

### Tignes

The trick skiers' paradise, where the freestyle skiers will be competing in three new stadiums created at Lognan-Val Claret.

6 gold medals:M: aeriels, moguls, ballet; W:aeriels, moguls, ballet.

### Val d'Isère

All the men's downhill events along with the giant slalom and super G will be here. The already famous Belvedere run laid out by the two champions Jean-Claude Killy and Switzerland's Bernhard Russi is one of the most technical runs in the world. It needs maximum snow cover as it faces due south, offering excellent views for spectators. 4 gold medals:giant slalom, super G, downhill, combined.

## TITLES TO REMEMBER

Performances engraved in crystal: the Olympic medals, created by Lalique, are unprecedented. The better to perpetuate the purity of the sporting gesture.

**W**hat are your Olympic medals like? Could you describe them?"

"Well, they're medals..." In bronze, silver or gold, the metal brighter according to placing and merit. The answer seemed obvious to the athletes who were asked this question. These medals, impossible to describe, are full of moments of intense emotion: the flag hoisted above the podium, the national anthem that can still be heard, the excitement, the applause... the joy! As though it was only yesterday. Unforgettable. Grenoble, Sapporo, Lake

Placid, Sarajevo, Calgary... All those medals are somewhere, proudly on display or carefully preserved in their symbolic casket of seconds, points or final scores. In Albertville too, they will be as immutable as time. But as transparent as crystal. Never before seen at the Olympic Games. True works of art, they will be the perfect representation of the mountain rock they might have been extracted from, of the crystalline venues where the XVI Olympic Winter Games will be held: "These medals blend in beautifully with our visual identity, our spirit, the look. we want to give the event," notes Guy Mucel, who is in charge of the Games image. The creator, Lalique, the great French glassmaker of international repute, a name which has become a prestigious label for art connoisseurs. Certain rare pieces are conserved in famous museums. Jean-Albert Corrand, COJO's Director General, tells us: "Jean-Claude Killy and I were very impressed by the nobility of this firm, undoubtedly one of the pillars of French culture. We discovered superb material and magnificent works of art... It was that immense range of creativity that gave rise to our idea of crystal medals." The project, presented to the President of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, was approved.

Set in gold, silver or bronze, a great technical innovation on crystal, they will be entirely produced by hand. Each piece has been finely wrought: on colourless crystal, the artist has engraved the back of the medal with a decorative motif symbolizing a mountain in bold lines. Five Olympic rings appear in the foreground, standing out from the valley worked in a graded satin effect. On the top side of the medal, a stylized laurel branch, on the other, the words "XVI Olympic Games" (in English and French) both engraved in intaglio. A metal ring holds a large silvery ribbon with the five Olympic colours in its centre. The medals will be awarded to 330 exceptional athletes. "Each piece is unique. One thing is for sure, they will remember these medals!", smiles Guy Mucel.

C.B.

