

MONIQUE BERLIOUX: HER ASSOCIATION WITH THREE IOC PRESIDENTS

by Joanna Davenport

Prior to the 1984 Olympic Games there were many articles about Monique Berlioux, the longtime Director of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), who was regarded as the most powerful woman in sports. Yet, within a short time, on 3 June 1985, the headlines “IOC Director Is Under Fire” appeared in *The New York Times* followed two days later by “Retirement Agreement Reached.”¹ What could have happened in those few years to Madame Berlioux who had served IOC President Avery Brundage, IOC President Lord Killanin, and was, at the time of her resignation, working with the new president of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch. This paper is an overview of the IOC, an examination of the lives of three IOC presidents and Monique Berlioux and an attempt to explain the working relationship she had with each of them.

First of all, a brief description of the IOC is necessary in order to understand not only the complexity of the Committee but how Monique Berlioux was able to achieve supreme power with the Committee. The IOC is headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland and controls and directs the Olympic Movement which governs the Modern Olympic Games. Even though there are 197 nations competing in the Games, representation on the IOC numbers only 106 people. Some nations do not have any IOC members while others have two representatives. It is a self-perpetuating body whose members are elected by each other and until 1966, served for life. Since then, a member had to retire at age 75.² Recently, to allow Samaranch to again run for President, it was changed to 80 years. It is important to remember that an IOC member represents the IOC, not his or her respective country. Thus, they are not delegates from their nations, but ambassadors of Olympism to their countries.

The IOC has been described as “the most famous executive club in the world” not recognized officially by any government but powerful in its uniqueness.”³ Its permanence has been attributed to its being “dependent on nothing and answerable to nobody . . .”⁴ For 87 years, this powerful Olympic family had only male members. Finally, in 1981, a milestone in Olympic history occurred when the first two women were elected to the IOC.⁵ A breakthrough was made and although progress has not been swift since, there are now ten women members of the IOC.

Next is the story of Avery Brundage, the only American to serve as President of the International Olympic Committee who was in office for 20 years, from 1952-1972. He was born in Detroit on 28 September 1887. He graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in engineering and a passion for sports, particularly for competitive walking and the

¹New York Times, 3-4 June 1985, C11 and B9.

²Lord Killanin, *My Olympic Years* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1983), 19. The age limit was originally voted at 72 years but so many vital men on the Committee were being forced to resign at that age, the limit was changed to 75 years.

³Ibid., p. 18.

⁴John Lucas, *The Modern Olympic Games* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1980), p. 136.

⁵Killanin, *My Olympic Years*, p. 79. See also “Report of the 85th IOC Session,” *The Olympian*, July/August 1982, p. 17. Killanin was disappointed this historic event did not take place during his presidency. He wanted the right person to be the pioneer. He had asked Tenley Albright (USA) but she declined.

shot and discus. He competed in the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm where he was fifth in the pentathlon and did not finish the decathlon, and in this country he was a three-time All-Around Champion of America, a grueling ten-event track competition held on one day.⁶

In 1915, Brundage began his business career in construction and real estate and soon was a multimillionaire. His interest in sport led him to involvement in sports administration and eventually to President of the IOC where he made his mark in history. He was President of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) for seven terms and President of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) for 30 years, from 1923-1953. In 1936, he was elected to the IOC, became Vice President in 1945 and assumed the Presidency in 1952. Note one author's comments: ". . . the 1952 Games were noteworthy because a new president was appointed - Avery Brundage, an American, who would preside for the next twenty years. Before his appointment, the Olympic presidency had been strictly a European province. The change was symbolic in the sense that it reflected the changed power structure in the world, just as did the inclusion of the Soviet Union on the committee and in the Games."⁷

