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## **RARE 1936 U.S. OLYMPIC BASKETBALL GOLD MEDAL FROM BERLIN GAMES UP FOR BID IN SCP AUCTIONS' 2015 FALL PREMIER AUCTION**

*Heirloom belonging to former UCLA hoops star up for auction through Dec. 5*

**Laguna Niguel, Calif. (Nov. 30, 2015)** – SCP Auctions is proud to present an extremely rare 1936 U.S. Men's Olympic Basketball Team gold medal from the Berlin Summer Games as part of its 2015 Fall Premier online auction. The '36 Games represented the very first international basketball tournament and the medal that's up for bid belonged to a former UCLA standout guard named Carl Shy. Bidding, which concludes on Saturday, Dec. 5 at [www.scpauctions.com](http://www.scpauctions.com), is currently at \$12,081 for the exceptional Olympic heirloom. Early estimates price the medal at \$40,000.

"It's extremely rare to have an Olympic gold medal with this much significance behind it since the Berlin Games represented the very first time the Olympics hosted an international basketball competition," said David Kohler, president of SCP Auctions.

During the '20s and '30s, before the formation of the NBA in 1946, several companies across the country sponsored amateur basketball squads made up of their own employees to compete in Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) sanctioned tournaments. Since there was no pro league, many of the country's top collegiate stars chose this route to keep their playing dreams alive. One such player was Carl Shy, who competed for the Universal Pictures team. An American film studio, Hollywood-based Universal Pictures sponsored one of the premier amateur basketball squads in the nation.

Shy, who was born in Los Angeles on Sept. 13, 1908, played his college ball for the UCLA Bruins in the late '20s and early '30s. Standing 6' 1" and weighing 170 pounds, he was a playmaking guard and following graduation went on to play for the Universal Pictures club team with fellow UCLA teammates Sam Balter, Carl Knowles, Don Piper and Frank Lubin. As it turns out, their team wound up winning a national AAU tournament in New York City in the spring of '36 that allowed them to field half of the 1936 U.S. Men's Olympic Basketball Team.

Presented here is Shy's Olympic gold medal from the Berlin Summer Games. It is actually made of gilt silver (as are all golds after 1912), designed by Giuseppe Cassioli and measures 55mm in diameter, 3mm in thickness and weighs 71.5g. The obverse features Nike, Goddess of Victory, seated above the stadium holding a winner's crown and palm branch with "XI OLYMPIAD Berlin 1936" scripted on the right. The reverse shows a winner being carried off by jubilant athletes. On the rim, it is imprinted with the name of the manufacturer: "B.M. Mayer Pforzheim 990." Well-preserved in both color and texture, the medal remains in good condition, although the recipient's wife years later re-chained the medal so she could

finally wear it around her neck. It now has a hole at the very top through which a 24-inch, gold-filled chain resides.

At the Berlin games, all basketball was played outdoors on courts consisting of clay and sand. The United States' 14-man roster earned a first-round forfeit win over Spain whose team had been called home because of the start of the Spanish Civil War. The Americans then trounced Estonia, 52-18, in the second round, before posting a 56-23 victory over the Philippines. A 25-10 U.S. triumph over Mexico in the semi-finals set the stage for a gold-medal encounter between basketball inventor James Naismith's native Canada and his adopted United States.

In the championship game, which was played in a torrential downpour, the U.S. team battled the elements as well as the Canadians. After leading 15-4 at halftime, the U.S. squad spent the majority of the second half simply playing catch with a waterlogged sphere that must have felt like a medicine ball. The final score was 19-8 with American Joe Fortenberry matching the total output of the entire Canadian team.

Balter, Shy's teammate at UCLA as well as at the Olympics, had this to say about the experience some 40 years later: "We had hoped to display to sports fans of other countries the skills, the science and the speed of the American game. Instead, a comedy of errors and unfortunate circumstances had combined to make a sandlot affair of what should have been the greatest basketball tournament ever.

"A dribble was not a dribble," he said in describing the championship game. "It was a splash."

When the Games ended, the United States Men's Basketball Team had an undefeated record of 5-0 and had outscored its opponents 152 to 69. Shy, who went on to become a police officer with the Los Angeles Police Department, died in 1991 at age 83.

Bidding is open to registered bidders only. For more information on how to participate, please visit [www.scpauctions.com](http://www.scpauctions.com) or call (949) 831-3700.

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