

**Report presented by the Italian National Olympic Committee (C.O.N.I.) at the
48th Session of the International Olympic Committee
held in Mexico-City, 14-18 April 1953.**

Our first report, presented two years ago in Vienna, stipulated that immediately after the Oslo Games we should begin executive work for the Seventh Winter Olympics, which will take place in Cortina d'Ampezzo in 1956.

It is our pleasure to notify you that our work is already well begun and being carried out rapidly. Since last year all decisions relative to the principal problems have been made.

We are happy to announce that the Italian Government has given assurance of its whole-hearted cooperation in the organization of the Games. Such aid will make it possible for us to prepare the Games in a manner worthy of our country's finest traditions.

With the assistance of the State and the various interested Ministries, it will be possible, also from the point of view of general necessities, to increase the capacity of the necessary public services to such a degree that Cortina d'Ampezzo can fulfill the requirements that the Winter Games demand. These demands refer particularly to:

- a) enlargement and extension of highway system and lines of communication;
- b) improvement of the Dolomites railway service in conjunction with the national and international networks;
- c) construction of a new building for postal, telephone and telegraph services;
- d) installation of a coaxial cable to expedite international telephone communications;
- e) completion of several public buildings and grounds;
- f) improvement of street illumination;
- g) extension of the municipal aqueduct;
- h) increase in hotel equipment and accommodation;
- i) preparation of parking space for vehicles;
- j) snow removal from all important streets

The above-mentioned works have already been begun. An outlay of not less than three million dollars is needed for their completion.

TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

The Italian Olympic Committee has held various meetings, in collaboration with the qualified Italian Sport federations and the town of Cortina d'Ampezzo, to determine executive and financial measures to be taken to ensure the complete success of the undertaking.

Naturally, Cortina's particular status must be kept in mind when considering the extent of work to be done. Although it enjoys a wide

fame among tourists all over the world, it is still only a mountain village. On the other hand, the Winter Games ordinarily can be held only in mountainous zones, as was the case with Chamonix, St. Moritz and Garmisch; and Cortina will, of course, be no exception.

Nevertheless, everything has been planned so as to guarantee maximum smoothness in the running of the sporting events. Visitors to the 1956 Games will certainly be more than satisfied with the hospitality we shall do everything in our power to offer them and with the more efficient and new arrangements.

We are, therefore, sure that all the nations taking part in the competitions will have the opportunity to give their best performances under the most favourable conditions and that afterwards they will carry away with them a pleasant memory of days passed in the heart of the Dolomites.

Cortina is now one vast workshop. The main public works of improvement are already started, and work is speedily progressing on the sport sites. Some of these latter are completely new, such as the artificial-ice stadium, and others already in existence are being overhauled.

We now believe that the total organization and construction expenses directly connected with the Games will amount to around three and a half million dollars.

The competition sites will have the following characteristics, unless there should be some future change in detail.

ICE SPORTS

Olympic Stadium. — This is now under construction on land donated by the administration of Cortina and at the expense of the C. O. N. I. (Italian National Olympic Committee). The stadium is a ten-minute walk from the village centre in a magnificent panoramic position. The building will be composed of three tiers of covered seats and a glass gallery for radio and press. Each tier of seats will have its own entrance for the public, with special sectors reserved for the members of the International Olympic Committee and for the authorities. The maximum seating capacity of the Stadium during the Games will be 10,000 people.

There are to be two 30 × 60 meter areas artificially frozen by a plant that can produce 600,000 ice-units an hour. The outer aspect of the Stadium will blend with the traditional local architecture.

The Stadium will be used for hockey matches and for the figureskating competitions. The building will be completed during the winter of 1954-1955.

Other subsidiary rinks will be used for training. Hockey matches can also be played in the new Ice Palace of Bolzano.

