

# BOOK REVIEWS

---

## THE COMPLETE BOOK OF THE SUMMER OLYMPICS - SYDNEY 2000 EDITION

*By David Wallechinsky. Published by The Overlook Press,  
Peter Mayer Publishers, Inc., Lewis Hollow Road,  
Woodstock, New York 12498, USA. ISBN: 1-58567-033-  
2 (paperback version); 932 pages; price: US\$23.95, exclusive  
packing and mailing. Reviewed by Tony Bijkerk.*

Since 1984, David Wallechinsky's statistical work has found its way to Olympic buffs all over the world. The remarkable thing is that in each edition David Wallechinsky has been able to enhance on the previous issues. As a member of the ISOH, he not only promotes the Society in his books, even placing its members on a pedestal for their valuable work, but he rightly uses the information, attained from all over the world to bring this latest issue completely up to date. The most interesting thing about this

## BOOK REVIEWS

---

publication, the fifth edition of the series, is that it is not a dreary summing up of statistics, but to the contrary, Wallechinsky lards its contents with stories, 1750 of them, and photographs. The stories are immensely readable, and that's what makes Olympic history so very interesting. Like in the previous edition (1996), Wallechinsky starts with giving a "short history of the Modern Olympic Games", which in this new issue has been enlarged to 14 pages, instead of the previous 4.

For each Olympic Games he mentions the most important facts, including such as when the Olympic flag, and the Olympic Oath appeared in the ceremony. In this respect, I missed the very first time the Olympic flame appeared, when it was lighted on the top of the marathon-tower of the Olympic stadium in Amsterdam in 1928, but maybe, that is my own Dutch chauvinism.

Wallechinsky's chapter on "Issues" starts with "Corruption and Expulsions" and with this title the 1998/1999 Olympic Bribery Scandal is being introduced. However, "Politics in the Olympics", "Amateurism" and "Drugs" are other important issues discussed in this chapter.

A new element is an Olympic map of the Sydney Homebush area, where the 2000 Olympics will start on September 15, 2000.

The most important part for many people is formed by the statistics for the Summer Olympic Games, starting with the "mother of all sport": track and field. David's statistics are immaculate. Of course, he has had the possibilities to improve upon his previous issues, but keeping his data up to date is an immense job by itself, as we all know.

As such this book is "an indispensable addition to the shelves of both sportswriters and serious fans", to quote Erich Segal in his 1996 New York Times Bookreview. This book should indeed find its way to the libraries of each and every member of our Society.

Everyone, planning to visit the Sydney Olympic Games should have this book in his luggage, because it gives him/her access to all necessary information about the Olympic Games, its events, and its history.

However, don't forget that it weighs a few pounds, with almost one thousand pages!