

BOOK REVIEWS

100 YEARS OF OLYMPIC MUSIC, by William Guegold. Published by Golden Clef Publishing, 4365 Dudley Road, Mantua, Ohio 44255, USA. Price: US\$19.95, plus postage for shipping. ISBN-number: 09652371-0-9. U.S. Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 96-94402. Reviewed by Philip Barker.

Music and Olympism is an area which has by and large been ignored by the Olympic Historians. The odd article in Olympic Review apart, there's been precious little until very recently.

The centenary year saw two publications, which have gone a long way to putting right the omission. The special edition of Olympic Message will be familiar to most people, William Guegold's book less so.

It should be said at the outset that Professor Guegold is a music scholar who discovered the Olympics through his chosen field of study rather than the other way round. He recounts the story of hearing "Towards a New Life" by Josef Suk as the springboard for his interest in the theme.

The book is well presented and has a pleasing feel to it, rather like a musical score, and contains a wealth of information, particularly about the Olympic competitions for musical composition. There are a few irritating typos, most notably the incorrect spelling of Sydney and Mick Jagger's name, which ought not really to have sneaked through along with some confusion over the Olympic Games of 1956 in Stockholm is incorrectly attributed to the Winter Games and White Rock is given as the film of the 1976 Montreal Olympics. In addition the various lists at the end of the book are a little haphazard – it isn't always clear exactly what the qualifications for entry in each listing is.

That said, there is obviously a lot of very good research which has been done for this book and it would be churlish indeed to "knock" one of the few volumes in its field. It has certainly broken a lot of new ground and serves as a useful introduction to the subject area.

WHO IS WHO AT THE SUMMER OLYMPICS — 1896-1992, Volumes 1 to 4, by Gennadi Martichev. Published by Demarko Sport Publishing, Salnas 32-17, Riga LV-1021, LATVIA. ISBN 9984-9156-0-3 and 9984-9156-1-1. Volume 1: 601 pages; volume 2: 575 pages; Volume 3: 504 pages and Volume 4: 557 pages. Price unknown. Reviewed by Tony Bijkerk.

These four volumes are quite similar to the publishings of Wolf Lyberg, titled: The Athletes of the Summer Olympic Games. But there are some important differences too.

First of all, Mr. Maritchev added athletes who were

entered in the Olympic Games, but who did not compete. In my opinion this asks for complexity and should not be necessary in an already comprehensive work like this.

On the other hand, Mr. Maritchev not only mentions the dates of birth of each athlete, as far as he had been able to find them, but also added dates of birth mentioned by other Olympic historians, like Kamper, Lyberg, etc., when they were different from the ones he found himself.

He elaborates on the information by adding dates of death, mentions the events in which each athlete participated in each Games in which he participated, and finally also adds the results obtained in each event.

Clearly, this goes quite a bit further than Lyberg's statistics, which give us each athlete, his full name, date of birth and the Olympic Games in which that athlete participated.

Maybe, when in the future someone would be thinking about making up a complete statistical database about the Olympic Games, both Lyberg's and Maritchev's books could play an important role in the construction of such. These works, important as they are for us Olympic historians will, however, never be complete and will continue to ask our attention for corrections, additive information, and the like. And I write this from my own experiences as an Olympic statistical author.

Mr. Maritchev's books stop with the 1992 Olympic Games from Barcelona, and while they were published in the Centennial Year 1996, it shows how much research had to be done. The books could in the future form an integral part of each Olympic library, but they also need re-evaluation of the information which has been contained in them.

FROZEN IN TIME: THE GREATEST MOMENTS AT THE WINTER OLYMPICS. By Bud Greenspan. Santa Monica, CA: General Publishing Group, 1998. In English. 208 pages. Price: US\$24.95 or Can.\$34.95. ISBN #1-57544-027-X. Reviewed by Bill Mallon.

Bud Greenspan's legacy will be the words and pictures which he has given us and which have so beautifully described the Olympic Games. Usually those words and pictures have been via a visual medium, motion picture documentary, but in the past two years he has turned his attention a bit more towards books. In 1996, Greenspan wrote "100 Greatest Moments in Olympic History," which was published in preparation for the Atlanta Olympics His latest work, "Frozen in Time" is the sequel to that work.

Greenspan specifically describes 56 of the greatest moments in Winter Olympic History Each moment is described in well-written prose of about 2-3 pages in length. Each moment is illustrated with some nice photographs, many recognizable to students of Olympic history, but there are a few which have rarely been seen before. There is an introduction by President Samaranch, and a preface by

American speed skater Bonnie Blair. The end of the book has a short statistical section.

