

BOOK REVIEWS

Historical Dictionary of the Modern Olympic Movement. Edited by John E. Findling and Kimberly D. Pelle. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996. 504 pp. ISBN 0-313-28477-6. \$79.50 (US). Reviewed by Bill Mallon.

Over one year ago, John Findling and I spoke on the phone for the first time and made the amazing revelation that we were concurrently working on books tentatively titled "Historical Dictionary of the Olympic Movement," mine with Ian Buchanan, John's with Kimberly Pelle. We agreed that night to write reviews of each other books.

While it might be fun to completely denigrate Findling and Pelle's efforts, in light of our competing book, that would be far from fair. As Thoreau said, ". . . I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, . . ." This is an excellent book which is a valued addition to my Olympic library, and one which I expect I will use time and again as a reference. They have done a fine job. I suspect the book would serve as a good introductory text on the Olympics for an undergraduate course.

Our two books are also very different. While we have multiple entries (over 900), covering all aspects of the Movement, Findling and Pelle have chosen to follow the Olympic Movement Olympiad-by-Olympiad. Their only entries, in the main body of the book, are summaries of each Olympics - first for the Games of the Olympiad, and then for the Olympic Winter Games. It is a multi-authored book, with each chapter basically written by a separate author. Only a few authors contributed two chapters. The main body of the book is followed by biographies of all the IOC presidents. Then comes several appendices looking at the IOC, the USOC, Olympic Films and the Olympic literature.

As with any book, however, there are good and bad points. I think there are three excellent points concerning this book. First of all, each Olympiad is covered, which is usually not true of many books looking at the socio-political aspects of the Games, such as the books written by Allen Guttman, John Lucas, or Christopher Hill. While all those books deal with the important details of Olympic history, certain Olympics are given short shrift because "not much happened." That is not true in this book. Each Olympiad is covered and basically covered well.

Secondly, the biographies of the IOC Presidents were valuable. They are longer than ours. While bios of Avery Brundage, Pierre de Coubertin, and Juan Antonio Samaranch are easily sought, biographical information on the other presidents is somewhat rare. David Young has studied Demetrios Vikelas in *Stadion*, and Killanin has his autobiography, but bios of Edström and Baillet-Latour are almost non-existent in the English language.

Finally, the bibliographical material contained in Findling and Pelle's Dictionary is wonderful stuff. Each chapter has a bibliographical section which not only outlines the pertinent works, but usually directs the researcher to the appropriate archival sources of information. The book ends with a long discussion of Olympic Bibliography, pointing out quite correctly that the last book-length treatment of this topic is now 12 years old.

Now no book is perfect and neither is this one. There are the usual niggling errors of typography and minor factual errors, but they did not detract from the book to any degree, and many of the errors would only be found by members of ISOH. I did have a few minor complaints, however.

The first is inherent in any multi-author book and is the complaint that the chapters are not always evenly handled. Each author always has a different “agenda,” some emphasizing politics, some sociology, some the competitions. It is the responsibility of the editors to even that out. But it is difficult, as no editor wishes to totally change their contributor’s work. I have been on both ends of that, and did not like the result either way. Having said that, I thought the chapters on 1964 Tokyo and 1972 Munich were far too short. Tokyo is covered in just over 2 pages, and the treatment was superficial. Munich received 3½ pages, but given the events that occurred on 5 September 1972 and the Rhodesian problem, I would have expected more.

My main complaint about the book is also a result of the structure chosen by the editors. Using an Olympiad-by-Olympiad approach, many of the problems of the Olympic Movement are chopped up a bit. Thus, things like the South African problem, the two China question, and the two Germany question are found in multiple chapters. No single, coherent treatment of them can be found. Still, they are all covered and with a bit of effort, all the pertinent information is included.

On the whole, this is a good book on the Olympic Games and I think all members of ISOH will enjoy it and find it helpful. How could I feel otherwise when the authors kindly devoted the last sentence in the book to ISOH and their reviewer?

Historical Dictionary of the Olympic Movement. by Ian Buchanan and Bill Mallon. Lanham, MD, and London: The Scarecrow Press, 1995. 322 pp. ISBN 0-8108-3062-0. \$55.00 (US). Reviewed by Kimberley Pelle and John Findling.

Students of sport history, Olympic aficionados, and Olympic Games fans will find Ian Buchanan and Bill Mallon’s new reference book ***Historical Dictionary of the Olympic Movement***, easy to read, fun to browse through, and packed with statistical information as well as entertaining tidbits pertaining to the realm of events that make up the history of the Olympic Movement.

