

OBITUARIES

John Rodda

***6 November 1930 † 3 March 2009**

The British sports journalist John Rodda has died after a long illness. He was 78. A recipient of the Olympic Order, he was a member of ISOH and regarded as one of the foremost Olympic writers in the world.

Born in 1930 at Beckenham on the outskirts of London and evacuated during the war, Rodda left school at 15 to join his local newspaper the South London Press. He covered his first Olympic Games for them as a young reporter in 1948. Destined for the national press, he spent most of his working life with The Guardian newspaper. He was present at every Olympic Games between 1960 and 1992 and also attended many Winter Games.

In 1968, he described the massacre of students at the Plaza de Tres Culturas in Mexico City when the military attacked a student demonstration on the eve of the Olympics. His was a unique perspective, the bullets flew inches from his head. He was instrumental in revealing the true extent of the casualties. Four years later he

reported from the village during the terrorist attack on the Israeli team.

He was a close friend of IOC President Lord Killanin. Together they wrote a history of the Olympic Games which at the time was the pre-eminent study of the movement. They persuaded many prominent sporting personalities to contribute, including HRH Prince Philip. It still stands the test of time today, some three decades later. He specialised in Athletics and Boxing and he was consultant to and a contributor to many television programmes including the excellent documentary series "The Games in Question" made for Channel Four in the United Kingdom in 1984.

He offered advice to many British Olympic bids including the successful candidature for 2012. London Chairman Lord Coe has expressed his sadness that Rodda will not be there to see them.