

News flash

Nagano Declaration

Precisely one year ago today, on 7 February 1998, the curtain rose on the XVIII Olympic Winter Games in Nagano, and our long-cherished dream of hosting the Olympic Games finally became a reality.

Thanks to the combined energies of more than 60,000 people, especially volunteers and competition officials, and with tremendous support and cooperation from the local population, the Nagano Games, the last Winter Games of the 20th century, became a stage where more than 2,300 athletes acted out dramas of courage and supreme skill. Their efforts were cheered on by enthusiastic spectators, both Japanese and from abroad, and generated unparalleled emotion and excitement all over the world.

In organizing the Olympic Games in Nagano, we were

able to attain the following three objectives with the guiding theme of "Games from the heart - Together with love".

1. Promoting the participation of children

Through the various activities included in the "One School, One Country" programme, a large number of children could were able to share in the occasion. This helped to build enthusiasm for the Olympic Games, and to fuel the hopes and dreams of these young people - tomorrow's leaders. We are also proud that the "One School, One Country" programme is being continued for the Games in Sydney and Salt Lake City.

2. Paying homage to nature

To preserve the natural environment, which is our

legacy, we implemented a programme of bold environmental measures, such as moving competition venues to protect rare species of plants and animals; maximizing the use of existing ski runs; introducing a method to rebuild the humus layer; fitting out venues using ozone-friendly products; encouraging energy-saving measures; and planting trees. We firmly believe that these initiatives will contribute to greater awareness of environmental issues on a global level.

3. Staging a festival of peace and friendship

We were able to stress the importance of world peace through the Nagano Peace Appeal, which called for observance of the Olympic Truce resolution and the eradication of antipersonnel mines, and through the

wide-ranging "Olympic Harmony" campaign, the funds from which were used to provide educational assistance to disadvantaged children all over the world.

As we celebrate the first anniversary of the opening of the Games in Nagano, we wish, on behalf of everyone, to reiterate our profound gratitude to all those whose support and cooperation contributed to the success of these Games.

We hope that our objectives will continue to be pursued into the 21st century and achieved in a new dimension by the children of today. And may the international bonds established during the Nagano Games enable them to reach even greater goals.

The steering committee for the one-year anniversary celebrations of the Nagano Games, 7 February 1999.

San Marino

"Rasta", a friendly torch-bearing hedgehog, is the mascot of the IX Games of the Small States of Europe to be held in San Marino in 2001. The mascot was created by Michela Pozzi, a seventeen-year-old San Marino student at the State Institute of Art in Urbino. It was chosen by the Organizing Committee from among

21 entries presented by middle- and high-school students in San Marino who participated in a design contest organized by the Organizing Committee in November 1997.

According to Michela Pozzi, who also won an air ticket to the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney in 2000, the hedgehog was named Rasta because of its Bob Marley style mane. She

chose the animal for its prevalence in the area, and also for its positive behaviour despite appearances to the contrary.

Rasta's hair is in the shape of the three towers of Mount Titano, and his clothing is in the national colours of white and light blue. These features complete the symbolic aspects of the mascot, which bear its

torch toward glorious Olympic goals.

