

ENTRANCE TICKETS FOR THE COMPETITIONS OF THE IV. OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES 1936 IN GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN - AND THE TALES THEY CAN TELL



by Kurt K. Hahn

The Olympic collector who doesn't feature just philatelic items in the centre of his collection, but also memorabilia, finds a very interesting and increasingly popular scope for discovery in the entrance tickets for the various Olympic Games. The tickets for the IV. Olympic Winter Games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in 1936 are no exception – they are extremely interesting in their variety and design, sometimes they are simply attractive. They are, however, fairly rare, with the logical conclusion that the collector has difficulty finding them and also being able to afford them as the prices have in part gone up considerably, in a similar way as on the philatelic market.

I see a further parallel to philatelic items in the fact that they can tell their owner full stories as do cards and letters.

In order to make an inroad into the wide spectrum of entrance tickets it is necessary at the beginning to make a down-to-earth list and description of the various tickets issued. There is basically just one authentic source available (as with almost all Olympic collecting areas), namely the Official Report of the IV. Olympic Winter Games 1936 Garmisch-Partenkirchen 6th-16th February, issued by the Organising Committee and published by Reichssportverlag Berlin SW 68.

All useful pieces of knowledge and accounts are listed on pages 150-162, see ill. 1 and ill. 2. It would go too far in this article to quote all interesting details. Anyone interested is well advised to read the appropriate text. However, please find below a few words regarding the fundamental facts relating to the different types of entrance tickets:

- A. General tickets
- B. Season tickets
- C. Single tickets
- D. Participants' and officials' tickets
- E. Press, film and photographers' tickets
- F. Honorary tickets

All these tickets vary in design, colour and, of course, price. Nearly all of them feature the official emblem of the Games, namely the Alpspitze (mountain peak). This emblem, which also adorns the badges and also decorates the envelopes of the Organising Committee, is also well-known to pure philatelists because it is, of course, also illustrated on the official postal

stationery entries.

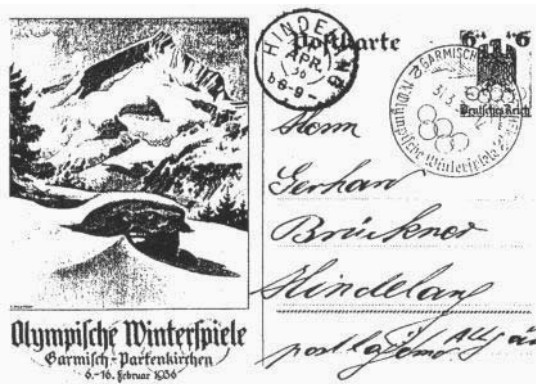
The for those times very expensive tickets, such as general and season tickets, were of remarkable extravagance. The general ticket, which cost 200,-- RM!, was issued in a red morocco leather case, the 80,-- RM ticket in blue. The season tickets were issued in a similar manner, but in different colours. Season tickets costing 110,-- RM in grey, those costing 55,-- in green morocco leather cases. The single tickets for the various stadiums and



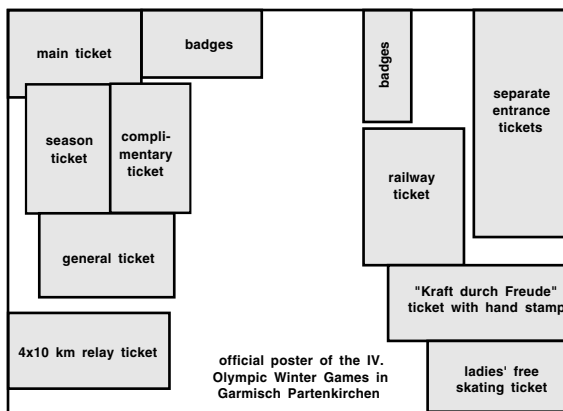
Badges



Envelope of the Organising Committee



Postal stationery entire



Explanation of the title collage

arenas were identified by a certain colour and alphabetical systems, so that even at large events everything went off smoothly. An exception to this ticket system was in the stadiums with stands as well as seats and standing room where single tickets were issued in the form of pins; these are very much sought after. They were issued for all events outside the skiing or ice stadiums for which uniform prices were set and were designed along with all the other tickets by Al Orwitz, the head of the ticket department. These were mainly the standing areas on the skiing slopes and tracks.

