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TRIBUTE TO JIM FOX OLY MBE OBE (1941-2023)

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The global Modern Pentathlon community is in mourning after the death of Jeremy “Jim” Fox at the age of 81.

Fox (GBR) became Olympic champion at the fourth attempt, topping the podium in the team event alongside Danny Nightingale and Adrian Parker at Montreal 1976.

Following an 8th-placed finish at Mexico 1968, the former army sergeant finished 4th in the Men’s Individual Final at Munich 1972, which was the closest a British male pentathlete would come to the ultimate prize for almost 50 years (until Joseph Choong won gold at Tokyo 2020).

Apart from the gold medal, Fox (GBR) will always be synonymous with fair play at Montreal 1976 –he was the athlete who alerted competition judges to an apparent irregularity in the fencing equipment of one of his rivals, who was proven to have cheated and was disqualified.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann led the tributes, saying: “Jim and his Great Britain teammates created historic moments that provided our sport with a heritage to be proud of. His contribution and service to Modern Pentathlon were immense, not only as an athlete but also as a

leader who served Pentathlon GB as Chairman.

“Like so many distinguished pentathletes, Jim’s military service cultivated the discipline and commitment to physical excellence that enabled him to compete at the highest level across two decades. His individual progression from 29th to 4th in the Olympic Games 1964-1972 was evidence of his adherence to high performance, and the team gold medal he earned in Montreal in 1976 was a rich reward for so many years of hard work across the five disciplines.

“Jim was an outstanding horseman, but above all an outstanding sportsman. I personally competed against him numerous times, including in my home city of Darmstadt, and I remember him as both a fierce competitor and a gentleman. We all admired his intervention in Montreal that led to the exposure of cheating by a rival athlete.

“Thanks to athletes like Jim, a recipient of the Olympic Order, fair play is enshrined within the values of Modern Pentathlon. He was the embodiment of Coubertin’s vision in creating an Olympic sport that would ‘test a man’s moral qualities as much as his physical resources, producing thereby the ideal, complete athlete’.”