



# Obituary



**Ichiro Ogimura (JPN)**

former world table tennis champion and president of the ITTF, died in Tokyo on 4th September. He was 62. Beginning with the men's singles title in Wembley, London in 1954 when he was a student at Nihon University, Ogimura won twelve world titles as a player in the 1950's, a period in which the new «pen-grip holders like himself were revolutionizing the sport.

He reached the top in administration a year before the entry of table tennis into the Olympic Programme in 1988, when he



replaced Roy Evans as president of the ITTF. His mandate saw the growth of the organization into over 160 countries, instituting major reforms to professionalize a sport that had often been regarded as amateur and family-based. He set up the first table tennis Grand Prix and the World Team Cup in 1990. In 1992, he was the main instigator of the worldwide ban of certain glues used in tennis table bats, when it became evident that many adhesives used to attach the rubber covering were dangerous to health. Ogimura was only the third president of the ITTF since its creation in 1926. He was the first Asian, indeed the first non-British, president, a logical progression given the domination of table tennis players in the continent that he and his compatriot Hiroji Sato, who was the first Japanese world champion, had started in the fifties. Ogimura was the best of these new wave players in his country, his fast attack convincing coaches for a long time that using one side of the bat instead of two as with the Western handshake grip was better. He was a man who continued to favour innovation as an administrator: encouraging experiments on different scoring systems, shorter matches and larger balls, the use of colour, etc. He had experience in coaching in Sweden, China and the USA and was until recently the Japanese national trainer. He was also a well-known businessman in Japan, the president of an iron and steel company and the owner of his own table tennis equipment company.



**Harold Zimman (USA)**

who was awarded the Olympic Order in 1993, has died at the age of 78. A publisher of many sports publications, including *The Olympian*, the USOC magazine, he loved sport and served the USOC for many years on its board of directors and as head of the public relations committee and the United States Tennis Association. A progressive, he championed the role of the athletes in administration. He founded the World Maccabiah Games for Jewish athletes and the United States Sports for Israel Committee.

**Jacques Dimont (FRA)**

Olympic fencing champion in team foil in 1968, has died at the age of 49. A fencer who trained at the famous school of Hénin-Liétard, in the Pas-de-Calais, he was the fifth man in the Olympic squad in Mexico, competing in the elimination rounds up to the quarter finals, with an attitude that was always exemplary according to the national technical director of the time Jean Cottard. Dimont's later life did not match his early triumph, when after moving to Avignon and setting up an arms room, business did not take off. After a long depression he took his own life on New Year's Eve.

**Gisela Mauermeyer (GER)**

who won the discus competition in 1936, has died at the age of 81. She set seven world records in the discus during her career, as well as world records in shot put and pentathlon.