For the next 20 years Avery Brundage was a powerful controversial figure who tried in every possible way to keep the Olympic Games open only to pure amateurs - those who competed for the love of sport and derived no financial gain from the sport. He attempted to do this "against the enormous opposition of politics and the gradual increase in professionalism."⁸ As Red Smith wrote, "it did not trouble him that what he stood for existed mainly in his own mind."⁹ During the course of his presidency there were many unpopular decisions about athletes in regard to this amateur question, and he acquired less than respectful nicknames such as "Slavery Avery."¹⁰

Yet many authorities will state that he was the most effective of IOC Presidents who reigned during a period of unbelievable crisis in the world and without his leadership, the Olympic movement may have ceased. As Lucas states about the world during the Brundage years: "The political problems of two Germanys, the two Koreas, the two Chinas, the Hungarian revolt, the tragedy of Vietnam, war in Ireland, the Middle East, and confrontations all through southern Africa are reflected in IOC issues and edicts."¹¹

Even though the IOC headquarters was in Lausanne, Switzerland, Brundage did most of his Olympic work from the hotel he owned in Chicago, the LaSalle Hotel. The headquarters staff in Switzerland was administered by Otto Mayer, who had the title IOC Chancellor, and began his duties in 1946, six years before Brundage became President. The headquarters was located at the time in Chateau Mon Répos where Mrs. Coubertin also lived. At times it was difficult for Mayer and his staff as Mrs. Coubertin lived to be 101, and was often unpleasant about them being in the building.

As Brundage became more involved in the IOC headquarters activities, he soon was dissatisfied with Otto Mayer. He thought that Mayer was not only often impetuous and indiscreet, but also that at times took action with Brundage's approval. By 1964, the situation had become impossible between the two men and Mayer was forced to resign. The next

⁶William O. Johnson, "The Man Behind the Mask," *Sports Illustrated*, 4 August 1980, p. 52.

⁷Richard Espy, *The Politics of the Olympic Games* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 39.

⁸James Coote and John Goodbody, *The Olympics 1972* (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1972), p. 20.

⁹Red Smith, "The Noblest Badger of Them All," *New York Times*, 12 May 1975, p. 33. Quoted in John Hoberman, *The Olympic Games* (New Rochelle, New York: Aristide D. Carotzas, 1986), p. 51.

¹⁰Lucas, *The Modern Olympic Games*, 166. This nickname came after Brundage told Olympic ice skater Barbara Ann Scott to return a car in 1948. Some other names were "professional snoop" and "the country's No. 1 common cold."

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 193.

¹²Allen Guttman, *The Games Must Go On* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 187.

person was given the title IOC Secretary but never won Brundage's confidence and left within a short time. The new IOC Secretary was Johann Westerhof who was hired in 1966.

In 1967, both Westerhof and Lord Killanin, who was to become IOC President after Brundage, were approached by a French Olympian, Monique Berlioux, about making one of her books she had written on the Olympics into a film. Impressed with her credentials and personality, they disregarded her request but offered her a job at the IOC Headquarters in Lausanne as Director of Press and Public Relations. Her credentials were indeed impressive.

Monique Berlioux was born in Metz, France, about 200 miles from Paris on 22 December 1925. She became one of her country's finest swimmers, winning over 40 titles. She was a semi-finalist in the 100 metre backstroke in the 1948 Olympics in London, finishing 6th in the second semi-final.^{13 14} A graduate of the Sorbonne in 1947, where she also received her Masters one year later, she became a journalist and sports reporter and also produced films for French television. She wrote many essays on women and sport and two books on the Olympic Games. She soon was appointed Press Chief for the French Ministry of Youth and Sport and Inspector General of Sport.

