



OLYMPIAN INSIGHT

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**From the desk of
Dr. Liston Bochette
Secretary General**



Dear Fellow Olympians,

On behalf of the WOA I am pleased to share another "Olympian Insight" with you. This is the second part of last week's interview. In addition to this weekly edition, you can look forward to a monthly news bulletin which will also be delivered to you through the Internet. In the case of occasional or urgent matters of special interest I will be sending you "flash news." Hopefully these communication tools will help make you proud of the WOA and our Olympian Family.

Our staff at the Secretary General's office is working hard to bring the global community of Olympians closer together through sharing ideas, thoughts, and interviews. In the coming months we will be able to share more information leading up to the World Olympians Association General Assembly. For those able to attend, you will find details that will prepare you for a memorable event. We will also be hosting a series of regional of seminars in the days ahead. The first of which will take place for the Asia and Pacific region on September 11th at our office in Osaka, Japan. We look forward to addressing the needs and concerns of the members in this region as well as disseminating information directly to the Olympian attendees. That will be followed by a similar seminar to be held at our Africa region office in Dakar. Both of these will be valuable activities as we move our mission forward.

Like so many other Olympians I am dedicated to the highest Olympic ideals and being to bringing Olympians together. As the WOA Secretary General I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible through the Internet and at Olympic activities. We are a Family unlike any other and through improved communication we will become even stronger. Let's keep the flame alive by recalling the great times and share the memories of those moments special from yesterday together.

Yours in Sport,

World Olympians Association

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We are very grateful to Al Oerter for his time to help us get this newsletter off to a good start. We would also like to thank Olympians worldwide for helping to make the World Olympians Association a successful reality. The staff at the Secretary General's office in Miami looks forward to working with you in the future. I hope that you have enjoyed this inaugural interview of "Olympian Insight." We look forward to sharing another interview with you next week. As always, please feel free to share this newsletter with others in the Olympic Family.

Q: As a spectator at recent Olympic Games, what feelings would you like to share?

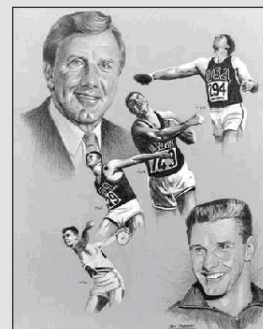
A: As a spectator now I view the Games with as much marvel as I did way back when. Some athletes find the competition exhilarating and extend themselves beyond anything they thought possible while other athletes find that same competition inhibiting and shrink from their best. This has always been and will always be part of the fascination of the Games. I wish some of the athletes could be more respectful while on the awards stand or more gracious during their press conferences but thankfully they seem to be few in number.

Q: What effect did the Olympic Games and the Olympic Experience have on your personal life?

A: The Games or Olympic experience has always added good things to my life and as far as I am aware never taken away anything. I have been privileged to meet Royalty, Heads of State the Pope, many Statesmen, people of high intellect and most importantly my wife all through athletics. I have also been in hospitals, psychiatric care facilities, shelters and with folks that provide services for drug abuse, teen pregnancy and the indigent, again all through athletics. In many respects life is a bit fuller, more complete, having had the experience of being an Olympian.

Q: What personal thoughts or dreams would you like to share for the future of the Olympic Movement and for tomorrow's Olympians?

A: It may be impossible and I realize I talk as an old timer but my personal thoughts and dreams for the Games return to the past. We didn't have dream teams where it was a lousy game if you only won by 30 points, or there was a conflict if clothing was provided by someone other than the company an athlete had a contract with or corporations were the only source of revenue for the Olympic committees and on and on. Wouldn't it be terrific if we as a nation got behind a bunch of athletes that just missed the cut in some professional league or when we gave our \$5 or \$10 to the Olympic Committee we absolutely believed we were helping or when we listened to the athletes after their competition they thanked their country for supporting them and their teammates for their hard work? I believe these attitudes still exist in those sports that don't get a great deal of national attention and they have become the sports and athletes I admire.



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Thank you to all the friends that support the World Olympians Association...

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Q: What did it feel like, competing in your first Olympic Games? In your first Olympic Games, what were your initial thoughts and feelings when you realized that you had won the gold medal?

A: Competing in my first Games was and still is a blur. I can remember Ducky Drake our team manager in Melbourne telling me not to talk to the other throwers and not to let them talk to me. "After the first throw you're on your own kid." Well I won on my first throw so I guess the advice was well taken but I have no memory of the balance of the competition until our press conference afterward. They asked me how I felt and I replied that it felt good to throw well and win a medal and in fact it felt so good I wanted to do it 4 more times for a total of 5. Obviously they thought I was nuts but I lived to that expectation for 12 more years and won 4 of the 5.

In all honesty, it was not the medals, rather it was working at ever increasing levels to get back on the floor of an Olympic stadium competing with the best of the best. I shoveled snow off throwing rings, threw in downpours, worked through countless injuries all to get to the next Games. There was never a thought of 'why am I doing this?' or 'what happens if I don't make it?' This was always a journey well taken.

Q: Can you share any of your thoughts during the subsequent Olympic competitions?

A: The 3 Games following my first were all different and similar. They were different in that we obviously were in another country, I had not seen or heard of many of the throwers and a new set of world record holders had emerged during the four year interval between Games. The Games were similar in that here we are once again in an Olympic final with a bunch of large, strong, capable and nervous throwers to compete with. The faces may change and the look and atmosphere of the stadium may be different but the intensity of a final was absolutely the same.

Q: Who were your toughest competitors in any of the Games?

A: From 1956 to 1968 the US discus throwers won 9 of 12 medals so my toughest competitors came from the states. But I can remember Adolfo Consolini, Ludvik Danek, Lothar Milde and others of equal capability all in the medal hunt. That's what made it fun because you didn't know who would accelerate during the competition and who would not be at their best.



Q: Who is your Olympic hero?

A: I am a person who doesn't look at others as heroes. There are lots of folks on this earth who do extraordinary things and I admire them deeply but I don't believe I have patterned myself after anyone as a hero. Perhaps the closest outside of athletes are the New York abstract artists of the 40's and 50's. In athletics there is one person, Rink Babka, a fellow discus thrower that I admire. Rink was a

teammate on the 1960 Olympic Team and because of him I was able to win my second gold medal. I was messing up badly in the Olympic final and before the 5th of 6th throws we get in Olympic competition Rink told me what I was doing wrong technically in the throw. I corrected to what Rink suggested and passed him on the next throw. Up to that moment Rink was leading the competition and he helped the only person on the field that day that could throw further than his leading distance. Rink tried on his 5th and 6th throws but could not get beyond my one throw and I had a second gold. I owe Rink that medal (but I'm still not going to give it to him).

To sum it all up I worked long and hard by myself without coaches, physicians, drugs, business managers, psychologists and those that hang around athletes just to be around athletes. I was thrilled to compete with USA on my chest and I never expected a reward beyond the chance to compete in the Games. I thought that was the way to do it properly all those years and quite frankly I still think it is the way to do it. I left the Games thoroughly enjoying the experience and those competitors I got to know well and that feeling remains today.