This is a nice book and a worthwhile addition to anyone's Olympic library. As Bud Greenspan always does so well, he tells each story about the Winter Olympics with a style and grace rarely seen. I have few criticisms of the book and the 56 moments he chose are a representative collection of the greatest events and athletes in the Winter Olympics. ISOH Members will not likely find much new information in this book, however, as the book is more of a coffee-table style, with the information being primarily aimed at Olympic fans a bit less knowledgeable than our membership.

THE 1896 OLYMPIC GAMES: Results for All Competitors in All Events, with commentary by Bill Mallon and Ture Widlund. Published by McFarland & Company, Inc.; Box 611; Jefferson, North Carolina 28640; USA. \$32.50. 152 pages in English. ISBN (0-7864-0379-9. Reviewed by David Wallechinsky.

Although the complete results of recent Olympic Games have been made available in newspapers, on the Internet and in Official Reports, the earliest editions of the modern Olympics were not so well documented. The first reasonably comprehensive Official Report was produced by the Organizing Committee of the 1908 London Games. Still, published accounts for the years 1896-1920 do not approach standards that would be acceptable today.

Bill Mallon has attempted to fill this important gap in Olympic history by compiling "Unofficial Reports" of the early Games. The first volume in this series, prepared with the assistance of Ture Widlund, deals with the first Olympic Games of the modern era, those of 1896.

Using an impressive array of original source material from 1896 from nine different nations, as well as dozens of more recent works, Mallon and Widlund have reconstructed the results of each event, including early heats and the names of almost every athlete who competed and many who were entered but did not start.

The authors have also included information about the preparations for the Games as well as a statistical analysis of the competitors. A section entitled Summary Articles reprints several eyewitness accounts of the 1896 Games. Although the emphasis in this work is on statistical results, the authors have included enough descriptive material to make it an entertaining read.

This book is an invaluable addition to any library with an Olympic collection. Indeed, it is so important to understanding the history of Olympic competition that it is difficult to understand why such a work has never been produced by the IOC itself and why it was left to independent researchers to compile, write and publish.

At any rate, all those who are interested in the history of Olympic competitions and competitors owe a debt of gratitude to Bill Mallon and wish him luck on completing his series of Unofficial Reports.

THE 1900 OLYMPIC GAMES: Results for All Competitors in All Events, with Commentary by Bill Mallon. Published by McFarland & Company, Inc.; Box 611; Jefferson, North Carolina 28640, USA. \$39.50. ISBN 0-7864-0378-0. 335 pages in English. Reviewed by David Wallechinsky.

Volume two in Bill Mallon's series of Results of the Early Modern Olympics, this work on the 1900 Games is even more impressive than the volume on the 1896 Games. The organization of the 1900 Paris Olympics was chaotic at best. Many athletes had no idea that they were competing in the Olympic Games. Mallon has performed a Herculean task in locating original source material, sifting through the mess of handicap events, ballooning contests and conflicting accounts of such events as the tug-of-war, and then presenting the results in a clear format accompanied by readable and informative commentary.

The comprehensiveness of this work can be appreciated by noting that it includes:

- *The amount of prize money awarded to the winners of the yachting events

- *The last place finisher in the underwater swimming event

- *The post-Olympic baseball career of U.S. sprinter Edmund Minahan

- *The results of the non-Olympic Paris-Toulouse-Paris automobile race for small cars (won by Louis Renault).

On a more serious note, Mallon raises the issue of "Which Events and Sports Were the Olympic Games?" This has never been satisfactorily addressed by the IOC. Mallon lists four basic criteria: was it restricted to amateurs; was entry restricted by national origin; was it a handicap event; was it open to athletes of all ages and classes.

Hopefully, Mallon's discussion of this issue as it relates to the 1900 Games will serve as the basis for the establishment of a joint IOC-ISOH committee to decide which events in the early Olympics (1896-1920) should retain official Olympic status.

As with Mallon's earlier work on the 1896 Olympics, this current volume about 1900 is a must-have for all libraries with Olympic collections.

THE OLYMPIANS GUIDE TO WINNING THE GAME OF LIFE, compiled by Bud Greenspan. Copyright: Cappy Productions, Inc. New York. Published by: General Publishing Group, Inc., 2701 Ocean Park Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90405, U.S.A. 160 pages. Price: US\$12.95 or Can\$17.95. ISBN 1-57544-060-1. Reviewed by Tony Bijkerk.

