

## Olympic Rome and the President of the IOC

Continuing his official visits, the President of the IOC, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, was in Rome from 27th to 29th January.

The Italian capital has played an important role in the history of the Olympic movement. Pierre de Coubertin himself forged solid links there, and it was there that he tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to organise the 1908 Olympic Games. It was not until 1960 that an Olympiad was celebrated in Rome. Four years previously, the Winter Games had been organised at Cortina d'Ampezzo, which has again presented its candidature for the 1988 Winter Games.

Many Olympic meetings have also been held in Rome : IOC Sessions in 1923, 1949 and 1960, and meetings between the Executive Board of the IOC and the delegates of the International Federations (1966) and of the National Olympic Committees (1975). The devotion of the Italian National Olympic Committee to the Olympic principles has never faltered throughout the 85 years of its existence, and it has always had the support of the IOC members in Italy, particularly in recent years that of Mr. Giulio Onesti, the creator of Olympic Solidarity. The events of the last twelve months are the most striking proof of this. Thus, there is justification enough for the visit of the IOC's President, accompanied throughout his stay by M<sup>me</sup> Monique Berlioux, Director of the IOC.



... with the Sovereign Pontiff, His Holiness John Paul II...



*Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch and the President of the Republic, Mr. Sandro Pertini...*

### At the Quirinal Palace

Mr. Franco Carraro, the dynamic president of the CONI, recently elected president of the European National Olympic Committees, the two IOC members in Italy-Mr. Giorgio de Stefani and Mr. Giulio Onesti, Mr. Mario Pescante, secretary general of the CONI, and Mr. Primo Nebiolo, vice-president of the CONI, surrounded their guest with efficiency and affection.

On 27th January, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch was received by the President of the Republic, Mr. Sandro Pertini. Throughout their dialogue, Mr. Pertini showed his awareness of Olympic problems and the esteem in which he held the aims of the Olympic movement. The President of the Republic made this clear by presenting the President of the IOC with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Republic, and making M<sup>me</sup> Monique Berlioux a Commander of the Order.

Other meetings, no less cordial and interesting, were also held with Mr. Orlando Forlani, President of the Council, and Mr. Nicola Signorello, Minister for Tourism responsible for sport.

### At the Vatican

On the morning of 29th January, the President of the IOC went to the Vatican City. His Holiness John Paul II received him in private audience for almost three quarters of an hour. The importance of sport as a means of bringing people together and maintaining

peace between them, and the development of this exceptional means of communication were the main topics discussed. His Holiness promised to address a personal message to the sporting world next year.

Another highlight of the visit was a meeting with the most important national sports administrators. All these conversations, whether they were with people whose talents and activities are appreciated beyond the borders of the peninsula—here let us just mention the three presidents of international Olympic federations: Mr. Gian Carlo Brusati (fencing), Mr. Francesco Gneccchi-Ruscione (archery) and Mr. Beppe Croce (sailing); Mr. Giuliano Pacciarelli, secretary general of the FIAC; and Mr. Sergio Orsi, secretary general of the canoe and kayak federation, representing its absent president Mr. Adriano Rodoni—or with all those people whose responsibilities have a more national character—looked to the future with serenity and optimism.

At a press conference given at the Foro Italiceo, the headquarters of the CONI, the President of the IOC drew attention to the importance of the coming months leading up to the next Olympic Congress, which is an essential meeting-place for the custodians of the Olympic ideal, and at which the eligibility rule is to be brought up to date.



*... together with the President of the Council, Mr. Orlando Forlani.*



*From left to right: Mr. Giulio Onesti, Mr. Franco Carraro, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, Mr. Nicola Signorello, M<sup>re</sup> Monique Berlioux, Mr. Primo Nebiolo and Mr. Giorgio de Stefani.*