

Duff Hart-Davis, *Hitler's Games: The 1936 Olympics*. Century Hutchinson, London, 1986. Index. pp.256. \$A29.95 cloth.

Duff Hart-Davis, British journalist and author of both fiction and non-fiction, has produced a most interesting account of a very significant Olympic Games. Of course, it is not coincidental that this book was published fifty years after the main event. In that time much has been written about this particular sporting and political 'festival', especially in journal articles, and it is inevitable that Hart-Davis' contribution will be compared with the thoroughly researched and documented *Nazi Olympics* by Richard Mandell, which was published in 1971.

Apart from some minor disappointing aspects, Hart-Davis book worthily complements Mandell's earlier work. Although the 'New Germany' and the winter and summer Olympics are mostly considered within a global context, there is a bias towards the British perspective (one chapter, for instance, is entitled 'England Expects'), so in that sense another dimension to that offered by American-based Mandell is provided. To the author's credit, much emphasis is given to the political, social and economic context in which the Games were 'staged' (the appropriate term to use) and apart from justifiable discussions of the impact of the outstanding performances of Jesse Owens ('Black Magic' chapter) and several others, there are few descriptions of athletes or the events. Where they do occur they are presented in enlightening contexts. It is appropriate that the splendid sporting achievements, facilities and

organisation of the 1936 Olympics does not dominate and that the reader is encouraged to consider these aspects within the social and political tensions and milieu of the period.

A disappointment is that Hart-Davis does not provide sources for much of his information - a two-page list of 'Principal sources' is inadequate and frustrating for sport historians. Appendices are brief and incomplete and the index is restricted to the names of persons only.

In summary, it is recommended that *Hitler's Games* should be read in conjunction with, and preferably after, Mandell's *Nazi Olympics*. The tone and message of Hart-Davis' book provides yet another timely reminder to Olympic and sporting administrators, participants and spectators that they cannot remain naive to the fact that sport and politics are so closely entwined.

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