After the offer from the IOC, Madame Berlioux resigned as Inspector General and moved to Switzerland. Two years later, in 1969, Westerhof made the same mistakes as his predecessor and took action without Brundage's approval. He was forced to resign and Monique Berlioux took over the responsibilities. The job title was changed to Director for these reasons, according to Berlioux, "To make it clear that the job was not like the Secretary-General of the United Nations - above the president."¹⁵

Even so, and even though she was doing the work of the Director, she was not given the title. As she states, "They tried to find a man, of course, but they could not find the right person for months and months, and I continued to do the job. After two years I said, 'If you don't intend to nominate someone else, you could ratify me.'"¹⁶ Thus, in 1971, she was ratified and officially given the title of Director of the IOC. When asked why she could succeed where Westerhof failed, she replied, "Westerhof thought being secretary general meant that he was the boss . . . He forgot that the president was the boss. You never forget that. Maybe that's the advantage of being a woman. You accept more. I like to stay in the shadows."¹⁷

And yet, note her feelings once she assumed the position: "One does not ever ask for authority . . . One takes authority."¹⁸ As Director she increased the staff from a haphazard group of six to thirty-five. She introduced new standards and "demanded long working hours and efficiency and the same unquestioning loyalty to herself that she gave Brundage."¹⁹ She had good relations with Brundage and yet, she admitted that "her boss... often acted with despotic firmness."²⁰

This new efficiency in the office was not accepted by many at first and as Lord Killanin stated "probably had something to do with the high turnover of personnel (at headquarters)."²¹ But he adds, "she is strongly loyal to the IOC and its presidents."²² Berlioux's duties were

¹³ Michele Kort, "Monique Berlioux and the '84 Olympics," MS, November 1983, p. 123.

¹⁴ *Editor's Note:* In the 1948 Official Report, Madame Berlioux is listed in the results as "M. Libotte Berlioux," a name which I have never seen associated with her in any other source.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Anita Verschoth, "Carrying the Torch," *Sports Illustrated*, 13 April 1981, p. 70.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, 1989.

²¹ Killanin, *My Olympic Years*, p. 80.

²² *Ibid.*

enormous. She planned IOC meetings and followed up on the decisions taken, handled a staggering amount of correspondence, managed the budget, helped negotiate TV contracts, edited the monthly publication of the IOC, served as spokesperson on Olympic matters, and gave press conferences with such expertise that even journalists praised her skill.

Note the following remarks from a former assistant on the headquarters staff, "She is a career woman with great willpower, great talent, and great capacity for work . . . She loves power. When she arrived in Lausanne, we were a small group . . . She was very tough. Little by little, she got organized . . . Because of her, the IOC has taken on a spectacular character. She brought to it more decorum and a high degree of efficiency . . ."²³

Another colleague said: "She is brilliant . . . for working long, hard hours and for being impeccably prepared."²⁴ A sportswriter in Geneva wrote, "Madame Berlioux's position is so strong . . . because she is aware of her place at all time. She shows her superb intelligence by observing the boundaries of her position and being very discreet . . ."²⁵ Even though Brundage stepped down in 1972 as IOC President, his style of operation in working with Berlioux allowed her to become the most dominant force, second only to the president, in the Olympic movement.

The successor to Brundage was Sir Michael Morris, Lord Killanin (of Dublin and Spiddal), who had been an IOC Vice President since 1968. Lord Killanin was born July 30, 1914 in London. Educated at Eton, the Sorbonne and then went on to a journalism career the *Daily Mail*. In World War II he took part in the invasion of Normandy as a Brigade Major. For his service he was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE).

After the war Lord Killanin settled in the country of his ancestors, Ireland, and did a variety of jobs, such as producing movies, the most well known being "The Quiet Man" with John Ford; wrote a book on an 18th century painter; co-edited the Shell Guide to Ireland; wrote columns for European and American newspapers and became a Director of the Board of Irish Shell and BP Limited which resulted in his also being a director of many companies.²⁶ His interest in sport led to his being elected President of the Olympic Council of Ireland.²⁷

