

THEY'VE GONE OUT!



The postmen carry off the invitations to all the NOC's throughout the world.

One year ahead, as usual, the invitations to the XVII Olympic Winter Games have gone out to the 184 NOCs, which have to reply before 12th June 1993.

So, they are out, the invitations to the Winter Games to be held next year from 12th to 27th February in Lillehammer, Norway. In front of the cameras of Norwegian television, which broadcast the event, and the flashes of the journalists, President Juan Antonio Samaranch symbolically signed some of the large-format invitation cards which the sports world is already eagerly awaiting. The first for the NOC of Norway, organizer of the Games, another for that of France, where the

previous Winter Games were held, and one for the NOC of Japan, where the XVIII Games will take place, in Nagano, in 1998. Mr Samaranch then signed the invitations for the NOC of Greece, where the first Games took place, the United States, where the 1996 Summer Games are to be held, Russia, the country with the greatest number of Olympic medallists, and Switzerland, where the IOC has its headquarters. EMS, the official courier of the Games, and the Swiss postal ser-

vice were entrusted with the task of distributing them to all NOCs the world over.

This ceremony provided an opportunity for the IOC President to emphasize the work accomplished by the LOOC team working under the chairmanship of Mr Gerhard Heiberg, to whom he expressed his profound gratitude. Mr Heiberg was accompanied for the occasion by Messrs Peter Roenningen, Co-President of LOOC, and Jan Staubo, IOC member in Norway. Also present were Messrs Marc Hodler, President of the Association of international Winter Sports Federations, Francois Carrard, IOC Director General, Raymond Gainer, Administrateur délégué, and Mrs Françoise Zweifel, Secretary General.

“These Games will present a very special spectacle, and our Norwegian friends have worked unremittingly to offer it to the world with particular respect for nature and the environment. “Not white Games but green Games”. An ecological goal that will not stop the snow from falling to fulfil the skiers’ wishes.

After a verbal tour of the Olympic site covering the various aspects of the sports facilities and the care with which LOOC has approached their construction, President Samaranch recalled that the alternating cycle of the Games will simplify their organization and lighten their costs, for example for communications companies whose investments for this type of event are very significant.

“We are impatient to arrive at the start of these Games”, said Mr Heiberg, expressing in turn his pride at being able to announce that everything is ready, or almost, for the finest of Winter Games. These Games will also be open to the world’s cultures, as the Chairman and CEO of LOOC explained, highlighting the cultural aspects of the programme. These Games, the first to be held in the interval between the Summer Games, will undoubtedly attract a series of new teams under new national names and new flags. There will be, for example, the twelve republics which formed part of the same Unified Team last year at the Winter and Summer Games. There will also be, in all likelihood, a Czech and a Slovak delegation, as their NOCs will doubtless have

been recognized by then. All in all, three thousand athletes and officials will be taking part in sixty-one competitions, four more than in Albertville, in eight sports. The spectacular and very popular discipline of short-track speedskating has gained a women’s 1000m and a men’s 500m. As for the no less spectacular freestyle skiing, it will include aerials for men and women, now on the programme.



The IOC President, with Mr Gerhard Heiberg, LOOC President, shows the invitation he has just signed to the press.

SEVEN CANDIDATES FOR 2000

They will be seven in Monte Carlo in September in contention for the Games of the XXVII Olympiad. After Berlin (GER) and Beijing (CHN) several days earlier, Brasilia (BRA), Istanbul (TUR), Manchester (GBR), Milan (ITA) and Sydney (AUS) came to present their bid files at Olympic House, where the delegations were received by the President Juan Antonio Samaranch, Mr Francois Carrard, Director General, and Mrs Françoise Zweifel, Secretary General.