



Nine months before the XIth Winter Games

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Despite a short preparation period—the Games were only delegated to Innsbruck on 4th February, 1973—it was possible to test all the main sites for the XIth Winter Games last winter. It can justifiably be claimed that all tests yielded very satisfactory results. The Organising Committee's policy of creating sites which will afterwards be available for the sporting masses has been realized. It was necessary to pay special attention to competitors' safety at these sites which have all proved their merit in this respect. The competitions nevertheless showed that these sites are most selective, excluding any possibility of a chance win.

The artificial ice combined bobsleigh and toboggan run in the Igls area is the largest project in the sports field for the XIth Winter Games. The run is 1,200 metres long and covers a difference in altitude of approximately 100 metres; of its 15 curves, the highest is 5.50 metres. The entire run is iced by two separate cooling circuits and 62 kms. of piping were laid for this purpose. The run has been tried out at both national and international bobsleigh and toboggan events—at times when the outside temperature was extremely high, too—and has passed its test. The tobogganners had nothing but praise for the run and the Toboggan Association is particularly pleased that it is suitable for training and learning purposes, thanks to its safety. A few of the bobsleigh competitors made the criticism that it is impossible to skid off the run and that the risk factor which some bobsleighters wel-

come is thus lacking. It is, however, the opinion of the Organising Committee that, at Olympic Games especially, but also at any sporting event, the factor of risk should be reduced to a minimum and the main emphasis placed on sporting performance. The run was built with this in mind and has fulfilled these expectations. Results of events, particularly of the bobsleigh events, have shown that the run demands a competent performance and that only the well prepared competitor whose driving is precise has chances of success.

The Innsbruck Olympic ice stadium is at present being adapted for the figure skating events, the ice dancing and the ice hockey A-tournament Olympic events. The 400 metres speed skating track which was built in 1973 in front of the stadium has now been equipped with a third cooling plant, so that the quality of the ice can be retained even if outside temperatures are high. In the interior of the 400 metres circuit a further artificial ice area has been made for training purposes and for the speed skaters to warm up. During the Games further artificial ice areas will be available to the athletes in the form of an arena with an air-supported roof in the immediate vicinity of the stadium at the Tivoli sports ground, and another rink at the trade fair site for the ice hockey players.

Alterations to the traditional Bergisel jump have now been completed. The jump was tested on 3rd January this year at the international Bergisel jump-

ing event and the new record for this jump is 100 metres. The new run-up and the jump are of concrete and for the first time there is an adjustable starting platform.

The smaller jump in Seefeld is still to be slightly adapted, whilst all the cross-country courses in the Seefeld, Telfs, Leutasch and Reith area have already been completed. There was great enthusiasm for these courses from all participants at the international events. The starting and finishing area for the Nordic events has been laid out and the biathlon shooting range in the near vicinity is also finished. Work on the Seefeld sports and congress centre has made great progress; this will function as a press sub-centre for the Seefeld district as well as being available to the athletes.

As in 1964, the men's downhill race is on the Patscherkofel run, Innsbruck's

"local" mountain. Considerable alterations have taken place here, emphasis being placed on large safe-falling areas. On 26th January this year the course was tested at a men's downhill event as part of the World Cup in Alpine events. Here again several athletes at first thought the run too easy because of its great safety. Training and the race itself, however, showed that the course is extremely demanding. Only very minor adaption work is still to be carried out here.

The ladies' downhill run in the Axamer Lizum was also tested at a World Cup event. This course, too, has proved its worth. The runs for the men's giant slaloms, the ladies' giant slalom and the men's and ladies' slaloms have been selected and completed. A funicular up to the top of the Hoadl will start operating in the autumn of 1975 and will make transport easier for athletes, officials and all services.

The new bobsleigh and luge track.





Mr. Alois Lugger, Mayor of Innsbruck, an interested spectator.

The Olympic village is nearly finished. Before the Winter Olympics it only remains to adapt and furnish the buildings for the athletes' purposes and to install the kitchens and restaurants for athletes and official services. An indoor swimming pool with sauna baths, a generously planned entertainments centre and a row of various shops will be available to the athletes and their companions when they wish to relax. The news media centre for the XIth Winter Games is taking shape at the foot of Bergisel. This will be the place of work for the press, radio and television people.

Telephones, telexes, wire photo outlets, agencies, press offices and both large and small studios here will enable the mass media to send world-wide reports on this big sporting event.

At present numerous roads and bridges are being re-built in Innsbruck and its

surroundings so that the transport network is perfect for the Winter Games. No journey within the Olympic area will take more than 30 minutes by car. The roads are being enlarged to cope with the expected traffic and the Organizing Committee is making 1.8 million square metres of parking space available at the various sites.

All preparation work is progressing according to the deadlines set by the Organizing Committee and the main work has already been completed. It can, therefore, justifiably be claimed that Innsbruck is well prepared for the XIth Winter Games to take place from 4th to 15th February, 1976.

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