In 1952, Lord Killanin was elected to the IOC, became a member of the Executive Board in 1967, Vice President in 1968 and President in 1972. Before taking office as President he stressed to the Committee two demands. The first was that he could not operate like Brundage who never in all his years of Olympic work asked for reimbursement. As Killanin explained, "I reckoned I could match him in devotion but not in cash, and made it clear from the start that I would not allow my name to go forward unless my basic expenses-travelling, telephone, postage, secretarial services and so forth - could be guaranteed."²⁸

Some indication of Killanin's character is illustrated by these further remarks about demanding expenses, ". . . I have to earn my living and could not afford to do it in any other way and second, because as a matter of principle, the presidency should be protected from falling necessarily into the hands of a rich man."²⁹ Next, he only would serve one term - eight years - and would not stand for re-election. The Committee agreed and he was elected to office. At his first public appearance as President a reporter asked him about his decision to

²³Verschoth, "Carrying The Torch," p. 70.

²⁴Kort, "Berlioux and '84 Olympics," p. 124.

²⁵Verschoth, "Carrying The Torch," p. 75.

²⁶Clive Gammon, "Lord of the Games," *Sports Illustrated*, 9 February 1976, p. 68. See also Geoffrey Miller, *Behind the Olympic Rings* (Lynn, Massachusetts: H.O. Zimman, Inc. 1979). pp. 181-182; and John Lucas, *The Modern Olympic Games* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1980), p. 194.

²⁷The Associated Press and Grolier, *The Olympic Story* (Danbury, Connecticut: Grolier Enterprises, Inc., 1979), p. 350.

²⁸Killanin, *My Olympic Years*, p. 51.

²⁹Geoffrey Miller, *Behind the Olympic Rings* (Lynn, Massachusetts: H. O. Zimman, Inc., 1979). p. 22.

only be in office for one term. He swiftly replied, "If . . . you ever hear me say 'I'm running for a second term' you have free permission to come around and kick my bottom."³⁰

Lord Killanin was a very different President from Avery Brundage. One author stated, "Killanin is the new Pope . . . sent to heal the scars of 20 years of autocratic Brundage rule . . . (He is) 'as resolute as Brundage was, but infinitely more diplomatic and liberal.'"³¹ Many authorities have attempted to compare the styles and personalities of the two men. One trait in particular that is always mentioned with Killanin is his sense of humor. "This helped him and those around him to make light of heavy matters at the right moments."³² His comic replies at press conferences often diluted sensational events. One of his best retorts was at the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal where a streaker ran through the closing ceremony. When a reporter asked him about the matter, Killanin's reply was that "he failed to understand how the man ever penetrated the security ring because he wasn't wearing the correct badge."³³

One expert states that "Brundage was a barking dog who stood guard over the Olympic movement . . . he snapped and snarled at every hint of deviation from the principles . . . (whereas) Killanin is a diplomat who nurses his words carefully and works quietly - (defending those same principles)."³⁴

It is well known that Brundage operated as a director and ruled the IOC with an iron hand, whereas Lord Killanin had a completely different style best expressed by this overview. "In place of Brundage's (harshness) they found charm; instead of strong and forthright speech they found discretion and diplomacy. Where Brundage had acted independently, Killanin consulted his vice presidents and executive board. Thunderous presidential pronouncements were no more; instead, the new president avoided controversial statements and sought to divert attention from himself . . ."³⁵

Just as Brundage operated from Chicago, Killanin did most of his Olympic work from his home in Dublin and relied on Madame Berlioux to run the headquarters in Lausanne. He commented on his work with Monique Berlioux, "When I became president, I had reservations about Berlioux suiting my style. I had serious reservations about the organization of the headquarters . . . did not expect she would accept . . . new structure, having been given so much power by Brundage . . . while giving due time for consideration of . . . changes I came to appreciate the qualities of Berlioux. I have never had the cause to regret that I discarded my ideas about a new structure to ensure retaining the dedication and qualities that she brought to her work and her supreme loyalty to me and the IOC during my term of office."³⁶