Through his films, Bud Greenspan has showed himself, for decades, to be the “philosopher on the film-screen”! This new booklet shows us that Greenspan is a collector of philosophical writing too. In this book he allows many of the most famous of the gold-medal-winning Olympians to give his readers (us) “words of inspiration and hope”!

In short, terse prose these champions tell us about “Camaraderie, Competition, Focus, Discipline, Confidence, Challenge, Resilience, Passion, Performance, Achievement, Recognition and Affirmation”, each one from her or his own point of view, or from her or his personal experience.

About 150 Olympians, more or less famous, participants from the first Olympic Games in Athens (Ellery Clark) to the last Olympic Games in Atlanta (several), have provided Bud Greenspan (and thus in fact “all of us”) with their life-lessons!

It is useless to mention any of them by name, because everyone of us, historians, will recognize their names, but their message is an individual one and that makes it especially worthwhile to read.

I will quote one message from the many, which I have chosen at random, which speaks its own “life-lesson”:

“I was born, bred and reared in the Mississippi Delta cotton fields. Athletics was my flight to freedom, my escape. I discovered that through athletics you could see the world. I could get an education. I am who I am because of my participation in sport and my Olympic experience. I did not win a gold medal in athletics, but I did win the gold medal of life.”

Willye White, United States. Track: 1 silver, 1956 Melbourne; 1 silver, 1964 Tokyo.

PIERRE DE COUBERTIN, THE VISIONARY, by Jean Durry, Member of the Comité Français Pierre de Coubertin. Published in 1996 by the Maison du Sport Français, 1, Avenue Pierre de Coubertin, 75640 Paris-Cedex 13, France. 98 pages, in English (translated from the original French edition from 1994). Reviewed by Tony Bijkerk.

This small booklet was written by ISOH member, Jean Durry, who had this project in mind for a very long time. It was his intention “to sum up, in a few pages, the life and works of Pierre de Coubertin beyond the Olympic Games”, as IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch himself wrote in his Foreword.

Of course, it is truly impossible to give in such a small booklet the full range of Coubertin’s writing, thoughts, and initiatives, but Durry comes almost all the way.

The French edition was published in 1994 for the Centennial Olympic Congress, and this English edition to celebrate the Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta in 1996. However, strange that no one of our members ever mentioned this little treasure for inclusion in our Book Reviews.

It should have been!

In a few chapters, the author gives us the most important facts about Coubertin’s life and after these facts, he starts with the important facets about Coubertin’s extremely prolific activities. Durry disseminates Coubertin as the Organizer, as the Pedagogue and Youth, as the Historian, the Man of Sport, the Olympian, the Journalist, the Writer, the Aesthete, and the Humanist. Each facet is enlightened with a list in which the years are marked with references to the most important texts, or lines which Coubertin wrote.

This factual pocketbook should find its way among many members of the Olympic Family, who all know much about Coubertin, but who will find here many aspects about the “Renovator”, they never knew before.

NEW BOOKS PUBLISHED

* Australia Post recently published a booklet titled: AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC LEGENDS, to commemorate the launch of a range of new stamps, bearing the images of six of Australia’s greatest still living Olympians.

The Olympians chosen for this honour were already mentioned in Harry Gordon’s article in the Summer 1998 issue of the Journal, titled: Olympic Legends honoured at Sydney’s Games Sites. In the very last paragraph of his article, Gordon already mentioned the launch of the new stamps, plus the fact that he had been honoured himself to make the nominations for the Olympians whose effigies were to adorn the stamps.

He did not add that he had also written the texts for this booklet, which in fact is a must for each collector of Olympic philately! The book is in A-4 format, was issued by Australia Post, has 45 pages with many photographs throughout, and costs Aus\$12.95.

* Ian Buchanan pointed out to the editor the publishing of: ENVIRONMENT AND SPORT, by Lamartine P. Da Costa, ISOH member from Portugal. The publisher is University of Porto, in Portugal. ISBN 972-96699-8-8.

* BIBLIOGRAFIE VAN NEDERLANDSTALIGE LITERATUUR OVER DE OLYMPISCHE SPELEN, by Gosse Blom (ISOH-member).

This private publication is an inventory of all Olympic publications in the Dutch language. About 200 titles were collected by Mr. Blom and although he tried to opt for completeness, he soon knew that this would remain an illusion. For those people who are interested in attaining complete Olympic literature this is an indispensable publication! It gives additional information on Bill Mallon’s: The Olympics/A Bibliography (published 1984).