Although only 247 pages (*Editor’s Note*: actually 322, counting front pages), the book contains a wealth of information, some of which would be hard to find elsewhere. The authors have divided their book into several sections, including a useful chronology of the Olympic Movement dating back to the inauguration of the Olympic Movement in 776 BC. This section provides some brief historical context and notes the political, economic, and social “ups and downs” of the Olympic Movement.

The chronology is followed by short essays on each of the “modern” summer and winter Games. These entries contain information regarding the site selection process, the number of participants, and some of the distinctive highlights, athletic or otherwise, for each Games. We learn, for example, about the Olympic debut of women in the 1900 Games and about the controversial “Anthropology Days” at St. Louis in 1904.

The main body of the dictionary, occupying about 180 pages, is an alphabetized series of entries including one for each country or entity recognized by the International Olympic Committee and its Olympic history - years of participation, total medals won, and the like. The dictionary section also includes short biographies of a number of Olympic champions, notably those who have won more medals in an event than anyone else, or those considered the “greatest” in their sport. Other entries that will entertain and inform include ones on sex testing, the origins of the Olympic Hymn, the Olympic Creed, and several other Olympic appurtenances. One can always quibble with the selection process in books such as this; we, for example, wondered why Edwin Moses and Abebe Bikila, both of whom warranted a

photograph in the picture section, did not merit a biography. We also would have liked to have seen James E. Sullivan included, who was so very important to early U.S. participation in the Games.

A bibliography and no less than sixteen appendices conclude the book. The bibliography, which might have been better placed after the appendices, contains references to official Games reports, national Olympic histories, biographies of the IOC presidents, and an assortment of miscellaneous works. The authors obviously spent a great deal of time and effort devising the appendices, and all are well packed with valuable and interesting information. Some of this information, such as the names of the final torch bearers and the speakers of the Olympic Oath, would be very difficult for the average student to track down. A particularly useful appendix catalogues all the athletes who have tested positive for drugs since 1968. This timely listing will doubtless be a major source for numerous research papers and journalistic essays, although readers may have to have a *Physician's Desk Reference (PDR)* at hand to learn more about the drugs involved which, with one exception (Meziocard), are listed only by name.

An especially valuable contribution of the book is its attention to efforts before 1896 to revive the Olympic Games. Readers will learn about such events as the Much Wenlock Olympian Games, the Morpeth Olympic Games, and the Zappas Olympic Games, all contested at various times in the 19th century in different efforts to recreate the ancient Olympics in a more modern setting. This is an area of Olympic history that has received very little attention, and Buchanan and Mallon are to be applauded for placing such emphasis on it.

Overall, we found the book to be packed with valuable information that students and fans alike will enjoy perusing. They may, however, find it frustrating that the book contains no index, making it a little more difficult to find a name or a game.

Minds, Bodies and Souls. An A to Z of the British Olympic Heritage Network. by Don Anthony. British Olympic Association. 44 pages. Reviewed by Ian Buchanan.

This first volume of a proposed trilogy presents the highlights of Britain's Olympic heritage in readily accessible form. As the title implies, the book is presented in A-Z dictionary form but there is also a chronological index. The many ISOH members who have met the author during his world-wide travels in the cause of Olympism will not be surprised at the depth of research and the enthusiasm with which Don Anthony presents his findings.

Having myself been a diligent student of British Olympic history for some years, I was delighted to add to my knowledge from this entertaining work. For the first time I learned that the first IOC President, Demetrios Vikelas, not only worked in the family business in London but also studied botany at London's University College. It was also news to me that the first collective visit by IOC members to Britain was not for the Session in 1904 but during the Congress at Le Havre in 1897 when a day excursion took them across the Channel to the Isle of Wight.

Of course, the Cotswold and Much Wenlock Games are given due recognition but there are a number of intriguing entries on other less well-known early celebrations which had a distinct Olympic flavour. Also of interest is the extent to which the "gymnasium movement" in provincial cities such as Liverpool and Birmingham influenced the development of sport in Britain.

