

Excellent start in Sydney

The IOC President made, from 25th to 29th May, his first visit to Sydney since it was named host city of the 2000 Games. His verdict after touring the new International Athletic Center and the almost complete Sydney International Aquatic Centre in the Olympic Park in Homebush Bay was: "Wonderful ...It's a very good beginning." The 80,000 seat stadium has yet to be built nearby, but at this stage in the Games, Sydney is much further advanced with facilities than most other cities have been. Mr Samaranch pronounced the indoor swimming pool the best he had ever seen. "The Games for the new millenium are in good hands."

During his stay, H.E. Mr Samaranch, accompanied by Mr Jacques Rogge, IOC member and president of the European NOCs who will head the IOC-IF-NOC Sydney Coordination Commission, met with the New South Wales State Premier Mr John Fahey, IOC members Messrs Kevan Gosper and Phil Coles, Mr Gary Pemberton, president of the Sydney 2000 organiz-



ing committee and NOC President Mr John Coates. The IOC President praised the recent decision of the Government to make 135 million

Australian dollars available for Australia's athletes and coaches. "A successful Games for the city that is hosting them and the nation...is to ensure that we have success on the field, not just off the field," said Mr Fahey. Appropriate then, the presentation of the Olympic Order to the swimmer Shane Gould, who produced one of the greatest-ever Australian performances ever by winning three golds, a silver and a bronze at the Games in Munich. She joins the select band of Australians, Dawn Fraser, Betty Cuthbert and Herb Elliott, who have received the award. The President also visited Melbourne, the only Australian city to have organized the Games, in 1956, and received the freedom of the city in a ceremony with the city's chief commissioner, none other than Mr Gosper, IOC vice-president..



Work is advancing on the Sydney International Aquatic Centre and the International Athletic Centre, the models of which are shown above. Left, the future Olympic Stadium.