

The Olympic Winter Games 1984 in Sarajevo *

by Peter Baumgartner

Technical delegate, Men's Alpine competitions



I am very glad not to speak of a "boycott" but to present you a very-positive report on the next Olympic Winter Games. Below, you will find a short report on the preparations made for the courses in Sarajevo.

As a technical collaborator of the central FIS office and as technical delegate, I had, in April 1980, the opportunity to inspect the preparations made in the region of Sarajevo, for the courses of the Alpine men competitions at Bjelasnica and the Alpine women competitions at Jahorina. I know quite well that many people shook their heads when the IOC had appointed Sarajevo, a town far to the south, as organiser of the Olympic Winter Games. But, I can say, on the basis-of experience made, that this decision of the IOC was good. *The organization is in excellent hands* with most active people and technical experts, such as Peter Lakota and Slavko Podkubovsek who are working with much devotion and engagement for these courses. As a former competitor and a member of the FIS Committee for the Alpine Courses, Peter Lakota has all the necessary qualifications for arranging these courses. Moreover, he is a forest engineer and thoroughly knows all problems referring to woods. Problems-there are a lot, because all courses must be arranged by tree cutting.

General survey

The basis is in Sarajevo, an interesting and beautiful town, where will be the Olympic Village.

The *ladies' competitions* will take place in the famous ski region of *Jahorina*, which can be reached in 40 minutes on a good road.

The men *competitions* will take place in the region of *Bjelasnica*. Today, about an hour is still necessary from Sarajevo in order to reach this region. But, an express road is now already being constructed which will bring the competitors in 30 to 40 minutes into the region of the competitions. In the middle of a thick wood with trees situated up to an altitude of about 1700 m, a downhill course, supplementary courses and a combined course for giant slalom

and slalom have been arranged in a generous way by tree cutting.

Inspection at Bjelasnica

I was accompanied in the terrain by Drago Bozja and Peter Lakota. As there were not transport means yet, such as ski-lifts and chair-lifts, etc., we went on foot all the distances, i.e. about 2500 m of vertical drop in two days, partly with rain and variable cool weather. Above 1700 m. there was still snow. In the valley, we had a landrover at our disposal.

In order to have a general survey of the whole terrain for Alpine and Nordic competitions, I had the opportunity to fly in a helicopter over Jahorina, the terrain of the ladies' competitions, the Nordic terrain and the courses for men competitions. Unfortunately, the helicopter could not fly very high, as there was a strong wind with a bad view.

The terrain for men's competitions is situated in the massif of Bjelasnica and it is *best qualified* for carrying out all men competitions.

Tree cutting is now finished for all courses, It has been done in a generous way with a width of 80-120 m per course. The removing of the wood and the destruction of the rocks by explosions are now being done. They began again on 1st June with 20 machines.

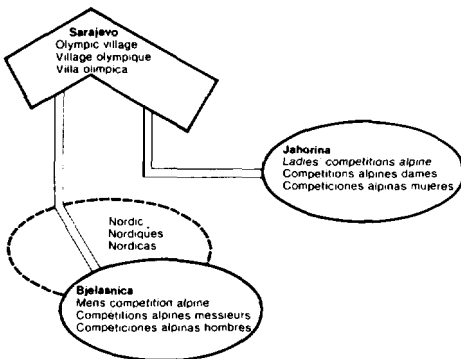
In the course of this summer, there will be organised camps for children with children coming from the whole of Europe. 250 children per day and per competition terrain will be in action. Constructions have not yet been realized, but the corresponding projects already exist. The details must, however, be still settled.

Downhill

The downhill has been newly arranged in this region of woods. Tree cutting has been done in a generous way with wide passages of 80-120 m. It will thus be possible to realize a good setting of the course also under difficult conditions.

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**GENERAL SURVEY
VUE D'ENSEMBLE
VISTA GENERAL**



Sketch of the competition terrain
Le croquis presente le terrain des competitions
El croquis presenta el terreno de las competiciones

Short description of downhill

The start is situated on an altitude of 2076 m. The competitors will take their start from the roof of a restaurant, which must still be constructed. After a starting ramp, the competitors will enter into a very steep terrain. This terrain is entirely open and does not present, up to an altitude of about 1850 m, any obstacle. On this altitude begin the dwarf pines which have been cut. There are also some calcareous rocks, but the destructions by explosion should not cause any difficulties. It is on an altitude of 1700 m that begins the wood. This latter has been cut in a good width of about 100 m on an average, as said above.

The average incline is, in the superior part, at first about 40 %, then a little less, 20 % about, and across the wood 35 % on an average and with a small slope having an incline of about 20 to 30 %. It is a correct, modern and relatively steep downhill, which will permit, thanks to tree cutting, to realise many possibilities as to the course setting. There will thus exist the possibility of an ideal course setting for the Olympic Winter Games.

