

# Olympians Oral History Questionnaire

The ISOH is embarking on a project to create an oral history of the Olympic Games based on interviews with athletes and other participants. We have created a basic questionnaire to be used. Although it is possible for former Olympians to fill out the questionnaires personally, it is our hope that members of the ISOH, as well as interested academics, students and journalists around the world, will seek out former Olympians and tape-record their answers. Naturally we encourage interviewers to begin with those athletes who participated in the pre-World War II Games. However, we welcome responses from athletes from all years. Completed questionnaires, transcribed responses and tapes may be sent to ISOH treasurer David Wallechinsky at either of the following addresses:

ISOH  
6 Place de L'Église  
13520 Maussane-les-Alpilles  
France

ISOH  
310 25th Street  
Santa Monica,  
CA 90402, USA

## FAMILY INFORMATION

- What is your name?
- What is your date of birth?
- Where were you born?
- What is your father's name?
- What is his date of birth?
- Where was he born?
- Is he still alive? If not, when did he die?
- What was your father's profession?
- What is your mother's name?
- What is her date of birth?
- Where was she born?
- Is she still alive? If not, when did she die?
- What was your mother's profession?
- How many brothers and sisters do you have?
- How many are older? How many are younger?

## SPORT INFORMATION

- When did you compete in the Olympics?
- Which sport? Which events?
- When were you introduced to your event and how?
- What other sports have you participated in?
- When did you settle on the sport and event in which you competed in the Olympics and why?

## COACHING

- Who have been your coaches?
- What were the most important lessons they taught you?

## PRE-OLYMPICS

- What was your profession at the time of your participation in the Olympics?
- How did you qualify for the Olympics?

- How did you learn that you were chosen?
- What did you know about the Olympics before you qualified?
- What was your goal when you competed in the Olympics?
- Describe the journey from your home to the Olympics.
- What was it like to arrive in the host city?
- What were your experiences in the Olympic Village?
- What were your personal experiences in the city?

## THE OLYMPICS

- What do you remember about the Opening Ceremony?
- How did you train while you were at the Olympics?
- Describe in detail your experience of competing in the Olympics including all rounds, matches or bouts.
- Were you familiar with your opponents beforehand?
- Were you satisfied with your performance?
- What was your most memorable moment at the Olympics?
- What do you remember about the Closing Ceremony?

## POST-OLYMPICS

- What was it like to return home after the Olympics?
- How did friends, family and the public receive you?
- Did you continue to compete after the Olympics?
- What has been your profession since competing in the Olympics?

## GENERAL

- What is your single best memory about your sports career?
- What is your worst memory?
- What advice would you give to athletes in your specific sport or event?
- What advice would you give to aspiring athletes in general?
- Is there anything else that you would like to add?

## Advice To Interviewers:

When interviewing athletes (or anyone else) it is important to be flexible. Do not proceed from question to question without listening to the answers. Do not hesitate to ask follow-up questions that are not on the questionnaire list. Always consider the questions on the questionnaire to be the minimum to be asked.

Encourage the interviewee to talk freely. For example, if the interview subject tells you that his father competed in the Olympics, ask what his father told him about his own experience. If the subject bristles at the mention of his opponents, encourage him to talk about it. If he is reluctant, let it pass and then ask again later.

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