

# JOURNAL OF SPORTS PHILATELY

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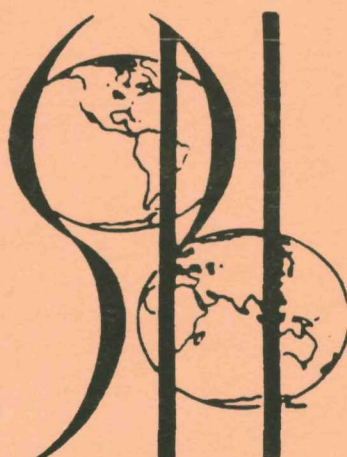
## Remarkable Dates on the Postmarks of the 1896 First Olympic Issue of Greece



1896 Olympic theme post card bearing the triple-ring free-frank cachet of the Olympic organizing committee. Mailed at the Athens 7 post office, 31 March 1896.



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INTERNATIONAL**

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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by Mark Maestrone

## It's Renewal Time Again!

Yes, folks, it's renewal time once again. Included with this issue of the journal is your own, personal renewal envelope. Please complete the information on the inside flap, including any address changes on the label, and mail with your check.

You will be happy to know that we have been able to retain the same dues structure as last year. Don't overlook the savings you get by renewing for multiple years: 5% for a two-year renewal, or 10% for five years.

For our overseas members that may be having problems receiving their copies of the journal in a timely fashion, consider upgrading to airmail. This is strongly suggested for members residing in countries with mail delivery problems.

In order to guarantee uninterrupted delivery of your journal, we must receive your renewal by the date shown on the front of the envelope.

---

I am happy to report that at the close of nominations on March 31, we had a full slate of candidates for the upcoming SPI election:

*President:* Mark C. Maestrone

*Vice-President:* Charles V. Covell, Jr.

*Secretary-Treasurer:* Peter J. Meade

*Directors:* Glenn A. Estus; Norman F. Jacobs, Jr.; John La Porta; Sherwin D. Podolsky; Jeffrey R. Tishman; Robert J. Wilcock.

The election will be conducted in June, with ballots enclosed in the June-July issue of the journal. While all positions are uncontested, we hope you will still vote, thereby showing your support for your fellow SPI members.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our nominations chairman, Bernie McGovern, for doing a fine job. We will also be saying goodbye to two hardworking directors: Dorothy Crockett and Ed Epstein. SPI appreciates the work you have both done over the years!

Lastly, I also want to thank Bob Mummert, our secretary-treasurer, for serving SPI so admirably over the past couple of years. For personal reasons, Bob has had to resign his position, effective April 30. Peter Meade has taken over that position. Please see the inside front cover of the journal for Peter's address. For questions regarding your membership, you should still contact our Membership Chairman, Margaret Jones.

---

Readers will note that we have made some alterations to the "look" of the journal. Hopefully, the new typeface and font size will make the journal a bit easier to read. We've also tried to spruce up the layout with new headers and footers, and added white space in the margins and gutters.

Next stop: importing illustrations directly into the journal layout (instead of utilizing the old "paste-up" method). This will have to wait until I can install a flatbed scanner.

---

Finally, I would like to direct your attention to the newest SPI publication (see the enclosed order form) entitled "Olympians On Stamps." I won't compromise my journalistic impartiality by telling you how great it is, since I co-authored it. Nevertheless, this handbook is a useful tool for collectors of Olympic sports and the Olympic Games.

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SPI World Wide Web Site: <http://www.infopost.com/philately/index.html>

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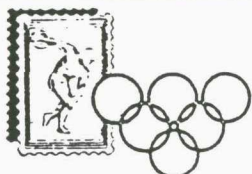
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# Remarkable Dates On The Postmarks Of The 1896 First Olympic Issue Of Greece

by Michael E. Tsironis  
with a postscript by Sherwin Podolsky

In the Olympilex 88 Seoul catalog, I published an article relating to the 1896 Olympic Games issue. At that time, I never imagined that I would have the honor of contributing another article on the same topic for Korea. So, for this article I will discuss the postmarks.

First, let me clarify that there were no official commemorative postmarks for these stamps. I shall therefore refer only to postmarks used during the period of their circulation. Other types, such as maritime, control (Tameion), railway, etc. are not covered. The main points of my study are:

- A. First day postmarks (25.3.96, Julian calendar)
- B. Postmarks during the remainder of the Olympic Games

- C. The Olympic Committee cachet
- D. Postmarks of the Athens post offices
- E. Postmarks on the final days of circulation of the Olympic stamps

## A. FIRST DAY POSTMARKS

On March 25, the first day of issue of the Olympic stamps and also the opening day of the Olympic Games, all the post offices in the country had the new Olympic stamps for sale. An official decree specified that part of the income from the sale of the Olympic stamps would finance the Olympic Committee. It also temporarily forbade the circulation of all other stamps. This is verified by the fact that many of the postmarks on the first day of issue are from cities and towns of all sizes (Figures 1 and 2). Some of these are listed below along with their spellings in Greek and their populations.

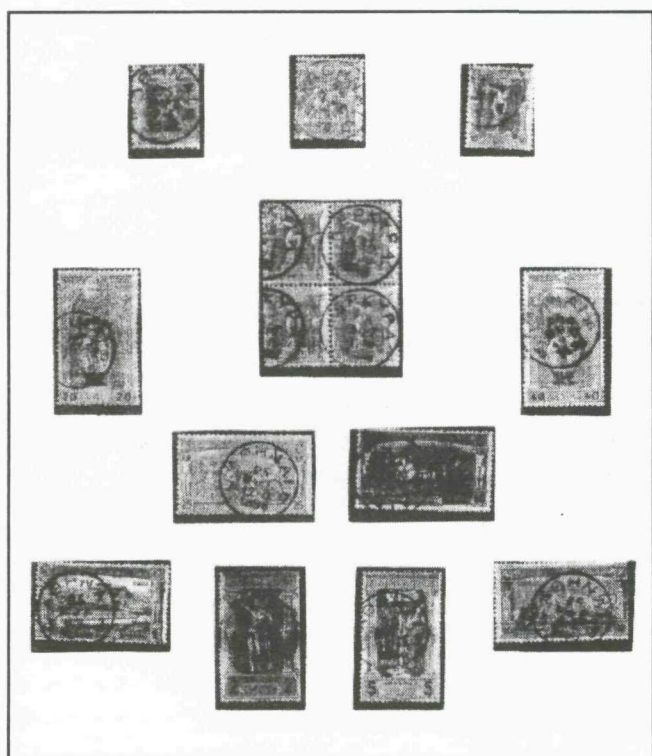


Figure 1. On the first day of issue of the 1896 Olympic stamps, all towns and cities in Greece used the stamps.



Figure 2. First day cancel from the city of Corfu on a block of four of the 5 lepta value.



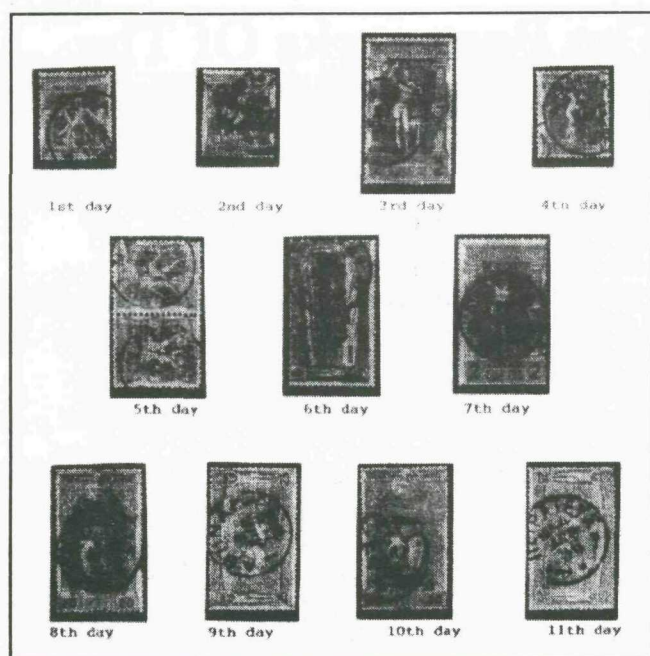


Figure 3. Remarkable postmarks from each day of the First Olympic Games, 25 March through 4 April 1896.

#### Large Cities:

Athens	ΑΘΗΝΑΙ	111,486
Piraeus	ΠΕΙΡΑΙΕ	43,000
Patra	ΠΑΤΡΑΙ	37,985
Corfu	ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ	17,918
Volos	ΒΟΛΟΣ	16,788
Kalamae	ΚΑΛΑΜΑΙ	14,298
Syra	ΣΥΡΟΣ	13,272

#### Towns:

Lavrion	ΛΑΥΡΙΟΝ	7,926
Almyros	ΑΛΜΥΡΟΣ	4,833
Dimitsana	ΔΗΜΗΤΣΑΝΑ	2,400
Ithaki	ΙΘΑΚΗ	1,620

#### Villages:

Atalanti	ΑΤΑΛΑΝΤΗ	1,403
Milos	ΜΗΛΟΣ	1,088
Neon Faliron	ΝΕΟΝ ΦΑΛΗΡΟΝ	820
Isternia	ΥΣΤΕΡΝΙΑ	410

Here, I must mention first day covers franked with the complete set of stamps. Although prepared for philatelic reasons, they are extremely beautiful and rare.

Postmarks were used throughout Greece and are classified by the following types:

Type III	Double circle with number in lower part
Type V	Double circle with ornament in lower part
Type VI	Single circle

The following types may exist, but have not yet been reported:

Type II	Double circle, number in parentheses in lower part
Type IV	Double circle, Gothic lettering

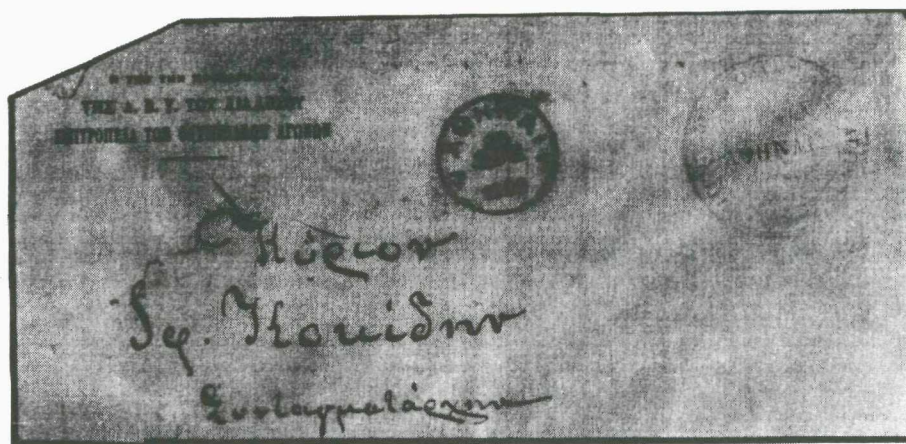


Figure 4. Cover bearing the Olympic Committee cachet (at upper right). It was mailed on 26 March 1896 (day 2 of the Games) from the Athens 7 post office.



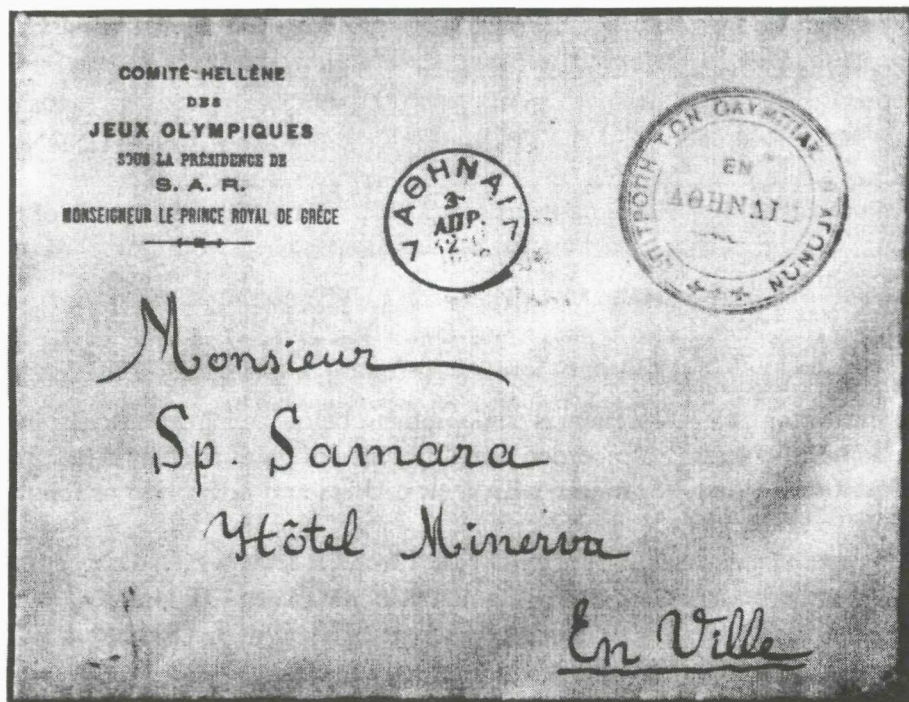


Figure 5. The Olympic Committee was granted free-frank privileges during the Games. In lieu of a stamp, the committee applied a special three-ring cachet on its outgoing mail. The cover shown above was canceled on April 3 in Athens, and was addressed to Spyros Samaras, the composer of the Olympic hymn.