In the ISOH Journal (Vol. 3, No. 1) Dietrich Quanz wrote of the close relationship between the IOC and the Peace Movement and this is supported in the book by information on the moral stance adopted by many leading figures in British sport. In view of the fact the

Church were equally dedicated to promoting peace, I have been reflecting on why, in its entire history, the IOC have never numbered a truly senior representative of the Church among its members. I haven't yet reached any conclusion but perhaps Don Anthony will enlighten us in his next volume to which I am very much looking forward.

Copies may be obtained *gratis* on application to The British Olympic Association, 1 Wandsworth Plain, London, SW18 1EH, England. Although there is no charge for the book, applicants will be asked to make a modest donation to British Olympic funds. Details will be sent with the book.

Das Grobe Buch der Olympischen Spiele. [The Great Book of The Olympic Games.] by Christian Zentner. München: Copress-Verlag, 1995. In German. 320 pages, 422 pictures. Price: DM 78, oS 609, sfr. 74. ISBN 3-7679-0460-8. Reviewed by Rupert Kaiser.

Die Chronik - 100 Jahre Olympische Spiele 1896-1996. by Britta Kruse and Armin Mende. Gutersloh and München: Chronik-Verlag im Bertelsmann-Lexikon-Verlag, 1995. In German. 312 pages, 850 photos. Price: DM 49,90. ISBN: 3-577-14540-4. Reviewed by Rupert Kaiser.

100 Jahre Olypische Spiele - Idee, Analyse, Bilanz. by Karl Adolf Scherer. Dortmund: Harenberg-Kommunikation, 1995. In German. 828 pages, 500 pictures. Price: DM 98, oS 748, sfr 98. ISBN 3-611-00497-9. Reviewed by Rupert Kaiser.

Just before the start of the year of the hundreth anniversary of the Olympics three German publishers present us their "birthday presents."

The Copress-Verlag in Munich, well-known for its interesting books about the history of sports, published ***Das Grobe Buch der Olympischen Spiele (The Great Book of The Olympic Games)*** by Christian Zentner. Zentner is an author of standard-books about the history of national-socialism and "Third Reich" and was the chief-editor of the Olympic-reports by Harry Valerien between 1968 and 1992. The result of Zentner's work is not extraordinary, but it is a good and informative book for people who want basic information. There are three qualities in this book: First - it is an Olympic dictionary with 1,200 catchwords about stars, events and sites of summer and winter Olympics and about rules of sports. Second - it is an easily readable book. Unforgettable events, dramatic decisions, sensational records and persons around the five rings come back in extra chapters. Third - it is full of interesting pictures. More than 400 pictures support the verbal information. The photos are not rare, because most of them are known for insiders from the "Who's Who" by Erich Kamper. An appendix is reserved for statistics. It includes the results of the medalists and gives the national medal totals for each game. As just said - nothing new for insiders, but suitable for first and basic information about the colours of the Olympics.

The prominent Chronik-Verlag - a section of Bertelsmann-Lexikon-Verlag - in Gutersloh and München publishes chronicles on a very high level, for instance ***Die Chronik des XX. Jaahrhunderts, Die Chronik der Deutschen, Die Chronik des Sports*** and so on. This year, the publisher presents ***Die Chronik 100 Jahre Olympische Spiele 1896-1996 (The Chronicle of 100 Years of the Olympic Games)*** by Britta Kruse and Armin Mende. In

contrast to the other chronicles it is not much more than a picture-book, with an arbitrary choice of photos, which supply only flashes of each games. The essays at the beginning of each chapter bring only basic information. The statistics include only the medal winners. And the Games of 1906 are “banished.” Two good things: the layout and an informative preview to Atlanta 1996. After the former chronicles - all these books of communicative world-class - the *Chronik 100 Jahre Olympische Spiele* is more than a one step back. A further publication of the Olympic chapters of Umminger’s *Chronik des Sports* would have been a better present to the hundredth birthday of the Olympics.

The book *100 Jahre Olympische Spiele - Idee, Analyse, Bilanz (Hundred Years of Olympic Games - Idea, Analysis, Balance)* published by Harenberg-Communication in Dortmund is the “heavyweight” among the three German “birthday presents.” The author is Karl Adolf Scherer, member of the Olympic Order and journalistic participant in nine Olympics and more than thirty sessions of IOC. He reminds us in picture and word of famous athletes, events and remarkable backgrounds. A statistical part - nearly half of the whole book - is reserved for medalists, medal totals for each discipline, tables about the leadership of the olympic movement. The background-tables in the first part - typical for Harenberg-books - are not necessary in each case. There are 800 pages filled with facts and stories, supported by interesting photos. The most important mistake, however, is the high price. Most of the Olympic fans will have to go to a library to use this book.