Technical difficulties: In the superior part, a very rapid race which becomes calm afterwards. There will be also turns and twice jumps of about 20-30 m with a good landing. Then, a very long slope leading to the finish situated on an altitude of 1273 m. The total vertical drop is thus 803 m. The diagonal length is about 2900 to 3000 m. I can imagine that the average time will be, with a good setting, 1 minute 45 seconds. This downhill is full of technical difficulties and it will become extremely difficult in case of hard snow or ice.

It is obvious that protection nets will be necessary to the left and to the right-at any place where there exists the risk of falling into the wood.

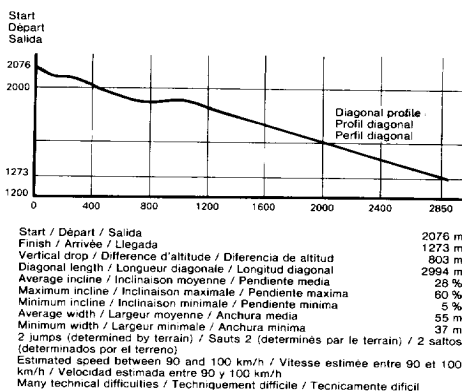
The finish is situated at the entry of big meadow having a dimension of about 500 x 300 m in a marvellous country-side.

The whole downhill can be followed from the opposite slope and this in an irreproachable way from the start to the finish. It will thus be possible to observe, at a distance of about 300 m from the finish, a competitor from the start to the finish.

Thanks to generous tree cutting, it will be possible-according to course setting-to place spectators to the left and to the right of the whole downhill course. These latter will also have the possibility to view a good part of the downhill. In my opinion, this is an ideal instalment. The only disadvantage is that the restaurant on the summit must be-in order to respect the vertical drop of 800 m-used, with a roof inclined serving as a starting ramp. The restaurant will have a height of about 15 m and the start will be on the roof or the highest floor, otherwise the vertical drop of 800 m would not be reached.



DOWNHILL MEN DESCENTE MESSIEURS DESCENSO HOMBRES



During my presence, the building machines were already at work and on these courses, there will be about 20 machines. Building enterprises have been charged with this work.

On these courses, the works after the destructions by explosions and the removing of the wood will be executed by young people. I draw your attention to the normal sketch and to the diagonal profile as well as to the photographs.

Giant Slalom

(see also sketches and photos)

The downhill has also been newly arranged in the wood. Tree cutting has been finished. The slope presents an average incline of about 30 %, thus a good incline for a giant slalom. It is a slope with few depressions and few undulations and it is, under normal conditions, relatively easy. It is entirely in the falling line and permits to carry out two runs. These two runs can be set at the same time. The setting does not present any particular difficulties. It is true that, from the viewpoint of giant slalom technique, the courses must be set in a selective way—given the fact that the terrain does not present any particular difficulties, except its incline. As the removing of the wood will soon be finished, the slope for giant slalom can already be homologated and it can be used for the competitions as soon as the next snow falls.

Start

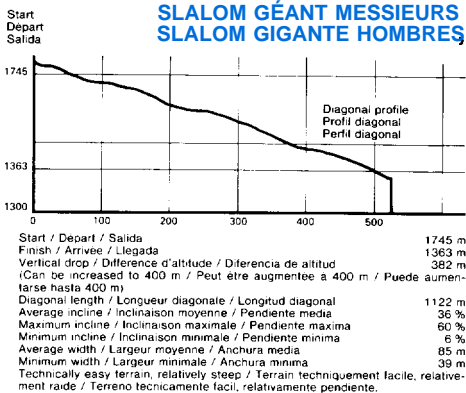
The starting place is chosen in an irreproachable way. It does not present any problem and is located in a saddle between two hills and is somewhat protected.

Wind

The slope is, it is true, exposed to the wind. But, in my opinion, it can be used at any time. At our inspection regularly a southern wind was blowing, so that the staging of the competition could have been fully guaranteed. The slope is exposed towards the south and this means that in general a hard course can be set.

In front of the slalom slope there is another slope from where the reporters, the journalists and the spectators will have a fine view on the whole slope of giant slalom and, therefore, on the runs. The necessary construction must still be carried out, in order to improve the place of the spectators. The width of tree cutting will also allow for a space all along the course, from which the spectators will have an immediate view of almost the whole slope.

