

# THE XIV<sup>th</sup> OLYMPIAD IN LONDON

## 1948

*His Majesty, King George VI has graciously consented to act as Patron of the Games. Opening Ceremony : July 29th. 1948. Closing Ceremony : Aug. 14th. 1948.*

*From the last report received from the Organising Committee of London, we publish hereby an extract concerning the preparation and the events of the Games.*

*(Du dernier rapport que nous avons reçu du Comité d'organisation des Jeux nous publions ci-dessous un extrait ayant trait à la préparation des Jeux et aux épreuves qui y seront disputées.)*

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE « GAMES »

*Work of the organization of the XIVth Olympiad is now under way.*

*A new approach road from Wembley Station to the Empire Stadium is to be laid down.*

*Adequate dressing rooms with shower and plunge baths and other comforts for the hundreds of competitors are in the process of construction. A new outdoor swimming pool, new car parks, gardens and a special "warming-up" track for athletes are also to be constructed.*

*A Restaurant and Restroom for competitors and officials will be provided.*

*The Grayhound and Speedway tracks in the Stadium will disappear and a first class running track with 7 lanes will be laid down instead.*

### EVENTS FOR THE GAMES

*The seventeen sports included in the "Games" for 1948 are :*

*Equestrian, Yachting, Fencing, Shooting, Boxing, Swimming, Cycling, Football, Rowing, Canoeing, Basket Ball, Field Hockey, Wrestling, Weight-Lifting, Modern Pentathlon, Athletics and Gymnastics.*

#### Equestrian Events.

*Probably in the Windsor area or Aldershot, the world's best horsemen will compete in the arduous S-days event to test control of the horses in the arena, jumping and endurance. As a climax to the "Games" picked riders*

*compete for the coveted Prix des Nations jumping competition in the Empire Stadium. Each Nation enters a team of three horsemen, who must each jump over from 16 to 20 jumps on each round of the Course. The jumps include a water obstacle approximately 13 feet wide with a hedge in front of it, also post and rail jumps with a maximum height of 5ft. 3in.*

#### Yachting.

*The venue for the Yacht Racing will be announced shortly.*

*At the International Yacht Racing Union Congress held in London recently five classes were decided upon for the 1948 "Games".*

*They are :*

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>International</i> | <i>6 metres Class with a crew of five.</i>                                    |
| <i>"</i>             | <i>Dragon Class with a crew of three.</i>                                     |
| <i>"</i>             | <i>Star Class with a crew of two.</i>   |
| <i>"</i>             | <i>Y. R. A. of Great Britain, one-design keel boat with a crew of two.</i>    |
| <i>"</i>             | <i>Y. R. A. of Great Britain — Firefly 12-foot dinghy with a crew of one.</i> |

*The two latter classes are new designs as far as the Olympic races are concerned. The Firefly Class will be built in England for the "Games". Already orders have been placed for boats:*

*Yacht racing will take place from 3rd to the 6th August and from the 10th to the 12th August. Each day all classes of boats will compete, the winner being determined in each class by the award of points covering the whole series of races.*

#### Fencing.

*Fencing will be held in the Palace of Arts at Wembley. At present this building is being used by a Government Department but as soon as they leave the building, workmen will get busy in knocking down partitions, erecting a large central stand to hold 1,300 spectators, preparing a cafe and rest room for competitors and officials, making dressing rooms, workshops and administration offices. Eight pistes (fencing strips) will be laid down, each 92 feet*

long by 6 ½ feet wide. The central piste for the major contests will be 111 ½ feet long so as to allow the epee final to be held indoors if the weather is bad.

For the epee events eight pistes are being laid down outside the Palace of Arts on ground adjoining the building. Each piste will have an electrical judging machine which automatically records the number of hits of each competitor.

#### Shooting.

Shooting events, both for full-bore and miniature rifle, will take place at Bisley from the 2nd to the 6th of August. The events have not been finally decided with the Union Internationale de Tir but will probably consist of :

Full bore at 500 yards.

