

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF SPORTSMANSHIP

Athletes from around the world compete in the Winter Olympics in the spirit of sportsmanship, fair play, friendship and peace. The Olympic creed and Olympic oath both reflect these ideas. Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic Games, first stated the creed in 1896.

The Olympic creed:

“The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.”

An athlete first took the Olympic oath, or promise, at the 1920 Olympic Games. One athlete from the Games’ host country takes this oath at the Opening Ceremony on behalf of all competing athletes. This year, gold-medal winner Jim Shea Jr. took the oath.

The Olympic oath:

“In the name of all competitors, I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honor of our teams.”

1. A creed is a set of guiding rules or beliefs. Do you agree with the Olympic creed? Why or why not?

2. What does good sportsmanship mean to you? _____

3. How do you show good sportsmanship? Give an example. _____

4. Write a sentence describing how one athlete mentioned in this week’s issue showed good sportsmanship. _____

BONUS Do you think the Olympic Games can encourage world peace? Write your answer on the back of this page.