



# The IX<sup>th</sup> Olympic Winter Games Innsbruck 1964

## Simple Games and Return to Reason

by Bertl Neumann, Press Manager

Austria is but a small country, and Olympic Innsbruck is a relatively small town—Olympic Games, on the other hand, are a gigantic undertaking considering not only the athletic achievements but the overall requirements.

Since the beginning, Olympic Games have been growing constantly, until today the country wherein they are staged, and more so if it is a small country, faces an almost impossible financial and organizational task. At times, this unchecked growth has seemed to bury the Olympic spirit.

Innsbruck, as a city, is genuinely devoted to sports. It will make a supreme effort to hold high the spirit of true sportsmanship by setting an example of concentrating on the intrinsic value of sport. Return to reason—to the 'Simple Games': this is the motto of the 1964 Winter Games. Once more, the Olympic Games shall become what they were in Greece: a meeting of youth to compete against each other in fair contests. The great Olympic ideal alone inspired Baron de Coubertin when, in 1896, he initiated the first Olympic Games of modern times in Athens and thus gave shape to the idea of Olympic Renaissance.

The first Olympic Winter Games, also initiated by Baron de Coubertin in Chamonix, in 1924, could very well be called 'Simple Games'. It is only because of the untiring efforts of Baron de Coubertin that the winter sports competitions were put on the same footing as the classic sports.

Innsbruck wishes to continue in the spirit of Baron de Coubertin, one of the greatest pioneers in competitive sport. Following in his footsteps, and at the same time keeping within the economic capacity of Austria, the Innsbruck Organizing Committee wants to stage the 1964 Winter Games 'perfectly from a sports technical viewpoint', but otherwise in a 'simple' manner. No mad Olympic whirl, no sensationalism, no astronomical construction budget, no gigantic prices, nor publicity at all costs shall warp or mar the great festival of sport. The facilities, that have to be built, shall not be created without limit according to Olympic standards for just these twelve days of the Games, but with an eye to the future. After the Games, these buildings must serve a purpose, and be used

for the good of the public. The competition sites will offer modest, not luxurious, facilities and furnishings, but they will be the best ever from a sports technical standpoint. The alpine race courses in Lizum and on Patscherkofel mountain, and the cross-country courses at Seefeld will certainly deserve these three superlatives: 'to be the finest, most difficult and least dangerous of all Olympic race courses'. The Bobsleigh and Luge run will not be furnished with gigantic tribunes, they will not have flood lights for nightly competitions, and there will be no highways leading the spectator to the competition site, but the runs themselves have been calculated and designed by mathematicians and scientists, and sports technically they will be the finest runs in the world.

The athletes will be accommodated in eight strictly functional apartment houses of the Olympic Village. They will probably get a good feeling out of the fact that their quarters are in an Olympic structure that will serve public welfare best — later on, these apartment houses will be the homes of many families. Buildings in the Olympic region will be kept to a minimum. This will save a lot of money, and nature will remain almost untouched. Due to that, though, the representatives of the press will find their telephones installed in little alpine huts - Tyrolean style - at the competition sites. On the other hand, they will be offered the finest press accommodations and a Press Center at the Students Home and the New Chemical Institute that leave nothing to be desired.

This 'Return to Reason' shall not be in any way 'reactionary' - on the contrary, only simple things can be perfect. The Organizers want the 'Simple Games' of Innsbruck also to be the 'most perfect' Olympic Winter Games, in the fulfilment of their original and still valid aim and purpose: to serve the development of sport.