

Gillmeister, Heiner. *Olympisches Tennis: Die Geschichte der olympischen Tennisturniere (1896–1992)*. Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag, 1993. Pp. 216. Tables, photos, references, summaries of selected documents pertinent to the history of Olympic tennis.

To celebrate its ninetieth anniversary, the Deutscher Tennis Bund (German Tennis Federation) commissioned a volume tracing the history of Olympic tennis. The choice of author was fortunate for the historian, for students of the Olympic movement, and for anyone interested in the sport of tennis. A linguist of the first order and an impeccable scholar, Heiner Gillmeister is well-known to the international sport history community. In articles like “Challenge Letters From a Medieval Tournament and the Ball-Game of Gotland,” which appeared in *Stadion*, 16:2 (1990), he has argued that modern ball games are derived from the Medieval tournament. To carry out such an exquisitely detailed analysis, it was necessary to consult, interpret, and understand information contained in fifteenth-century manuscripts and nineteenth-century diaries located in the Bodleian Library and the British Library.

The same painstaking attention to detail is evident in *Olympisches Tennis*. Although written in German, the handsome volume is lavishly illustrated, which makes it useful for the English-language reader. (The photographs alone make the book valuable; and with the aid of a pocket German-English dictionary one could do a fair job of translating at least the captions.) A few of the items in the “Dokumente zur Geschichte der Olympischen

Tennisturniere” (“Documents on the History of Olympic Tennis”) and the “Anmerkungen [Annotations] zum Text” section are in English or French.

From a photograph of Coubertin posed in front of the tennis net with three other athletic young men at the grounds of the Puteaux-Clubs (p. 2); to the stylishly-attired Marguerite Broquedis (France), Sigrid Fick (Sweden), and other female tennis stars at the 1912 Olympics (pp. 41-57); to the picture of the men and women of the 1924 American team (p. 69); to Jennifer Capriati saluting the crowd at Barcelona in 1992 (p. 119)—it is evident that tennis has had a significant place in the modern Olympics and that the United States has contributed significantly to this. The reproduction of a 1924 French announcement of Spalding’s tennis equipment and paraphernalia (p. 90) reminds us how widespread was the influence of America’s leading sporting goods entrepreneur. The achievements of other nations are by no means neglected, however; and Gillmeister has been very even-handed. The chapter on the 1920 Antwerp Olympics, for example, opens with an action photograph of the Japanese men’s doubles silver medalist Kashiwa executing an overhead smash. There is also a chapter on developments preceding the canceled 1916 Berlin Games. The author has assembled a remarkable selection of materials—with many photographs not likely to be found in English-language works—to illustrate the history of the game, its players, and those who fostered the growth of tennis within the Olympic movement.

University of California, Berkeley

Roberta J. Park