

# TOON IN!



BY MICHAEL PAYNE  
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## Michael Payne's "*Toon In!*" wins prestigious Illustrated Sports Book of the Year Award

**27 May 2022; London:** "*Toon In!*" by Michael Payne, former Director of the IOC and long-time Olympic commentator, has won the prestigious Illustrated Sports Book of the Year Award at the Sunday Times Sports Book Awards 2022 held at the Kia Oval in London.

*Toon In!* is a uniquely insightful book of wicked humour and visual genius, which uses the cutting insight of 400 of the world's greatest cartoonists from 50 countries to help tell the extraordinary story behind the modern Olympic Games.

Started as a COVID-19 lockdown project, Michael, a collector of political cartoons, pulled together more than 1,200 Olympic-themed cartoons, accompanied by a personal 100,000-word commentary, to produce a one-of-a-kind, 500 page, very large coffee table book.

Speaking about *Toon In!* after receiving the award, Michael said:

"I am proud and very honoured to be presented with the prestigious Illustrated Sports Book of the Year Award. It was very special to receive it from eleven-time Paralympic gold medallist Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson. As a collector of political cartoons, I have always admired the incredible skill and visual genius of the cartoonist. It's that ability to tell the most incredible stories and reveal hidden truths, often without words. What started as a little COVID-19 lockdown project to bring people a few smiles ended up as fun, time-consuming, but very rewarding project.

"I would firstly like to thank the IOC for not suing me for libel! I would also like to thank the publishers, Vision Sports Publishing, and the designer, Theodora Mantzaris, whose design brilliance was actually able to pull this creativity together. The whole project was for four charities around the world."

All profits from the sale of *Toon In!* are being donated to the following four charities and special causes: Back Up Trust, Cartooning for Peace, Peace and Sport, and Yunus Sports Hub (further details in Notes to Editors).

*Toon In!* is published by Vision Sports Publishing (UK). To see a full overview of the book and to purchase a copy of *Toon In!* for €80 (\$95), visit: [www.olympiccartoon.com](http://www.olympiccartoon.com). A special collectors' version, with a limited edition (250 copies) art litho of the cartoon from Jim Thompson detailing the history of the Olympic ceremonies, along with signed copy of *Toon In!* by the author is available for €200 (\$250).

-ENDS-

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## Notes to Editors

### 1. The Team Behind *Toon In!*

#### **Michael Payne: the author**

Michael has had a lifelong career at the forefront of the business of sport. Over the past four decades, few people have been as close to the finance and politics of global sport or have accumulated as much insider knowledge as he has. His stories will reveal, entertain and surprise. He has been nominated by Advertising Age as one of the world's 50 most influential marketers. Tokyo 2020 will be his 20th Olympic Games.

Michael has also served as advisor to Formula One and its CEO, Bernie Ecclestone; to multiple different international sports federations; to broadcast and media groups; and to corporations around the world. He is the author of "Olympic Turnaround", the best-selling book that details the transformation of the Olympic Movement from bankruptcy to a multi-billion dollar brand. Olympic Turnaround has been published in 15 languages.

#### **Theodora Mantzaris: the designer**

Theodora is the world's leading design director for major sporting events. She led the design team of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games and she became the Design Adviser to the IOC on all subsequent Olympic Games.

#### **Stewart Binns: the editor**

A BAFTA winning film producer, author and former SAS soldier, Stewart launched Trans World Sport and the Olympic Television Archive Bureau. He is the author of numerous historical novels and sports anthologies, and a renowned Olympic historian. He is the founder of his own media company.

#### **Jim Thompson: the cartoonist**

The Editorial Sports Cartoonist of the Los Angeles Times, Jim is a comic historian and California trial lawyer. He occasionally raises the ire of judges by lampooning them in court. He is the founder of Thompson Sports Art.

#### **Cartoonists**

Over 3,000 cartoons from over 500 cartoonists were shortlisted for inclusion in Toon In! Eventually, 360 cartoonists from 47 countries made the cut:

Africa – 6 countries

Americas – 7 countries

Asia – 13 countries

Europe – 19 countries

Asia – 2 countries

## 2. The Charities / Causes

### **Back Up Trust** ([www.backuptrust.org.uk](http://www.backuptrust.org.uk))

The UK charity was founded by former world champion freestyle ski champion and James Bond stunt skier Mike Nemesvary, who became paralysed as the result of a training accident. Mike established Back Up to enable everyone affected by spinal cord injury to experience freedom and independence by returning to the ski slopes and joining expeditions to climb mountains.

### **Cartooning For Peace** ([www.cartooningforpeace.org](http://www.cartooningforpeace.org))

The international network of more than 200 cartoonists from 60 countries committed to the promotion of freedom of expression and human rights - fighting with humour for the respect of culture and freedom. According to leading French cartoonist Plantu, who helped found the organisation, "Where there are walls of separation, walls of incomprehension, there will always be cartoonists to crack them, to circumvent them and finally make them transparent."

### **Peace and Sport** ([www.peace-sport.org](http://www.peace-sport.org))

The neutral, independent organisation set up under the High Patronage of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, to promote sport as a tool for peace. Peace and Sport has pioneered programmes around the world, from bringing Israeli and Palestinian athletes and diplomats together through to the staging of the Friendship Games around the African Great Lakes for the conflict nations of Burundi, Congo and Rwanda.

### **Yunus Sports Hub** ([www.yunusportshub.com](http://www.yunusportshub.com))

Founded by Nobel Peace Prize winner Professor Yunus to bring networks of sport and social business together, and to realise the potential power of communities. When the first wave of COVID-19 struck, the Yunus Sports Hub moved to create programmes for local groups of sports enthusiasts to help people weakened by the coronavirus, especially seniors and people living below the poverty line.

## 3. Selection of cartoons, released for worldwide media

Visit [www.olympiccartoon.com/media-hub/](http://www.olympiccartoon.com/media-hub/) for a selection of cartoons cleared for use by media, worldwide - both print, digital and electronic broadcast, copyright free, subject to the following conditions:

- Cartoonist name and nationality must be credited
- Clear reference to the Toon In! book and website reference: [www.olympiccartoon.com](http://www.olympiccartoon.com)