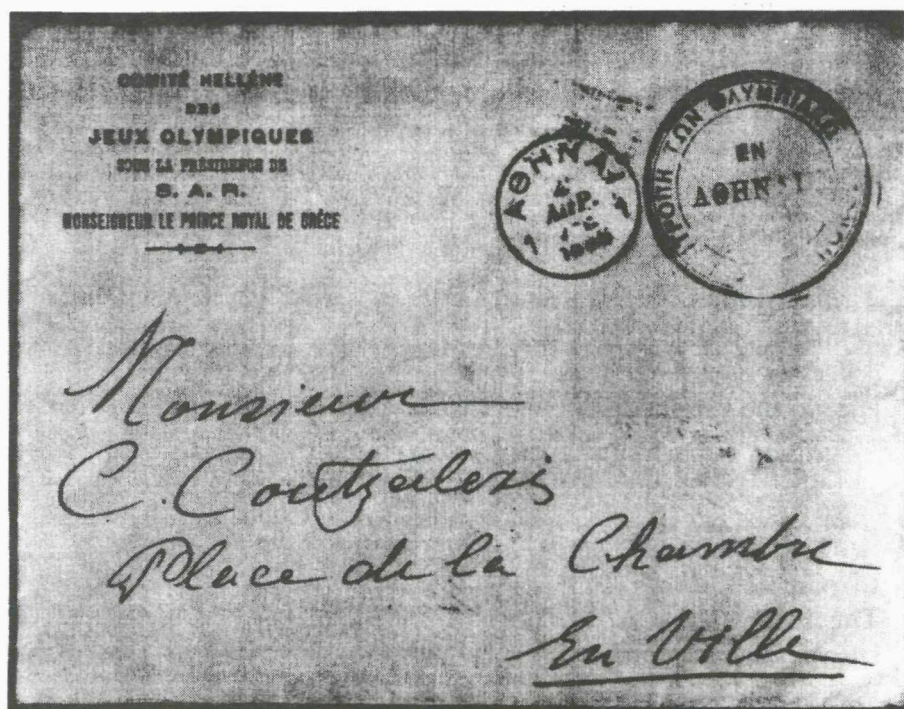


Figure 6. Similar to the cover illustrated in Figure 5, this one bears a blue, rather than magenta, cachet, and was mailed from the Athens 1 post office on April 4.



The diameters of the postmarks vary from 21.5 to 26 millimeters, especially for those in the villages. The Athenian postmarks (Type VI) have a relatively standard diameter of 23 millimeters, with very small variations of between 22.8 and 23.2 millimeters. These variations are probably attributable to differences in inking densities.

I would like to remind readers that in 1896, Greece used the Julian calendar which was 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar used by most other countries. Some authors use April 6 (Gregorian calendar) as the first day of issue for these stamps — and the opening day of the Olympic Games — rather than the equivalent Julian calendar date of March 25. This has caused some confusion to collectors when comparing the departure date (by the Julian calendar) with the arrival date (by the Gregorian calendar) on covers. Nevertheless, April 6 is celebrated internationally as “Olympic Day.”

#### B. POSTMARKS DURING THE REMAINDER OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The postmarks subsequent to the first day of circulation (in other words, from March 26 through April 3, 1896) are remarkable because they cover the remainder of the Olympic Games (Figure 3). It is not easy to find postmarks from this period. However, more examples from March 25, the first day, have been found than for the subsequent period, including for April 4, the day of the official reception.

Both traditional and thematic collectors actively search for and exhibit the postmarks of these dates. Specialized traditionalists collect them as powerful elements in their collections.

Following the examples of the pioneers in the field (Mannhart, Bergman and Tecardi), thematic collectors use the dates to present a philatelic reference to the sporting events.

#### C. THE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE CACHET

The Olympic Committee was granted permission to post its correspondence without using stamps. The mailing was done at the post office by using a special Olympic Committee cachet on the committee's stationery envelopes. No stamps were applied.

The cachet is composed of three circles. The thick outer circle measures 36 millimeters in diameter. The thinner inner circles measure 34 and 26 millimeters in diameter, respectively. Between the

two inner circles is written “Committee of Olympic Games” in Greek:

ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ ΤΩΝ ΟΛΥΜΠΙΑΚΩΝ ΑΓΩΝΩΝ

Ornaments appear at both ends. In the center of the cachet, “In Athens” appears in two lines:

ΕΝ  
ΑΘΗΝΑΙΣ

There is one ornament below this inscription. I have recorded five different covers of the Olympic Committee with their cachets and postmarks as follows:

- 7 ΑΘΗΝΑΙ 7 25 ΜΑΡΤ. Day 1—First Day of Issue
- 7 ΑΘΗΝΑΙ 7 26 ΜΑΡΤ. Day 2 (Figure 4)
- 7 ΑΘΗΝΑΙ 7 31 ΜΑΡΤ. Day 7 (Reproduced on the cover)
- 7 ΑΘΗΝΑΙ 7 3 ΑΠΡ. Day 10—Last day of the Games (Figure 5)
- 1 ΑΘΗΝΑΙ 1 4 ΑΠΡ. Reception Day (Figure 6)

The cover of April 3 (Figure 5) is of special importance. It is addressed to Spyros Samaras, the composer of the Olympic hymn, who at that time was living temporarily in Athens. Perhaps, the cover enclosed an invitation to the official reception for athletes and dignitaries held the following day.



Figure 7. Two Athens post office cancels of 25 March. The Athens 3 cancel (left) is easier to find than the Athens 8 cancel (right). While the exact location of the 11 post offices in operation during the Games is not known, scarcer cancels are most likely from post offices in less populous boroughs of the city.



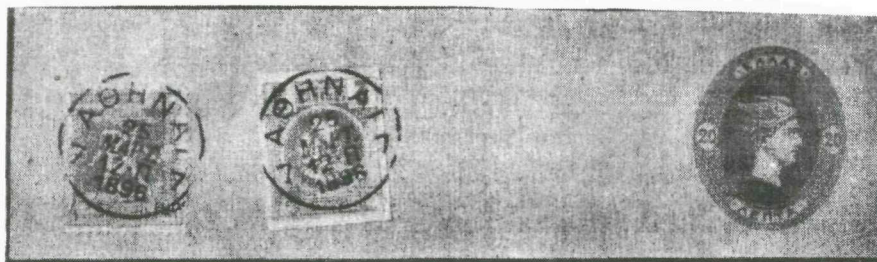


Figure 8. From 25 March 1896 through 1 October 1896, mixed frankings of Olympic and non-Olympic stamps were forbidden. Shown above is a fragment franked with 1 lepton and 2 lepta Olympic stamps, plus a Small Hermes indicium, canceled on the first day of issue of the Olympic stamps (25 March 1896).

#### D. POSTMARKS OF THE ATHENS POST OFFICE

During the period between 1896 and 1906, there were eleven main post offices in Athens, although their exact locations are not entirely certain. We can classify these post offices into two categories:

1. Those with numbered post office postmarks
2. Those with postmarks having no post office numbers

Nine post offices exist in Category 1. Their postmarks are circular with a diameter of 23 millimeters. In the upper part of the circle, the word "AΘHNAI"

appears. At center, in four lines, are the day/month/year/hour. The main characteristic of this type of postmark is that on each side of AΘHNAI, the numbers 1 through 9 appear. Postmarks are also known with a day/month/year sequence.

From the surviving postmarks on the stamps, we can conclude that those used most frequently come from post offices 1, 2, and 7 (Figure 7). This is perhaps due to their use in boroughs with large populations. The rarest postmark is number 9, especially for the years 1896-1898. The following is a rarity scale for the Athens postmarks:

9 (very rare), 5, 8, 6, 4, 3, 1, 2, 7 (easily found)



Figure 9. This fragment illustrates a triple mixture of postage: Olympic stamps and both perforate and imperforate Small Hermes Heads stamps. The cancelations are from Athens post office number 1 and are very late usages of the Olympic stamps - 1900!



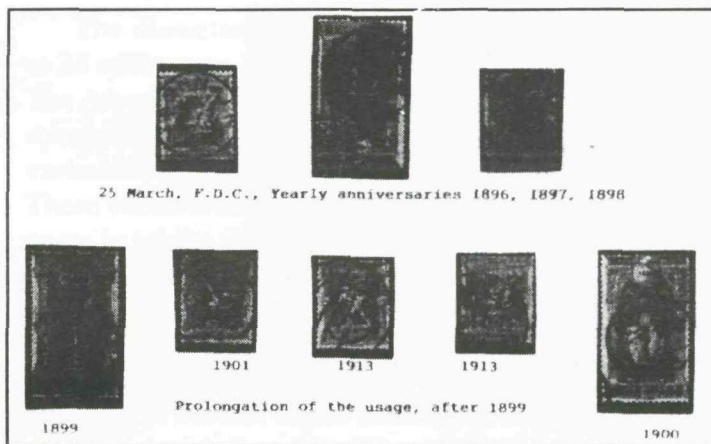


Figure 10. The Olympic stamps continued to be used by post offices in Greece through at least 1913.

Category 2 postmarks have no numbers. They have the same diameter of 23 millimeters. Their primary identifying feature is the thinner lettering of the word "ΑΘΗΝΑΙ." Also, the Greek letter theta (θ) is instead rendered in this fashion: θ. This peculiarity is found on the tenth type of Athenian postmark.

The eleventh type of postmark does not have the year on the fourth line. Instead, it appears in the lower part of the circle. The year appears only as an "18" rather than as "1896." This is also the case for the years 1897, 1898, and 1899.

#### E. POSTMARKS ON THE FINAL DAYS OF CIRCULATION OF THE OLYMPIC STAMPS

The period of circulation of the Olympic stamps had two official extensions: first through June 1897, and then until the supply of stamps was exhausted. It is therefore very rare to find covers franked with mixed postage of Olympic and other issues between the dates 25.3.96 and 30.6.97. Equally difficult to

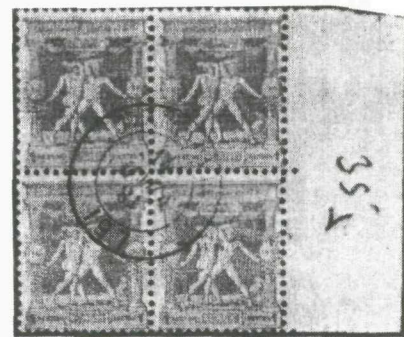


Figure 11. A block of four of the 1lepton value postmarked at the Tsagarada post office on 21 May 1918 – a very late usage.



Figure 12. Last known date of use of any 1896 Olympic stamps on cover: 13 July 1918. The registered letter to Switzerland, postmarked at Patras, bears 3 censor markings.





Figure 13. Until recently, this Athens 5 postmark error with month and date inverted was not known to exist.

find are covers with non-Olympic Greek stamps (e.g. Small Hermes Heads) postmarked during the same period, because their circulation was officially interrupted. From 25.3.96 through 1/10/96, the use of non-Olympic stamps was forbidden (Figures 8 & 9).

We do find postmarks on Olympic stamps dating from 1897, 1898 and, more seldomly, from 1899 and 1900 (Figure 10). After 1901, very few of the Olympic stamps remained in circulation. There are some examples of a few stamps used even later (1913). But for 1918, I made three remarkable observations:

1. On May 21, 1918 at the Tsagaradas Post Office (ΤΣΑΓΚΑΡΑΔΑ), an unknown number of 1 lepton stamps were postmarked. The postmark is Type III, but was not applied for postal reasons (Figure 11).

2. On July 13, 1918, a registered letter to Switzerland was posted from Patras. The postage consisted of eight different Greek stamps totaling 86 lepta, including the 1 lepton 1896 Olympic issue. I note that although the various types of postage were carefully selected, the cover is truly traveled. It bears three different censor marks as well as a transit postmark from Milano. The Patras postmark of 13 July 1918 is the last known date of use for an 1896 Olympic stamp on cover (Figure 12).

3. Finally, a 2 lepta 1896 issue also exists canceled (probably at Athens) with a registered postmark reading "... NOEM. 18" (November 18, 1918). This is the last known date for the 1896 Olympic Games issue.

