

## THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE WINTER IFS IN JAPAN

For its first official meeting on Japanese soil since September 1990 in Tokyo, when the 96th Session selected Atlanta to stage the Centennial Games in 1996, the IOC Executive Board gathered at Karuizawa in the prefecture of Nagano. Situated midway between Tokyo and Nagano, this resort town and former imperial residence will host the men's and women's curling competitions in February 1998.

Once again, all of the Executive Board members were present for their fourth and final meeting of 1995. In keeping with tradition, a joint meeting with the international winter sports federations provided an opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern.

### Snowboarding at the Nagano Games

One of the Executive Board's key decisions was to include a new discipline on the programme of the XVIII Olympic Winter Games in Nagano: snowboarding. Widely practised by young people and sports enthusiasts in Europe, North America and Japan, snowboarding will become an Olympic sport in 1998 at the request of the organizing committee of the Games in Nagano (NAOC) and under the aegis of the International Ski Federation (FIS). Men's and women's giant

slalom and half pipe will add to a programme which already features 64 events. The slopes of Mount Yakebitai at Shiga Kogen, one of the two Olympic alpine venues, will host the slalom competitors, while the half pipe competitions will take place in the Kanbayashi park, also at Shiga Kogen. In addition to snowboarding, men's and women's curling (which were demonstration events at the XV Olympic Winter Games in 1988 in Calgary and at the XVI Winter Games in 1992 in Albertville/Savoie) and women's ice hockey have now attained Olympic status. The Executive Board was also satisfied that there had been an agreement between the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) and the National Hockey League, whereby the world's best players competing in the North American professional championship will face off on the two rinks in Nagano, making the Olympic tournament a very special occasion.

The NAOC was involved in all aspects of organizing these meetings, which were a sort of *in situ* dress rehearsal, and the two activity reports which it submitted to the IOC and the Winter IFS were approved. Two other organizing committees also submitted reports. Eight months before the competitions, ACOG, the organizing

committee of the Centennial Games in Atlanta, gave the Executive Board members an exclusive world premiere of the highlights in the opening ceremony for the Games of the XXVI Olympiad, which will doubtless make its mark in the history of great festive events. Elected on 16 June 1995 at the 104th Session in Budapest (Hungary), Salt Lake City presented its first official report.

After a tour of the venues, now under construction or already built, the Executive Board spent three days considering in detail the various points on the agenda. The Board began by approving the operating budget for the 1996 Olympic year. A sum of just over 32 million Swiss francs will ensure that the administration runs smoothly during the Centennial Games year. The intermediate report by the Study Commission for the Centennial Olympic Congress, Congress of Unity, was approved subject to comments by the Executive Board members, and a final report will be submitted to the Session meeting in Atlanta prior to the Games. The contract to be signed with the city chosen to host the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad in 2004 was modified slightly, and senior IOC staff explained the change to the official candidates at a meeting held on 23 January 1996.

The Executive Board will hold the first of five meetings planned for the Centennial Games year in Lausanne from 4 to 6 March 1996, before meeting the members of ASOIF (Association of Summer Olympic International Federations) on the 7th for a final assessment of preparations for the Games taking place in Atlanta from 19 July to 4 August.

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## GERMANY

On the occasion of the centenary of the German NOC, which was celebrated in Berlin in December 1995, the IOC President awarded the Olympic Order to three leading figures in German sport: (from left to right) Fritz Wagnerberger, vice-president; Claus Hess, honorary member; and Werner Göhner, treasurer. They were accompanied by Walther Tröger, NOC president and IOC member.

