

Medals of the Winter Games

We now come to the end of our presentation of Olympic medals. Those for the Summer Games appeared in Nos. 29, 34, 52, 55, 56 and 58, while the first three parts of our study on the Winter Games medals were published in numbers 66, 70 and 74.

1968 - Grenoble

For the first time in the history of the Games, a different medal was produced for each discipline.

On the obverse side, the medal reproduces the official emblem of the Grenoble Games, designed by Roger Excoffon: a snowflake surrounded by three red roses, symbolising Grenoble, and the Olympic rings. These are surrounded by inscription "Xes Jeux Olympiques d'hiver - Grenoble 1968" (Xth Olympic Winter Games - Grenoble 1968).

The reverse side displays one of the pictogrammes by the same artist symbolising the different events, the name of which appears in French. The photographic process of transfer on acid-cut steel had to be used. This delicate work was carried out by the Administration of Coins and Medals in Paris.

The medal measured 5 cm in diameter, and was 3 mm thick. Those medals for the first and second places were of standard 950/000 silver, those for the first places being gilded with six grammes of pure gold.

A ribbon in the Olympic colours threaded through a gold, silver or bronze hook allowed the medals to be hung round the necks of winners who received in addition black leather caskets with the emblem of the Games, of which the interior was lined in red, white or blue silk.

As for the commemorative medal, this was conceived by Mme. Coëffin, who placed on the obverse side with a background of snow and ice flakes the profile of a Greek athlete to remind us of the origin of the Olympic Games. The





1972 - Sapporo

The Winter Games were held for the first time on the Asiatic Continent, and at the same place where they should have taken place in 1940: Sapporo.

The Olympic medal created on this occasion was in the image of the Games themselves - impressive and pure.

The front side was designed by Kazumi Yagi: a winding flow slightly in relief representing sharp, pointed ice in contrast with the cotton-wool impression of the background: the whole makes up the perfect image of a typically Japanese scene of peace and serenity.

reverse side features a panorama of Grenoble, dominated by the chain of Belledone, with the words "*Xes Jeux Olympiques d'hiver*" and the symbol of the Games. The obverse side is signed J.M. Coëffin, while the year 1967 and the stamp *Bronze* appears on the outer edge. It is 6.3 cm in diameter.

Roger Excoffon was asked to produce two diploma designs: for the Olympic diploma, to be awarded to those taking the first six places in each event, and for the commemorative diploma.

On the Olympic diploma, the words "*Grenoble 1968 - Xes Jeux Olympiques d'hiver*" and the motto "*Citius, Altius, Fortius*" enframe the emblem reproduced in relief. The word "*Diplôme*" appears in the centre in different shades of gold.

Printed on Arches off-white paper, 440 x 320 mm in size, these diplomas were rolled up in velvet-covered tubes of different colours and embossed with the emblem in gold.

The commemorative diploma reproduces the emblem in the original colours and has an appreciable resemblance to the Olympic diploma.

Printed on offset paper, 440 x 320 mm in size, 18,000 copies were distributed to all officials, competitors, journalists and participants at the Games.



The flowing line also depicts the bobsleigh track, while on its right a slight dip represents the oval of the ice stadium.

The reverse side was created by Ikko Tanaka, following the official symbol of the Sapporo Games, designed by Kazumasa Nagai: the three components of these Games are worked in: the sun, the symbol of the "first snow", the Olympic rings and the inscription "Sapporo 72" made up this time in squares.

The fourth square is decorated with the inscription «Xlth Olympic Winter Games» while the whole design is headed with the same inscription in Japanese.

Slightly asymmetric, these medals are 6 cm high and over 3 mm thick.

The gold medals were cast in 95% pure silver, covered with a layer of six grammes of line gold. The silver medals were in solid silver.

The medal is attached to a plate of the same metal, behind which a ring is fixed. A ribbon with a dark blue background, the colour of the Sapporo Games, and bordered in the five Olympic colours, enabled the medal to be placed round the neck of its recipient. The front side of the medal is engraved in relief with one of the silhouettes symbolising the events and the name in English of this event is written on the other side.

Striking was carried out by the Ministry of Finances Mint, which produced a total of 267, 89 in each metal. 204 medals were awarded, 70 in gold, 66 in silver and 68 in bronze.



The commemorative medal is the work of Shigeo Fukuda and was also struck by the Ministry of Finances Mint.

The front side in the form of a full-flighted arrow representing human force in action, symbolises nobility and sportsmanship. The reverse side is engraved with the official emblem of the Games in its vertical form.

This bronze medal was 5 cm in diameter and 5 mm thick.

Encased in a plastic box, 10,000 of these were distributed to athletes and officials who took part in the Games.

The Organising Committee moreover prepared two diplomas: one for the winning athletes, the other for the officials.

These were designed by Hiromu Hara, on thick card, engraved with olive leaves and the emblem of the Sapporo Games.

Expressions of gratitude and congratulations were written on these diplomas according to the case, in Japanese, French and English, as well as the name of the person to whom it was to be sent.



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