

COMPETITIVE UNITY IN AUCKLAND



OPENING CEREMONY IN AUCKLAND

Auckland New Zealand was the showcase for a revitalized Commonwealth Games this year. The biggest in the event's sixty-year history, the sixteenth edition from January 24th to February 3rd was also the most keenly contested, with medals going to athletes from roughly half the 57 participating nations.

The ten-sport programme - athletics, badminton, bowls, boxing, cycling, gymnastics, swimming and weightlifting, with netball and triathlon as demonstration sports - produced fine performances from some newer faces as well as old among the 2,500 athletes. Several, such as Papua New Guinea's bowler Geva Vada Tau and Maltese shooter Adrian Breton, who took a gold apiece, became the first ever medalists at the games from their home countries.

Australian teenagers captured the lime-light in swimming. Fifteen-year-old Hayley Lewis won five golds and a bronze, something no swimmer, nor woman had done before at the games. Glen Housman and Kieren Pierce, first and second in the 1,500m, also entered the record books as the only men, besides the great Vladimir Salnikov (URS), to swim the distance in under 15 minutes. Another person chasing a world record, his own, was England's Olympic champion Adrian Moorhouse

who got tantalizingly close by equalling the 1'1"49 in the 100 m breaststroke he set five months ago.

In athletics, Australian Andrew Lloyd, in a comeback after a severe car crash five years ago, made a daring challenge in the 5,000m that paid off with a win over John Ngugi (KEN). The 1988 Olympic champion nonetheless ran a sensational race, making up 30m after falling over another runner's spikes only to fade at the last moment into second place. There was more emotion with the last appearance of Sebastian Coe (England), who came a disappointed 6th in the 800m, and withdrew from the 1,500m through illness, his compatriot Peter Elliott going on to win the race. Retiring without the Commonwealth medal he so much wanted but with much grace, Coe goes on to pursue a full-time career in politics. (For his pre-race thoughts before his last competition, see page 154).

In the men's marathon, Douglas Wakiihuri of Kenya over the last kilometre beat Steve Moneghetti (AUS) into second place, as he had done in the London Marathon, whilst Lisa Martin of Australia notched up an eight-second margin to win the women's, as she had in 1986. Colin Jackson of Wales took not only a new Commonwealth but a new European record in the 110m hurdles with a time of 13"08, whilst Linford Christie (England), Olympic runner-up in the 100m, showed he was back to his form in Seoul by running 9.93 in the final, although heavily assisted by wind measured at +3.83. and 10"02 in the semis.

These highlights - amongst many others, such as the five golds of Canadian Curtis Hibbert in gymnastics - were not the only headline-grabbing news. Three medalists, all weightlifters, two Welshmen and one Indian, were disqualified in the first cases of doping at the Games. Although this, as some people pointed out could be interpreted as a move in the right direction towards stamping out drug abuse, others felt it was only the tip of the iceberg and that testing must become more widespread. More specific criticisms were that testing had not been carried out on all medal-winners, as advised by the IWF, but

randomly, that the total number of athletes tested in all sports was a fifth and that the procedure in different sports federations still varies greatly.

Samples from athletes in Auckland were flown to Australia's IOC-accredited laboratory. This worked efficiently but served to emphasize the fact that testing is a costly procedure which not all developed, never mind developing, countries can carry out themselves. At a meeting of sports ministers after the games, alongside the determination to form a united front against doping was the realistic acknowledgement that poorer Commonwealth nations can ill afford the measures taken in



16th EDITION OF THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The smile of victory at the Commonwealth festival : Sally Gunnell and Kriss Akabusi of England celebrate their double victory in the 400 m races.

countries like Canada and Australia. Mr Lyle Makosky, Canadian Assistant Deputy Sports Minister, pointed to a way out of this dilemma by suggesting a series of bilateral drug testing agreements between developed and developing nations.

This particular issue is part of a wider concern by ministers that smaller nations must not be priced out of hosting the Commonwealth Games.

■ At the general assembly of the Commonwealth Games Federation on 23rd January, Prince Edward was unanimously elected president. He replaces his father, Prince Philip, who did not stand for re-election. The rest of the new executive is: *Chairman*: Mr A. de O. Sales (HKG); *First*

Vice-Chairman : Mr Michael Fennell (JAM); *Second Vice-Chairman* : Mr Charles Mukora (KEN); *Secretary*: Mr D. Dixon (GBR); *Treasurer*: Mr Austin Sealy (BAR); *Legal Advisor*: Mr S. Rao (KEN); *Medical Advisor*: Dr B. Haigh (CAN).