All tickets were classified according to a certain scheme and system, the prices were set in advance, transferable or non-transferable, but nevertheless as always with such restrictive regulations, there was an exception to the rule. The famous and infamous NS group "Kraft durch Freude" (strength through pleasure) received price-reduced tickets for some of the events. This group also transported its members with special coaches and trains to visit Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Ivar BALLANGRUD
special
cancellation
1994

Kraft durch
Freude
Railway
ticket



Participant's
ticket: men's
free skating

But there was also a price-reduced season ticket for 10 RM. This was valid only for skiing, was printed on cheap card and was issued without a leather case and only to members of the German Skiing Association. But in neighbouring Austria the visitor to the grand event "Olympic Winter Games" was also granted a cheaper fare as the photocopy of the Olympic Accommodation ticket of the Austrian Railways shows.

Taking into consideration the above, more general description, we now come to the history of some of the tickets, which belong to our IMOS collector friend, D. Mauersberg, and myself, and reconstruct and comprehend what the visitor to the respective events actually saw.

For example, a ticket for 500m speed skating on Lake Riesser on 11th February, 1936. The spectator did not possess an honorary ticket or an expensive general or season ticket. He was in possession of a price-reduced ticket costing 1 RM of the NS group

"Kraft durch Freude" as the hand stamp on the ticket proves.

"Kraft durch Freude" had received 2000 tickets at a special price for this event. 36 participants were registered for the event and all 36 started. One gave up, 35 finished. The winner was the legendary Norwegian Ivar Ballangrud, 3-times gold medal winner, having also won the 5000 and 10000 m stretches. In the 1500 m event he "only" won silver, which he had also previously received in 1932 in Lake Placid (USA) for the 10000 m event, but he had also previously won gold in 1928 in St. Moritz for the 5000 m stretch and bronze for the 1500 m. In 1994 the Norwegian Post Office honoured him with a commemorative postage stamp and also a special cancellation as a result of the Winter Games in Lillehammer.



The best German in this event in 1936 was Willy Sandtner, who was 19th.

A further 3 tickets for figure skating also give an interesting insight:



The ticket for the men's free skating commencing at 2.30 p.m. is dd. 14th February. 36 participants were registered, but only 25 from 12 different countries actually started. This ticket must belong to one of them. Perhaps one of the winners? Karl SCHÄFER from Austria won gold in front of Ernst BAIER from Germany (silver) and a further Austrian Felix KASPER (bronze).

A day later on 15th February the ladies' free skating took place. 34 participants were registered; 26 from 13 countries started. The spectator and then happy owner of the



interesting that Karl SCHÄFER used "Polar" ice skates which were produced in Remscheid. Ernst BAIER used ice skates from "Hudora". At its peak there were 20

Sonja HENIE: Hand and commemorative stamp

entrance ticket for 2 RM was able to watch from the West Stand the most famous figure skater of all times, notwithstanding Katarina WITT - Sonja HENIE from Norway. In 1936 she won her 3rd gold in succession after 1928 St. Moritz and 1932 Lake Placid. She was also world champion from 1927-1936 10 times in succession and European champion from 1931-1936 6 times in succession.

She too was honoured by a Norwegian postage stamp during the Lillehammer 1994 Winter Games (other countries have followed this example). Sonja HENIE founded an Ice Revue Show in 1937 after resigning from her skating career and started a second career as a film actress, acting in many films. The film company 20th Century Fox promoted her successful film *Die Eiskönigin* (The Ice Queen) with a (much sought-after) postage frank in Berlin. Sonja Henie died in a plane crash near Oslo in 1969.

