, table tennis and tennis, all bouts in boxing, wrestling and judo, all results of all the heats in athletics, cycling, canoeing, rowing and swimming, each performance in the multi-events (biathlon, pentathlon, heptathlon and decathlon). Only in fencing and gymnastics are results missing, in fencing the 1st round bouts and in gymnastics the score per apparatus. An objection I have is that Chinese and Korean names are not written in the conventional Oriental order with the family name first, but in inverted order. I find that confusing and very annoying.

You can also complain that in team sports the line-ups per game are missing. On the other hand the number of games per team member are accounted for. In this context I cannot refrain from a personal comment. In the male EUN handball team only 12 actually played in the Olympic Games but all 16 members of the squad received gold medals. Is it compatible with the Olympic rules to hand out medals even to those who did not participate in any game?

In the diaries the focus is on the Swedish participants. In the sports sections each sport is given its fair space, from two pages at the least to 21 (skiing) and 25 (athletics).

Something that leaves a sour taste is that one of the columnists without any proof whatsoever, accused some Olympic medallists of doping although he must be well aware of the fact that the very strict doping control cleared them from any such suspicions. This false accusation reveals that this particular columnist is heavily prejudiced.

For all who can read Swedish, i.e. those living in the Nordic countries, with a keen interest in the Olympic Games, *Olympiaboken* is a must. For those who do not read Swedish, *Olympiaboken* is well worth acquiring because of its results sections. I doubt there is any other source, except for the Official Results and the Official Report, that has such a wealth of Olympic results.

Olympic Revolution: The Olympic Biography of Juan Antonio Samaranch. by David Miller. (Published in London by Pavilion Books, Ltd, 1992. 266 pages. In English.)
Reviewed by John A. Lucas, Ph.D.

David Miller, veteran journalist for *The Times* of London, is the only newspaper person whose primary assignment is the International Olympic Games, the Olympic movement, and, especially, the machinations of the 95 men and women on the International Olympic Committee (IOC). And Mr. Miller is extremely good at his work. He has had these past dozen years the "ear" of the IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, and most of the committee members trust Miller's honesty and journalistic ethics. There is no one that can contest the book's thesis - that during Samaranch's first dozen years in office, a greater revolution has occurred within the movement than the combined changes of the previous 85 years. There is disagreement in some circles about the nature of these changes; and, while Miller does target some people and some decisions, he is, unashamedly, an advocate of the President, ending his book with the sentence, "The IOC, under the guiding force of Samaranch, is the most universal social instrument of peace in our time."

One detects a journalist at work in looking at the fourteen "Table of Contents" chapter titles: Mission, Crocodiles, Moneybags, Reality, Boycott, Turning Point, Travels, Diplomacy, Cheats, Solidarity, Gigantism, Freedom, Bidding, and Successor. There is also good factual data in a short appendix. Good print media man that he is, Miller interviewed scores of

people that know Samaranch well - billionaires, potentates, presidents of National Olympic Committees (NOCs), and international sport federations (IFS), television bosses, as well as many people inside the Château de Vidy Olympic headquarters. More than any book yet written, this one reveals the real Samaranch, the “soul” of the man. But Miller is not all complimentary. In his last chapter he asks rhetorically (on page 238) if Samaranch’s startling liberal reforms might some day, if they have not already, turn on their creator, and on his successor - and create newer problems in the non-professional world of sport and within the massive under-developed world.

I looked awfully hard for factual errors or historical inaccuracies, but I couldn’t find any, something I’ve never said in several dozen previous book reviews. Sigfrid Edström’s first name is misspelled on page 4 as is Otto Mayer’s last name, but this is of no consequence. Some historians might say David Miller is too close to Mr. Samaranch to be wholly disinterested, dispassionate toward the IOC, its leader, and the whole Olympic Movement. I disagree, because, while an advocate of these three components, Miller does point out “roadblocks,” potential hazards, and outlines future Olympic danger signals. Quite possibly, no one outside the IOC could have written such a book . . . not Norbert Müller, John J. MacAloon, John Lucas, Robert Barney, Allen Guttmann, Yves Boulogne, nor France’s Jean Durry.

Lastly, David Miller’s use of the English language is exemplary, not surprising for someone with thirty years’ association with *The Times*. But occasionally, he demands too much of his readers, especially that great majority who are not experts on this subject of the Olympic Games, the Movement, and the “revolution” that is taking place. What is the amateur or ordinary reader to make of such a gargantuan sentence as:

Because the IFs were better organized than the NOCs, made better use of their television money, they were the greater threat to the IOC, and this led to the creation of the Tripartite Commission, which did some useful work: not least in helping Killanin resist the “democratization” interference of UNESCO, and its unsubtle attempt to take over the Olympic Games!” [page 291]

On pages 29-31, in no obvious chronological order, appear the dates 1982-83, 1970’s, 1966, 1967, 1973, 1968, 1981, 1988, 1991, 1984, and again, 1991. I read it all three times and still had great difficulty.

IOC members have abused their evaluation of potential Olympic sites, resulting in many restrictive guidelines. “Establishment of cure is admission of ailment,” says Miller on page 222. The Olympic Games are still for the amateur athlete, reminds Miller, who wrote on page 71: “The music of the jackpot reaches fewer than one percent of the competitors.” Wonderful sentences appear on Samaranch (page 243), on Primo Nebiolo (page 250), on Peter Ueberroth (page 102), and on “Public relations . . . the IOC’s most serious weakness” (page 253). But you’ll have to read the whole book to get the full flavor of this valuable addition to contemporary Olympic history.