Any target pistol calibre 22 inches (5.5 mm) at 50 metres.

Rifle calibre 22 inches (5.5 mm) at 50 metres.

#### Boxing.

The Empire Pool Building at Wembley will be used for the Olympic Boxing Contests from the 29th July to the 3rd or 4th of August. Wembley Stadium are preparing a new floor which can be easily removed to enable the Swimming Pool to be used afterwards and later on so that it may revert to an Ice Rink.

#### Swimming.

As soon as the last boxing bout is finished workmen will demolish the boxing ring and take up the floor so as to prepare the swimming pool. Wembley will have to work day and night to get the pool ready for the first indoor swimming events which will start there on the evening of 7th August. The first swimming event takes place in the outdoor pool on the 6th August and the Finals will take place in the Empire Pool on 12th or 13th August. Diving and Water Polo will mostly be in the outside Pool.

#### Cycling.

Herne Hill will be used for the track events. For the Cycle Road Race the Organizing Committee are having difficulty in finding a suitable area near London where the roads can be closed. Richmond Park, which is a Royal Park, might be used if permission can be obtained from the Ministry of Works who control it.

Track events, to be held on 4th, 6th and 7th August, will consist of :

Individual.

1,000 metres scratch.

1,000 metres time-trial.

Team (of 4 per nation)

4,000 metres pursuit.

Tandem

2,000 metres.

The road race events will be over approximately 200 kilometres (125 miles) and will consist of:

(a) Individual.

(b) Teams of 4 per nation.

One event only for (a) and (b).

#### Football.

The preliminary rounds of the football will take place on football grounds in the London area, the first matches being played on the 30th July. Every evening until the 7th August these preliminary rounds will be played and the semi-finals will be held in the Empire Stadium on the evenings of 10th August and 11th August. The Final will be played on the evening of the 13th August in the Olympic Stadium.

#### Rowing.

Rowing will take place, from 6th August to 11th August, on the same stretch of river that is used for the Henley Regatta. The events have not yet been finally decided but will probably be :

Single Sculls.

Double Sculls.

Pairs Oars with cox.

Pair Oars without cox.

Four Oars with cox.

Four Oars without cox.

Eight Oars.

The Organizing Committee are faced with some big problems at Henley. Additional stands will have to be erected as well as refreshment tents, storage room for boats, overhead steering indicators every 250 metres and other facilities. The piles used for Henley Regatta only allow two boats to row abreast. These will have to be moved so as to allow for three boats abreast. Accommodation for competitors and officials must be found in the locality. Additional car parks, and a public address system over the whole course are other problems to be overcome.

#### Canoeing.

Directly after the rowing events the canoe races will be held on the same course on 12th and 13th August.

The British Canoe Union have suggested to the International Canoe Federation that an 8,000 metres race is held, the start being approximately at the finishing post for the shorter races opposite Phyllis Court and going down-stream to Hambledon Lock and return. Other events will be :

8,000 metres K. 1., K. 2., and C. 2.  
 1,000 metres K. 1., K. 2., K. 4., C. 1.,  
 and C. 2.  
 Relay 4 x 500 metres K. 1.  
 (K. 1. = Single-seater Kayak ; K. 2. =  
 Two-seater Kayak, etc. ; C. 1. = Single-  
 seater Canadian, etc.)

#### Basket Ball.

The venue for Basket Ball which will be held probably from 31st July - 6th August, has not yet been decided. The International Basket Ball Federation expect from 24 to 28 Nations to send teams. The game has an immense popularity in the United States and on the Continent.

With a team of jive and five substitutes allowed, as well as trainers, masseurs and officials this sport alone will bring nearly three hundred men. A search is being made to find a suitable place in the London area which can stage this event indoors. Large dressing room accommodation is required for a minimum of 120 athletes at any one time.