There was no doubt that her working relationship with Killanin was not as close as it had been with Brundage. One source at headquarters revealed Killanin "not exactly . . . rebuked her but . . . reminded her of boundaries when she . . . strayed into the executive decision making zone."³⁷

Perhaps it was inevitable that she strayed into the decision making zone. She was a strong personality who had become a very powerful person. In essence, she ran the administration of the Olympic movement. Often Olympic committee members visiting the IOC headquarters remarked what a formidable woman she was. One source comments about her work with members of the IOC as well as her meetings with visiting Olympic committee

³⁰Doug Gilbert, "Killanin," *The Montreal Gazette*, 16 July 1976, p. 14-15.

³¹Gammon, "Lord of the Games," pp. 67, 69.

³²Miller, *Behind The Olympic Rings*, p. 180.

³³Ibid., 183.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., p. 17.

³⁶Ibid., p. 21.

³⁷Killanin, *My Olympic Years*, p. 80.

members, “She stands no nonsense and sets them right without ceremony when they are wrong, and she has been known to put IOC members themselves in their places when they wander off course and speak unwisely in public . . . All in all, she is one of the world’s most remarkable women.”³⁸

Berlioux commented on her influence with both Brundage and Lord Killanin: “Mr. Brundage looked strong, but he may have been a little weaker than he looked. You could make him do things, finally by persuasion. Lord Killanin seemed weaker but in the end he was more difficult than Brundage. So I sometimes did not convince him.”³⁹

True to his word, Lord Killanin did not stand for re-election for the IOC Presidency and Juan Antonio Samaranch was elected President of the IOC in 1980. Mr. Samaranch was born on 17 July 1920 in Barcelona and from an early age was interested in sports. He graduated from the Higher Institute of Business Studies and then took over his father’s upholstery company. He later went into banking and became a member of the Board of Directors of several banks. From 1977-1980 he was the Spanish Ambassador to the USSR and the Republic of Mongolia.

Samaranch’s sports involvement was extensive. He became the municipal councillor responsible for sport in Barcelona and the national delegate for Spain for physical education and sport. In 1954, he became a member of the Spanish Olympic Committee and served as its President from 1967-1970. In 1966, he was elected to the International Olympic Committee, and over the years was given more and more responsibility. From 1968-1975 he was IOC Chef de Protocol, then on the Executive Board from 1970-1979, Vice President from 1974-1978 and elected President in 1980.⁴⁰

He also had responsibilities where he was closer to the athletes than some other IOC members. He was Chef de Mission for the Spanish team for the 1956 Olympic Winter Games and had the same administrative role for the Spanish teams at both the 1960 and 1964 Olympics Games. “Samaranch has been in many ways more liberal than his predecessors. He often claims that he would like the Games open to all athletes but does not completely endorse open Games with all professionals being allowed. He has been described as ‘a man of quiet charm, tireless dedication and the . . . smoothness of a diplomat . . .’”⁴¹

Samaranch thoroughly loves being President of the IOC. When asked about the position, he replied, “to be in a post like this is wonderful. I love what I am doing . . .”⁴² Soon after he was elected, Samaranch declared: “We are lucky to have Madame Berlioux as director.”⁴³ By this time the headquarters staff Berlioux managed had grown to 67 people, and she was making over \$100,000 (US) a year.⁴⁴ The IOC had a new home, an 18th century mansion, the Chateau de Vidy, which Lausanne allows the IOC to use rent-free in recognition of the pride the city feels for it being located there.⁴⁵

As Samaranch started his term of office, she accompanied him on every important trip and attempted to update him on all Olympic matters that he needed to know. For example, in 1981, she and Samaranch travelled to Los Angeles to not only have an update on the preparations for the 1984 Olympic Games but also for Samaranch to view the venues. Peter

³⁸Gammon, “Lord of the Games,” p. 70.

³⁹Miller, *Behind The Olympic Rings*, p. 40.

