

OLYMPIC MEDALS

(continuation and end)

1956 - MELBOURNE

Here again the form adopted for the winners' medal is Professor CASSIOLE's design of 1928. Only the inscription on the face is different: "XVIth Olympiad, Melbourne - 1956". The I.O.C. had just amended rule 36 to the effect that henceforth no competitor may receive more than one medal in an event which is both an individual and a team event. However, since this new regulation was not enforced at Stockholm, it was decided to apply the old rule and award competitors more than one medal in the same event. (top illustration).

Rule 41 (amended in June 1956) stipulated that the medals must bear the name of the sport. However, as they had already been struck the president of the I.O.C. agreed not to enforce this amendment for the Games of the XVIth Olympiad.

280 gold, 280 silver and 290 bronze medals were struck, of which 273, 273 and 281 were awarded respectively. This difference in figures is due to the fact that in boxing, for each weight category, an extra bronze medal was awarded to the athlete who came fourth.

The commemorative medal was designed by Mr. Andor MESZAROS. The face has a raised border of athletes following the Olympic flag bearer, and in the centre is the motto



Médaille commémorative:



"*Citius, Altius, Fortius*". The reverse side bears the inscription "*Olympic Games, Melbourne 1956*" above the Olympic rings and the City of Melbourne coat of arms. 12,250 commemorative medals were struck and 11,305 were presented to officials of the I.O.C., I.F., N.O.C., Organising Committee, sporting delegations and competitors, etc...



The diploma, awarded to the first six competitors and teams, bears the Olympic motto and rings above the Melbourne coat of arms. Here and there are laurel branches, and at the bottom the signatures of the president of the I.O.C., Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE, and the president of the Organising Committee, Mr. Robert G. MENZIES, Prime Minister of Australia. 4,000 copies of the diploma were printed in four shades of grey on ivory paper.



1956 - STOCKHOLM

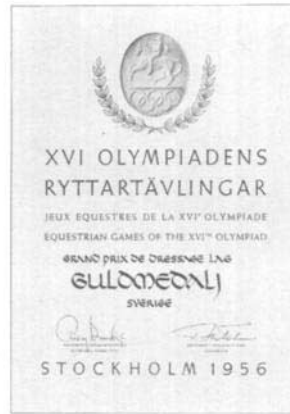
The equestrian events of the Games of the XVith Olympiad were organised at Stockholm and a special Olympic medal was struck for the occasion designed by Mr. John SJOSVARD. On the face is the silhouette of a Greek horseman, emblem of the Games, around which is written in Swedish: "*XVith Olympiad - Equestrian Games, Stockholm - 1956*". On the reverse side is a torch above the five rings with the inscription in French "*Olympic Games*" and the I.O.C. motto "*Citius, Altius, Fortius*".





The commemorative medal is an oval plaque in bronze, reproducing the emblem of the Equestrian Games. In accordance with the I.O.C. regulations it was awarded to officials, athletes and people actively participating in the organisation of the Games.

The first six athletes received a diploma very sombre in design: the emblem of the Games above the inscription in three languages (Swedish, French and English) "*Equestrian Games of the XVIIth Olympiad*", the athlete's name and the usual signatures.



1960 - ROME

The design of the Olympic medal remained unchanged, and on the reverse side is of course the inscription "*Games of the XVIIth Olympiad, Rome - 1960*". The competitors were to wear the medal round their neck, and the organisers invented a sort of bronze chain, the links of which were olive leaves; the event was inscribed not on the medal itself, but on the wreath of leaves surrounding it. This chain however was not attached to the medals presented to the winners of "artificial" team events.



The commemorative medal, designed by Professor Emilio GRECO, has a very simple design breaking away from old-fashioned symbolism. The face represents, with the Olympic rings as background, the silhouette of a woman running, holding the Olympic torch. On the reverse side, in a stylised manner, the artist has shown eagles flying above the Olympic stadium. The artistic committee also commissioned a statue by Professor GRECO symbolising the Olympic flame, which was erected near the Sports Palace.



In accordance with rule 41 of the Olympic Statutes and Rules, a diploma was awarded to the first six athletes. This diploma was based on an antique plaque, and the different inscriptions look as though they are engraved in stone. At the top is the number of the Olympiad. The she-wolf, emblem of Rome and the 1960 Games, appears on the left, and on the right the name of the holder, his placing and the event in which he took part. The signatures of the president of the I.O.C. and the president of the Organising committee appear below.



