

“Lords of the Rings, Part II”: Avery Brundage’s Relationship with International Olympic Committee Members, 1937 - 1972

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Joining the International Olympic Committee in 1937, Chicago businessman Avery Brundage quickly moved to a leadership position. A member of the American Olympic team in 1912, president of the United States Olympic Association at the 1932 Los Angeles games and leader of the campaign for American participation in the 1936 Berlin games, Brundage renewed and extended the Olympic movement after World War II. In 1952, he became the first (and only) American president of the I.O.C. From Melbourne to Rome, Tokyo, Mexico City and Munich, he guided the Olympics into the modern era of televised sports spectacles. While building his international reputation as a hard-line defender of the Olympic ideals of amateurism, non-commercialism and internationalism, Brundage led the elite, self-perpetuating I.O.C. His relationships with David Cecil, Karl von Halt, J. Sigrid Edstrom, Jose Clark Flores, Armand Massard, Giulio Onesti, Alberto Bonacossa, Juan A. Samaranch and other I.O.C. members reveal how Brundage drew upon his organizational experience, interpersonal skills, public reputation and financial resources in meeting the challenges and opportunities of building the postwar Olympics.