

Book Reviews

Guttman, Allen. *The Games Must Go On: Avery Brundage and the Olympic Movement*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984, xiv + 317 pp. Photos, appendices, notes, index. \$24.95 (cloth).

The celebration of the summer Olympic games held in Los Angeles in 1984 has raised many troubling questions concerning the future of the Olympic movement. Yet despite the on-going debate about boycotts, Cold War relations, the future sites for the games, and the amateur/professional issue, many observers came away from those games with a renewed confidence that the Olympic spirit is vibrant and that the games will endure. To understand the worldwide appeal of the Olympic spirit, one needs to understand the career and achievements of Avery Brundage, one of the important contributors to the spirit of the modern Olympic movement.

In *The Games Must Go On*, Allen Guttman, a professor of American Studies at Amherst College and author of the widely acclaimed book *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports* (1978), provides an assessment of Brundage's role in shaping the modern Olympic games. The book is both a biography of Brundage and an evaluation of his career as an international sports figure.

Less than one third of the volume deals with Brundage's personal life; his early years, as an undergraduate at the University of Illinois, as an Olympic athlete at the 1912 Stockholm games, and later as a businessman, art collector, husband and father. The sections of the book devoted to the private side of Avery Brundage are less satisfying than Guttman's commentary on Brundage the public sports administrator. This is the case because Brundage was an intensely private, even reticent individual concerning his private affairs. Guttman goes to great lengths to uncover Brundage the man, including a rudimentary effort in employing the methodology of psycho-history, but the reader comes away with the feeling that he does not really know much about Brundage the individual. Certainly this is not Guttman's fault because he uses available sources, albeit skimpy, to the fullest possible extent,

The major portion of the book deals with Brundage's career as an international sports administrator. In this area Guttman excels in his research, writing, and analysis. He traces Brundage's career from 1919 when he first became associated with the Amateur Athletic Union to his elevation to membership on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) by 1936. The largest section of the book covers Brundage's tenure as president of the IOC between 1952-1972. Guttman draws heavily on the Avery Brundage Collection at the University of Illinois, the papers at The Carl-Diem Institut, Co-

logne, the Archives of the International Olympic Committee, Lausanne, as well as secondary sources to provide an insightful narrative on Brundage's long and eventful public career. He gives a balanced assessment on such important topics as Brundage's role in averting the proposed American boycott of the 1936 Nazi Olympics, Brundage's anti-Semitic and isolationist views of the late 1930s and early 1940s, and the IOC president's response to the terrorist attack during the 1972 Munich Olympics.

Beyond this Guttman sheds light on some lesser known accomplishments of Avery Brundage. He explores Brundage's efforts to develop inter-American athletic competition which resulted in the Pan-American Games in the 1950s. Guttman also traces Brundage's missionary attempt at spreading the Olympic movement as well as the spirit of the games into the Third World areas of Asia and Africa. This latter achievement may well be one of the most important legacies of Brundage's long career as president of the IOC. In the course of his narrative on Brundage's public career, Guttman includes several important chapters which provide the historical setting for the many struggles of Avery Brundage. Guttman's chapter on "Coubertin and the Olympic Ideal" as well as a later commentary on the Cold War give the reader a better sense of what Brundage is attempting to accomplish and the great obstacles which he faces.

Guttman's major thesis is that Brundage was the prophet who fostered and expanded Coubertin's concept that the Olympic movement and spirit must be made into a twentieth century secular religion. As Brundage saw it, the Olympic movement in order to endure and prosper must be "a religion with universal appeal which incorporates all the basic values of other religions." "A religion," Guttman adds, "whose ethical component Brundage summed up in the single word: amateurism" (p. 116). Brundage's greatest struggle in the postwar years was to defend the amateur ideal against the creeping commercialism and professionalism which invaded the Olympic movement. As Guttman relates so well, Brundage mainly lost the battle to smite the twin evils of commercialism and professionalism, but in the process helped to strengthen the religion of Olympism to the point that it may well survive and prosper in spite of these twin evils.

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