⁴⁰Verschoth, “Carrying The Torch,” p. 73.

⁴¹Amy C. Bodwin, “Juan Antonio Samaranch,” *Contemporary Newsmaker* (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1986), p. 92.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Verschoth, “Carrying The Torch,” p. 76.

⁴⁵Arturo Gonzalez, “Swim Champ Monique Berlioux Pulls Her Weight as Director of This Year’s Olympic Games,” *People Weekly*, 20 February 1984, p. 109.

Ueberroth, chairman of the Organizing Committee, gave this appraisal of their trip: “The meetings with President Samaranch and Madame Berlioux were primarily held so we could profit from (the IOC) experience, and Madame Berlioux in particular was very helpful. She provides the continuity between the Games and helps each organizing committee get pointed in the right direction.”⁴⁶

Ueberroth had first met Berlioux in July of 1979 when he travelled to Lausanne shortly after Los Angeles had won the bid to host the 1984 Games. In his book written after the Games he comments about the visit: Before leaving Los Angeles, I had been tipped off as to what to expect from Berlioux, who is the most powerful woman in sports. She is also a stickler for detail and I was warned she would demonstrate her superiority by subtly testing my knowledge of the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Charter.”⁴⁷ He also described her power with these remarks: “(Her) influence peaked from 1972-1980, while Lord Killanin was IOC president. Since Killanin presided over the Olympic Movement from his home in Ireland, Berlioux virtually ran the organization and handled day-to-day workload from the IOC headquarters.”⁴⁸

Following Ueberroth’s meeting in July, Berlioux came to Los Angeles in September of 1979 to approve the TV contract with ABC that had been negotiated by the Los Angeles Organizing Committee for the 1984 Games. Another indication of her power as well as her authority is found in Ueberroth’s description of the TV contract negotiations: “Only one hitch remained: The International Olympic Committee, our partner, and, in effect, co-negotiator (who) retained the right to review and approve all matters associated with the Olympic Games. This veto power is exercised mainly by the IOC director Monique Berlioux. Her blessing is the Olympic seal of approval . . .”⁴⁹

Ueberroth revealed further information about her position, “Berlioux knows the Olympics better than any human being alive and she protects its traditions and integrity as a mother would a child . . . If she was on your side, you had clear sailing. If she sensed any Olympic Charter violations or potential damage to the movement, there was no more formidable foe.”⁵⁰ She was supportive and with Berlioux present, a news conference was held on 26⁵¹ September 1979 to announce the “largest television sports deal in history” - up to that time.

The above statements certainly imply that at times, Madame Berlioux seemed to have played a more dominant role than the President. It may not have bothered Killanin but this perception of and use of power did not sit well with Samaranch. Even the visit to Los Angeles in 1981 when Samaranch first viewed the venues demonstrated that Berlioux seemed to have played a more important role than Samaranch, as illustrated by these further remarks from Ueberroth, “She works very hard to get the policies of the president across and I think that is why are meetings were very lengthy. Since he [Samaranch] is a new president to the IOC, the policies are also new to him and she has to bring them to us.”⁵²

In 1984, President Samaranch, unlike his predecessors Avery Brundage and Lord Killanin, decided to settle permanently in Lausanne, in order that he be closer to all the affairs of the IOC. It was reported that this move increased the friction that had developed between Samaranch and Madame Berlioux. Soon they were fighting over matters large and small.

⁴⁶Miller. *Behind The Olympic Rings*, p. 150.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 73

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 54 and 55.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 67-68.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 68.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Verschoth, “Carrying The Torch,” p. 73.