Misurina. — This magnificent lake, justly named the « Pearl of the Dolomites » by poets, will be the site for the standard speed 400 meter skating track. The course will be prepared so as to guarantee absolute perfection and a uniform consistency of surface. The lake is situated a few kilometers from Cortina and can be reached via the national highway, which is always open to traffic. On the banks of the lake there are hotels of the same category as those in Cortina itself, and visitors can be comfortably lodged in these.

Bobsleigh. — The course is already in condition, and numerous tests have proved its perfections. The famous « Antelao » curve, well known by bobsledders, has been corrected and widened. Therefore, the run of the whole course favours maximum velocity with no risk to competitors other than that dependent on circumstances typical of this sport.

A new platform for the public has been put at the great S-curve, and there will be separate ones reserved for the authorities, the International Olympic Committee and the press.

Next year the world championships will take place here, and the whole run will thus be once again and decisively put to the test.

SKI

Tofane. — The slopes of these majestic mountains facing Cortina offer a vast area suitable for ski races.

The Olympic downhill for men will be expanded along a new course, which was opened last year and which has all the necessary requirements to compare favourably with the most famous Alpine descents. The departure point is at a 2400-meter altitude, and the finish is at around 1500-meters; there is thus a vertical drop of about 900 meters over a run of about three kilomts. The course will be completely operative next season.

For ladies' downhill the so-called « Canalone », a run which has been in use for many years and is well known by European skiers, has been chosen. It is possible, however, that another course on the same slope may be used.

The giant slaloms for men and ladies will also be traced on the Tofane Canalone, between altitudes of 2000 and 1500 meters.

Col Drusciè. — This hill (1778 meters) located at the foot of the big Tofana, is well adapted for slaloms and has already been the scene of numerous important competitions. A double run is to be developed in accordance with the most modern methods dictated by the experience of recent years.

In addition, as far as relates to ski-alpine events, the work is to be completed under the close guidance of the Chairman of the F. I. S. (International Ski Federation) Downhill-slalom committee, who resides in Cortina.

It is unnecessary to add that all the runs are served by excellent chair and ski lifts and that cars may drive to the finishing posts. There are also spacious huts at the public's disposal.

Faloria. — A wide ski area in the Mount Sorapis group 2000 meters high. A cable-way reaches it from Cortina. The snow is ideally suited for skiing throughout the spring and has never been lacking. The reserve for the alpine-events will be located here.

Snow Stadium. — In Cianderies, a few minutes from Cortina — surrounded by marvellous landscape embracing all the mountains of the Cortina basin — an amphitheatre with provisional grandstands will be erected. Cross-country and relay races will depart from and finish up at the Snow Stadium, which will be large enough to hold even 20,000 people.

Along the valley and in the direction of Misurina there are many possibilities for the marking out of cross-country courses of every type and for every taste. The Italian Federation experts will begin their inspection work during the coming months in order to pick out the best spots for marking out the runs.

The reserve courses for the cross-country races may be situated at Pocol (funicular railway) as well as at Misurina. The two places are quickly reached from Cortina, requiring no change of lodgings by competitors, and the snow there is always abundant during the winter.

Zuel. — A few kilometers from Cortina in the direction of the valley and served by a station of the Dolomites Railway. The ski-jump « Italia » is being built here, completely reconstructed in concrete, similar to the famous Holmenkollen-hill. The new profile has already been approved by the F. I. S. Jumps of a maximum of 80 meters in length can be executed from the take-off run. Platforms with a capacity of 7000 people will be constructed at the sides, while another 10,000 spectators will be able to congregate around the end of the jump run.

The ski jump will be completed within the next year, and the whole installation will begin to function in 1954–1955.

PROGRAMME

After a close study of Cortina d'Ampezzo meteorological statistics, comprising data recorded without interruption from 1924 to 1949, it has been determined that the most favourable period for celebrating the Games is between the end of January and the beginning of February. We therefore take the liberty of suggesting that the Seventh Olympic Winter Games take place from January 26 (Thursday) to February 5 (Sunday). We believe that these dates are advisable also from the strictly sportive point of view. These dates have been chosen from local experience, and we can therefore attest to their having been well chosen.