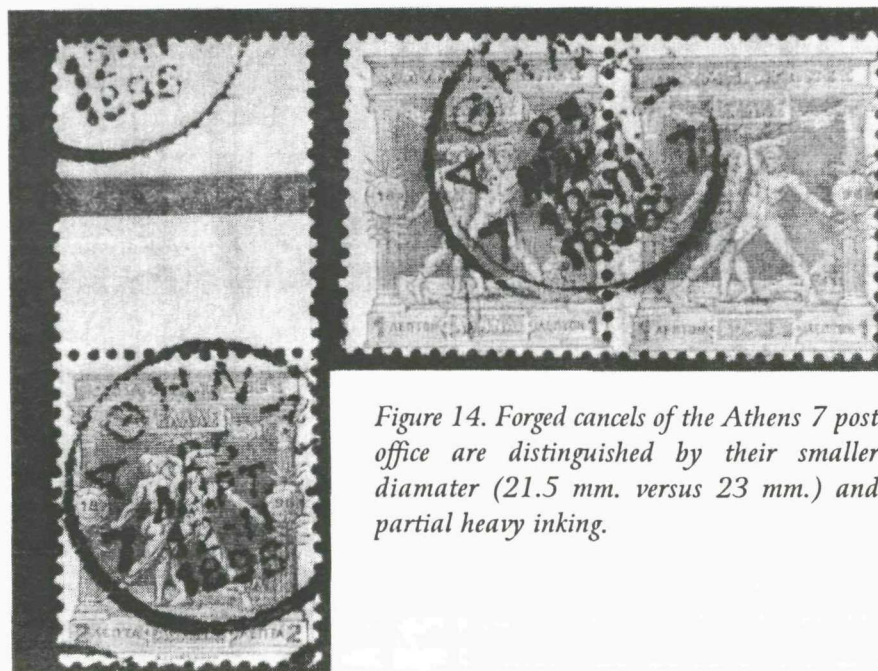


Figure 14. Forged cancels of the Athens 7 post office are distinguished by their smaller diameter (21.5 mm. versus 23 mm.) and partial heavy inking.



Before concluding this article, let me add some special remarks on the above postmarks. First, a well known auction firm recently offered an extraordinary and hitherto unknown first day postmark from the Athens 5 post office (Figure 13). Instead of either of the normal types (day/month/year or day/month/year/hour), it shows the sequence day/month/hour/year with the day and month inverted.

To date, two types of forged Athens post office postmarks are known. The first exists as a first day postmark from Post Office 7 with a distinctly smaller diameter (21.5 mm. instead of 23 mm.) and with partial heavy inking (Figure 14).

The second forgery exists as a common postmark from Post Office 1 (Figure 15). It appears on an unmailed cover addressed from Athens, but franked with postage paying the foreign registration rate. The lettering of the month, the characteristic numbers designating the post office (the "1" on both sides) and especially the year number prove that the cancel was privately constructed.

[The preceding article appeared in the *Philakorea* 94 show catalog and is reprinted with the author's permission. This English translation was edited for clarity.]

## POSTSCRIPT

Many stamps of the 1896 Greek Olympic issue can be found with large portions of the postmarks visible. The low values are inexpensive and yet may be canceled with scarce town postmarks.

The *Hermes 1996 Catalog of Stamps of Greece 1861-1995 and Cyprus 1880-1995 and Postal History* has descriptions and listings for cancellations of Types I, II, III and IV. These four types were used in the 19th century. Part One lists the Type I cancels by the number found at the bottom of the postmark and then gives the name in Greek. This is followed by the premium in Greek drachma. Readers are then able to compare the wording in the cancel to the listing. Often the name or number is incomplete, in which case the collector must study and analyze the postmark.

Part Two lists the Type II postmarks alphabetically by town. The post office number appears after the town name. Part Three, for the Type III postmarks follows the same format as Part Two.

The Type IV postmarks do not have a town number in them. The listings are strictly alphabetical and include the towns listed by their Greek names.

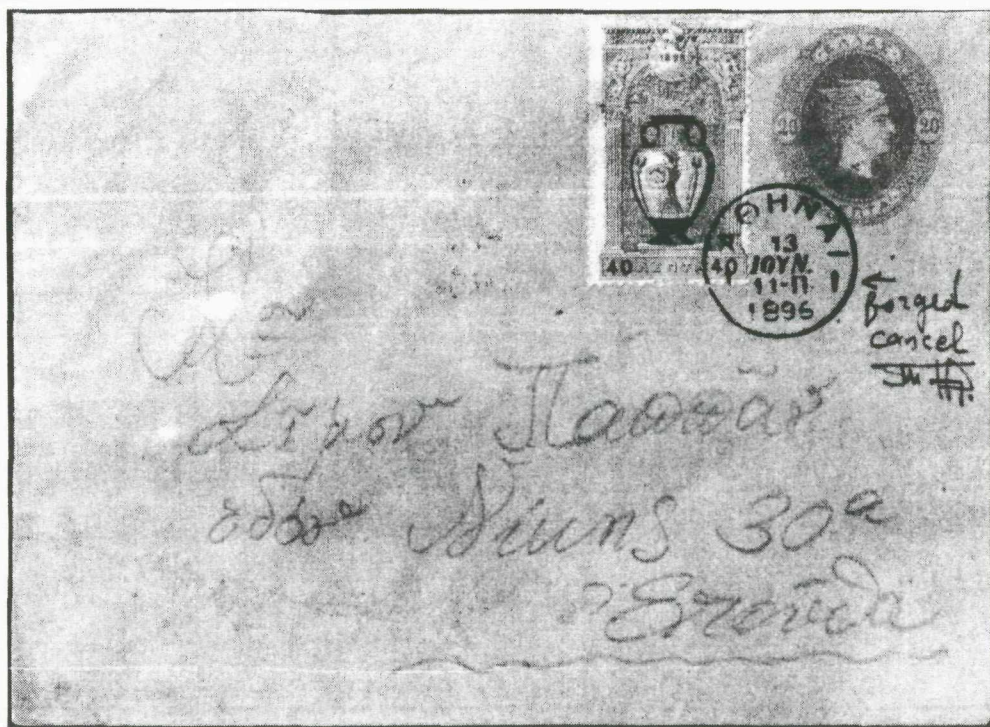


Figure 15. Another forgery appears from the Athens 1 post office. Postage covered the rate for foreign registered mail, yet the cover was never mailed to its domestic address.



The *Vlastos Catalog* for 1973 lists and values these four types of postmarks, and also includes an English translation of the town names. This is particularly helpful when writing up the stamps. However, recent editions of the *Vlastos Catalog* omit the English translation.

The *Hermes 1996 Catalog* is dedicated to the centenary of the modern Olympic Games. Included are special sections in English dealing with both the 1896 and 1906 Olympic issues. Information on the postal and revenue overprints is also presented. There is pricing for mint and used multiples, as well as a discussion of proofs. The 1906 Olympic special cancellations and perforation varieties are listed and valued. However, there are no listings for covers.

Because Greece has issued many stamps of Olympic and sport significance, the full color *Hermes 1996 Catalog* is an excellent reference. There is also a very fine listing of postal stationery. Quantities printed are often included.

*Sherwin Podolsky*

## SPI Rapid Notification Service

Do you collect new U.S. sport and Olympic commemorative postmarks? If so, then you need to take advantage of SPI's Rapid Notification Service. To enroll, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to William E. Fraleigh, RD #3, Box 176, Red Hook, NY 12571, U.S.A.

## Arts Information Wanted

I am looking for additional information on the two painters discussed in Vsevolod Furman's article on the cultural Olympics: Angel Zarraga and Vlastimil Hofmann. Does anyone know where the originals of these paintings are? Their value? Are there any related postcards or other stamps showing their sports-related works? Please send information to Thomas Charles, Jr., 32 Joshua Drive, Belle Mead, NJ, 08502, U.S.A.

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Figure 3. Postcard with green label for the international ski meet at Morez, France.

## An Overview of Skiing and the FIS To World War II

by Sherwin Podolsky

**S**kiing dates from ancient times. In northern Russia, a skier is shown on a cave painting several thousands of years old. Ancient Norwegian rock paintings also feature primitive skiers (Figure 1). In Sweden, geologists have dated fragments of antique skis to be four thousand years old.

Skiing became a popular sport as people escaped the crowded cities and sought the fresh air in the mountains. Resorts developed into year-around recreational and sports havens.

If skiing is ancient, its practice as a sport is rather recent. The first races were held near Christiania (later Oslo), Norway sometime after 1850. The world became aware of this sport in 1888 when the famous Norwegian explorer, Fridtjof Nansen, used skis to cross the breadth of Greenland in 46 days (Figure 2). Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the Modern Olympic Games, awarded him the second Olym-

pic Diploma of Merit in 1905. During World War I, Nansen helped famine victims in Russia. Following the war, he assisted in the return of prisoners of war to their respective countries. Nansen was influential in the creation of the League of Nations and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1923.

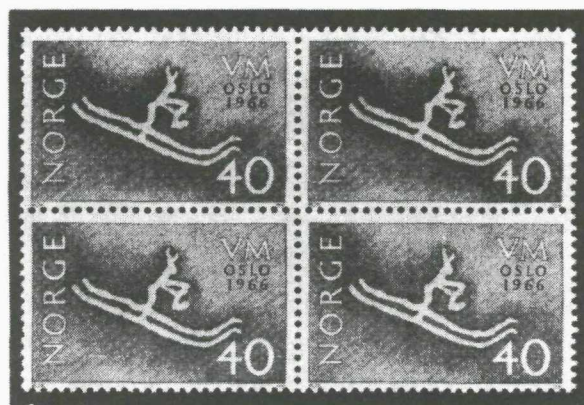


Figure 1. Norway stamp showing rock carving, Rodoy Island, circa B.C. 2000.





Figure 2. Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930).

Alpine countries saw the rapid expansion of skiing as a sport beginning with the first competitions in Germany in 1879. The Swiss established a club in 1893. National Ski Federations appeared in Russia (1896), Czechoslovakia (1903), the United States (1904), Austria and Germany (1905), and Sweden, Norway and Finland (1906).

The creation of an international skiing federation was first discussed at the time of establishment of the Norwegian Ski Association in 1908. The following year, on February 2, 1909, during international ski competitions at Morez, France, Durban Hansen, the trainer for the Norwegian skiers, made a proposal (Figure 3). He issued an invitation on behalf of the Norwegian Ski Association to attend a ski congress at Christiania for the purpose of establishing an international federation.

In February 1910 at the Christiania Congress, an International Ski Commission (CIS) was founded. Among those delegates attending the congress was future IOC President, J. Sigfried Edström (Figure 4). The major task of the CIS was to develop a set of



Figure 4. J. Sigfried Edstrom was one of the organizers of the Olympic Games at Stockholm, 1912. He was the head of the Swedish delegation to the 1932 Olympic Games at Los Angeles, and served as president of the IOC from 1946 to 1952.

rules for each skiing discipline. From 1910 to 1924, the International Skiing Commission monitored the development of the sport throughout the world. It was this commission that gave birth to the Federation International de Ski (FIS) at Chamonix in 1924 at the First Olympic Winter Games.

The 1908 Olympic Games at London included figure skating for men and women and special figures for men. The latter event was held only at the 1908 Olympics (Figure 5). Figure skating and ice hockey events were included in the 1920 Olympic Games at Antwerp, Belgium (Figure 6). Winter sport competitions were slowly finding their way into the Olympic program.

The CIS subsequently had to wrestle with the influence of the Olympic Movement. Coubertin's opposition to athletes tainted with compensation participating in the Olympic Games was well known. In 1911, the FIS ruled that any skier receiving money for participation was a professional.

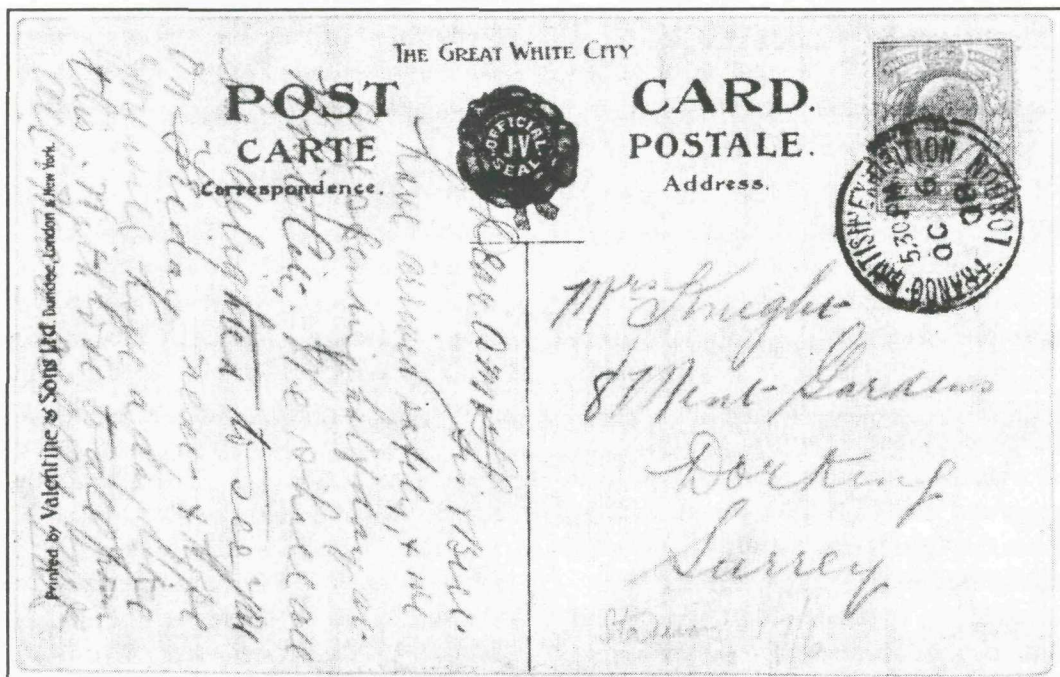


Figure 5. Figure skating for men and women was held October 29, 1908 at the London Olympics, which was part of the Franco-British Exhibition.