100 Jahre Eidgenössischer Schwingerverband 1895-1995. by the Jubiläumsschrift-Kommission. Fischer Druck AG, 3110 Munsingen-Bern. In Helvetic-German and Helvetic-French. 327 pages. Reviewed by Donald Sayenga

As a modern nation, contrasted against the present day situation in places such as Palestine-Israel, Ulster-Eire, or Serbia-Croatia, the Helvetic Confederation known to North America as “Switzerland” could be considered the role model for how to do things the right way. The “Switzers” after all, must contend with a mountainous region where travel is often difficult and no less than *four* official national languages, all assembled into a territory smaller than many of the individual states and provinces on the continent occupied by Canada-USA-Mexico. These people manage to get along with minimum internal strife. They personify Olympic idealism. It is not very surprising, therefore, to discover they have a system of regularly-celebrated competitive sports and games at the root of their culture.

This sports history book is the centennial summary of organized activities as recorded and published by the internal wrestling organization known as the Helvetic national *Schwingerverband*, but the book also celebrates a centennial for the other Helvetic festival events practiced by yodelers, alphorn-musicians, banner-twirlers, stone-throwers, and practitioners of the obscure but fascinating golf-baseball antecedent known as *hornussing*. (It is beyond my power to explain what happens when *hornussers* compete, but I have often suggested a study of this sport would lead to a better understanding of how golf and baseball originated.) This book is the sort of compilation that warrants wider translation into other languages for the enlightenment of sport historians everywhere.

Helvetians are not offended when Americans refer to them as Swiss, (much in the same way that all Netherlanders tolerate being called “Dutch”) so for the same of simplicity, I will describe this wonderful book as a complete history of Swiss wrestling. In reality, however, it

is a summary of names, results, and competitions during the last 100 years of European belt-wrestling with a documented history predating the Middle Ages, one wide-spread on the continent, but now confined to remote places such as the Alpine valleys. Sketches by the artist we know as *V. de Honnecourt*, dated 1235 A.D. matched against similar drawings by *Ludwig Vogel* dating from the early 1800s, demonstrate conclusively that Swiss belt-wrestling hasn't changed much in 750 years. If you want to see photos and obtain authenticated details about the most recent 100 years of Swiss wrestling, this book provided more than enough for any historian.

Personally, I regard the naming of the national "king" of Swiss belt-wrestling at regular celebrations following the festival of 17 August 1805 at Unspunnen as the starting point for our present system of annual national sports championships, World Cups, and quadrennial Olympic gatherings. It is appropriate, therefore, that the names of several men crowned as the "king" of Swiss wrestling (such as the Bernese champion Robert Roth who won an Olympic Gold medal in 1920) also appear on the lists of Olympic medallists. It is likewise an appropriate choice for the international headquarters of Olympism to be now located in a nation with such a well-documented history of national sports competitions.

II. *Olympische Spiele 1900 in Paris.* by Karl Lennartz and Walter Teutenberg. Kassel: AGON Verlags- und Vertriebsgesellschaft mbH, 1995. In German. 238 pages. ISBN 3-928562-20-7. Available from AGON Sportverlag, Frankfurter Straße 92 A, D-34121 Kassel, GERMANY. Reviewed by Tony Bijkerk.

The Games of the IInd Olympiad in Paris 1900 belong to the category "Shambles" and once again one can ask if these "Games" are truly to be called "Olympic?" This is of course a discussion that has been raging among Olympic historians for decades but when reading this book, this question comes up once again.

But this time by two eminent Olympic historians, both members of ISOH, who had access to correspondance between Willibald Gebhardt, IOC Member in Germany, and Baron Pierre de Coubertin. It is exactly as Walther Tröger, President of the German Olympic Committee, states in his Foreward, "This correspondance is 'eine Fungruße' [gold mine] of information. Through this correspondance we see a completely different IOC President, Baron de Coubertin."

In the first place this new book is dedicated to the participation of Germany in the 1900 Olympic Games. Nevertheless all Olympic historians interested in these Games will find enough information on the various events themselves to make this book a valuable addition to their library. But the value of the book is especially enhanced by the many documents that, reproduced in the third chapter, the two authors have been able to consult in their research for the historically correct reproduction of the facts.

