

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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On March 13, 2000, Hans Rupert Kaiser from Germany wrote to the editor as follows:

Dear Mr. Editor,

In the last issue of the Journal of Olympic History I read the article by our member Kevin Berry 'Seedlings For Sydney?' with great interest and joy. I wrote him spontaneously and I addressed to Mr. Hollway, the Chief Executive of SOCOG, too.

I support the idea by Kevin Berry with all my heart. I support it as an ISOH member who documents the history, the location and the current status of the Olympic Oaks given to the gold medallists of the XIth Olympic Games in Berlin, for years, as Mr. James Ross Constandt does it.

Together we have documented till nowadays more than eighty of these oaks (a half of them are still alive, the others have died by various causes). And I am sure we are able to trace some more of the world-wide 129 Olympic Oaks.

During my investigations I have heard and read many interesting, moving and ludicrous stories about the Olympic Oaks. But ever and ever, there were feelings of love to these trees and of pride on receiving the tree as a sign of a great victory.

As I said - more than forty of the oaks are still alive as a symbol of the Olympic idea. And I think we have to keep it in mind that these trees are the only living monuments of the Olympic history.

It is true: The Berlin Olympics from 1936 are even today still rousing conflicting feelings.

The Sydney Olympics will not rouse any such impressions, I think.

What an occasion then to set new signs at the beginning of a new Millennium!

In 1936 gold medallists of a little over twenty nations received oak-tree seedlings and they planted them in their native countries. In the year 2000 it will be many more champions from many more countries.

An Olympic Oak



As Kevin Berry said in his article:

"The Seedlings From Sydney Will Populate the World!"

And they will do that on the threshold of a new era of the Olympic movement!

That's why I support the idea of Kevin Berry, and I hope that many of the ISOH-members will support it too.

Rupert Kaiser

On March 25, the editor received a letter from Ove Karlsson in Sweden, as follows:

Dear Mr. Editor,

Unfortunately, the list of Deceased Olympic Medallists, usually published in No. 2 every year, will be delayed this year. Among the reasons is the fact that fewer colleagues than in previous years have contributed to the compilation. This in turn means that I need more time to check (and double-check) media reports.

We sincerely hope medallists from early Games stay healthy and alive, but this, of course, cannot always be true. Old stars are leaving us in about the same number every year. It is a fact. However, for 1999, this is not reflected in reports received so far. I am very grateful to colleagues like, for example, Arild Gjerde and Magne Teigen (NOR), Giuseppe Odello (ITA)

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and Peter Matthews (GBR) for their great help, while I have heard nothing from colleagues in leading Olympic countries like Russia (and other countries previously part of the Soviet Union), Germany and France. If this compilation is to be of benefit to the ISOH membership/Journal readership, I kindly ask for contributions whenever an Olympic medallist dies. Many thanks!

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The Editor wholeheartedly supports this plea for assistance from all members, for keeping the records up to date!

The editor received the following letter from Mr. Gennadi Maritchev, from Riga, Latvia

January 24, 2000.

Dear Mr. Editor,

To the members of International Society of Olympic Historians

Dear Sirs,

In in the 2nd issue of the Journal of Olympic History in 1999 you published our request to take part in the creation of an 'Olympic Encyclopaedia'.

Unfortunately, this request was neglected by most of the ISOH members.

In view of such, we once again would like to appeal to all members.

This publication will contain detailed information about the evolution of the Olympic movement; the evolution of the Olympic Charter: Olympic Congresses; Sessions; a biography of the members of the International Olympic Committee; and detailed information of the contemporary Olympic Games. Further a biography of all athletes, who took part therein; important data of the history of the National Olympic Committees, etc., all related to the Olympic Games history.

In our opinion The Olympic Encyclopedia should become the international project of the International Society of Olympic Historians. At present the circle of people engaged in the creation of this publications in many volumes is not large. We obtained sufficient information to start the publication of the first volume (the project is supposed to comprise at least ten volumes).

However, we still have a lack of Information. This refers to the biographies of many members of the International Olympic Committee; biographies of the majority of athletes who took part in the Olympic Games; and dates of birth and death of athletes.

In view of the above mentioned arguments; n-e once more apply to all members of the ISOH, with the request to take part in our project!

We are looking forward your comments regarding our appeal.

In turn, we are ready to answer any questions regarding the Olympic Encyclopedia and don't hesitate to apply to Mr. Gennadi Maritchev, at the address: LV-1021 Riga. Post Box 147; Fax (371) 7184844.

New Journal Editor

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that I have decided, after the September 2000 issue of the Journal of Olympic History, that it is time to hand over my responsibilities to another person. After four years someone younger should take the reins.

Steve Harris has agreed to take over as editor-in-charge, while I will remain on the editorial team as an associate editor.

These changes will be implemented starting with the January-2001 issue of the Journal of Olympic History

Anthony Th. Bijkerk
Secretary-General and Editor