The third ticket, ill. 14, is of significance for the above 2 events, men's free skating and ladies' free skating.

The ticket to view the competitions and participants in the Olympic ice-skating compulsory figures, the first exercise before the free skating in the two-part competition, which does not exist in this form today, was not bound to any one particular day. The number of visitors was always comparatively low, as these events were generally not of interest to the general public, only to professionals, as the sporting competition was difficult to follow. The men's compulsory part took place on 9th/10th February, the ladies' on 11th/12th. Which competitors could have been admired by the viewers on these dates?

Living in Remscheid I find it very

manufacturers of ice skates in and around Remscheid. Hajo JUNGBLUTH, a collector of ice skates in Emden, purchased a pair of ice skates from Karl SCHÄFER which displays the name of the figure skater and the trademark of the manufacturer "Polar", the polar bear. In 1996 my wife Heidi found a small model ice skate from Polar at an antique market in the Westfalenhalle in Dortmund. On this model is a reference to the Games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Obviously it was produced for advertising purposes.



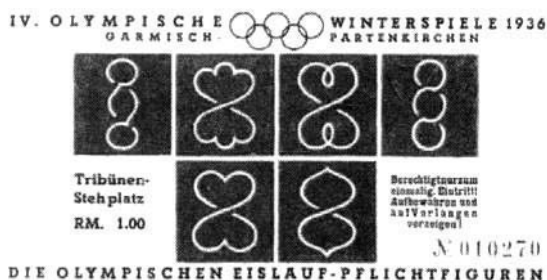
Skates by Polar

Two further tickets are dedicated to skiing, more specifically to cross-country skiing.

The 4x10 km relay race with start and finish in the Olympic Stadium took place on 10th February at 9 a.m. All 16 registered teams – each country with 4 members – started en masse almost on time at 9.02 a.m. The Scandinavian teams were to produce the winners. Finland won gold with a 6 second lead over Norway (silver). Two minutes later Sweden won bronze. Kalle JALKANEN was the final skier for the Finnish team and had the fastest lap time of all 64 participants.



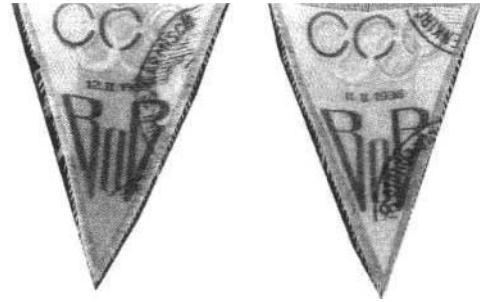
Ticket for the 18 km race



Ticket for Ice-skating compulsory figures

Two days later Kalle JALKANEN was only a disappointing twelfth in the 18 km cross-country event to which the second ticket allowed admission.

In 1945 the Finnish Post Office issued a set of stamps "for sport" with illustrations of K. JALKANEN and 4 further Olympic winners. Such



a set had been planned for the V. Winter Games and for the XII. Summer Olympic Games in 1940, neither of which took place owing to the war.

75 from 79 registered participants from 22 countries started in the 18 km special cross-country event. Winner was Erik-August LARSSON from Sweden, second Oddbjörn Hagen (Norway) and Peka Niemi (Finland).

To conclude – a further 2 single tickets in the form of pins. They were valid for the 11th or 12th February. The pennant for 11th February is pink, that of 12th February is pale blue. Bobsled Switzerland II was first, Switzerland I second and Great Britain third. 18 from 19

participants from 10 countries actually competed. The size of the triangular woven badge is 60/44 mm. Part of the Olympic special cancellation can be seen on the pennants, probably acquired by a philatelic souvenir collector.

I hope my digressions into an area which is foreign to me are of interest not just to the memorabilia collector, but have also aroused the interest of IMOS philatelists to the tales behind the tickets. I would be very grateful for any comments, tips or even offers of items for my collection.

My thanks to Dietrich Mauersberg for supplying the photocopies of the tickets and to Konrad Wärtgen for advice on philatelic issues.



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