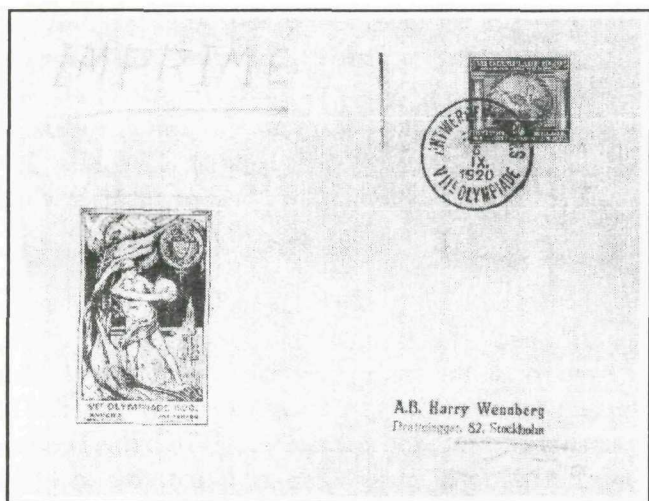


Figure 6. Canada won the ice hockey event and Sweden won the figure skating events at the Olympic Games at Antwerp, 1920.

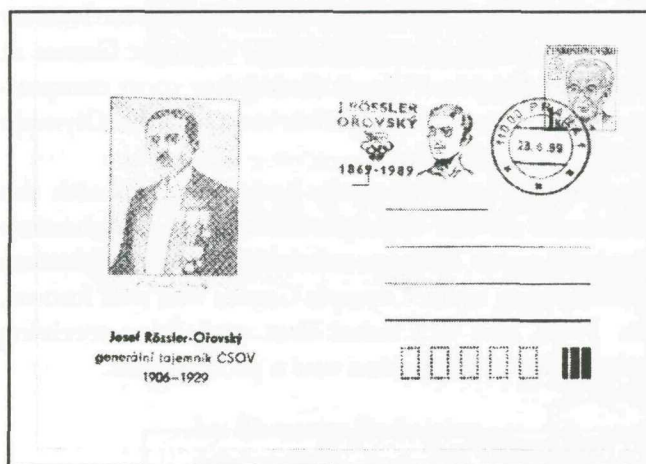


Figure 7. Jozef Rössler-Ořovský, member of the Czech Olympic Committee. Postal stationery envelope.

During the February 1914 CIS Congress at Christiana, Norway, the German delegate suggested that skiing be included in the Olympic program. Wishing for the Scandinavian nations to retain monopoly over the skiing competitions, Sweden opposed the proposal. In his *Olympic Memoirs*, Baron de Coubertin wrote: "The Scandinavians did not want them [Olympic Winter Games] at any price". But, he noted, winter sports had developed rapidly in the past 25 years and were truly amateur. Also, there was concern that the Games could not be held in the same place as the Summer Olympic Games.

France, as the host of the 1924 Summer Olympics, was permitted to present a week of winter sports to which the IOC would give its patronage. However, the winter sport competitions "would not

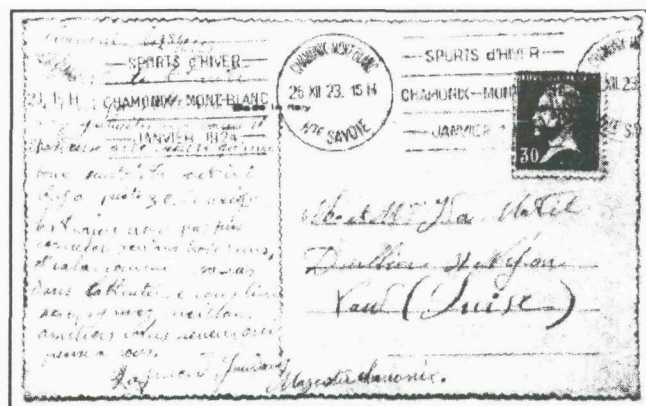


Figure 8. Continuous machine cancellation, 1924 Winter Sports Week at Chamounix-Mont Blanc, France, January 1924. Later renamed the First Olympic Winter Games.



Figure 9. 1925 Czech commemorative postal card with blue imprint semi-postal Olympic Congress stamps. Commemorative postmarks: June 3 (right), and June 4 (left).

be part of the Games." The latter clause was annulled at the Olympic Congress in 1925, when the Scandinavians realized that because of the development of skiing in Canada and Switzerland, they could no longer claim a practical monopoly.

Thirty-six delegates from 14 countries participated in the CIS Congress at Chamounix in 1924 during the international winter sports week. The CIS gave way to the FIS. The Czech delegate, Jozef Rössler-Ořovský (Figure 7) and Ivar Holmsquist of Sweden proposed a constitution for the federation. After spirited discussions, the proposal passed on February 2, 1924. Thus, the International Ski Federation (FIS) was born (Figure 7).

At the Olympic Congress in Praha (Prague) in 1925, the event was posthumously renamed the First





Figure 10. Sweden's commemorative handcancel for the FIS event at Solleftea, 1934. Postal stationery envelope.



Figure 11. Registered official stationery envelope of the FIS competitions at Innsbruck. The dates of the event were February 21-22, 1936.



Figure 12. Postcard franked with the 1937 France Chamonix-Mont Blanc stamp tied by a continuous commemorative machine cancel. Cancel also ties colorful imperforate vignette for the event.

Olympic Winter Games (Figure 9). At its Congress in 1924, the FIS decided to invite ski racers to a large annual international competition. Until 1927, they were called "rendezvous." Then, beginning in 1929, they became "FIS Competitions."

At the Ninth Congress in 1926 at Lahti, Finland, the national ski federations of Finland, Sweden and Norway came out against Olympic skiing competitions. However, when a vote was taken, the "yeas" won.





Figure 13. Cover for the 1933 FIS competitions at Innsbruck with the Austrian semi-postal set tied by the commemorative cancel for the event.



Figure 14. Front of official postcard for the 1933 FIS competition. The events took place February 6-13, 1933.

Subsequent FIS Congresses adopted rules for the slalom skiing races and downhill races (1930), and designated ski events for the 1936 Olympic Games (1934) (Figure 10). In 1936, the FIS created the alpine skiing discipline (Figure 11), and announced the first World Championships at Chamonix, France to be held in 1937 (Figure 12). At the 1938 Congress, ski flying was recognized. Competition rules for this discipline were not adopted until after WWII.

A very attractive set of semi-postal stamps was issued by Austria on January 9, 1933, for the FIS Ski Championships at Innsbruck. Nine events for men and three events for women were held with Austria winning six of them (Figures 13 and 14).

FIS events were held in Switzerland in 1934, 1935 and 1938 (Figures 15 and 16).

The High Tatras mountains in Czechoslovakia were very popular for many FIS events. Competitions held there in 1935 and 1938 were commemorated by postal stationery and special cancellations (Figures 17 and 18).

As the world entered World War II, FIS championships continued at Lahti, Finland in 1938 (Figures 19 and 20), and Zakopane, Poland in 1939 (Figure 21).



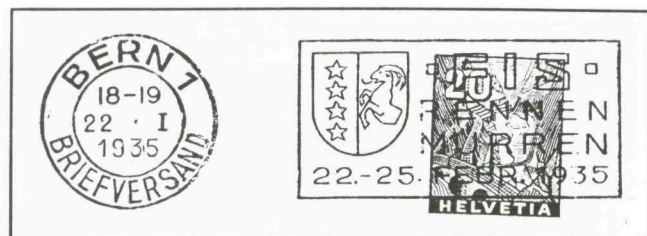


Figure 15. Various machine slogan cancellations were used by Switzerland to commemorate FIS competitions in that country. At left and above, a selection of cancels used for the 1934, 1935, and 1938 events held at, respectively, St. Moritz-Engaden, Engelberg, and Murren.

Figure 16. Red rubber-stamp reading "FIS-Rennen/Engelberg" and an angel, emblematic of Engelberg appears next to the 1938 handcancel of the Swiss auto postal bus.

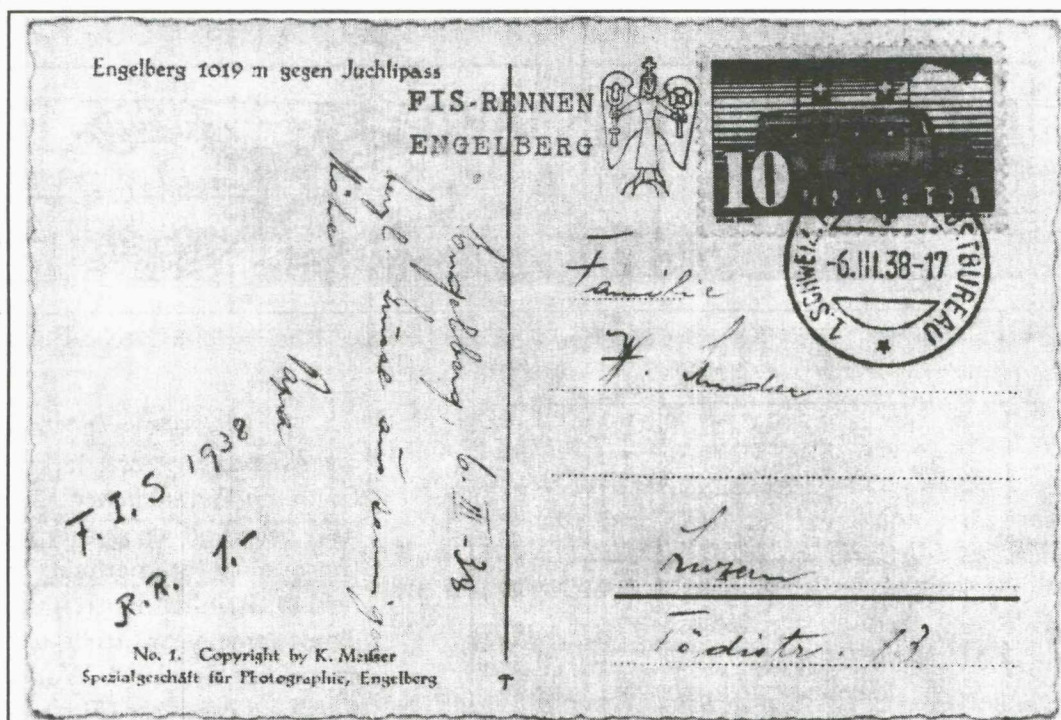


Figure 17. Continuous pictorial machine cancel showing a view of the High Tatras mountain region in Czechoslovakia, site of FIS competitions in 1938.



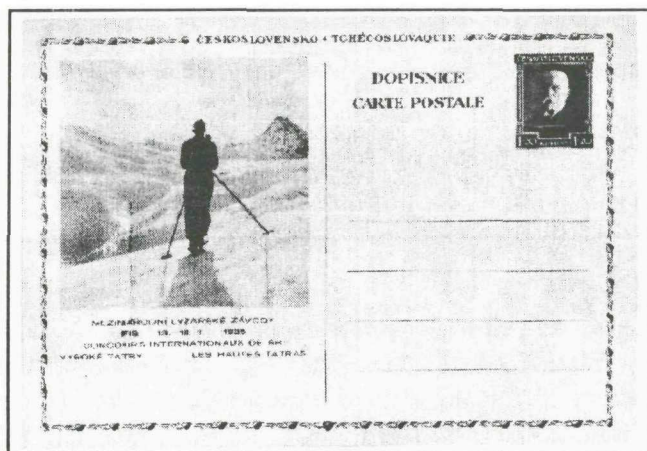
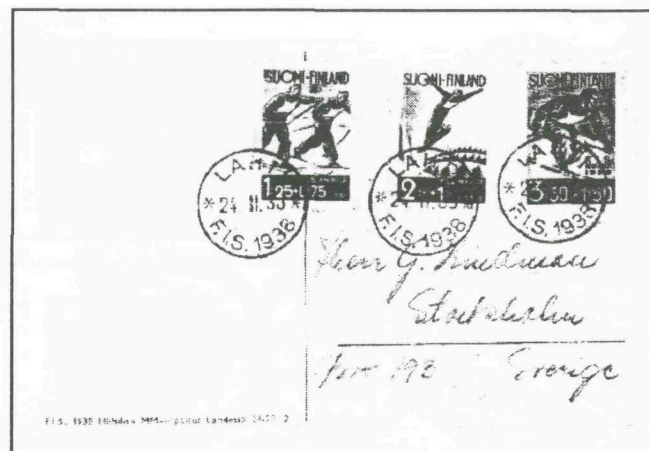


Figure 18. One of five different commemorative postal cards with brown stamp imprint of 1.20 koruny. Another set exists with red 1.50 koruny indicia of a different design. Issued for the 1935 FIS competitions in Czechoslovakia.



