

## Olympic Medals of the Winter Games

*We continue here the history of the Olympic medals, published in issues Nos. 29, 34/35, 52, 55, 56/57 and 58 of the Olympic Review with the medals struck on the occasion of the eleven Winter Games.*

### Chamonix—1924

The winter sports events held in Chamonix from 25th January to 5th February 1924 were not given the name of the 1st Olympic Winter Games until 1925, at the Prague Congress. Although the medals do not bear the title of Olympic medals, they do nevertheless have this value.

The medal awarded to the winner bore the following design on the obverse: a sportsman walking in the snow with high

mountains in the background; his right hand holds a pair of ice skates while his left hand carries skis, their ends trailing on the ground. The signature of the artist, Raoul Bénard, author of the commemorative medal of the Paris Olympic Games in 1924, appears below. The reverse side bears the inscription "Chamonix-Mont-Blanc. Sports d'Hiver. 25 janvier–5 février 1924. Organisés par le Comité Olympique Français sous le haut patronage du Comité International Olympique à l'occasion de la célébration de la VIII Olympiade" ("Chamonix-Mont-Blanc. Winter



sports. 25th January—5th February 1924. Organised by the French Olympic Committee under the high patronage of the International Olympic Committee, on the occasion of the celebration of the VIIIth Olympiad"). The medal is 5.5 cm in diameter.

### Saint Moritz—1928

For the II<sup>nd</sup> Winter Games, organised in Saint Moritz, the Swiss Olympic Committee entrusted one of their compatriots, the sculptor A. Hünérwadel, with the task of designing the medal to be awarded to the



winners. It was minted by Huguenin Bros. of Le Locle (Switzerland). From this date on the Olympic medal for the Summer Games bears a uniform design for all the future Games, while for the Winter Games the subject of the medals is left to the discretion of the engraver. The obverse represents a skater on a background of snow crystals. On the reverse side two olive branches frame the words "2<sup>s</sup> Jeux Olympiques d'Hiver. Saint-Moritz 1928" ("IInd Winter Olympic Games. Saint-Moritz 1928"), with the Olympic rings above. The initials of the engraver, A. H., appear on each side of the branches. The medal is 5 cm in diameter and was minted in silver-gilt, silver and bronze.

This medal was awarded to the athletes at the closing ceremony; each nation was called, and the chef de mission, accompanied by his deputies and the flag-bearer of his country, approached to take the medals and diplomas awarded to his team. The diploma was the work of the talented Swiss designer Menet.

A commemorative medal, designed by the Swiss sculptor Milo Martin, was also awarded to every participant. On the obverse Victory, standing on a sledge pulled by two frisky horses, carries an olive branch, with high mountains in the background. The lower part bears the Olympic rings and the artist's signature. On the reverse side is the inscription "2<sup>s</sup> Jeux Olympiques d'Hiver. Saint Moritz 1928" ("IInd Winter Olympic Games. Saint Moritz 1928"), accompanied by an olive branch.

The diplomas and commemorative medals which were to be given to the officials were forwarded to them by the Organising Committee in the course of March and April 1928.

## Lake Placid—1932

The third Winter Games were held at Lake Placid from 4th to 13th February 1932. Unfortunately we could not find the names of the engravers, sculptors or artists who created the medals and diplomas on this occasion.

The Olympic medal awarded to the winner is 5.5 cm in diameter. The obverse represents winged victory (Elis) with a laurel wreath in its right hand. It emerges from a cloud in all its glory, while beneath lies the region surrounding Lake Placid—mountains covered with fir trees through which a road winds. The Olympic stadium and jumping board are also represented. On the reverse side the Olympic rings appear above the inscription "IIIrd Olympic Winter Games. Lake Placid 1932". Two interlaced olive branches complete the design. It is interesting to note that the medal is grooved on its circumference like an ancient column. This medal was minted by the Ribbins Company of Attleboro in Massachusetts.

The commemorative medal is shaped like an irregular plaque: it represents Fame, blowing its trumpet and holding a lighted torch in its left hand. It is standing on a pedestal, crowned with the Olympic rings, and its widely spread wings half hide a mountainous landscape. The reverse shows the different sports held at Lake Placid: curling and sledge-racing as demonstration sports below, while a row of six inset medallions, linked to a laurel wreath, illustrate hockey, figure skating, skiing, speed skating and bobsleigh.

The designs of both these medals are reproduced on the Olympic diploma; the obverse of the commemorative medal, enlarged, appears in the centre with the Olympic medal on each side. Superimposed on this is the inscription "IIIrd

Olympic Winter Games, Lake Placid 1932, Diploma awarded to . . .” which appears above the signatures of the President of

the Organising Committee of the IIIrd Winter Games and the President of the International Olympic Committee.

