

# The International Panathlon honours the IOC

On 3rd February, in the main hall of Innsbruck's Imperial Palace, the President of the IOC, Lord Killanin, one of the Vice-Presidents of the IOC, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, and Mr. Marc Hodler, IOC member for Switzerland, officially received the International Panathlon "Golden Torch" prize.

The first national Panathlon club was created at Venice in 1951. In the intervening years, an ever increasing number of sports enthusiasts has been assembling in the Panathlon clubs with the dual purpose of defending the sporting idea in all its intended purity and of instilling the world with the feeling and atmosphere of the Olympic Games.

Without interfering in the technical organisation of sport, the Panathlon does not however fail to attract the attention of top class sportsmen. This is the reason that the honours it bestows constitute a mark of recognition, as Mr. Sisto Favre, Vice-President of the International Panathlon, explains:

*"He who has become worthy of such an award is a meritorious panathlete who has been active in spreading the sports and Olympic movement. The Golden Torch rewards those sports personalities who are eminent in their belief, doctrine and creative strength, and exemplary in their propaganda work in favour of the sporting ideal, or in the organisation of world famous events."*

## Address of the President of the IOC

The President of the IOC, Lord Killanin, thanked the President of the International Panathlon, Mr. Demetrio Balestra, as follows:

*"Mr. President, on behalf of the International Olympic Committee I would like to thank you for the honour you have bestowed on me as*

*its President. This I believe I would not have received except in this capacity.*

*It is very encouraging when there are people-admittedly a minority-prepared to criticise various aspects of the Olympic movement, to have the support of an organisation such as the International Panathlon which has undertaken to defend the purity of sports and endeavoured to spread the moral idea of understanding and brotherhood between individuals and peoples.*

*This support from outside the main Olympic family of the IOC, the IFs and the NOCs is a source of considerable assistance and gives us confidence.*

*The last time I was with you was in Rome when you honoured my predecessor, the late Mr. Avery Brundage, who during his lifetime never ceased to struggle for the ideals.*

*Many chauvinists and armchair critics, besides those who may have personal ambitions, are very pleased to find any weakness in the Olympic movement and exploit it to their utmost, with a negative approach. It is for this reason that the positive support of your organisation is so very welcome. For those of you who are present and are not members of the International Panathlon, perhaps I should point out that it is organised on a system of local and regional clubs.*

*The principal activities, through their organisations, spread the Olympic ideals by means of conferences, round table discussions, study courses, exhibitions and all other possible methods to propagate the Olympic ideals. Like the IOC, the IFs and the NOCs, its main object is to encourage the healthy practice of sport, the principles of loyalty, and the propagation of fair play. It is, like the IOC, prepared in its particular field to undertake and collaborate in all*



*Successors to Messrs. Avery Brundage, Giulio Onesti and Willi Daume, holders of the first "Golden Torch"-the three holders of the 1976 Golden Torch: the President of the IOC, Lord Killanin, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch. Vice-President of the IOC and member for Spain, and Mr. Marc Hodler, IOC member for Switzerland and President of the Fédération Internationale de Ski.*

*forms of action which can assist towards these ends. Round tables and conferences have considered such diverse subjects as the safety of skiers, all aspects of sports medicine, the Olympic ideals, besides participating in a great number of artistic and cultural events connected with sport.*

*Mr. President, I would like, on behalf of the IOC and especially on my own behalf, to thank you very much for the honour which you and your associates have conferred on me.*

*In so doing, I would like to wish the International Panathlon success in the future, renewed expansion and at the same time perhaps I could couple this wish also to the other organisations throughout the world which, in one way or another, are working with us towards the same ideals.*

*Thank you again for the honour you have bestowed on me."*