Figures 19 & 20. Special handcancels (above) used for the FIS World Nordic Championships held at Lahti, Finland in 1938. The publicity roller cancel (below) was applied to mail in 1937 in advance of the competition.



Figure 21. Special card with stamps tied by pictorial handcancel. 1938 FIS championships.

The 1940 Olympic Winter Games were originally awarded to Sapporo, Japan but were transferred to Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. They were eventually called off altogether (Figure 22). Nevertheless, the annual International Winter Sport Week was held in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in 1940 (Figure 23). That same year, Italy used a machine publicity cancel for the 1941 World Ski Championships at Cortina d'Ampezzo (Figure 24). The onset of World War II forced the cancellation of these.

Skiing includes national, regional and local events and competitions. Many countries have commemorated them with special cancellations which deserve a place in any ski collection. Lebanon issued four stamps showing recreational skiing as part of its airmail set issued in 1936. Japan, in 1931, had a very attractive, but unusual, cancel showing an airborne skier with arms reaching back. The many Japanese ski cancels issued annually have tried to show many different designs. In occupied Poland, the German Post used a special cancellation for the First Ski Competition held in the East at Zakopane, 1940 (Figure 25). Finally, we have a postal card from





Figure 22. Colorful postcard giving the names of the host cities for the 1940 Olympics: Garmisch-Partenkirchen (winter) and Helsinki (summer). The tiny inscription at bottom reads, in effect: "only if war does not take place."



Figure 23. The Winter Olympics at Garmisch were cancelled. Nevertheless, an International Sport Week was commemorated by a pictorial cancel showing a figure skater. Other pictorial themes exist.



Figure 24. Machine slogan cancel for the 1941 World Ski Championships in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy. The event was cancelled due to World War II.



Figure 25. During the Nazi occupation of Poland, the first Eastern Ski Competition was held at Zakopane (1941).

Manchuria with a red cancel showing a skater and skier (Figure 26).

Information for this article comes from the ski collection of the late Dorothy Gulick and from Cliff Jeger. Also, a 1984 issue of the *Olympic Review* devoted to skiing and Olympism was kindly provided by the FIS (Blochstrasse 2, 3653 Oberhofen/Thun-ersee, Switzerland). Another source was a brief history of the FIS by Erich Brenzikofer of Switzerland published in an IMOS Bulletin (date unknown).

This article shows many, but not all, known ski and FIS cancellations and stamps issued through World War II. The scope can be enlarged by including material related to special cancels and stamps of ski resorts from around the world.



Figure 26. Undated red pictorial cancel from Manchuria (probably 1942) showing an ice skater and skier.



# "The Arts Must Go Hand in Hand With Sport": The Author Responds to Comments

by Vsevolod Furman

It's been a long time since my article entitled "The Arts Must Go Hand In Hand With Sport" was published in the *Journal of Sports Philately* (July-August 1995). For various reasons, I did not see the published article until December 1995. By that time, I had received some responses from collectors, analyzed reviews in the IMOS journal (issue #87) and *Phila-Sport* (issue #16), as well as became acquainted with Dr. Manfred Bergman's remarks (*JSP*, Sept.-Oct. 1995).

I am very grateful to those who showed interest in my work, and intend to continue this series with an article about the Olympic arts competitions of 1936-1948.

I express my deep gratitude to my old friend, Mr. Boris Fomenko, who worked hard translating the article into English. Mr. Mark Maestroni also had much work to do [on the article] as the editor and as an enthusiast of Olympic philately. However, some disappointing misprints slipped in resulting in some distortion of my text.

As the author, I would like to respond to Dr. Bergman's remarks, make some corrections, as well as add some information. Dear readers, kindly take your July-August 1995 issue of the journal in hand and make the following corrections to the text.

## ON DR. MANFRED BERGMAN'S REMARKS

A. The article *does not say* that philosophers, scholars, poets, and musicians of ancient Olympia competed with each other as sportsmen. I wrote in the Russian text that "... Hellenes would flock to Olympia not only to watch athletic competitions. They would also rush there to listen to philosophical discussions by Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, to get acquainted with views of Democritus, Demosthenes, Lucianus, to listen to kithara music and to watch Euripides' tragic plays." Therefore, I don't understand on what grounds Dr. Bergman could make another conclusion. In his thoughts he added what is not written in the article.

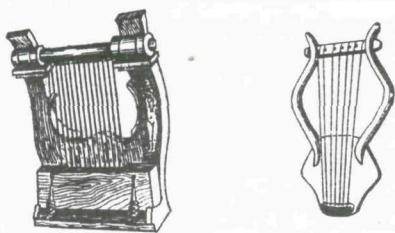
B. Special pentagonal hand postmarks used at the stadium *are not suitable* for philatelic illustration of the Olympic arts competition which was held on the basis of the exposition *at the Municipal Museum of Amsterdam*. In thematic philatelic practice, we must always strive for the most precise illustration of events according to the time and place of their occurrence. The stadium was not the place at which the arts competition was held. Therefore, in the absence of special postmarks for the competition, it is preferable to show philatelic items such as envelopes or cards franked with commemorative stamps and cancelled with a standard date postmark from the "Amsterdam/Central Station." Still better would be postmarks from the local post office that served the Municipal Museum of Amsterdam (to my regret, I do not know either the number of that local post office, nor its location). Unfortunately, the "universal" special machine postmark "Amsterdam/Central Station" with the slogan text reading "IX<sup>e</sup> Olympiade" ceased to be used on June 7, 1928, i.e. five days before the opening of the arts competition. The pentagonal hand postmark is not suitable in this case, so I emphasized, and emphasize, the importance of standard date postmarks of the city.

As for the beginning of the operation of the post office at the stadium, it was really on May 17, 1928. I wrote about it in my former article with different contents published in *Sovetsky Kollektioner*, issue #23, 1986, page 67.

I can agree with Dr. Bergman that his remark was caused by the phrase: "On the opening day of the Games, no use was made of special Olympic cancels." But there is no such phrase in the original Russian text. The translator made a mistake by calling June 12 the opening day of the Games instead of the opening day of the arts competition.

C. On page 10 of the article, there appeared an incorrect phrase due to the translation: "In the architecture division, Hungarian Alfred Hajos was awarded Olympic laurels for his new designs of a stadium and swimming pool." The editor repeated this mistake in the caption for Figures 25 and 26 on





Figures 1 & 2. A kithara (left) and lyre (right).

page 9. Moreover, the editor made another mistake by writing that in 1896 they did not award gold medals. Champions won silver medals! [Editor's Comment: Mr. Furman is correct. Because Coubertin considered gold particularly vulgar, first place winners in 1896 received a silver medal; bronze medals were awarded to second place finishers. I used the words "gold medal" in a generic sense to signify that Hajos came in first, *not* necessarily that he received a medal of that color. Had I substituted "silver" for "gold" medals, the reader would have been led to believe that Hajos placed second in the 1896 swimming events.]

In the original Russian text, I wrote: "In the architecture division the world got acquainted with a new design of Alfred Hajos who was awarded Olympic laurels." Here, the words "was awarded Olympic laurels" refer to former achievements of A. Hajos (1896!) as a sportsman. I didn't mean at all that at the arts competition of 1928, A. Hajos won an award.

As for the real name of Alfred Hajos (it was Guttmann), it was such indeed, and is known to many people. He competed in Athens (1896) under the name Guttmann, but documents and the official catalog of the 1928-1932 arts competition give the name of A. Hajos! It is this name that should be cited in this case.

D. A slight difference in spelling the German architect's name (*Marh* instead of *March*) is explained by the fact that the same sounds in German, Russian and English are transliterated by different letters or their combinations (thus, German "ch," Russian "x" and English "h" or "kh" are identical).

Summing up my comments on Dr. Bergman's remarks, I would like to inform my readers that when I met Dr. Bergman in Lausanne in October 1995 and learned about his remarks regarding my article, I asked him not to hurry with their publication until I saw the article myself. Even then I doubted the errors made.

I appreciate Dr. Bergman's knowledge, experience, enthusiasm and authority in problems of Olympic and sport philately, consider him to be Maître in our hobby, bear good feeling for him, but cannot agree with his haste in judgement.

## MY REMARKS AND ADDITIONS

A. Turning to mythology and the god Apollo, one must not identify "kithara" with "lyre." Apollo played the kithara! It looks like a lyre, but is designed differently. A kithara is acoustically better than a lyre. Figures 1 and 3 in the article show a kithara, not a lyre, as stated in the captions. Figures 1 and 2 show a kithara and a lyre.



Figure 3. Musical competition between Marsius and Apollo (who is mistakenly shown with a lyre rather than a kithara).

The article should have been supplied with two pieces of information which, in my opinion, deepen understanding of the role of Apollo as a forerunner of arts competitions in general and Olympic ones in particular. Ancient Greek mythology paid attention to Apollo's competitive nature as a musician time and again. Pan, the god of forests and shepherds was very proud of his playing of the reed-pipe and once challenged Apollo to a contest. The judge of this competition, the deity Tmol, was to decide which of them, Pan or Apollo, could more skillfully charm with his reed. It was Apollo who won.

Figure 3 shows an example. One of Dionysus' companions, the Phrygian satyr Marsius, was proud of his playing of the reed flute and challenged Apollo. Again, it was the leader of the muses who won the competition. It should be noted that even ancient Greek artists who painted vases, were sometimes wrong in their depiction of Apollo playing the lyre. Figure 3 confirms this.

B. The caption in Figure 10 (page 6 of the article) incorrectly states that the sculptor of the statue shown on the stamp at right was P. Puget. In fact, the left stamp in Figure 10 shows P. Puget alongside his sculpture "Milon of Kroton." The sculpture



shown on the stamp at right, also entitled "Milon of Kroton," was executed by another sculptor, E. Dumont.

C. The centenary of the birth of Norwegian composer, Marius Ulfrstad, was commemorated in 1990, not 2000. The Swiss stamp devoted to Arthur Honegger was issued in 1972, not 1922 [Scott #550].

D. Not long ago, I was lucky to find two philatelic items commemorating an additional work which participated in the arts competition of 1932. Special pictorial machine roller postmarks from the "Prague-1" and "Prague-25" post offices for some years (1935-1938) promoted the football cup finals held at the state's Th. G. Masaryk Stadium in the Strahov

District (Prague). At Los Angeles, Czechoslovakian architects Alois Dryak, E. Kopp and F. Balcarek displayed five design plans related to this stadium. The Prague-1 cancel shows a general view of the stadium field. The Prague-25 cancel shows a soccer player with the playing field in the background. ☛

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Feb96	4	Field Hockey	Mar96	4	Parachutes	Feb96	2	Water Ski/Surf
Feb96	3	Golf	Feb96	4	Pole Vault	Feb96	7	Weight Lifting
Feb96	8	Gymnastics, Men	Feb96	1	Polo	Feb96	2	Windsurfing
Feb96	8	" , Women	Feb96	3	Relay Races	Feb96	7	Wrestling
Feb96	2	Hammer Throw	Feb96	1	Roller Skating			
			Feb96	5	Rowing			



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE



Figure 1. Sepak Takraw, known as Sipa in the Philippines, is played with a rattan ball which is kicked over a net. The game is very popular in Asian countries where it first began.

## Sepak Takraw & Rattan Ball Sports

by Rex Haggett

What is rattan? My dictionary provides the following definitions: "One of several species of *Calamus*, climbing palms with long thin pliable jointed stems, growing chiefly in the East Indies; piece of rattan stem used as cane or for other purposes; rattan used as material in buildings, etc." Rattan's best known use in the West is probably in the making of furniture.

The plant has such strong, supple qualities allowing it to be woven into a very light-weight ball. These rattan balls have formed the basis of games unique to Southeast Asia for many hundreds of years.

A book by Norman Lewis entitled *Golden Earth* relates a journey through Burma during the 1950s. Lewis observes that "the three things for which Burma is, of all countries, the most famous are snake charming, the playing of 'rattan football' and

the destruction of the invading forces sent by a Ming Emperor of China."

### THE NAME OF THE GAME

Another equally famous rattan ball game in that part of the world was *sepak takraw*, a name officially used until recently. Originally each country had its own name for the sport. Thus, in Brunei it was known as *sepak raga jala*, in Burma it was called *ching loong*, while in Ceylon it went by the name *raga*. The Indonesians used the name *rago*, in Laos it was called *kator*, and in Malaysia, *sepak raga jaring*. The version played in the Philippines went by the name *sipa* (Figure 1). Variations of these names are used in other Asian countries.

