

## THE GAME OF RUGBY IN ROME?

Just when the International Olympic Committee, according to a resolution passed at Cortina in 1956, has decided to abolish from its rules and list of optional sports: gliding, polo *and rugby*, a rumour has been spreading in Italy asking for the introduction and inclusion of rugby in the programme of the Games of the XVIIth Olympiad which are to be held in Rome in 1960!

The new art of the new set of rules declares that "only optional sports practised extensively in at least *twenty* countries *may* be included in the programme of the Olympic Games". (The underlinings are ours, *Ed.*) Now, we are informed that the game of rugby is only practised in fourteen countries, including the Fidji Isles! One presumes that in some of the countries where this sport has been adopted it is only practised on a very limited scale. Therefore this matter is settled for the meantime and most probably for some time to come.

It seems to us, however, that it may be of interest to our readers to read the article published by "L'Equipe", which deals with this subject. all the more so because our distinguished colleague sets on foot a scheme which has already been discussed by the International Olympic Committee and which

does not conform with the fundamental principles which govern our Olympic Games. "L'Equipe" writes:

"The Italians suggest the organization of an Olympic Rugby Tournament which is to take place in Rome in 1960.

"We are very much afraid that this wish will come up against serious difficulties...

"Firstly, on a matter of principle which pertains to the Olympic Charter... The Summer Games form a homogeneous whole... governed by the same principles as the Greek tragedies, necessitating unity of place and time; but the Italians must realize that a Rugby tournament played in July in Rome is out of the question.

"They therefore propose to hold it in May (already too late in the season)... They can of course point out that the Olympic Charter has not been applied to the letter in 1956, since the Equestrian Games are going to be held at Stockholm in June, separately from the Melbourne Games. This decision which is quite exceptional has been forced by the Australian laws of quarantine and can hardly be taken as a precedent!

"As far as the following is concerned, our point of view is categorical : we wish in order to lighten the Olympic Programme which is becoming too heavy and overcrowded to organize Spring Games, besides the Winter Games (skiing, skating, ice hockey, etc.) and the Summer Games (athletics, aquatic sports: rowing, swimming, water-polo, yachting, etc.) These Spring Games would include

all team games (football, basketball, rugby, hockey) as well as indoor Games such as (boxing, fencing, gymnastics, weight-lifting, wrestling, etc.).  
“This relieving of the overcrowded Olympic

Programme is bound to come sooner or later. It will also serve the excellent purpose of meeting the wishes of a large number of candidate towns applying for the Games...”