1,801 were awarded to athletes and the National Olympic Committees of the countries whose representatives came away with a medal.



1964 - TOKYO

For the first time the Games took place in Asia. The design of the Olympic medal was again that of 1928, and was effected by Mr. Toshikata KOSHIBA. The reverse side bears the name of the event in English under the inscription "*XVIIIth Olympiad, Tokyo - 1964*". The Japanese Mint struck the medal in pure silver covered with six grams of fine gold for the gold medal, and in silver and bronze for the two other medals. Each one was surmounted by a ring covered with gold, silver or copper respectively, to which was attached a ribbon. Not all the medals were distributed, and those in excess were either melted down or offered to museums.

The commemorative medal was the work of two artists, Messrs. Taro OKAMOTO and Kazumitsu TANAKA. Again the design of the face was very bare: stylised runners and a swimmer, whose distinct contours - curves and sharp angles - helped to give an impression of dynamic force. The reverse side bears the five linked rings and the words "*XVIIIth Olympiad, Tokyo - 1964*".

17,000 copies of the medal - in dark green patinated copper - were struck and presented to the athletes and officials.



The diploma awarded to the athletes was designed by Mr. Hiromu HARA. Printed on strong paper, again it is very simple; at the top in the centre appears the emblem of the Games and the red sun surrounded by engraved olive leaves; below, written in Japanese, French and English, "Games of the XVIIIth Olympiad". The athlete's name appears above the signatures of the president of the I.O.C. and the president of the Organising Committee.



1968 - MEXICO

Professor CASSIOLE's medal remains unchanged. The number of the Olympiad, the name of the city and the year were composed in characters of three fine lines, officially used for the Games. The name of the discipline was not shown on the medal itself, but on a plaque attached to three rings and to which was fixed the ribbon going round the athlete's neck. The face of the plaque bore the symbol of the event and the reverse side the name itself.



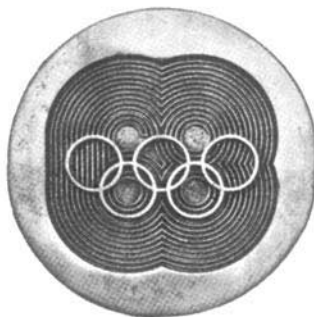
The commemorative medal in gold reproduces in relief the Aztec calendar, official emblem of the Games.



This motif, symbolising the universe as the Aztecs imagined it, showed the face of Tonatiuh, the sun, in the centre, around which the universe revolved.

Each motif, very finely engraved, has its own significance and represents the different dates of the year, the planets and the stars. Round the central motif are the words "*Games of the XIXth Olympiad, Mexico - 12th-27th October 1968*" in relief.

The reverse side is more sober and only bears the year, 1968, of which the contours multiply to infinity, and the Olympic rings.



1972 - MUNICH

The medal which will be awarded to the winners at the next Olympic Games keeps Professor CASSIOLE's design on the face, and also shows the number of the Olympiad and the date. The reverse side, designed by Mr. Gerhard MARCKS, is resolutely modern and bare, representing the silhouettes of two athletes - symbol of Olympic fraternity. There will be 150 individual events and 41 team events, for which 365 gold, 365 silver and 382 bronze medals have been struck.



This is the last part of our study on the Olympic medals. In editions 29, 34, 52, 55, 56-57 and 58, we reviewed the winners' medals, the commemorative medals and the diplomas from 1896 to 1972.



During certain Games, special medals, true official decorations, were given to high ranking personalities and to people who had particularly distinguished themselves by their devotion to the Olympic cause.

Thus, in Stockholm, in 1912, the Olympic medal of King Gustaf V was given to the members of the Swedish royal family, to foreign royalities, to members of the International Olympic Committee, to the Swedish Olympic Committee, to special committees and to officials, as well as to the Swedish medalists.



A medal on the same lines and awarded with the same criteria, was struck for the Antwerp Games (1920). It carried the effigy of King Albert on the front and the inscription "*Antwerp Olympic Games, 1920*" on the reverse.



Then, in Berlin, in 1936, the Germans and foreigners who had taken an active part in the organisation of the Games of the XIth Olympiad, received the Olympia Erinnerungsmedal and a first or second class decoration, the Deutsches Olympiachrenzeichen, in recognition of their devotion.