When a federation of participating countries was formed in 1965, it standardized the name of the sport as *sepak takraw*. This compromise terminology was derived from the Malay word "sepak" (kick) and the Thai word "takraw" (rattan ball).



Whilst on the subject of names, the reader will have noticed that I said that, until recently, the official name for the game was *sepak takraw*. At a meeting of the Asian Sepak Takraw Federation (ASTAF) in December 1994, the name was changed to "acrobatic volley" or "acrovolley."

The reason for the name change is that the ASTAF is making strenuous efforts to get the sport included in the 2000 Olympic Games at Sydney, Australia. The sport currently falls far short of the "five continents" or 65 countries criteria for Olympic status. ASTAF would like to see the sport included as a branch of volleyball. Both regular volleyball and beach volleyball are already Olympic sports. The International Federation of Volleyball has promised to help push acrovolley along the road to Sydney 2000.

#### HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

Rather than laboriously cataloging the various rules governing the game, I will instead quote from an article which appeared in the magazine *Asiaweek* on 19 May 1995:

*"The year is 2000, the setting a small court ringed with cheering spectators in Sydney. Six lithe muscular men stand poised for action, three on each side of a 1.5 meter high net. Suddenly, one of them snaps backwards from the waist like a ballet dancer, throws a leg in the air and smashes a woven ball with his instep [Figure 3]. The ball flies over the net and slams against an opponent's head. A team-mate rushes forward and flicks the ball with his thighs as a third man executes an electrifying cartwheel and 'spikes' the ball across the net.*

*"That imaginary scene from the Malay game sepak takraw could turn into reality at the Sydney Olympics. Although the game is played mostly in Southeast Asia, during the last five years it has spread to over a dozen countries including the United States, Finland, India, Japan and Korea. It was played in the 1990 Asian Games in Beijing and is being considered as a cultural event at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996.*

*"The game might be best described as a cross between soccer, gymnastics and volleyball with features of soccer predominating. It requires great agility, coordination and fitness. As kicks are the most important part of the game, soccer skills such as bicycle kicks come in handy and for the kicks to be effective, they must be powerful.*

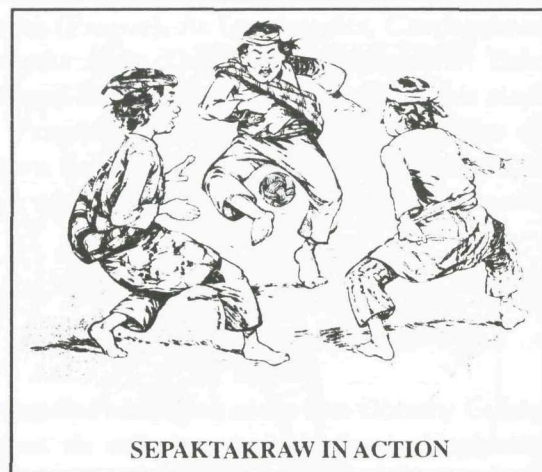


Figure 2. Originally, *sepak takraw* was played by three players in a circle. The object was to keep the ball in the air for as long as possible using only one's feet.

*"Sepak takraw and soccer share one cardinal rule; players are not allowed to use their arms or hands to propel the ball. They may, however, use any other part of the body."*

Each team, as in volleyball, is permitted to hit the ball only three times before it must cross the net. One difference is that it can be hit three times by the same player.

The game begins when either the "Left Forward" or "Right Forward" player (both positioned in quarter circles near each end of the net) throws the ball to the "Back" player (positioned inside the serving circle). The "Back" must get the ball across the net with just one kick. Players on the other team can position themselves anywhere.

The point is won or lost when the ball touches the ground, in or outside the court, or it does not cross the net after being played three times by either team or *regu*.

To win a set, a team must score 15 points. When the teams are tied at 13 points each, they play an additional 5 points. With a tie score of 14 apiece, the teams play for 3 points. The scoring method is similar to badminton: only the serving team may score points. A game is completed when a team wins two of three sets.

#### THE HISTORY OF THE GAMES

The game is believed to have originated as early as the 9th century. It was, and still is, a favorite



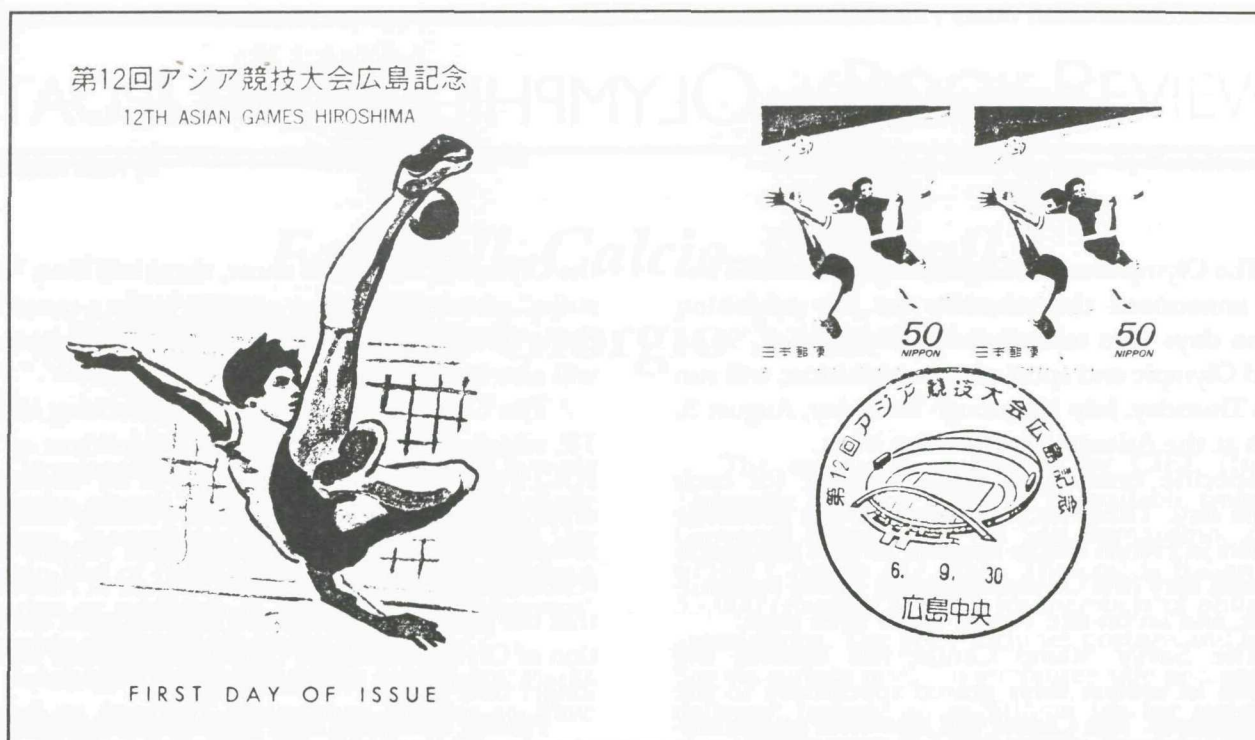


Figure 3. The modern sport of *sepak takraw*, or *acrovolley*, takes a great deal of agility and stamina. The aerial kicks make it a very exciting spectator sport.

pastime of office boys and workshop workers during lunch breaks. One often sees groups of them forming a circle and heading and kicking the ball to keep it in the air for as long as they can. This is the old way of playing the game when it was still known as *sepakraga* (Figure 2).

The net for *sepakraga* was introduced as recently as the 1920s. Prior to 1965, *sepakraga* (also known as *takraw* or *kator*) was considered a minor game played primarily in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Laos. Each country had its own set of rules with no uniformity in the size and dimensions of the court.

Since its introduction at the 3rd Southeast Asian and Pacific Games (SEAP) in 1965, *sepak takraw* has become a major sport. The rules of ASTAF govern the competition. The game is now included on the sport schedule of schools in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines.

Although *sepak takraw* has been included as an official sport in numerous Asian Games, I am aware of its having been philatelically commemorated on only four occasions:

5th Asian Games: Thailand #461, issued 9 December 1966)

Sipa: Philippines #1343-1346, issued 28 February 1978. See Figure 1.

13th SEAP Games: Thailand #1133, issued 8 December 1985.

12th Asian Games: Japan #2426, issued 30 September 1994. See Figure 3.

[Editor's Note: Mr. John Kessel, the Director of Programs at U.S.A. Volleyball (the national governing body for volleyball in the United States), was contacted regarding certain points in this article. Although he was familiar with Sepak Takraw, he could not confirm that the sport was ever considered for inclusion as an event of Atlanta's Cultural Olympiad celebration. He also mentioned that to his knowledge, there has been no "public" statement by the International Volleyball Federation "promising to help push acrovolley along the road to Sydney 2000."]



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# OLYMPHILEX '96 UPDATE

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by Mark Maestroni

The Olympihlex '96 Organizing Committee has just announced the schedule for the exhibition theme days (see table below). Olympihlex '96, a world Olympic and sport stamp exhibition, will run from Thursday, July 18 through Saturday, August 3, 1996 at the Atlanta Merchandise Mart.

Specific events are being planned for each theme day. These include: tours of the philatelic exhibits in French and in English, athlete autograph sessions, Izzy (the Olympic mascot) photo opportunities, and an on-site World Wide Web page.

The Savvy Stamp Center will observe the themes in unique ways geared specifically to the new collector. The Center will also offer opportunities for the moderately developed collector to explore philately, including designing a page on the computer, and exploring philatelic applications of ultraviolet light.

A philatelic passport will be available. Over 90 postal administrations are scheduled to be represented at the exhibition. In the numismatic area of

the Olympic Collectibles show, there will be a "coin strike" where visitors may actually make a memento coin. Two auctions of Olympic and sport material will also be conducted.

The Opening Reception on the evening of July 18, which will be attended by the president of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, is by invitation only. The Palmares will not be an evening banquet, although there will be refreshments served. It is scheduled for the afternoon of August 3. Also note that the previously announced International Federation of Olympic Philately (FIPO) Conference will no longer take place.

Finally, three First Day Ceremonies are planned during the exhibition. The dates and times will be announced as soon as that information is available.

Those desiring additional information on Olympihlex '96 may write the show chairman, Nancy Clark, at P.O. Box 1996, Lexington, GA 30648, U.S.A. Her telephone number is (706) 743-5044; her fax number is (706) 743-3845.

## Olympihlex '96 Theme Day Schedule

Thursday, July 18	International Olympic Committee Day (by invitation only)
Friday, July 19	Salute to the Centennial Games
Saturday, July 20	International Federation of Philately (FIP) Day
Sunday, July 21	Philatelic Trade Day
Monday, July 22	Olympic Memorabilia Day
Tuesday, July 23	Organized Philately Day
Wednesday, July 24	Postal Administration Day
Thursday, July 25	Philatelic Press and Literature Day
Friday, July 26	Cultural Olympiad Day
Saturday, July 27	Olympic and Sports Philately Day
Sunday, July 28	Young Collectors Day
Monday, July 29	Olympic Coin Collectors Day
Tuesday, July 30	Country Collectors Day
Wednesday, July 31	Postal People Day
Thursday, August 1	International Peace Day
Friday, August 2	Exhibitors Day
Saturday, August 3	Olympihlex 2000 Salute: Australia



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# BOOK REVIEWS

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by Mark Maestroni

## *Football-Calcio-Fussball* by Giorgio Sini

Occasionally, a new book on sports or Olympic philately crosses this reviewer's desk that truly deserves recognition. *Football-Calcio-Fussball*, by Giorgio Sini of Italy, is one of them. Every serious collector or exhibitor of the sport of soccer must have this catalog in his or her library.

Subtitled a "catalogue of the special postmarks related to football," the author appears to have uncovered *every* cancel and slogan meter ever released relating to soccer. At 584 pages, I can believe it!

