



INNSBRUCK ONCE AGAIN SITE OF WORLD WINTER GAMES FOR DISABLED

At the request of the International Coordinating Committee, a contract about the forthcoming disabled games has been signed between members of the ICC governing body and the Organising Committee of the IVth World Winter Games for the Disabled in 1988, represented by Secretary General Bertl Neumann and Treasurer Director Helmut Heiseler, in Arnhem on June 19th, 1987.

The Disabled and Sport

This contract, similar to the agreements between the International Olympic Committee and Olympic venues, guarantees an orderly realization according to finances, policy and sports programme. The present ICC Presidents Guillermo Cabezas and Dr. Arie Klapwijk, as well as the executive director Mrs. Marjolijn Hillegers, stated that Innsbruck performed pioneering work for disabled sports in 1984 by achieving full acknowledgement of these games by the IOC, but also by the renewed promise of the IOC to support the forthcoming games.

Since Calgary was forced to cancel the latter, due to a severe lack of officials, Innsbruck, being in a position to yield to ICC's urgent request, agreed to stage once more the disabled games.

The idea to organise Olympic Winter Games and World Winter Games for the disabled together at the same venue came from Innsbruck. Although Calgary had to cancel, a joint realization of both able-bodied and disabled Games should remain the object of the disabled institutions concerned.

In 1984, Innsbruck had earned a splendid reputation because of the perfect organisation of the 3rd World Winter Games for the Disabled. At that time, publications issued by the Innsbruck organizers had promoted these games around the world, to emerge from their previous anonymity, and the games themselves were organised in the manner of the 1964 and 1976 Olympic Winter Games.

Institutions committed to the care of the disabled are convinced that sport is the best rehabilitation process for the disabled. Hence it had

become necessary to find model athletes to spur on the highest possible number of disabled persons (at the present there are over 500 million physically handicapped people all over the world) to engage in sports.

In this connection, the notion of organising high performance sport events for disabled athletes was raised. In the beginning, there were regional championships (winter and summer), then the sport associations for the disabled went on to World Championships and at last World Winter and Summer Games, which are equal to the Olympic Games, have been organised.

The twofold Olympic city of Innsbruck has been enthusiastic about this plan, but in the city's opinion these games should have been organised in a real Olympic way, and with only the best disabled athletes participating.

Innsbruck seems to have first option on international sport events. The first games in a long series were the 1964 Olympic Winter Games, then, in 1974, after the cancellation of Denver, the Tyrolean capital agreed to host the 1976 Winter Olympics; in 1984, Innsbruck organised the 3rd World Winter Games for Disabled with worldwide success. Now Innsbruck took the place of Calgary in staging the forthcoming Winter Paralympics, in 1988.

Throughout 1987 — in January the 25th Racing Luge World Championships were staged in Igls, and from September 17th through to September 20th the 6th World Transplant Games will take place in Innsbruck — our town has kept the attention of the sports world.

The Innsbruck delegation, from left to right: Wilhelm Thiel, General Director, Rehabilitation International; Dr. Dieter Hoffman", Municipality of Innsbruck; Vbgm. Rudolf Krebs, Municipality of Innsbruck; IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch; LR Fridolin Zanon, Government of the Tyrol; Secretary General Bertl Neumann, Organising Committee; Director Helmut Heiseler, Organising Committee.



In 1984, the Tyrolean capital made great efforts towards having the disabled games endorsed by the International Olympic Committee. An Innsbruck delegation achieved full acknowledgement of these games by the IOC and so the Games were organised under the patronage of the IOC for the very first time.

From then on, the importance of disabled events grew. The first disabled games were conducted in Sweden, in 1976, the next ones in Geilo, Norway, in 1980. Both events had not been in the news at all.

The importance of the Innsbruck world Winter Games for Disabled, in 1984, brought a strong integration of disabled sports in sports events for the able-bodied. It was possible to include a demonstration-competition in the Olympic programme of the Games in Sarajevo, and Seefeld, site of the 1985 Nordic Ski World Championships, organised a special cross-country event for disabled sportsmen.

The Olympic Winter Games for Disabled will take place in the period from January 17th through to January 24th, 1988.

The indoor arena of the Olympic Ice Stadium in Innsbruck will be the scene of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies ; the Ice Sledge Racing events will take place on the outdoors skating oval.

The competition sites for the alpine ski events are located in the renowned Mittersill region, and Natters will be the venue of the nordic ski events, close to the existing nordic ski centre, meaning that all sites, alpine and nordic, previously built for disabled sports can be used once more, thus following the pattern set by the organisers of the 1964 and 1976 Winter Olympics, where almost every organisational measure of 1984 was copied in 1976.

We are proud of the fact that the Olympic facilities of Innsbruck — in contrast to other Olympic venues — are a valuable legacy to future generations.

Since the 1984 World Winter Games for the Disabled, the "International Coordinating Committee (ICC)" has been founded to unite all sports associations for the disabled. Thanks to the close cooperation between the ICC and the Organising committee, the staging of disabled games has become easier.

Conforming to the 1988 Summer Paralympics in Seoul, the title of the World Winter



Games for the Disabled has been amended with the term "Winter Paralympics" : this means to the fact that Innsbruck will be the only city in the world where flags with the Olympic rings will wave for a fourth time.

The games are to be financed through subsidies given by the federal government, by the province of Tyrol, and the Innsbruck municipality, and also by the Austrian Sports Association for the disabled which is, after all, the official organiser of the games. Furthermore, the Organising Committee expects to receive added income from the sale of postage stamps with extra charge, from advertising, and donations by sponsors.

Any deficit beyond these grants shall be covered by the Austrian Sports Association for the Disabled.

The dates for the games were selected with an eye to the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics : the Closing Ceremony at Innsbruck will take place three weeks before the Opening of the XVth Olympic Winter Games, giving officials and media representatives, wishing to attend both events, ample time to travel to Calgary.

After discussion with ICC, the sports programme of the 1988 Winter Paralympics is the same as the 1984 one, with slight alterations insofar as there will be an additional class for the blind, and a Biathlon event will be held — not for the blind, however. In addition, a Sledge Hockey tournament will take place if at least six teams enter. If there is no tournament, a demonstration-game will be arranged between the two best teams in the world. Mono-ski will be introduced in the alpine events with the class LW 10 for paraplegics and amputees. An entry of up to six participants per country will be permitted.