

# “What I expect from the XIIth Winter Games...”

## Some journalists' reactions

### Michel Clare - “L'Equipe” - Paris



*The form of the Winter Games can be disputed and the point argued about whether money takes on too great a significance. One can even go as far as asking purely and simply that they be abolished. But these are not problems which concern me at the moment.*

*What I find comforting about the Winter Games is that the sporting quality of small nations linked to the traditions of a liberal sport is expressed in them better than anywhere else and that it is still possible to compete against the representatives of the “big” powers of the West and East, of the Left and Right.*

*At Sapporo, the champions of nations where sport is not closely dependent on the state, and where sport is not a reflection of ideologies, whatever they may be, proved that they could reach the top. Thank you to the Dutch skaters, Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish cross-country skiers, Swiss Alpine skiers, and others, for having shown that sport can be outstanding at Olympic level without however being considered as a “state affair”. It is well to recall that the Games are primarily a festival and not a confrontation, and that the “lesser” nations are not inferior to the “great”.*

*I hope that this trend, which was the most important at Sapporo, will be confirmed at Innsbruck, and that progressively—as President Lord Killanin would like, I believe—nationalism and ideologies will be left in the changing rooms.*

M.C.

22nd November, 1975

### Alexander Ivanitski<sup>1</sup> - “USSR Central TV and Radio” - Moscow



*Above all, I wish that the Games areas will be full of white snow. We recall the previous Games in Innsbruck which had to be snow rationed. This time, if the weather intends to repeat its tricks, I am sure that all the participants and guests would meet a possible call of the organisers and take along a handful of snow from all parts of the world to the Tyrol.*

*Together with snow, I expect Olympic Innsbruck to be full of sun and smiles. These components always exist together, bringing the third one—the Olympic sun of sports festival. In their turn they help a lot to cover the Games electronically and to show them to the world at their best.*

*I expect as well that the XIIth Winter Games will be staged in a friendly, sportsmanlike atmosphere to the benefit of peace and friendship among the peoples of the world. Such atmosphere will undoubtedly be met by the participants with the best sports results and wish to display the beauty of sport. I expect also that the Games in Innsbruck will demonstrate once again the victory of the Olympic ideals.*

A.I.  
29th November, 1975

<sup>1</sup> Former Olympic wrestling champion (1964).



### **Sven Pe Johansson - "Dagens Nyheter" - Stockholm**

*Swedish winter sports have excellent traditions in the Winter Games. We have won 22 gold, 21 silver and 23 bronze medals. This winter Sweden is not going to participate in ice hockey and most Swedes are looking forward to the skiing competitions. Sweden has a new favourite in Ingemar Stenmark, our talented Alpine skier. Not long ago, interest in the Alpine events was not great, but now more tickets have been sold for the Alpine competitions than for the Nordic—an almost incredible situation*

*some years ago. Ingemar—only 19 years old—is our hope in the slalom and the giant slalom races.*

*In the Nordic events, Sven-Ake Lundbäck has excellent chances to win the 15 km. once again, as in Sapporo, and we have strong hopes for Thomas Magnusson in 30 and 50 km.*

*Austria will do well with Klammer in the downhill and its famous new jumpers. They made clean sweeps last winter and should do so during the Games. Much will depend on the snow when it comes to pick "the king of Seefeld". Eero Mäntyranta was crowned in 1964. Whether his compatriot Juha Mieto takes over the crown depends on the weather. Juha likes mild winds and wet tracks—then he is almost unbeatable.*

*The East Germans with Grimmer and Aschenbach should keep their positions, but do not forget our Norwegian neighbours and the Russians with young Rotsjev.*

*We are looking forward to Innsbruck—we liked it in 1964—and I am sure we are going to like it even better this winter.*

S.P.J.  
20th December, 1975



**John Samuel - "The Guardian" - London**

*No pressman, especially a daily newspaperman, can look forward to an Olympic Games, Summer or Winter, without a sense of excitement and trepidation. However carefully he briefs himself, whatever his experience, there will be not one, not a few, but an endless succession of events and incidents which he must absorb and convey. Sometimes his readers, through television, will have had as good a view of things as the journalist. He must satisfy these, and also people unable to see television and wanting as complete a report as he can give in his available space. Innsbruck will be an enormous challenge to his professionalism, to his modern role of sports expert and critic for a massive television audience. In 1956 Austria made Toni Sailer a national hero. By 1968 the whole world could respond to Jean-Claude Killy, mainly because of TV. Innsbruck 1976 will produce new heroes and heroines, shared again by a world audience who may be snow rich or snow poor. The journalist can only be happy that he is writing for so many more millions now sharing in the wonders and thrills of winter sport.*

J.S.

18th November, 1975



**Werner Schneider - "Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen" - Dusseldorf**

*At first sight, it looks like an anachronism. Exactly four years after the biggest demonstration against the International Olympic Committee, when more than 100,000 people on the Ballhausplatz in Vienna protested wildly against the expulsion of world champion Karl Schranz from the Austrian ski team because of his breach of the IOC's eligibility rule, Austria itself is host to the Winter Games, replacing Denver/Colorado. Nevertheless, I expect the Austrians to be the best hosts one could ever wish. With only three years of preparation, they have done tremendous work with all their knowledge as a great winter sports nation and with all the experience they gained from the Games in 1964 in Innsbruck, where the youth of the world will meet again in February 1976.*

*I expect Innsbruck to be real Winter Games—in a small mountain city with other surrounding places like Seefeld, Igls and Axam; in the true spirit of sport; with many spectators in the various and excellent arenas and approximately 500 million more watching on their television sets around the world. Good luck, Innsbruck!*

W.S.

3rd December, 1975



### **Jaromir Tománek - "Československý Sport" - Prague**

*The Olympiad celebrations constitute the largest gathering of young people from the whole world. Without distinction of race, nationality or political opinions, they compete with exemplary uprightness to obtain the highest sports honour: the Olympic medal. A "greater awareness", "friendship", "mutual understanding", are all qualities springing from the Olympic Games and Winter Games, representing factors of peace which are welcome in today's world.*

*This indescribable and inimitable atmosphere will also no doubt stamp the XIIth Winter Games. Taking part in this magnificent event to witness top sports performances in skiing, speed and figure skating, ice hockey, etc., therefore represents a great honour for a sports journalist.*

*A great effort awaits this journalist, but I remain convinced that, faithful to their tradition, the Austrian organisers have obtained ideal working conditions for him. We shall thus be able to describe these days most vividly and accurately to the keen sports supporters of socialist Czechoslovakia.*

J.T.

27th November, 1975



### **Eric Walter - "Radio Suisse Romande" - Lausanne**

*At a time when violence, nationalism and money constitute a permanent threat to sport and the Olympic movement, the journalist hopes for peaceful Games, safe from displays of chauvinism and the interference of the ins and outs of industry. Delusive wish? Disappointed expectation? Idealistic or childish hope? It remains to be seen!*

*The Winter Games, by their very nature, should escape political interference, at least in its most aggressive form. On the other hand, they remain threatened by the profits that the manufacturers of sports equipment and the promoters of winter tourism intend to reap from all the victories. It is therefore to be hoped that the 20th century "merchants" will be chased from the steps of the podium for a two weeks' truce.*

*For the rest, may the Innsbruck Games bring us plenty of sunshine, happiness and triumphs!*

E.W.

5th December, 1975