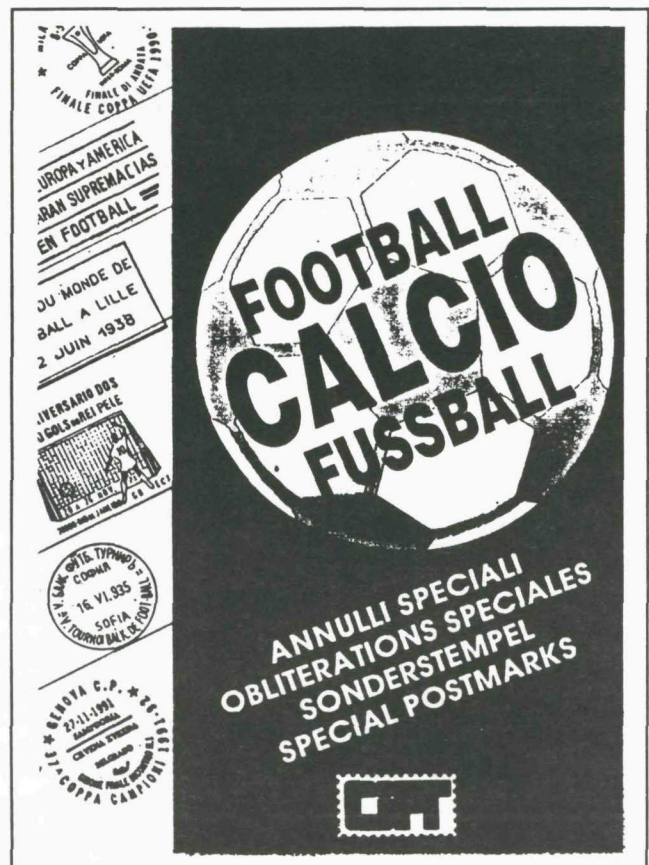
Sini opens with a brief introduction explaining the organization of his catalogue. The text of each cancel is presented in part one, followed by illustrations of each cancel in part two. Part three is a handy index to the subject(s) of the postmarks. Both the introduction and the list of abbreviations and symbols which follow are presented in Italian, French, German and English.

The postmarks are organized alphabetically by country. Each cancel is, in turn, presented chronologically with a unique number assigned to each one. The text for those postmarks that served as first day cancellations for new stamps includes the catalogue number of the stamp according to the Yvert, Michel, Scott and Stanley Gibbons. If a cancel commemorates a specific soccer match, the result, when known, is provided.

In all, the catalogue identifies 3390 special postmarks and 913 meters from 151 countries. These cover a time period from 1908 to 1995.

The clarity of the illustrations in this softbound catalogue is very good. Unfortunately, the paper is a nondurable pulp stock similar to that used for inexpensive paperbacks. No doubt this option was selected to help keep the cost of publication as low as possible. If Mr. Sini plans future editions, than the paper quality need not be of great concern.

The catalogue, published by CIFT (Italian Thematic Philately Center), is available from Dr. Giovanni Pienabarca, Via San Bernardino, 28, I-67100 L'Aquila AQ, Italy. The cost is Italian Lire 55,000 (roughly \$38.50) for members of philatelic associations. The price includes postage and handling via surface mail. To guarantee safe and prompt delivery, include an additional fee for registered airmail shipment (L7,500 within Europe; L25,000 elsewhere). When placing your order, you must include the name "Sports Philatelists International" and your membership number.





# Illustrated Bikes on Stamps

## by Steve Malone

The increase in popularity of sports as a philatelic topical collecting area has generated a flood of handbooks promising to make the life of the collector easier. The complexity of these publications varies from simple checklists to extravagant color presentations.

This reviewer has found that a good sport-specific handbook must satisfy three criteria. First, stamps must be logically arranged. Second, they must be easily identifiable. Third, enough information must be provided to allow the collector to obtain the stamps "on the market." *Illustrated Bikes on Stamps* manages to conveniently realize these goals—and more.

In his preface, Malone clearly identifies what is included in his handbook: "any postage stamp which depicts, or is strongly related to, cycling." Since cycling can be a recreational, as well as competitive, sport, the author has elected to include both. Savings stamps, various tax stamps, and locals not recognized outside a specific locality or region, are not included. Stamps and sheets predominate, and are listed in the first section of the book. Stamp booklets and panes, and postal stationery are listed in separate sections.

The handbook is organized alphabetically by country. Postal items are then listed in chronological order by date of issue and then by the face value. One value of each set is illustrated in black and white. Malone uses a system of icons (graphic symbols) to identify characteristics of a specific item (perforate, coil, or booklet pane, for example). Colors are described along with formats, varieties, overprints, etc. Even anecdotal information on specific athletes is occasionally included. A sample of one of the listings from the "Stamps & Sheets" section is illustrated at right.

A unique characteristic is the use of special symbols as "warning flags" to distinguish those items that are only marginally bicycle-related.

I did find one aspect of the book rather annoying: Scott catalog numbers are included in a separate six-page section at the end of part one, rather than with each stamp listing.

What is particularly interesting is that the author has harnessed the power of today's computer technology to generate this handbook. The entire document was produced using the Visual Foxpro database program. This means that text, graphics, and illustrations are integrated into the database, making it easy to add, subtract, and reformat the handbook on a moment's notice. This is the second edition of the handbook. I expect Malone will continue to reissue it on a regular basis.

This 146-page 1996 version of *Illustrated Bikes on Stamps* is printed in an 8½ by 11 inch format on quality paper and spiral bound. The card stock cover and divider pages for the three sections reproduce stamp illustrations in full color.

I would highly recommend this handbook for all levels of bicycling collectors. Copies may be ordered directly from the author, Steve Malone, 1617 North 190th Street, Shoreline, WA 98133, U.S.A. The price is \$25. Please add \$3 postage (first class mail to U.S. addresses, surface mail elsewhere); \$5 for airmail to Canada and Mexico; or \$10 for airmail to all other foreign destinations.

### FRANCE

1953.07.26



50TH ANNIVERSARY OF TOUR OF FRANCE

12f

2 CYCLISTS AND MAP OF FRANCE

The Tour was started by Henri Desgrange in 1903.

This stage race, the 40th Tour, was won by L. Bobet of France, a 3 time winner (1953-55).



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# REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

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by Dorothy Crockett & Mark Maestrone

## *Basketball Philatelic News* Vol. 10, No. 1

This issue (March 1996) contains reproductions of a number of postmarks celebrating the 50th anniversary (in 1982) of FIBA (the International Federation of Amateur Basketball). There is a lengthy discussion on whether Israel Scott #78, issued in 1953 to celebrate the 4th Maccabiah Games, should be considered a basketball stamp. Another article discusses minor varieties (caused by paper folds, scratched plates, etc.) found on several basketball stamps. A Japanese collector provides an update on numerous recent Japanese basketball cancels. Current cancels and meters from many countries, plus a few new discoveries, are illustrated. Cacheted covers picturing Israeli basketball great, Micky Berkowitz, are also shown.

Editor George Killian announces a contest to name the most outstanding basketball stamp, and asks for members' nominations.

Basketball collectors will want to write Mr. Killian about membership in this group. He can be reached at P.O. Box 7305, Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7305. - D.C.

## *The Malaysian Sporting Philately* Issue No. 4

*The Malaysian Sporting Philately* newsletter has evolved into a very nice overview of the philatelic happenings around the sports and Olympic world. This 30-page English-language bulletin is published by the Olympic & Sports Philately Group of Malaysia.

The December 1995 issue is full of interesting "centennial" news items (volleyball, rugby, and the Olympics), as well as reviews of the 2nd Olympic Collectors Fair, XVI Commonwealth Games and recently issued stamps and cancels for various sporting events.

The newsletter continues with two more reprints of Jim Bowman's outstanding column (in *JSP*) on

exhibiting. An interesting article entitled "Safety and Fairness in Sport" discusses the 1992 Olympic stamps from Liechtenstein. Each of the three stamps shows a sport along with measures taken to ensure safety or good sportsmanship in that sport.

For more information on this group, please address your enquiries to Mr. C. Nagarajah, GPO Box 11748, 50756 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

- M.M.

## *Phila-Sport* Issue No. 17

Among the feature articles in this issue of the Italian sports and Olympic philatelists' quarterly periodical is one on Venezuela's stamp series of 1944 saluting the 7th World Amateur Baseball Championship Games held in Caracas (Scott #C189-197). The author details the many errors and varieties of this set. Another article deals with the history of the Alpine ski championships which in 1997 will be held at Sestriere, Italy. Another major article examines the first ten years of the world championship of formula-one auto racing.

The summer University games (also known as the Universiade) were held in Fukuoka, Japan in 1995. There is an exhaustive presentation of the considerable amount of philatelic material which the sponsors caused to be issued to celebrate these games. This is the source of some amusement since, according to the author, there are only six collectors of Universiade material in the entire world.

Discussing the forthcoming Atlanta Olympics, the Italians are justly proud of the fact that their countrymen have submitted the largest number of exhibit applications: 32. Twenty applications were received from the U.S., 19 from China, 17 from the Czech Republic and 16 from Croatia. In all, exhibitors in 37 countries mailed in applications.

There is a continuation of an article discussing the Olympic torch. This installment deals with the torches used at the 1964, 1968, 1972 and 1976 Games. Rome's bid to host the Olympics of 2004 is,



understandably, a continuing focus of attention. The field of candidate cities is extensive. In addition to Rome, the following additional cities have entered bids: Athens, Buenos Aires, Capetown (South Africa), Istanbul, Lille (France), Rio de Janeiro, San Juan (Puerto Rico), Seville (Spain), Stockholm and St. Petersburg (Russia).

As always, *Phila-Sport* provides excellent coverage of new sports-related cancels and meters. Italian sports cancellations used during the first quarter of 1995 total 94. In subsequent issues the balance of the 1995 Italian cancels will be reproduced. - D.C.

### *Podium* Issues No. 7 & 8

The December 1995 and January 1996 issues of this periodical from the Argentine sports and Olympic philatelic group provide brief coverage of a variety of topics. The final 1995 issue discusses the soccer competition at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games, and wheelchair basketball and tennis events at the 10th Pan American Games (1995) held at Buenos Aires, and the 6th Torneo Magistral Internacional de Ajedrez chess competition. A longer piece provides an overview of the varieties of cancels at the 1992 Paralympic Games at Barcelona, Spain. New sport and Olympic cancellations and stamps are also included.

The January 1996 issue commemorates the centennial of the first Olympic stamps in 1896. The lead article concentrates on this theme with a look at varieties of this set, and a philatelic discussion of the ancient Olympic Games. Other articles in this issue include: the centenary of the Chilean Football Federation, the 8th Panamerican Maccabiah Games, part two of an article on the World Championship of Gliding, and the 2nd World Championship of Swimming (short course).

*Podium* is particularly useful for collectors interested in the sport and Olympic scene in South America. For more information, please write Mr. Jorge A. Casalia, C.C. 30 Suc 19, 1419 Buenos Aires, Argentina. - M.M.

### *Tee Time* Vol. 2, No. 3

The March 1996 issue of the quarterly journal of the International Philatelic Golf Society contains

feature articles on: errors in golf stamp design, Puerto Rican Promotional Covers, and Montserrat gutter pair varieties of the 1986 tourism issue. There are also brief articles describing and illustrating a new postal card issued by the Swedish postal authorities, and several 1995 first day covers from Batum, a breakaway territory of the former Soviet Union.

The golf collectors' organization is a truly international one, with officers in both the U.S. and Great Britain, along with correspondents in Japan, Australia and France. Collectors of this sport are encouraged to join by writing IPGS, P.O. Box 2183, Norfolk, VA 23501. - D.C.

### *Torch Bearer* Vol. 13, No. 1

The February 1996, issue of *Torch Bearer* features a long article, entitled "Nagano 1998 - Update," which reproduces the Games' emblem, the mascots (called Snowlets) and pictograms demonstrating various winter sports. Also shown is a set of postcards published by the organizing committee, some of which depict the sports venues. Finally, there is a narrative description of the sites and facilities for the Games.

A second major feature is a detailed listing of the German postage rates current at the time of the 1936 Olympic Games. Compiled by SOC Chairman, Franceska Rapkin, it presents, in great detail, the rates for all types and classes of mail. Illustrated with examples of both domestic and foreign rate covers, it is an invaluable reference for anyone collecting the 1936 Games.

This issue of *Torch Bearer* also includes another listing of recent Olympic-related postmarks provided by the German Olympics collectors' organization, IMOS. Short articles relate to the postcards published by the Mainichi Newspapers of Japan for the Tokyo Olympics of 1964, to additional sponsors for the 1996 Games, and to a recent Chinese Sports and Olympic Exhibition attended by Franceska Rapkin. This account evidences the lack both of quality philatelic material and of knowledge about thematic collecting which hampers collectors in mainland China.

*Torch Bearer* is published quarterly by the Society of Olympic Collectors. To join, write the secretary, Mrs. Elizabeth Miller, 258 Torrisholme Road, Lancaster LA1 2TU, Great Britain. - D.C.



# 1996 ATLANTA OLYMPIC GAMES

by Norman F. Jacobs, Jr.

## ACOG Postal History

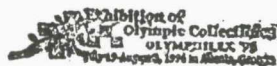
I received this large (5½" by 8½") postcard last week from ACOG reminding me to have my photo taken for security purposes so that I can volunteer at Olympihlex (Figure 1). Because the card is larger than 4¼" by 6" it required full first class letter postage. It was neither ZIP-plus-4 addressed nor bar coded. This suggests that it was part of a small mailing that did not receive any special efforts at cost savings. Since it included the current Olympihlex meter mark and was mailed from Atlanta, it was clearly produced within ACOG. Many large-volume mailings are contracted out like the ticket order communications that I've illustrated in the two previous articles. Interestingly, this "reminder" is

the first notice I have received regarding having my credential photo taken.

