

FIVE PARTNERS FOR THE CENTENNIAL COIN PROGRAMME

*The Canadian Royal Mint, in
Ottawa.*



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Five of the world's leading national mints have joined with the IOC to strike the gold and silver commemorative coins that will celebrate the Centennial of the Olympic Movement.

The decision to invite five mints to participate is as a symbol of the five Olympic Rings. That these mints are five national mints is a measure of the importance attached to the status of the coins. Certainly, the IOC might have commissioned a single private mint to strike medals or medallions to commemorate the Centennial. Only the national mints of sovereign countries, however, with the authority of their respective governments, normally strike coins of legal tender status. This feature is important for several reasons. "Coin of the realm" has traditionally honoured heads of state or historically important national subjects. Seldom are events of international status honoured as the subject of coins, which are, after all, national currency. Such

coins are also a reflection of the importance the country attaches to the event, and that has significant value in raising awareness of the Olympic Centennial. And, from a purely marketing perspective, this status ensures a broader interest among commemorative coin collectors and among those who may not be regular collectors but who will be attracted by the themes and unique features of the Olympic Centennial Coin Collection.

Legal tender status that accompanies "coin of the realm" does not mean that these coins will be traded daily in the conduct of commerce. The coins are struck in precious metal - gold and silver - and are subjected to a very meticulous production

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THE CANADIAN ROYAL MINT

Founded in 1908 as a branch of the British Royal Mint, the Canadian Royal Mint is still located in the specially constructed facility in Ottawa, the capital of Canada, enjoying the status of a Crown Corporation wholly owned by the Government of Canada, even though a massive block of native stone over the main entrance still bears the legend "Royal Mint", recalling its heritage,

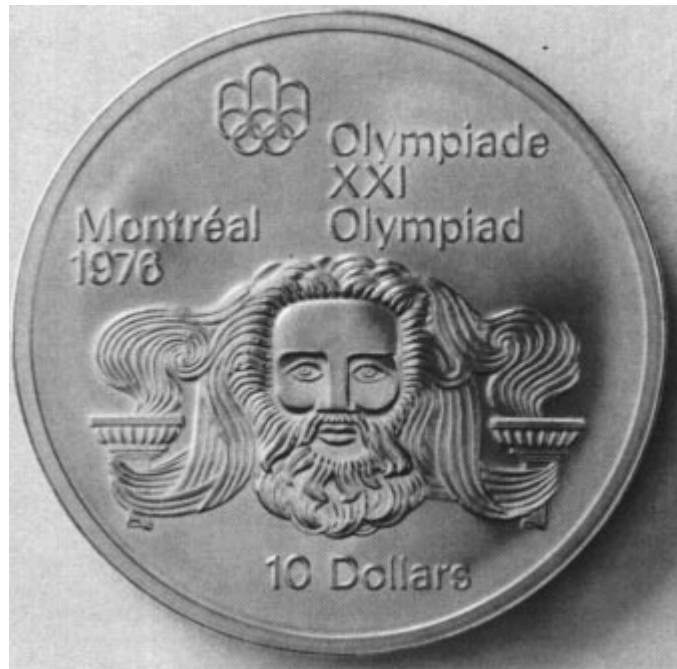
The Royal Canadian Mint combines all facets of precious metal coin production, from the on-site gold refinery to the final packaging and shipping elements. For

The Swiss Confederation has minted a coin with the five Olympic Rings. A very rare issue.

method that even prevents their direct contact with the acids and oils of human skin. Each is struck by specially prepared equipment, and the finish on each coin is a combination of matte relief and brilliant field referred to as "proof" quality. As such, the cost of the coins, including the exclusive packaging, exceeds their face value. (The production process is complex enough to be the subject of a future article in the 'Olympic Review'.)

Most importantly, the coins are clearly intended as commemorative numismatic products to be appreciated for their beauty and for the significance of the event they commemorate. They will be passed proudly from generation to generation recalling a unique event - the first hundred years of the Olympic Movement.

With the highest possible quality as one of its foremost objectives, the IOC chose its five partner mints very carefully. The following profiles are presented in the order in which the Olympic Centennial coins produced will appear - one a year from 1992 to 1996.



