

= Jack Le Goff =

Louis Jean " Jack " Le Goff (April 8 , 1931 in Alençon , Orne , France ? July 24 , 2009 in Saumur , Maine @-@ et @-@ Loire , France) was a French equestrian , best known as the coach of the American three @-@ day eventing team from 1970 to 1984 . He coached the team to multiple international championships , winning 18 international medals , including several in the Olympics . Le Goff is known for having a large impact on the American eventing world , and the era in which he coached has been called the golden era for American equestrianism .

Prior to becoming an American coach , Le Goff served in the French Army and competed in three @-@ day eventing for France . He rode in the 1960 Summer Olympics , winning a team bronze medal , and the 1964 Summer Olympics , where he did not win a medal . He subsequently acted as the coach for the French national team , winning multiple regional and international medals . After retiring as the American coach , he acted as a consultant to the United States Equestrian Team (USET) for finding new riders , helped to coach the Canadian national team , and served as the director for the USET Training Center . He also served the Federation Equestre Internationale as an eventing judge , committee member and Olympic appeals judge .

= = Personal life and competitive career = =

Born in 1931 , Le Goff 's father was a French cavalry officer . Jack began riding early , and during his teenage years competed as a steeplechase jockey , as well as showing in dressage , showjumping , and eventing . At the age of seventeen , after the death of his father , Le Goff joined the French military and began riding for Cadre Noir , the national riding academy . After his training , he became a riding master at the school . He remained in this position for a decade . As a French soldier he fought in the Algerian War after his appearance in the 1960 Olympic Games . Le Goff competed in two Olympic Games , in 1960 and 1964 . In 1960 , at the Roma Games , he finished sixth individually and helped the French team to a bronze medal . At the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo , he finished twenty @-@ third individually , while the French team came in eighth . He was also the French national eventing champion in 1956 and 1964 . In the US he had a long @-@ time companion named Susan Smith , and at his death was survived by her , as well as five children , five grandchildren and three great @-@ grandchildren .

= = Coaching career = =

Following his return from Algeria and his competition in the 1964 Olympics , Le Goff became the coach for the French eventing team , remaining as such through the 1968 Summer Olympics . In this position he was the first civilian equestrian coach for the French national team , which had previously been under the control of the Army . During his tenure , French riders took gold medals at the 1968 Summer Olympics and the 1967 and 1968 European Junior Championships .

After that Games , he moved to the United States and became the eventing coach for the American equestrian team . He coached the team through eight international championships , including the 1970 through the 1984 Olympics . His teams earned 18 international medals in all . During his time as coach , Le Goff had complete control over the US eventing team , including the selection , training and pairing of horses and riders . He said that he was able to " identify the Team 's event horses , blindfolded , merely by running his hands down their legs . " Although this power has since been taken away from the US eventing coach and a more objective selection system put in its place , Le Goff 's abilities in this area took the US teams to numerous medals while he was coach . In his position as American coach , USET historian Jennifer Bryant called him " one of the greatest coaches in three @-@ day @-@ eventing history " , as he built a multiple @-@ medal @-@ winning team from previously unknown horses and riders .

After retiring as the American coach , he spent five years in Hamilton , Massachusetts as the Director of the United States Equestrian Team (USET) Training Center . He also continued to work part @-@ time in developing new riders for the American team , as well as taking a part @-@ time

job coaching the Canadian team for the 1992 Summer Olympics . He also served as a member of the Three @-@ Day Event Committee for the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) , including serving as a three @-@ day eventing judge with the rank of " O " , meaning Official International . He was an eventing judge at the 1994 World Equestrian Games , the 1996 Summer Olympics , and multiple European Championships . At the 2000 Summer Olympics , he served as the chair of the FEI Three @-@ Day Event Committee and as the eventing representative to the Appeal Committee , assisting with supervising equestrian competition at the Games . After his retirement from coaching and judging , he moved between homes in Pennsylvania , Arizona , and France , until he died in France in 2009 .

= = Legacy = =

In 1983 , Le Goff was named Horseman of the Year by the American Horse Shows Association (the predecessor to the United States Equestrian Federation) . In 1999 , he was inducted into the United States Eventing Association 's Hall of Fame , followed by being named as one of the 50 most influential horsemen of the twentieth century by the equine magazine Chronicle of the Horse in 2002 . In 2009 , after his death , the USET announced the creation of the Jack Le Goff Memorial Fund , to provide travel grants to United States riders competing at the FEI Eventing World Cup Final .

Veteran US Olympic riders such as Michael Page and Mike Huber cite Le Goff as having a large impact on American eventing . Another US Olympic rider , Michael Plumb , says of Le Goff : " He was a disciplinarian , he was very strict , and he coached the team . I think we miss his approach . He could ride any of the horses brought to the Team , whether it was dressage or steeplechase or cross @-@ country . " The 1960s , 1970s , and early 1980s are known as the US 's " golden age of equestrian sports " , with Le Goff being named as a major player in the eventing arena . Denny Emerson , another top US eventing rider , called Le Goff a " tactician , consensus builder , consummate horseman , outrageous flirt , teller of terrible jokes , promoter , master chef , father , fisherman , and probably that most defining persona of all , the quintessential French male bon vivant . "