

undisturbed. The academic leadership of this centre can appoint researchers from the different subject areas who can deal with critical Olympic questions, whereby the Olympic Movement itself can also be critically scrutinized. Days for question/answer sessions about the Olympics will be regularly organized. The Thinking Centre appoints sport historians to publish a *Monumenta Olympica*. To this belongs:

- most importantly, an edition of all the writings of COUBERTIN that should also be translated into English. As is well known, the highly commendable COUBERTIN-edition from Norbert MÜLER embraces only a small part of COUBERTIN'S work.
- a critical edition of the minutes from the sessions of the IOC, the Congress, other conferences, the official reports from 1896-1940 and the *Revue Olympique* from 1894 – 1969.
- A critical examination of the biographies of all the IOC members to-date
- A synopsis of the biographies of all the 100,000 Olympic athletes who have participated through today, most importantly the medal winners. The biographies of the athletes must be a

focal point. The list by Wolf LYBERG is a valuable preparatory work.

- Reliable, official lists of the results from the competitions of the Olympic Games.
- An extensive collection of "oral history" information about the Olympic Games.

The Olympic Research Centre could have its headquarters, a building like the Olympic Museum, either in Lausanne or in connection with a large university in another country.

People don't think about costs when dreaming, but should it materialize into reality, then costs become quickly relevant. An Olympic Research Centre would cost millions of dollars. The IOC has 10 large sponsors who are active in the Olympic Movement and the execution of the Olympic Games, mostly in view of the practical sports. Why isn't a pool of businesses created who devote themselves to Olympic culture sponsoring? I am thinking about large television companies, other media organizations, publishing groups and the like. I am certain that this investment is worthwhile and is of an increasingly great benefit to the investors.

## CHARLES REIDPATH, OLYMPIC CHAMPION

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*by Timothy Evans*

Charles REIDPATH, war hero, civic builder and Olympic Champion, was born in Buffalo, NY in 1889. His cousin Isabelle REIDPATH MARTIN was the wife of Darwin MARTIN, who commissioned one of architect Frank LLOYD WRIGHT'S finest works, the Darwin MARTIN House. At Lafayette high school from 1904-08 Reidpath was an outstanding track competitor, in spite of an unorthodox "flat footed" running style. It was while at Syracuse University from 1908-1912 that Charles REIDPATH became a collegiate track star, winning the 220 and 440 yard dashes in the 1912 intercollegiate games. At one point he held the college record for the quarter mile.

On graduating from Syracuse in 1912 with a degree in civil engineering, Charles REIDPATH was put under pressure by relatives to quit

sports and take a position with the family business in Buffalo. Instead, he made the U.S. Olympic track team, and headed to Stockholm, Sweden for one of the finest Olympics ever held. REIDPATH won the 400 meters in an Olympic record shattering time of 48.2 seconds. This record lasted until 1924, when it was broken by Eric LIDDLE, whose story was made famous by the movie *Chariots of Fire*. Running the anchor leg of the 4x400 meter relay, REIDPATH helped the U.S. team set a world record of 3:16.6.

The 400 meter contest was thrilling and controversial. In one of the few serious official miscalculations in the 1912 games, the semifinals were held without lanes for individual runners. The result was a confrontation between German champion

Hanns BRAUN and American runner Donnell YOUNG. BRAUN allegedly cut YOUNG off, a hard bumping incident resulted, and officials hit Young with a disqualification. As a result, the finals were dominated by Buffalo's Charles REIDPATH and the German, Hanns BRAUN. REIDPATH had won the first semi-final heat in record setting time. In the finals (run in lanes, officials slamming the proverbial barn door after the horses, or at least Donnell YOUNG, had gone) BRAUN took the lead at about 200 meters. However, Charles REIDPATH caught him on the home stretch, and won the Gold medal for the U.S. by a narrow margin.

The 4x400 meter relay was not as closely contested. REIDPATH told the *Buffalo Courier-Express* that his teammates "were so far out in front that by the time it came for me to take over, the race was just about over too". In fact, REIDPATH was chosen to run the all important final leg and helped the American team to set a World record of 3:16.6, a record that lasted for 12 years. After the games, Charles REIDPATH donated both of his gold medals to *Syracuse University*.

Away from sports, Charles REIDPATH worked for the *Berdencer Construction Company* from 1912 through 1937, when he was named director of buildings for Buffalo, NY. For 15 years he worked in the city department of public works, and in 1956 helped build the *Federal Reserve Bank* as superintendent of construction for architects.

REIDPATH also had an outstanding military career. As a Lt. Colonel he served in England, France and Belgium in the *Transportation Corps* during World War II winning battle stars for the Northern France and Rheinland campaigns. In Belgium he was made an Officer of the Crown for his services at the vital port of Antwerp in 1944 and 1945. Charles REIDPATH was made a Brig. General when he retired from the New York National Guard in 1948.

He passed away on October 21, 1975 aged 86 in *Kenmore Mercy Hospital* following a brief illness. He was survived by his wife, the former Sally PRATT, two children, five grandchildren and five great-grand children. Relatives remember him as kindly, nature

loving "uncle Charlie" who helped his young relatives discover things like Racoon nests and Birds eggs along the old Bridal path near his home on West Delevan Avenue in the City. He is buried in section one of Buffalo's *Forest Lawn Cemetery*, along with members of the Pratt family. A simple marker mentions only his war service.

REIDPATH'S accomplishments in the 1912 Olympics were understandably somewhat overshadowed by the even greater feats of Jim THORPE, winner of the decathlon and heptathlon, but his place in track and field history is secure. In the early 21st century, two of REIDPATH'S nephews, Dick and Ted SULLIVAN, were still active in Buffalo area track and field, even though they were both in their 70's.

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- <http://members.tripod.com/~laxman36/klein.html>;
- <http://members.tripod.com/~laxman36/laettner>