

Cortina d'Ampezzo

Summary of the VIIth Winter Olympic Games at Cortina d'Ampezzo

Three months have gone by since the curtain fell on these Games which belong now to the past. Cortina which was once a winter station similar to so many others, has lived days of fame and glory. On the touristic basis, these Games have brought it fame, and Olympism has brought it into the lime light. The name of Cortina has been diffused throughout the world by means of thousands of lines issued by the press, not to mention the cinema, television and the radio. Three thousand two hundred hours of telephonic communications (of which 800 were simultaneous thanks to the device of a new coaxial cable) have diffused millions of publicity news, all praising Cortina. More than 7000 photo-telegraphic pictures have been realized, more than 1000 broadcasts enregistered, as well as about 100 running commentaries on the T. V., etc. etc. Altogether a magnificent display of publicity which Cortina d'Ampezzo fully deserved.

It is also an appropriate time to make a summary of the situation as it happened there. On the first instance, let us give a brief account of those who have been the mainsprings of the organization which reached such a pitch of perfection that they will be remembered for a long time. Was the press not *unanimous in* giving praise to those on whom fell the task to set afoot and carry out the organization of a manifestation on such a scale ?

Count Paolo Thaon di Revel, member of the International Olympic Committee and President of the Organizing Committee was efficiently aided by a host of courageous, go-ahead men devoted to the Olympic cause, who contrived to give to these Winter Games, the breadth never yet achieved by anyone. It has been said that unlimited financial resources were at his disposal. This may have been so, but it still remained to know how to use this money to the best advantage and this was done to the general approval of all. The second member for Italy, Dr. Giorgio de Stefani, Ambassador of the CONI, (Italian National Olympic Committee) was a brilliant assistant to his senior and thanks to this happy collaboration, was able to assume his arduous task with customary refinement and efficiency.

Dr. Onesti, President of the National Olympic Committee (CONI) who already presided over the Italian delegation which submitted the candidature of Cortina at the Session of the International Olympic Committee in Rome in 1949, in his usual unassuming manner shouldered his heavy task,

steeped in the enthusiasm so dear to the Latins. We knew how he set his heart on making a real success of these Games. Congratulations, Mr. Onesti, you certainly did it in a full measure.

He was assisted by Mr. Bruno Zauli, who well deserved to be serving on the CONI as its General Secretary. He kept up his reputation of being a tireless worker in his ceaseless effort and devotion to the Olympic cause.

Mr. Fabjan, the good-natured and courteous secretary of the Organizing Committee never once departed from his wonted calm ; for, anyone who has an inside knowledge of the arduous task set before him, both before and after the celebration of the Games must admit that Mr. Fabjan gave himself body and soul to his task,

We must not forget to mention the father of the press- or at any rate its laeder : Dr. Sabelli Fioretti who discharged the duty incumbent to him in a faultless manner and receive the gratitude of the journalists present for his kindnesses.

Let us thank Colonel Guiseppe Fabre, Officer in charge of the "Alpini" responsible for the tracks, for the efficient way in which he carried out the technical programme which was assigned to him. "Cortina 1956" augurs well for the Games to come, namely the XVIIth Olympiad to be held in Rome in 1960. Italy, and we mean her Olympic Committee, has won the best gold medal : the triumph of perfect organization.

The financial Survey of the Games

A lot has been said on the financial aspect of these Games. Without entering into details, we are able to quote certain statistics which reveal the extent of the sacrifices made by CONI. At this point, it may be useful to mention that the expenditure sustained by the Italian Government does not in anyway affect the balance-sheet of the Games Finances. The State built new roads, the P.T.T. and the Railways improved their material and their network of communications. It is quite true that CONI spent a considerable sum, but it has endowed the Olympic city with outstanding sports installations, unique in the world and which will greatly contribute to enhance the touristic value of Cortina ; without the Olympic Games this could never have happened.

The Olympic Stadium with its two artificial ice rinks, the jumping stand

"Italia" and the bobsleigh track have cost together ONE milliard and 700 millions liri (which means about 12 millions Swiss francs or 3 millions dollars appr.). The total account of expenses has raised the amount of three milliards and 200 millions liri (or about 22½ millions Swiss francs or 5½ millions dollars appr.).

The cost of erection of the military barracks where the 800 Alpinis were hospitalized while at work for about one year in the preparation of the tracks, etc, is included in the figure quoted above. Mr. Taviani, Minister of Defence, sized up the magnificent work carried out by the Alpinis in a telegram that he sent to General Liuzzi, Chief of Staff, worded as follows : In connection with the perfect organization of the Winter Olympic Games just concluded, to which the Alpinis and sections of the technical services of the Army contributed, I beg: you to convey to Col. G. Fabre in command of these Alpinis, to the commissioned and non-commissioned officers and all ranks, my warmest congratulations for the magnificent work they achieved to the admiration of all."

We wish to quote the comments made by Mr. Avery Brundage, President of the International Olympic Committee, when he passed through Lausanne on his way back from the Cortina Games and contacted the Chancellery. He declared himself highly satisfied with these Games and of their organization which he called brilliant, he also said that he considered that Cortina had surpassed itself.

A remark often heard "Where does the money for financing these Games come from ? has been answered by Mr. Onesti when he stated that all the funds came from Toto-calcio" (Football pools in Italy). The bets of sports fans return to sport as it were, a very natural thing rightly affirmed the President of CONI. He also added the following information concerning the military barracks of the village where the Army was lodged, which, along with the prefabricated houses are to be sent to various parts of the south of the Peninsula where there is an acute housing shortage at the present time. The tubular tribunes are to be offered to small communities which are laying out new sports grounds. Other equipments and movable installations

are to be conveyed to Rome in prevision for the forthcoming Games, when they will be put into use in 1960.

A happy Resolution passed by CONI

The Executive Board of CONI has appointed Mr. *G. B. Fabjan*, Gen. Vice-Secretary of the Olympic National Italian Committee. Mr. Fabjan was the mainspring of the Organizing Committee of the VIIth Winter Olympic Games at Cortina. This nomination has been made with the object of meeting the needs of its central organization, also as a token of the Committee's appreciation for the clever and efficient work achieved by this exceptional sportsman in every field of sporting activities. Everybody who came in contact with him on the occasion of the recent Cortina Games will rejoice at this nomination, and will join with us in the expression of our heartiest congratulations.

Quota of Spectators and Gate-money

The official report of the Cortina Games is of course far from being ready. We are nevertheless in a position to give the following statistics :

Quota of the paying spectators : 157,731. The receipts amounted to a total of 231,199,941 liri (about 1,600,000 Swiss frcs) shared out as follows : Opening Ceremony realized : 12,904,500 liri Gate-money ; six Alpine skiing racing events : 20,531,500 liri ; Bobsleigh, four races : 7,991,000 liri ; nordic skiing contests including special lumping namely nine events : 42,378,250 liri ; six events of figure skating : 35,539,280 liri ; four events of speed skating at Lake Misurima : 6,077,500 liri ; nineteen matches of Ice-hockey : 94,230,411 liri closing ceremony : 11,547,500 liri.

In connection with the skiing events, it is observed that the entrance money was collected only at the finish, thus one can reckon on an average attendance of 20,000 spectators per day at the Olympic Games of Cortina.

The Press

It was represented at Cortina by 402 journalists, 76 radio-reporters, 16 international agencies and 12 national ones.