

Opening of the Games...

The VIIth Winter Olympic Games opened at Cortina on January 26th. A manifestation which was most successful and perfectly organized in every respect except for the lack of snow : human will thwarted by the elements of nature ! Never before has the winter organization of a meeting turned out to be as much of a success as the one in Cortina. The financial effort has only been equalled by the qualities of initiative, imagination and perseverance which have been brought into play in order to set up a comprehensive sport structure which makes a worthy setting to these Games. A thousand young people coming from all the different part of the world and representing 32 nations lined up under a colourful symphony of flags facing the Tribune of honour in the main Ice Stadium were the official opening ceremony of the Games took place under brilliant sunshine. It was performed by Mr. Giovanni Gronchi, President of the Italian Republic. Previously to this, Count Paolo Thaon di Revel the distinguished representative of the International Olympic Committee for Italy, and President of the Organizing Games "Committee delivered a speech.

The whole of this ceremony enfolded itself in accordance to the protocol and the traditions of the Games.

Opening of the 51st Session of the International Olympic Committee

The solemn opening ceremony of the 51st Session of the International Olympic Committee was held in the drawing-rooms of the hotel "Miramonti". Conducted in a simple and dignified manner, it took place in the presence of Mr. Russo, representative of the Italian Government. On this occasion, both Count Paolo Thaon di Revel, President of the Organizing Committee of the VIIth Winter Olympic Games and Mr. Avery Brundage President of the International Olympic Committee pronounced speeches which we are reproducing in the present issue of the Bulletin.

The Transport of the Olympic Flame

According to a tradition instituted in 1936, the Olympic Flame was kept burning throughout the duration of the Cortina Games in the main Stadium of the place where the Games' competitions are taking place.

The 1956 Flame was lit at the Capitole in Rome and was the occasion of an official

ceremony which took place on January 22nd. The banners of all the nations which are competing at Cortina were flown in front of Michael Angelo's master piece. Adolf Consolini, the famous discus thrower and the European recordman carried the Flame through the streets of the metropolis ; he was relayed by Pino Dordoni who transported the Flame from the ancient Via Appia to the site of the Roman aerodrome of Ciampino. From there a plane assumed the transport of the Flame to Venice where on St-Marco's Square, the universities' world Champion Adriano Guarneri took charge of it as far as Mestre, where Miss Anna Vianello, roller skating relayed him. From there, the Flame was conveyed to the Dolmites till it reached the Duke of Aoste sanctuary. From there the skiing champion Zeno Colo transported the Flame as far as the track "Olympia" where it was handed to Leverino Menardi followed by Vincenzo Colli, Lino Lacedelli and Enrico Colli. Finally, it was the skater Guido Caroli who assumed the charge of conveying it to the Ice Stadium of Cortina during the Opening Ceremony of the Games.

Other Peoples' Opinions

It is looked upon as a great honour for a young AMATEUR athlete to be chosen for the relay of the Olympic Flame from its source to its destination, the place where the Games are going to be held. At least I always assumed it was so, but from all evidence I seem to be wrong . Already at the Games of Helsinki in 1952, the Olympic Flame was carried to the Stadium by Nurmi ex-champion and pseudo-amateur who had been disqualified for infringing the Olympic Rules, he was reinstated to the status of amateur for the sake of serving the cause by the Finnish Olympic Committee on the eve of the opening of the Games. In 1952, at the Winter Olympic Games at Oslo, the Italian Zeno Colo registered a record breaking performance when he finished first in the skiing events (Downhill Race). At Cortina in 1956, the Italian champion carried the Olympic Flame from the Duke of Aoste's refuge to Cortina. It is a known fact that Colo is excluded from taking part in the Olympic Games as well as competing in others sports encounters reserved to amateurs, as he failed to comply to the rules governing the status of amateur, his photograph having been used for publicity purposes in some American newspapers and magazines.

The carrying of the Olympic Flame does not constitute in itself a competition but, in my opinion it constitutes an honour which should be bestowed only on an AMATEUR athlete. Moreover Nurmi and Colo have not only violated the rules of amateurism for which they have been duly punished, but both of them have received the homage and tribute of the crowds as well as the praise of the Finnish and the Italian Organizing Committees. How very illogical !

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Echoes

For the first time in the history of Olympism, a young girl has conferred the honour of pronouncing the Olympic oath in behalf of the assembled athletes. The Italian skier Giuliana Chenal-Minuzzo who has won a bronze medal at the Oslo Games, discharged this duty in a crystal clear voice tinted with some emotion.

The International Skiing Federation has decided to give the title of World champion to all Olympic winners of each event.





Solemn Opening Ceremony of the 51st Session of the International Olympic Committee at Cortina d'Ampezzo. On the right : Members and Ladies of the Committee. First row from l. to r. : Lady Burghley, Mrs. A. Brundage, Mrs. A. Bolanaki.

