

The Security Pacific National Bank Collection: A Major Collection of Historical Importance To The Sport Historian

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In 1981, the Security Pacific National Bank gifted the City of Los Angeles with its collection of historic photographs of Southern California. The collection contains more than 250,000 photographs in a major collection of historical importance. Approximately one-third of the photographs depict sport in Southern California from the 1890s to the 1960s. Five hundred of the photographs specifically relate to the Games of the Xth Olympiad.

Through the photographers' eyes one gains insight into the lifestyles, the hopes and the dreams of Southern Californians as they played on the sport fields, in the stadiums, in the swimming pools and the many other available facilities Los Angeles and its neighboring cities had to offer.

A pictorial history of twenty-seven sports ranging from billiards to baseball, and archery on horseback to tennis on bicycles is presented. The dominance of the Los Angeles Athletic Club, Riviera Country Club, UCLA and USC in the sporting world is pictured with accuracy.

Because the collection spans over sixty years with the majority of photographs depicting the decade of the Thirties, a history of sports photography is also evidenced. The long-distance diving shots in the 1932 Olympic Games can be compared to the very close shots of the celebrities as they romped in Palm Springs in the Forties and Fifties.

As is generally the case, no celebrity sports star could come to town without “going Hollywood.” Babe Ruth was no exception. He is depicted making movies as photographers delighted in his many antics on the set.

Beginning June 20, 1984, and continuing until August 31, 1984, a photographic exhibit of the Games of the Xth Olympiad will be exhibited in the Los Angeles Public Library. Other sections of the collection will be exhibited in succeeding six-month intervals. Photographs can be ordered from the Los Angeles Public Library.



Judith Davidson spoke on Public Recreational sport in New York City during the years 1935 and 1943.