

Colonel John W. (Jack) Davies

Inducted 1993

If Bobby Robinson was the foundation, Colonel Jack Davies was the glue that held the Commonwealth Games together.

An active sportsman for over 60 years, Col. Davies competed, organized, officiated, established, coached, managed, and administered — activities that touched every spectrum of the Canadian sporting scene. It was, however, his legendary devotion to the Commonwealth Games that became his epithet.

As Senator Hartland de Molson has said: "... it was through the Commonwealth Games Association of Canada and the Commonwealth Games Federation that Jack was able to make his greatest and lasting impression on amateur sport in Canada and beyond."

What was it about Col. Jack that enabled him to make a permanent contribution of such magnitude? Some say it was his unflagging zeal and energy; others point to his eclectic approach which left so much room for imagination and initiative. Whatever impelled him, the result is an enormous list of accomplishments and contributions.

Col. Jack came to the Commonwealth Games in their infancy, serving the Hamilton Games as a member of the organizing committee. His commitment would end only upon his death two weeks before the opening of the 1978 Games in Edmonton.

During that time, Col. Jack served our Association as president for 25 years. He organized every Canadian team that competed at the Commonwealth Games between 1953 and 1978 — seven in all — and he raised the funds to field those teams, in every case, he proudly noted, exceeding the projected total.

He was general team manager of those seven teams. He was the first Canadian to be elected vice president of the Commonwealth Games Federation. And he was chairman of the Commonwealth Games Records Committee.

These activities encompass only the Commonwealth Games. He also found time to attend nine Olympic Games, two Pan-American Games, three European championships, three Canada Games, and numerous international matches. All this he did in an official capacity, carrying out any task that was asked of him whether as assistant chef de mission of the Canadian team or as the only Canadian delegate to the International Amateur Athletic Federation. All in all, Col. Jack was a most inspirational and dedicated leader.

Col. Jack was not unrecognized during his lifetime. His work with the Games earned him the Queen's Coronation Medal. He was awarded the "News of the World" plaque for being the outstanding Commonwealth Games official. He was inducted into both the Canadian Amateur Sports Hall of Fame and the Canadian Aquatic Hall of Fame. And he received his country's highest honour — the Order of Canada.

It is fitting that his friend and colleague, Senator Molson, should have the last word:

"All those associated with him appreciate his lifelong contributions and will honour his memory by making sure that sport in general and the Commonwealth Games in particular continue to profit from his efforts."

By honouring Col. Jack with the inaugural Award of Merit, the Commonwealth Games Association of Canada pays tribute to a man whose contribution is unrivalled.