As an old 1900 buff myself, I found only a few tidbits of new information about the sports events themselves in the book, but the correspondance between Gebhardt and Coubertin was a complete eye-opener to me. It showed me that Coubertin, despite his high visions on Olympic values, also had the same human flaws as many, as he showed he could not stand criticism and in fact was quite undemocratic in his dealing with the other IOC Members. Actually he was quite rude in some of his letters to Gebhardt. While Gebhardt, as a stalwart defender of German participation in the Olympic Games, only tried to point out the flaws in the organization of the 1900 Games. And these flaws were many as we now know. These criticisms were written down in a report, which was based on the personal experiences of the German participants. And this report was the main reason for the rift between Gebhardt and Coubertin, as shown in the letters and mentioned in this book.

All the letters from Gebhardt to Coubertin (starting in 1896) and the earlier mentioned report are reproduced by the authors. But it is a pity that the earlier letters from Coubertin seem to be lost forever. Nevertheless the most important one, in which Coubertin in 1902 responds to the letter and the challenged report from Gebhardt, is reproduced in full in the book.

In the third chapter, the authors have also reproduced many articles about the German preparations for the 1900 Olympic Games and about the German participation itself. These come from contemporary sports magazines such as *Sport im Bild*, *Sport im Wort*, *Deutsche Turn-Zeitung*, *Wassersport*, *Turnen und Sport*, *Spiel und Sport*, and *Schwimmsport*. I found many of the articles very enlightening.

The fourth chapter gives the calendar leading up to the 1900 Olympic Games and in chapter five the authors have given us all tabulations on the Games. Chapter six lists all results in statistical form and most of that comes from the **1900 Official Report**. But in this chapter, the authors ask which events were Olympic and which not, and they themselves elaborate on the subject in the first part of the chapter. It should give us some reasons to consider, but on the other hand I missed at least one event, which under their rulings should have been added to this chapter. This concerns one shooting event in which a young Dutchman won the first prize. The event is mentioned in the **1900 Official Report** under "Armes Nationale - Jeunesse," and it was won by Gerard Anne van den Bergh. I also missed him in the final chapter seven, which covers all the persons participating in the Olympics. But that would stand to reason!

All in all this book is a most valuable addition to any Olympic library in general and I want to congratulate the authors on a job well done!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tuesday, 5 December 1995, marked the fourth anniversary of the founding of ISOH and our first "Olympiad" has now come to a close. Sadly, just a few weeks earlier we learned of the death of Erich Kamper, our Honorary President, and the doyen of Olympic historians. Although I never had the pleasure of meeting Erich, my first letter from him was dated 20 April 1974 and after 21 years of regular correspondence it seems as if I have lost a close friend. I am sure you will all share the sentiments expressed by Bill Mallon in the accompanying obituary.

When ISOH was founded by a small group of historians in London in 1991, I was delighted to be asked to serve as the first President although I can now confess that I entertained some reservations about the need for such an organization. I felt that I knew of just about everyone interested in Olympic History and that the need to formalize many years of amicable correspondence was perhaps not necessary. How wrong I was! Since the founding of ISOH, I have made countless new and knowledgeable friends, many of whom I have had the pleasure of meeting personally and I am sure that through ISOH other members have also been able to widen their field of contacts.

The main vehicle for learning of members with similar interest is, of course, our journal, *Citius, Altius, Fortius*, and we owe an immense debt to Bill Mallon for editing a publication of such high quality. From the very first issue he produced a journal which was far superior to many of the publications of societies of much longer standing. However, all of Bill's efforts would have been in vain without the necessary finances to meet the printing and postage costs. Here we are indebted to IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch, for making funds available to meet the cost of publication.

Speaking of the IOC, many of you will already know that Karel Wendl, former Director of the Olympic Studies and Research Centre for the IOC, has now retired and I am delighted to report that, in recognition of all the help he gave to ISOH during our early years, Karel has been elected an Honorary Life Member by the Executive Committee. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

I believe it can be safely said that our first "Olympiad" has been successful. We are now recognized by a number of international academic bodies, and many of our members have published the results of their researches in a particular field. The wide-ranging nature of the articles in the Journal also serves to confirm the growing interest in Olympic history. Starting in 1996, ISOH will be listed as a recognized organization in the *Olympic Movement Directory*, published by the IOC.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to the members of the Executive Committee for their support during my term of office and I look forward to meeting them and many other members in Atlanta.

Ian Buchanan
President, IS OH