

FIFTY YEARS' ACTIVITY

by Dragan DESANCIC

The highlight of the Yugoslav Olympic Committee's work this year, which was once again intense both on the national and international levels, was another big new Olympic celebration - the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of this Committee's foundation.

The Yugoslav Olympic Committee was founded on December 14th 1919 and was a logical and legal continuation of the Serbian Olympic Committee, founded in Belgrade on February 14th, 1910 and recognized by the International Olympic Committee.

Yugoslav athletes have taken part in Olympic Games since the year 1912, and since that time, with their traditional sense of fair play and wholly in the spirit of Olympism, they have won 31 medals:

- 10 gold medals, 15 silver medals and 6 bronze medals, as well as 65 certificates for having come within the first six.

During the celebration of this great festival of Olympism in Yugoslavia, the Yugoslav Olympic Committee presented a total of 175 commemorative gold plaques to Olympic veterans, Olympic medal winners and those who had taken part in three Olympic Games, as well as to trainers, sports workers and sports reporters together with deserving members of the Yugoslav Olympic Committee who by their work have furthered the cause of international sport and Olympism. The purpose of these awards was to pay tribute to the recipient's merits and to express the Committee's gratitude for all these years of fruitful activity, devoted to sport and its noble aims.

On behalf of the International Olympic Committee, this commemorative ceremony was attended by our eminent guest, that indefatigable promoter of the Olympic cause and Vice-President of the International Olympic Committee, Lord KILLANIN.

This important anniversary was accompanied by a series of events on the theme "Olympic Movement and Olympic Ideology in Yugoslavia and in the World" as well as an Olympic Week organized all over Yugoslavia. In addition to a wonderful exhibition "in pictures and words" devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of Olympism in Yugoslavia, an "Olympic postage stamp" with the symbols of the jubilee, value: 0.10 dinar, was issued, and a philatelic exhibition organized on the theme: "Olympic Sports on Postage Stamps"; other ceremonies included the inauguration of a commemorative plaque on the building where the Yugoslav Olympic Committee was founded in 1919, the laying of wreaths on the tombs of great Olympic athletes, etc., many meetings of Olympic veterans, including a match between former water-polo players of Hungary and Yugoslavia, who had taken part in and won medals at Olympic Games. This all aroused great interest among the general public. The water-polo match was broadcast direct by T.V. The former rivals did not break with tradition. The match ended on a score of 7 - 7.

A large number of sports workers, public and political figures attended a ceremony held on December 7th, 1969 at which an envoy of the President of the Republic presented the Yugoslav Olympic Committee with a distinguished decoration - The People's Order of Merit with gold star - in reward for its long years of fruitful activity in the field of international sports cooperation. This important Olympic ceremony in Yugoslavia was thus brought to a close on a solemn note and to the accompaniment of the heartiest congratulations.