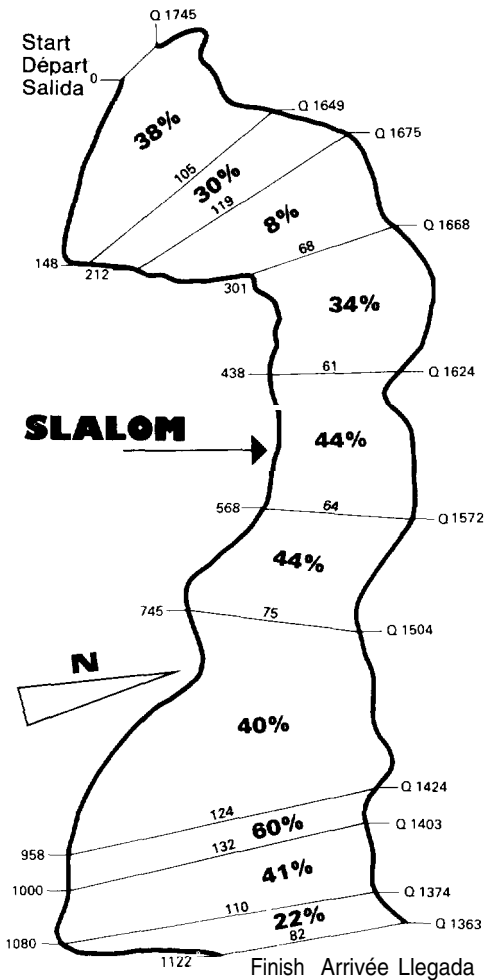
GIANT SLALOM MEN SLALOM GÉANT MESSIEURS SLALOM GIGANTE HOMBRES



Slalom

All that we have said above for giant slalom is also valid for slalom, as this latter is organised on the same course. Only the lower 200 m will be used, so that the same terrain is valid for the two competitions. This concerns also the out-run of the finish and the slope in front, from where one has an excellent view on the whole slalom. For slalom, a starting house at a height up about 200 m. will be constructed in order to guarantee from there the start. This slope can be, in principle, used already now, for only some tying up will still be necessary. Both runs can be set in an optimal way—there tree cutting is wide enough. It will also be possible to place, to the left and to the right of slalom, behind a fence, spectators in the immediate area of the course.

With a vertical drop of about 200 m the start for slalom is ideal, as a natural undulation allows an ideal start.



**GIANT SLALOM
SLALOM GÉANT
SLALOM GIGANTE**

Technical information
Informations techniques
Informaciones técnicas

start 1745 m
Départ
Salida

Finish 1363 m
Arrivée
Llegada

Vertical drop 382 m
Difference d'altitude
Diferencia de altitud

Length 1122 m
Longueur
Longitud

SLALOM

Technical information
Informations techniques
Informaciones técnicas

start 1572 m
Départ
Salida

Finish 1363 m
Arrivée
Llegada

Vertical drop 209 m
Difference d'altitude
Diferencia de altitud

Length 553 m
Longueur
Longitud

Average incline 3.6 %
Inclinaison moyenne
Pendiente media

Maximum incline 6.0 %
Inclinaison maximale
Pendiente maxima

Minimum incline 6 %
Inclinaison minimale
Pendiente minima

Average incline 40 %
Inclinaison moyenne
Pendiente media

Maximum incline 60 %
Inclinaison maximale
Pendiente maxima

Minimum incline 22 %
Inclinaison minimale
Pendiente minima

Conclusions

I judge the work accomplished by the fact that the organisers have at their disposal, until the preliminary competitions, still two winters-1981 and 1982-and three summers. We must, therefore, state that eminent work has already been realised.

The homologation of the downhill and giant slalom courses will certainly be possible at the end of this summer. To this could be added a winter homologation where one should pay attention not to prescribe to the setter-by an already determined setting-the way of setting his course.

About 1000 m of protection nets have been recommended for the two courses of giant slalom and downhill.

The courses have been chosen in an excellent way as well as for giant slalom-the latter is perhaps a little easy as to the difficulties of terrain-and for downhill-which will be an excellent and modern downhill. The relatively small vertical drop (803 m) and the length of about 3000 m (according to the setting of the course) fulfill the minimum requirements of the FIS.

If the removing of the wood and the projection works continue and if a certain number of protection nets are installed and the transport service is guaranteed, then competitions can be organised on all men courses already next winter. This would certainly be necessary, for most probably the weak point is not the technical work but the number of *qualified officials*. As there are at present, in the region of Sarajevo, still relatively few officials with sufficient instruction and experience for organising such skiing competitions, it will be necessary to prepare these officials at a long term. This team of officials will also have to find its working rhythm and surmount *linguistical difficulties*.

Finally, I should like to say that excellent work has already been done on the courses by an expert direction. I think it will be possible-if the work continues at the same rhythm-to organise excellent competitions in this marvellous region of Bjelasnica.

P. B.