The programme plans we present have already been sent to the Chancery of the International Olympic Committee and to the International Federations. From the answers we have so far received we feel that, on the whole, our plan is acceptable.

The programme includes the same competitions as those of Oslo. The figures demonstrate that even the Winter Games are assuming a size that cannot fail to preoccupy future organizers. A size of such proportions must, in our opinion, find its limit in the relative possibilities offered by the mountain resorts and, above all, in the logistic capabilities.

Decision on sport demonstration is still being studied. Our experts are considering whether it is opportune to adopt a sled race or a contest for alpinist-ski teams. We wish to return to this discussion at another time.

LODGINGS

From news published to date it would appear that in Oslo there were present, in round figures, 1200 athletes, 800 managers and officials and 1000 journalists, radio announcers, photographers, etc., for a total of 3000 persons directly interested in the Games.

If, as we hope, the Russians should participate, and considering that Cortina is not very distant from all Central and South European countries, it is obvious that the above figures would be greatly enlarged in 1956. It is impossible to resolve the logistic problem by constructing *ex novo* a real and independent Olympic village because, after the Games, there would be no way of utilizing the buildings in Cortina.

It has therefore been decided to house all the official Games participants in the hotels of Cortina, Pocol and Misurina, the total capacity of which will be increased for the occasion by the addition of supplementary beds. It is calculated that with hotels, pensions and private homes, Cortina and its immediate touristic environs will be able to lodge around 8500 persons, which represents a considerable effort for a small city of 6000 inhabitants.

Ideally this time the Olympic village will thus be made up of the hotels in which the participants are lodged. With this in mind, we think it is more important than ever before to recommend that the number of officials accompanying each individual teams be limited within the margins absolutely indispensable and in proportion to the number of actual contestants. With this precaution we shall also be able, to a certain extent, to satisfy the requirements of foreigners from all parts of the world who will want to come to Cortina to attend the Games.

It is evident that not all the visitors will find lodgings in Cortina; the large majority will have to be housed elsewhere. All existing housing possibilities in the area around Cortina are now being studied. It is expected

that within a radius of 40 kilometers, and with proper planning, at least another 10,000 beds will be at our disposal.

PRESS SERVICES

Everything possible is being done so that the representatives of press and radio can carry on their important task under the best conditions.

A group of four adjoining hotels will be conveniently equipped for every need of the radio and press. Officially accredited reporters will be lodged here. Their work will be facilitated in every way by the most modern means.

TRANSPORTATIONS

All competition sites planned are easily and quickly reached from the hotels in which the teams are housed. Therefore, participants will never be handicapped by the problem of transport.

However, preparations are already under way to set up various bus lines that will, with adequate frequency, unite the principal points with the centre of Cortina. Furthermore, contestants and their trainers may use all means of transportation free, both for training and for the competitions.

The directors of the Italian Railway System have arranged to attach coaches and sleeping cars to trains on the main international lines going to and from Calalzo and Dobbiaco, to merge with the Dolomites Railway. In this manner changes will be somewhat simplified. All national teams will receive the greatest possible assistance in the transportation of their baggage and sports equipment.

CONCLUSIONS

The C. O. N. I. and all its collaborators are completely aware of the value and significance of the Olympic Games. Italian sportsmen recognize that they are worthy of the confidence bestowed upon them: they will be honored to demonstrate to the International Olympic Committee and to all participants their maturity, even in the organizational field. The reception and hospitality which foreigners, when they come to Italy, have enjoyed has always been generous and cordial. With a like spirit, Cortina will welcome all those who take part in the 1956 Games.

With this report we hope we have given a sufficiently convincing idea of our concrete resolutions. The difficulties, as you well know, are not always easily surmountable, and the successful realization of our project requires an outlay of great financial resources. But all our sacrifices will have been amply rewarded if we succeed in obtaining the desired appreciation of the international sport world and if our work contributes towards maintaining the Torch of Olympic sport ever bright and high.