

# Homage to the Marquess of Exeter

After nearly half a century at the forefront of international amateur sport, the Marquess of Exeter has announced his final retirement from actual sports administration in Great Britain. Although he is now to relinquish the presidency of the British Olympic Association, having already brought to an end his thirty year reign as President of the International Amateur Athletic Association during the Montreal Games and just recently that of the Amateur Athletic Association, the Marquess of Exeter's influence will no doubt continue to be felt and his inestimable knowledge greatly utilised.

Widely considered as one of the most famous athletes of Great Britain, the then Lord Burghley rose to fame during the 1920's. He won more than two hundred events, including eight British championships and gaining in particular three British Empire gold medals. He competed in the Paris Olympic Games in 1924 coming fifth in the 400 m hurdles, the Amsterdam Games in 1928 where he won the gold medal for the 400 m hurdles setting an Olympic record, and the Los Angeles Olympics in 1932 winning a silver medal in the 4 x 400 m relay and a fourth place in the 400 m hurdles in a time which beat his winning time in Amsterdam.

After the 1932 Games he called an end to his athletic career and devoted himself to sports administration. He was immediately elected in 1933 an IOC member, at only 28 years of age setting a record for youthful co-optation and thus making him today doyen of the IOC.

Very early in his career he spoke out on the importance of amateurism, and has since then fought valiantly to keep amateur sports amateur, trying to instill in athletes' minds the glory of competing for sportmanship and not for money. He enjoyed a reputation of always giving fair and unbiased advice. He encouraged other athletes to enter into sport administration after their years of competition were finished in order "to give something back to the sport in compensation for what they had always got out of it."

In 1946 the Marquess of Exeter was elected to the presidency of the IAAF, taking over from Sigfrid Edström who became President of the IOC. Through his considerable efforts

international amateur athletics made a spectacular recovery after the Second World War.

As President of the Organising Committee he not only magnificently organised the 1948 London Olympic Games but succeeded in showing a profit at the end—the last time in Olympic history. The previous year he had persuaded the Soviet Union to come back into athletics.

In the IOC as well he was a very active participant and in 1952 stood for the presidency. Defeated, only because it was Avery Brundage opposing him, he nevertheless continued to exert a strong influence due to his wealth of knowledge and experience and was regularly re-elected Vice-President of the IOC from 1956 to 1968, although never actually becoming President of the IOC.

A Conservative Member of Parliament from 1931 to 1943 he sat in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Amongst other functions he was the Chairman of the Propaganda Committee of National Fitness Council in 1938; President of the Amateur Athletic Association since 1936; Chairman of the British Olympic Association 1936-66 and President since 1966; President of the British Horse Society 1963; President of the British Clay Pigeon Federation 1950-1954. He was Governor and Commander-in-Chief in Bermuda 1943-1945; President of the British Commonwealth Chambers of Commerce from 1952-54 and led the United Kingdom industrial missions to Pakistan in 1950 and Burma in 1954. For ten years he was the Director of British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) 1946-56.

Despite his retirement from international sporting bodies the Marquess of Exeter will continue to be very active. He is still closely involved in the Burghley Horse Trials amongst other activities and regularly takes his place in the House of Lords. Although no longer a member of an IOC Commission he still plays an important part in all aspects of IOC life. Throughout his career, both at home and abroad, he enjoyed great authority because of his technical competence and his high qualifications and it is hoped that as the doyen of the IOC his exceptional qualities and sound advice will continue to be of benefit to the Olympic movement and the sporting world in general.



*The Marquess of Exeter at the 1976 Burghley Horse Trials, at the extreme left, with the winners, Mrs. Jane Holderness-Roddam and Warrior, Mrs. Suzette Howard, the winning owner, and the governor of Kentucky, the Hon. Julian Carroll. In the background, Captain Mark Phillips, husband of HRH Princess Anne.*