

mony and the Games themselves. And now other circles were forming; half-way up the ski jump children dressed in fluffy gowns in the five Olympic colours moved round in rings so as not to freeze. Then the stadium was invaded once more - by the traditional frenetic Norwegian waltz. While Telemark skiers launched into spectacular arabesques down the slope, apple-cheeked peasants on skis, hair streaming in the wind like the manes of the strong, thick-set horses that pulled them along, came gaily to welcome their guests from all over the world to the sound of violins. This was a long way from traditional culture, and nearer to Norwegian daily life. Freshness and frankness appeared here like cardinal virtues. The welcome was traditional, warm, and

The IOC President greets the Royal Family. Traditional Norwegian scenes.



SPEECH OF MR GERHARD HEIBERG PRESIDENT OF LOOC

On behalf of the Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee, I am pleased and honoured to welcome our neighbours of the world to the city of Lillehammer. A very special welcome to the outstanding athletes of snow and ice assembled here today.

This is a very proud moment for all Norwegians and I would like to thank the International Olympic Committee for having awarded us the Games. For the next 16 days we shall see the results of the confidence that you have placed in us. I would also like to thank the Norwegian Government, our Royal Family and the Norwegian people for all the help and support you have given us during the more than 5 years of preparations.

We have planned these games in 3 dimensions. The sports event will, of course, be the main activity, but we emphasize also very strongly the cultural dimension. What we have introduced as new is the environmental aspect. I hope you will see and feel the results of our efforts in this connection.

We want to present the world with Olympic Games the Norwegian way. This means a sports festival, but also a folk festival. We hope our Olympic atmosphere will include the nearness and closeness athletes and public a togetherness in and with nature in joy, happiness and fair play. To us the human touch is very important.

Nevertheless, despite our enthusiasm, we must not forget that joy can very quickly turn to suffering. Ten years ago was hosting the Winter Games, and we are all aware of the tragedy that has struck this Olympic city since then. That is why, today, as we are all gathered here in Lillehammer, we would like to send our warmest thoughts and deepest sympathy to the people of Sarajevo, whose lives have taken a tragic turn, and who have seen their world suddenly propelled into terrible suffering.

We hope that these Olympic Games, this great sports festival organized in our peaceful country, will have a positive influence on this constantly changing world.

I now hand over to a great friend of the Lillehammer Games, the President of the International Olympic Committee, His Excellency Mr Antonio Samaranch.

human. The popular parade heralded the arrival of the royal sleds, which were greeted with a rousing ovation. The first family of the country, the King, Queen, Prince and Princess, in colourful embroidered jacquard sweaters and knee socks, bore evidence of the country's qualities in their rugged finery.

HEROES OF THE SNOW

The athletes, the other VIPs of the festivities, appeared in their turn. Introduced by the voice of a child speaking in their own tongue, the Greeks headed the procession, followed by the rest in barely recognizable alphabetical order. In Norwegian, Turkey comes before Hungary,

Great Britain follows Spain, immediately after Slovenia. Austria came just before Norway, which brought up the rear, applauded by almost forty thousand spectators massed under a uniform layer of immaculate, but not particularly warm, white plastic. The magnanimous crowd saved its loudest applause for the smallest delegations, beginning with the delegation from Bosnia-Herzegovina, which had escaped the infernal siege of Sarajevo with their flag-bearer, the nineteen-year-old cross-country skier Bakim Babic. Even smaller was the famous Jamaican bobsleigh team, not forgetting the lone participants from Senegal, Fiji and Israel, the latter making its first appearance at the