#### Field Hockey.

The final of the Field Hockey will be held in the Empire Stadium probably on the 9th August. Preliminary rounds will be held on grounds in London from 3rd to the 7th August. The International Field Hockey Federation expect 10 to 12 Nations to compete.

#### Wrestling and Weight Lifting.

The venues for these two sports have not yet been decided. The Olympic Committee are inspecting several well-known London arenas before making a final choice.

The Wrestling will take place from 29th July to 5th August, the events being :

Greco-Roman Style 7 events at various weights.

Catch-as-Catch-Can 8 events at various weights.

For this sport the Organizing Committee will have to secure two mats for the Wrestling Rings and those are likely to cost a large sum of money. Mats used in this country do not come up to Olympic requirements and enquiries are being made to see where they can be obtained.

The dates for the Weight-Lifting events will probably be from 10th to the 12th August. There will be six weights, the Bantam Weight being a new weight for Olympic Games.

#### Modern Pentathlon.

The Modern Pentathlon event, to be held from 31st July to the 5th August, is based on the ancient Greek Olympic Games when the best all-round athlete was chosen. Today this event comprises cross country running, shooting, horse-riding, fencing and swimming.

The Organizing Committee of the country where the „ Games ” are to be held usually provides the horses for the riding event. In 1948, it will be very difficult to provide the 45—50 highly trained horses that will be required. Before the War the Cavalry Regiments usually provided the horses and trained them but in this country, as in all others, Cavalry Regiments are now mechanised. The Organizing Committee therefore are examining the position in regard to this event to see if any modification will have to be made.

The other Pentathlon events will probably take place at Wembley for the swimming and fencing, Bisley for the shooting and probably in the vicinity of London for the cross country. The riding event, if held, will take place wherever the main equestrian events are staged.

#### Athletics.

The Empire Stadium will be used for the whole of these events from 30th July to the 7th August.

The full list of events is :

Track. Men.      100 metres flat.  
                          200 metres flat.  
                          400 metres flat.  
                          800 metres flat.  
                          1,500 metres flat.  
                          5,000 metres flat.  
                          10,000 metres flat.  
                          Relay 4 x 100 metres.  
                          Relay 4 x 400 metres.  
                          10,000 metres walk.  
                          Marathon - 26 miles 385 yards.  
                          3,000 metres steeplechase.  
                          110 metres hurdle.  
                          400 metres hurdle.  
                          25 or 50 kilometres road walk  
                          (not yet finally decided).

Ladies. 100 metres flat. and  
                          Relay 4 x 100 metres.  
                          200 metres flat.  
                          80 metres hurdle race.

Field. Men. *Running high jump.*  
*Running broad jump.*  
*Hop Step and Jump.*  
*Pole Vault.*  
*Throwing the javelin.*  
*Throwing the discus.*  
*Putting the shot.*  
*Throwing the hammer.*

Ladies. *Running broad jump.*  
*Running high jump.*  
*Throwing the discus.*  
*Throwing the javelin.*  
*Putting the weight.*

Decathlon. *100 metres flat.*  
*Running broad jump.*  
*Putting the shot.*  
*400 metres flat.*  
*110 metres hurdle race.*  
*Throwing the discus.*  
*Pole vault.*  
*Throwing the javelin.*  
*1,500 metres flat.*  
*Running high jump,*

*The Marathon Race and the Road Walk, which may be either 25 or 50 kilometres, will start and finish in the Empire Stadium, the competitors using the tunnel under the Royal Box to leave and enter the Stadium. The distance of 26 miles 385 yards is not, as is often believed, that which Pheidippides is said to have run to Athens when carrying the news of the victory of the Greeks over the Persians at the Battle of Marathon in 490 B. C., though the race is named after this mythical incident. The Greek courier is supposed, after running the 22 miles to Athens, to have fallen dead when he announced the victory.*

