

Urgent Letter 14-07

31 October 2007

Death of Mr Christian D'Oriola

LETTRE URGENTE DE LA FIE

Dear President,

It is with deep sadness that the International Fencing Federation learned of the passing of the great French foil champion Christian d'Oriola, at the age of 79, on Monday in Nîmes.

He was an Olympic champion in 1952 in Helsinki and in 1956 in Melbourne, after winning the silver medal in the London Olympic Games in 1948. He was also a team Olympic champion in 1952 and 1956. Four-time world champion (1947, 1949, 1953, 1954) as well as team world champion (1948, 1952, 1953, 1954), Christian d'Oriola was a talented foil fencer with a remarkable style, who defeated his opponents thanks to his exceptional speed, prodigious technique and perfect physical fitness. He was a champion endowed with a sense of modernity, who adapted to all circumstances with apparent ease but by dint of hard work and pride. By winning the Olympic title in non-electric foil in 1952 and the Olympic title in electric foil in 1956, Christian d'Oriola succeeded the significant feat of showing all, particularly the younger fencers, the importance of moving with the times.

For all his skills, the International Fencing Federation gave him the unique distinction of "Fencer of the Twentieth Century" in 2001.

He was a Member of Honour of the International Fencing Federation, Vice-President of the French Federation, Captain of the French teams and International Referee.

The International Fencing Federation sends its deepest sympathy and condolences to Mrs Kate D'Oriola and to French fencing at this very sad time.

René Roch
Président

