

A GIFT STEEPED IN HISTORY



Mr Juan Antonio Samaranch after signing the deed of gift for his stamp collection.

An ardent philatelist for almost forty five years, the IOC President, Mr Juan Antonio Samaranch, was known to have amassed a prestigious collection. On 5th December last he donated it to the Olympic Museum.

The collection is unique through the rarity of the items it contains, including the series of twelve stamps dedicated to the Games of the First Olympiad issued in Athens nearly one hundred years ago, and through the wide knowledge of the subject. There is little missing in the succession of 72 albums, 5,076 pages in which there are almost 62,000 stamps in 15,200 blocks of four. While one might argue that the collector had certain advantages, this does not prevent the discipline and exceptional quality, in many areas, of what is offered from revealing a real passion. This collection, unique in the world and worth an estimated one million Swiss francs, was the object of a deed of gift signed at the Museum 'in the presence of the Executive Board and numerous guests. "Today I am giving something I love very much",

declared President Samaranch. "There comes a time when one has to take major decisions, and during the last nine years that I have been in Lausanne I have had the happiest times of my life. I hope that this gift will serve as an example to many others". "You are giving a part of yourself", stressed Prince Alexandre de Merode, first IOC Vice-President, when he expressed the IOC's thanks.

Alongside these philatelic riches on display until 15th January 1990, the public will also be able to see a uniquely original collection of Olympic badges, pins and medals assembled by Mr Frantisek Chalus, member of the Czechoslovak Olympic Academy. The Olympic Museum has acquired this collection through the co-operation and understanding of the Czechoslovak Olympic Committee.

THE IOC PRESIDENT DONATES HIS STAMP COLLECTION TO THE MUSEUM