*The present length is actually that which was fixed for the Race in London in 1908, the year that the little Italian runner, Dorando, collapsed a few yards from the finishing post when in the lead and was disqualified for being helped over the finishing line by excited compatriots. It has remained this distance ever since, the International Amateur athletic Federation having agreed to adopt it as the standard course.*

*The course or the Race in 1948 has already been measured by famous Olympic runners with Mr. E. J. Holt, Chairman of the Technical Committee and Secretary of the International Athletic Federation, directing operations.*

*Mr. H. W. Payne, an ex-Olympic Marathon runner, Mr. J. G. Stubbs, T. F. Lalande and Mr. F. W. Harmer present-day Marathon runners with Mr. A. T. Liffen and Mr. W. T. Pain all helped to push a measuring wheel*

*over the 26 miles. The exact route will be published when the International Athletic Federation has given its final approval to the course.*

Gymnastics.

*These events will be held in the second week but the dates have not yet been finally fixed. They will probably be held in the Empire Stadium.*

*Twelve exercises are included in the team competitions. The team consists of 8 gymnasts. In the individual competitions exercises are carried out on the horizontal bar, parallel bars, side horse, long horse and flying rings. There are also free exercises. Placing for the individual champion is decided by the best score in the twelve-exercises competition.*

## DEMONSTRATIONS

*Two or more demonstrations of different sports will be given in the Empire Stadium. Many applications have been received by the Olympic Committee from different Associations to stage their sports and the Committee are now examining them and will make a final choice shortly.*

## INVITATIONS

*Invitations will be sent out by the Organizing Committee to participate in the 1948 "Games" early in the New Year. Germany and Japan will not be included.*

*The design for the invitations, which portray an athlete running with a flaming Olympic Torch, has been drawn by Mr. J. E. Slater, of Ribworth, Leicester.*

*The wording of the invitations, which is in accordance with Olympic Rules is :*

*" The International Olympic Committee having chosen the City of London as the place for the celebration of the XIVth Olympiad, the Organising Committee of the Olympic Games of 1948, on the instructions of the I. O. C., has the honour to invite you to take part in the competitions and celebrations which will take place on this occasion at London from 29th July to 14th August, 1948. "*

## HOUSING

*The problem of housing competitors and officials, who will number over 5,000 is being examined by a special Committee set up by H. M. Government. No decision has yet been*

come to as to whether or not an Olympic Village will be built, as was done for the 1932 "Games".

The Organizing Committee cannot give any further information on this important subject until the Government Committee has given its decision. The Organising Committee will, however, make an announcement at the earliest opportunity.

#### OLYMPIC FLAME AND TORCH RELAY

One of the many problems facing the Organizing Committee is making provision for the Olympic Flame, which is lighted in the Stadium on the opening day and extinguished at the close of the "Games". The flame must stay alight in all weathers and must be visible in the daytime. In order to light the Flame it is hoped to organise relays of runners from Olympia in Greece, across Europe to Wembley. The Flame has to be kindled by setting fire to legs by means of the sun's rays operating through a giant magnifying glass.

The design of the Torch, which, like the Flame in the Stadium, must stay alight under all conditions, is now being considered by

experts of the Fuel Research Board, a department of the British Board of Scientific and Industrial Research and others.

The exact route the torch runners will follow has not yet been decided.

#### FINNISH GIFT TO LONDON

A contribution to the preparations for the Games, symptomatic of the amity and goodwill among sportsmen the world over and of the spirit in which Olympic contests have always been staged, has been made by the Finnish Olympic Committee.

Hearing of the shortage of timber, the Olympic Committee in Helsinki cabled to London that it will gladly give twenty standards of timber for this purpose. This represents approximately 50 tons of timber.

The news of this generous gift came from Mr. Lauri Miettinen who was appointed General Organising Secretary for the Olympic Games of Helsinki which were due to take place in 1940. He still plays a very influential part in Finnish Sporting circles and is a member of the International Amateur Athletic Federation Council.