

OLYMPIC PROGRAM CHANGES

from various sources

Over the last few years, the Olympic Program has undergone significant changes. Some of these have been summarized in the *Olympic News* section of *Citius, Altius, Fortius* over the last several issues. Herein, I will summarize the changes planned for the Olympic program for 1994, 1996, and 1998. Of course, the 1994 changes have already taken place at Lillehammer, but they are included as it likely the new events will also be on the program in 1998 at Nagano. Many other sports are lobbying to be included on the Olympic program. The following changes have been enacted, with the exception of those listed for Nagano 1998 which are highly likely to be approved, per most sources.

Lillehammer 1994

- *Figure Skating* Approval to allow professionals to compete in figure skating, providing that they apply for reinstatement for the period surrounding the Olympic Winter Games.
- *Freestyle Skiing* Addition of freestyle aeriels as a medal sport for both men and women.
- *Luge* In doubles luge, which has previously been a men's only event, it is now permissible to compete with one man and one woman on the sled.
- *Speed Skating* Addition of a 500 metre short-track speed skating event for men, and a 1,000 metre short-track speed skating event for women.

Atlanta 1996

- *Athletics* In athletics, a women's triple jump has been added to the program.
- *Badminton* Addition of a mixed doubles event to the badminton program.
- *Basketball* In women's basketball, the number of teams in the tournament has been increased to 12 from the previous limit of 8. The men have had a limit of 12 teams for several Olympics.
- *Cycling* Approval to allow professionals to compete in cycling. In cycling, major changes to the program have occurred. The 100 kilometre team time trial will no longer be contested. For men, it has been replaced by an individual time trial race of *circa* 40-50 km.. Such a race will also be contested by the women, over *circa* 25-30 km. A women's point race of 24 km. with 12 sprints has also been added to the program. Men and women will also both contest a cross-country mountain bike event (*vélo tout terrain*) over the same course used for the equestrian cross-country phase of the three-day event. The men will ride a race estimated to last between 2¼-2¾ hours while the women's race is to last about 1¾ - 2¼ hours.
- *Fencing* Addition of individual épée and team épée for women to the fencing program.
- *Football (Soccer)* Addition of a women's tournament to the football (soccer) program. In men's football, the age limit of 23 years has been maintained. However, each

team may have up to three (3) older players above the limit. The women's teams will have no age limits.

- *Gymnastics* Addition of a rhythmic team event to women's rhythmic gymnastics.

- *Hockey (Field)* In hockey (field), the women's tournament will have a new format with a single pool of eight teams. Previously the women had eight teams, but were separated into two pools of four teams each.

Modern Pentathlon In modern pentathlon, all five events will be contested on a single day.

- *Rowing* In rowing, the men's coxed pairs and coxed fours, and the women's coxless pairs have been eliminated. They will be replaced by the following lightweight events: men's lightweight double sculls, men's lightweight coxed fours, and women's lightweight double sculls. The limits for lightweight rowing are as follows: Men - average weight of a men's crew must not exceed 70 kg., and no individual oarsman can weigh more than 72½ kg. Women - average weight of a women's crew must not exceed 57 kg., and no individual oarswoman can weigh more than 59 kg.

- *Shooting* Mixed events have been eliminated. Formerly, trap shooting and skeet shooting were contested as mixed events. These two events will now be contested for men only. The trap shooting for men will continue to be a single-trap event. A double-trap event for men and a separate women's double-trap event have been added.

- *Softball* Addition of women's softball (fast-pitch) as a full-medal sport with eight teams competing.

- *Swimming* Addition of a 4 x 200 metre freestyle relay to the women's swimming program. In synchronized swimming, the solo and duet events have been discontinued. They have been replaced by a team event for eight (8) swimmers.

- *Volleyball* In women's volleyball, the number of teams in the tournament has been increased to 12 from the previous limit of 8. The men have had a limit of 12 teams for several Olympics. In volleyball, both men and women will contest a second event, with two-person beach volleyball being a full-medal sport for both sexes. The beach volleyball tournament will consist of 24 men's pairs and 16 women's pairs.

- *Weightlifting* All of the weightlifting classes have been changed. The old classes and weight limits were as follows: 52 kg., 56 kg., 60 kg., 67½ kg., 75 kg., 82½ kg., 90 kg., 100 kg., 110 kg., and Unlimited class (> 110 kg.). The new classes and weight limits are the following: 54 kg., 59 kg., 64 kg., 70 kg., 76 kg., 83 kg., 91 kg., 99 kg., 108 kg., and Unlimited class (> 108 kg.).

Nagano 1998

- *Curling* Curling will become a full-medal sport.
- *Ice Hockey* Women's ice hockey will become a full-medal sport.