

HELLO FROM VIDY

The Session which the IOC is to hold in Birmingham will see the writer of these lines turn into a kind of venerable bat, that strange nocturnal creature. Strange, because it flies like a bird yet is mouse-like as a habitual resident of dark attic corners. I shall become a bird by flying off to the serene heights of honorary membership where the veterans of Olympism reside. But a hard-working mouse I shall remain in continuing to write the "Hello from Vidy", of which this June 1991 offering is already the 57th.

Vidy, whose rural setting hides an ever-increasing amount of activity. Vidy, a veritable Olympic crossroads where so many paths, as varied as the members and partners of the Olympic family who rub shoulders there, cross and intermingle. Vidy, crossroads of their journeys; their plans; their work; their secret or declared ambitions; their hopes; and sometimes their sorrow.

To convince oneself of this, one need only look at the list of subjects which will be raised or dealt with in Birmingham, and which this issue of the Review recounts.

Yes, here in Vidy the areas of concern extend from the Medical to the Programme Commission (to name but two); from South Africa to eastern Europe; from marketing to television; from financial forecasts to those involving the mergers or divisions looming on the geopolitical horizon and which will strike with full force the world of sport. And the list could go on indefinitely...

Did you know that, after Birmingham, the IOC, its members, its leaders, its administration and advisers will for the first time be simultaneously faced with the files of five different Games? Albertville, with its tortured mountainscape; Barcelona, and the frenzied activity of its construction sites; Lillehammer, with its charm and hospitality, and the worries of a small town suddenly transformed into an Olympic capital; Atlanta, discovering, like so many others before it, that the candidature phase is perhaps the easiest stage of all. To this

list of cities already designated will be added the one chosen in Birmingham to host the 1998 Winter Games. And already it is certain that there will be some high calibre candidates for the Games in the year 2000!

It is undeniable that the IOC today has the authority, means and prestige to enable it to play its role as a factor for cohesion, understanding, solidarity and peace on a global scale. Such a position entails obvious risks, and must constantly be merited. As we have long since known, the real strength of the Olympic Movement lies in the quality of service it offers, both within and outside the world of sport. The picture is a rosy one. But the people at Vidy are those best placed to appreciate what hard work that picture hides.

Outside my window, playing with care-free exuberance, are children whose vitality has found a haven amidst the verdant foliage of Vidy. Little do they care about the happenings within our walls a few metres from them. And that is a good thing, yet what is going on in Vidy is part of their future, is helping to shape it. We have no greater, nor more noble, motivation than that.



By Raymond Gafner

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