

John E Findling and Kimberly D Pelle, eds, *Historical Dictionary of the modern Olympic Movement*. Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1996. Appendices, bibliog. illus., index. pp. 451.

With a proliferating number of subjects on the Olympic Games and an increasing student and public interest in things Olympic, this authoritative reference work on the Olympics is timely and welcome. It is written by a cast of 53 carefully-selected authors — a veritable ‘Who’s Who’ of international scholars on the Olympics. John Daly writes on Olympism, for instance, Bob Barney on the Ancient Games, Ian Jobling on Melbourne (1956), Bruce Kidd on Montreal (1972) and Jim Riordan on Moscow (1980). There is even a final chapter by Max Howell on Sydney (2000). Max has not taken on the role of futurologist, a sports history Lennox Walker, rather he has looked at the successful Sydney bid and what was known about these Games at the time of writing. A valuable feature of this book is that there are also chapters on each Winter Games, which has been the poor relation of Olympic Studies. There are even chapters on the Games which were never held at Berlin (1916) and Tokyo/Helsinki (1940). Of particular interest is the background to the Tokyo Games and the Japanese decision to forfeit the Games in 1938. It provides some material for an intriguing topic on the rise of Japan as an Olympic nation. Why did Japan become an Olympic power in the 1930s? Why were

Japanese swimmers so successful in the pool? What was the link between 'Fascism' and sport in Japan in the 1930s?

In their preface Findling and Pelle state that the brief for each author was to deal with the historical context in which the modern Olympics have taken place: each author was asked to 'emphasize such matters as site selection and development, political questions or controversies, collateral events, programmatic changes, and political and economic consequences, while keeping their discussion of winners and losers to a minimum' (p. xi). This was a tall task given that each author was allocated only approximately 5000 words.

This is a book which will be invaluable for students. Each chapter provides an overview of major 'issues' before, during and after each Games as well as a summary of ongoing research on that particular Games. Each chapter ends with a lengthy bibliographical essay of about 1000 words, providing a guide for further research. While the brief syntheses of each Games will be less useful to sports history researchers — why read 5000 words on the Nazi Olympics when there are a number of books on the subject? how can one convey the continuing research on these fascinating Games in such a brief span? — academic researchers will find much to appeal in this book, notably in the extensive academic 'trimmings', the excellent bibliographies and appendices. In addition to the bibliographical essay at the end of each chapter there is a general bibliographical essay. There is also an appendix on the International Olympic Committee with biographies of each President. Appendix C provides a brief essay on Olympic Documentary Films with a long list of films produced from 1928 to 1994 and there is a similar essay and list of Olympic Feature Films.

While this book is admirable and comprehensive in terms of its suggestions for further reading the name of [Mr President] Bill Murray was missing from the bibliography on the Nazi Olympics. I hope that *Sporting Traditions* will be added in a future edition to the section under, 'Journals and Organizations', since Australian Society for Sports History had a separate issue devoted to the Olympics and has had other articles in both the journal and the Bulletin.

I was surprised by the contents of this book given its title. The notion of a dictionary conveyed the anticipation of an A-Z Companion-type approach including coverage of themes such as amateurism, Asia, Africa, bidding system, boycotts, cheating, commercialism, Cultural

Olympiad, drugs, specific events, ideology, symbols and so forth — a whole host of topics on which students write essays and seek an initial convenient point of embarkation. The authors might well consider another volume which will be closer to this ‘Dictionary’ concept.

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