It is speculated that the same qualities that were admired by Brundage and Lord Killanin were an irritant to Samaranch. Furthermore, it seems obvious that her position had become so powerful that it was difficult for the president, who was the leader of the IOC, to assume his rightful place. This was especially true of Samaranch who, when asked about the operation of the IOC, replied, “(My) philosophy is to put every man in his place in the organization . . . (and) I assure you that . . . the president is the president.”⁵³

Finally, she lost the long power struggle and was forced to resign on 7 June 1985. The woman who served three IOC Presidents and was Director through four Olympiads was allowed to address the IOC. Her final remarks were lengthy and the following are some of the highlights, “. . . I have held the position for 18 years. Of course, I may on occasion have found myself in disagreement with some of you on particular issues. But this is only normal in an organization like ours . . . My only rule of conduct has always been: the interests of the Movement and its ideals . . . I shall always be proud of the level (the administration) has reached. I shall say no more. A Director has moved on. Long live Olympism . . .”⁵⁴

Samaranch decided that there would be no successor with a title such as Director who, in turn, might assume the same power as Madame Berlioux had achieved. Instead, her job was subdivided into many less powerful positions. So, what has happened to the people who played their roles in the Berlioux Olympic history. Avery Brundage died in 1975 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany at the age of 87, and his obituary on the front page of *The New York Times* was entitled “Avery Brundage of Olympics Dies.” The article stated that he had been “the most powerful figure in the history of international sports.”⁵⁵

Lord Killanin, awarded the title “Honorary Life President” when he stepped down as President is now 81 years of age and lives quietly in Dublin. Although able to still be involved in Olympic matters as he was elected when the policy was to be an IOC member for life, he chose to resign from the Committee after his Presidential term.

Juan Antonio Samaranch was re-elected President of the IOC in 1988 and 1992 and his term ends in 1997. He will be 76 years old, and by the past IOC regulations had to retire. However, Samaranch wishes to be re-elected and at the 1995 IOC Session put pressure on the IOC members to change the rules to age 80. Since more than 50% of the delegates were appointed by him, the difficult negotiations were finally approved in his favor.

As Madame Berlioux stated in her farewell speech, “A Director has moved on.”⁵⁶ She became an Assistant to the Mayor of Paris and worked enthusiastically for the bid of the city of Paris to host the 1992 Olympic Games. The successful city, as everyone knows, was Barcelona, Samaranch’s hometown. At the present time, she is still Special Assistant to the Mayor of Paris. Even though she has stepped out of the Olympic limelight, she has transferred her administrative capabilities to the promotion of the “City of Lights.” It will be interesting to see if Paris bids again to host future Olympic Games. If so, it is highly possible that one of the chief proponents of the bid will be the former most powerful woman in sports, Monique Berlioux.

[*Editor’s Note:* Madame Berlioux was, indeed, one of the most powerful women in the history of sports, if not the most powerful. After receiving Ms. Davenport’s article, I had

⁵³Bodwin, “Juan Antonio Samaranch,” p. 94.

⁵⁴“The Departure of Mrs. Berlioux,” *Olympic Review*, August 1985, p. 424. See also Sarah Ballard, “The Most Powerful Woman in Sports,” *Sports Illustrated*, 29 September 1986, p. 56; and Anita Verschoth, “The IOC Loses a Righthand Man But May Earn An Insect Repellent,” *Sports Illustrated*, 17 June 1985, p. 17.

⁵⁵Frank Litsky, “Avery Brundage of Olympics Dies,” *New York Times*, 9 May 1975.

⁵⁶“The Departure of Mrs. Berlioux,” p. 464.

planned to use it in my last issue as editor. Little has been written about Madame Berlioux since her resignation from the IOC, and I think it is an important topic which deserves further study. It is obviously also a highly controversial topic.

To expand on her involvement with the IOC, and the above three presidents, I wrote to several of the principles involved, sending them a draft of the article and asking for their comments, hoping to expand it somewhat into a short study of her influence on the Olympic Movement. Lord Killanin answered, but stated he could not write anything at the time “due to health reasons.” Madame Berlioux noted, “I think it is best if I do not write anything at this time.” President Samaranch did not respond.]