It is for the Games in Montreal that the Canadian Royal Mint undertook its first commemorative coin programme.

many years, the two raisons d'être of the Mint were to refine Canadian-mined gold and to produce Canada's circulation coinage. The 1976 Montreal Olympic Coin Programme launched it into the intensive

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production and international marketing of precious metal commemorative and investment coin product as well as specialty medals and circulation coinage for other nations.

Today the Royal Canadian Mint enjoys world-wide recognition as a leader in this field, although serious competition has emerged from several other mints. Ironically, yet in the spirit of Olympism, some of these mints are also the IOC's partners in the Centennial Coin Programme. Collaboration among the competitors in the support of the Olympic Movement and its ideals exists along with the continuing goal shared by each, to achieve marketing and production excellence.

One of the latest programmes of the Monnaie de Paris, for the XVI Olympic Winter Games.

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN MINT

Located in Canberra, the federal capital, the Royal Australian Mint was officially inaugurated in 1965 to produce the new decimal coinage for Australia. Previously, coinage in Australia had been produced by other mint facilities in Australia, branches of the British Royal Mint. Today, the Royal Australian Mint enjoys its place in history as the first truly Australian Mint. Like other full service national mints, the Royal Australian Mint also produces coins for other countries, medals, medallions and other specialty products for government and private sector clients. The mint is a landmark in Canberra and provides popular public visitor programmes.

THE MONNAIE DE PARIS

The national mint of France, the Monnaie de Paris, is located in the heart of Paris, opposite the Louvre. The Monnaie de Paris continues, in the tradition of the ancient royal 'ateliers', to interpret the history and culture of the French people in precious metals. While other facilities in France are concerned with the production of circulation coinage, the historic Quai de Conti facility houses the artists, engravers and special workshops where medals, medallions, official decorations and numismatic commemorative products are created. Such is the renown of the artistry of the Monnaie de Paris, that specialty precious metal jewellery is also produced, original and prestigious gifts. The Monnaie de Paris has been occupied recently with the official coin programme commemorating the Albertville Winter Games and its Centennial issue, in 1994, will of course commemorate the first Olympic Congress.

THE AUSTRIAN MINT

The Austrian Mint has enjoyed a history of almost 800 years in the beautiful city of Vienna and, with its heritage of design and production of gold and silver coinage in central Europe, it has, because of the role of European nations over the centuries,

DES PIÈCES
EN OR ET EN ARGENT
POUR LES JEUX OLYMPIQUES
DE 1992



olympiques en émettant une superbe
d'argent, qui restera la première pièce
de la série, est dédiée à



The Monnaie de Paris on the banks of the Seine.

played a part in the evolution of coinage around the world. It is known throughout the numismatic community and among numismatic historians for what is perhaps the world's most famous silver coin, the Maria Theresa Taler dating from before 1780. The coin has been restruck in identical detail every year since. (The word "dollar" owes its origins to the Taler.) The Austrian Mint has struck commemorative coins for both the 1964 and 1976 Olympic Winter Games held in Innsbruck and recently produced an acclaimed series recalling the life of Mozart. The Olympic Centennial Coins from the Austrian Mint will appropriately celebrate Art, Music and Sport.

THE NATIONAL MINT OF GREECE

The National Mint of Greece will issue the three final coins of the collection in 1996, commemorating the Games of the First Olympiad. The history of world coinage is almost synonymous with the evolution of

the Greek civilization, and the origins of coins commemorating the ancient Olympic Games and Olympic achievements can be traced to several centuries B.C. in that country. Today, the national mint in Athens is part of the Bank of Greece. The mint produces the circulation coinage for Greece along with specialty products. The design work and attention to detail in its evolving commemorative coin programmes reflect the quality of old world craftsmanship one naturally associates with coins from that country. The special blend of Olympic Games and Olympic Coin heritage that Greece brings to the IOC Centennial Coin Programme will ensure a unique and timely tribute to the origins of the Olympic Movement.

The IOC Centennial Coin Programme will be launched in March. The next report in this series will feature the coins themselves, their designs and give full details of the programme.

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