## Olympihlex and Other Postmarks

Most special postmarks are available for only a short time, but the Olympihlex '96 postmark shown in Figure 2 will be used in Lexington, GA from now until the Olympic Games. It was first placed in use on February 15, as shown on the illustrated cover. To obtain this marking, send stamped covers to the postmaster of Lexington, GA 30648, requesting the Olympihlex '96 postmark. If you wish a specific date, you need to indicate that in your request. However, the postal service will only honor specific dates that are not earlier than 30 days prior to the

ACOG Accreditation  
270 Peachtree Street  
P.O. Box 105631  
Atlanta, Georgia 30348-5631



7538844  
NORMAN JACOBS  
2712 NORTH DECATUR RD  
DECATUR, GA 30033

*If any of the information on this label is incorrect, please notify us by calling 404.548.1200.*

Figure 1. The notice to volunteers to have their accreditation pictures taken was mailed by ACOG on this oversized postcard franked with the current pictorial slogan meter publicizing Olympihlex '96.



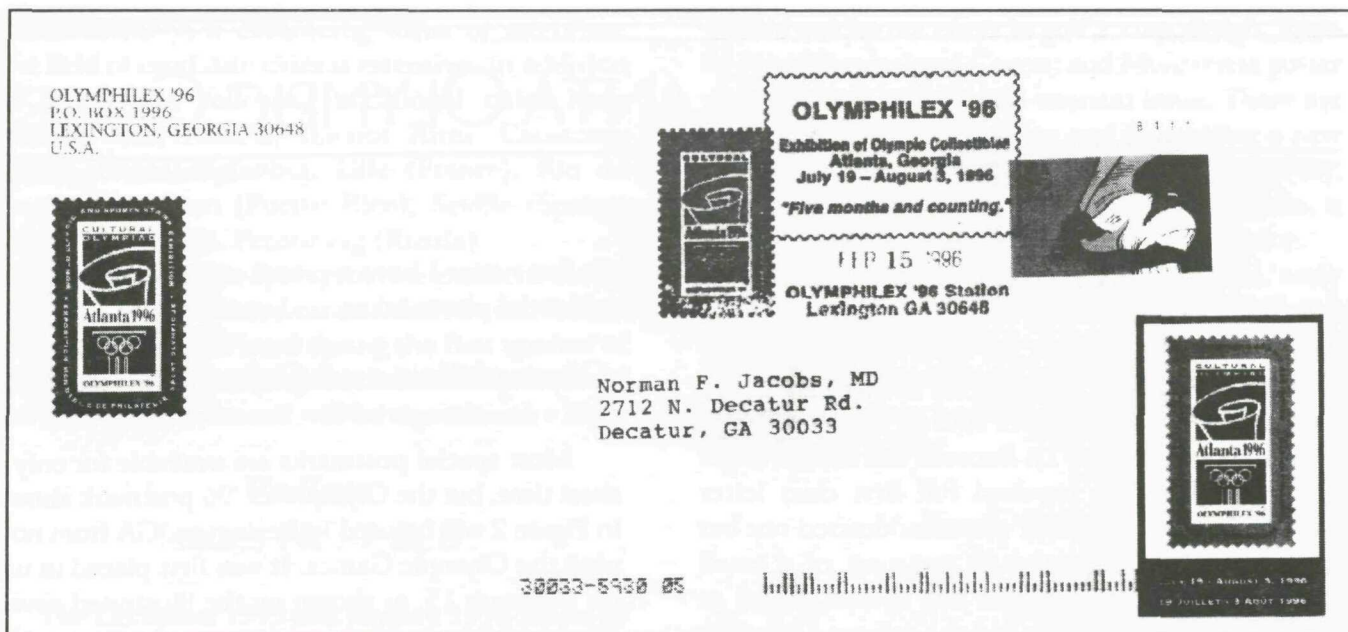


Figure 2. New Olymphilex '96 handcancel being used on all mail from the Lexington, GA headquarters.

postmark on your request. As the corner card in Figure 2 suggests, Lexington is the "other" headquarters of Olymphilex, the residence of Nancy and Doug Clark, who kindly provided the first-day-of-use cover.

The postmark had originally been scheduled to go into use on July 15, 1995, but the stalled negotiations between ACOG and USPS at that time prevented postal use of any Olympic-related themes. The original version of the postmark was never used, but it did appear as a cachet on the envelopes used to mail the Athens Philatelic News in July 1995. That cover would not be acceptable in an Olympic exhibit, but I think it is interesting because it illustrates the difficulty of philatelically commemorating this particular Olympics.

Even now that USPS has signed on with ACOG and will have a role in Olymphilex, ACOG requires that all postmarks with Olympic themes scheduled for use anywhere in the United States be reviewed by ACOG prior to their use. Several Olympic-theme postmarks recently announced in *Linn's Stamp News* were canceled because they had not been reviewed, even though there was nothing objectionable about the specific postmark. Let's hope there will be at least one philatelist on the paid staff of the Salt Lake City Organizing Committee!

Fortunately, some postmarks have made it through the obstacle course already. The first postmark to show the Atlanta logo and the rings

was issued in Birmingham, Alabama on January 13, 1996, and is shown in Figure 3. In addition, Eupex issued a postmark February 3, 1996 that shows a torch flame and commemorates the centennial of the modern Olympic Games, but without using the rings or the "O" word (Figure 4).

## "Tribute" Will Be Commemorated with Special Postmark

In the March *JSP*, I headlined the Greek-American community's efforts to provide a sculpture dedicated to the spirit of Olympism, with a symbolic representation of the ancient Games, the Athens Games and the Atlanta Games. The sculpture will be dedicated on June 1, 1996, and a special postmark has been prepared, as shown in Figure 5, for use on that date in Atlanta. You should be able to obtain the postmark for up to 30 days after the date of use by addressing stamped covers to "Postmaster, Tribute Station, Atlanta, GA 30304-9998." Watch for an announcement in *Linn's* that may indicate additional components of the address such as street address.

## 1996 Olympic Torch Relay

Would it surprise you to know that the 1996 Torch Relay will be the largest in the 60 years that it has been run? Probably not, just as you might not



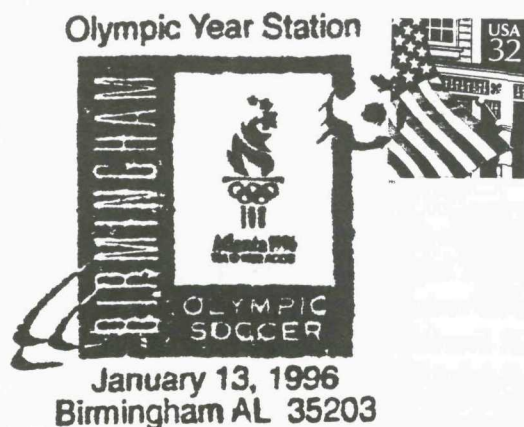


Figure 3. Special handcancel used in Birmingham, Alabama, site of preliminary Olympic soccer competitions.

be shocked to know that ACOG plans to sell lots of soccer tickets in the Eastern U.S. during the torch run, and the sponsors plan to promote their products.

The torch has already been lit in Olympia, Greece at the time of this writing, and is en route to Athens in preparation for being flown to the U.S. where the relay will begin in Los Angeles on April 27. It will end in Atlanta at the Olympic Stadium on July 19. In between, the torch passes through 42 of our 50 states, visiting 1200 cities during the 84 days. Not very likely that anyone will try to obtain covers from each place visited! As a matter of fact, there has been no official announcement of any commemorative postmark, although some SPI members are planning to obtain covers from at least the previous host cities included in the torch run.

*[Editor's Note: Gwen Harvey of the USPS pictorial cancellation division is not aware of any series of torch run cancels scheduled for use. This does not mean that there may not be individual cancels commissioned by philatelic groups to coincide with the arrival of the Olympic torch in their cities.]*

During some of the route the torch will be transported via train, cable car, horseback, canoe, ferry, steamboat, plane, and sailboat. A map obtained from the major sponsor of the torch relay, Coca-Cola, shows the route and some of the unusual methods of transportation. The circuitous route was designed to allow the torch to pass within a two-hour drive of 90% of the U.S. population.



Figure 4. Commemorative cancel showing a simulation of a torch, used at Eupex '96 in Ohio.

I have seen a copy of the postcard sent from Coca-Cola to the Torch Relay candidates to notify them of their acceptance or rejection. It is a very attractive multicolored card which I will obtain for a future article.

## Olympics Planning

I would enjoy meeting as many SPI members as possible during the Olympics, so please write to me if you are planning to come and we can get together. I'll be at Olymphilex on some days, but I will also have to work part of the time, so advance planning would be helpful. If you aren't able to plan ahead, my office telephone number is in the phone book, and the answering service can take a message. Just be sure they know it's a personal call. I'll send my home number to anyone who writes ahead of time. Now let's hope for cool weather!



Figure 5. Tribute station cancel to be used on June 1 in Atlanta at the unveiling of the Greek-American community's symbolic statue for the Olympic Games.



# NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

by Margaret Jones

## New Members

2058R David A. Kovacs, Route 7, Box 641C, Ada, OK 74820, USA. David is an analytical chemist. *Running Events* (Jones)

2059R Thomas W. Charles, 32 Joshua Drive, Belle Mead, NJ 08502, USA. *Soccer* (Jones)

2060R Bill S. Gonda, 18 Vasco Drive, Mill Valley, CA 94941, USA. Dr. Gonda is a physician. *Pre-1960 Sports* (Maestroni/www)

2061R David A. Hull, 529 Felder Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36106, USA. David is an auditor. *General Sports; Olympics* (Maestroni/www)

2062R Joaquim A. Capitao, C.P. 115 - Comunita Europee, I-21020 Ispra (VA), Italy. Joaquim is an engineer. *Motor Racing* (Maestroni/www)

2063R Larry C. Crawley, 415 Spezia Drive, Oxford, MI 48371. *Basketball; Football; Soccer; Baseball; Skiing* (Jones)

2064R William E. Judnick, P.O. Box 12248, Columbus, OH 43212-0248, USA. William is a part-time cover and postcard dealer. *Covers; Picture Postcards; Gymnastics Photos* (APS)

2065R Fritz Joubert, 10 Victoria Street, Paarl, South Africa 7646. *Olympics* (Maestroni/www)

2066R Jordi Virgili Arumi, Travesera de Dalt 16 2º 1ª, E-08024 Barcelona, Spain. Mr. Arumi is a student. *Mountaineering; Caving* (Maestroni/www)

2067R Michael J. Florian, 413 Sorrento Drive, Ballwin, MO 63021, USA. Michael is a mortgage banker. *General Sports; Olympics; Basketball* (Reiss)

2068R Duane F. Zinkel, 2323 Hollister Avenue, Madison, WI 53705, USA. *Skating; Hockey* (Jones)

## Reinstated:

1572R Bert Schapelhouman, 13810 South Park Drive, Magalia, CA 95954-9598, USA. Bert is a semi-retired accountant. *Cycling* (Vincze)

0861R Fernando Estrandia

1941R John T. Slater

## New Addresses:

Fernando Estrandia, Flat 7, 27-29 Britten Street, London, SW3 3UD, United Kingdom.

George Foussianis, P.O. Box 51175, G-14510 Kifissia, Greece.

Total Membership, February 29, 1996 = 440

## SPORTS TOPICAL METER SLOGANS

BOUGHT AND SOLD



Want lists solicited



METER  
STAMP  
ASSOCIATES



P.O. Box 30 • Fishkill, NY 12524 • (914) 471-4179



# COMMEMORATIVE STAMP CANCELS

by Mark Maestroni

## THE NUMBERING SYSTEM

Catalogue numbers are shown at left, such as 88101-911. In this example: 88=Year [1988]; 1=Month [January]; 01=First day of use; 911=First 3 ZIP code digits. The months of October, November and December are 2-digit months, and are expressed as X, Y, and Z. The place of use is listed next, followed by the dates of use. All cancels are in black unless otherwise noted. The numbering system is from the Commemorative Cancel Catalog published by General Image, Inc., PO Box 335, Maplewood, NJ 07040, and is used with their kind permission.

## SPORTS CROSS INDEX FEBRUARY-MAY 1996

Auto Racing: 46208-321.  
Baseball: 96302-960, 96401-435, 96415-253, 96426-795, 96504-122.  
Basketball: 96313-383, 96319-675.  
Cycling: 96309-923, 96428-303.  
Football: 96426-613.  
Horse Racing: 96430-402, 96503-402.  
Ice Hockey: 96413-122.  
Motorcycle Racing: 96301-321.  
Olympics (Summer): 96227-306, 96309-018, 96309-444, 96316-604, 96322-607, 96330-486, 96413-152.  
Softball: 96413-319.



FEBRUARY 8-10, 1996  
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DAYTONA BEACH, FL 32114-5007

96208-321 Daytona Beach, FL 8-18



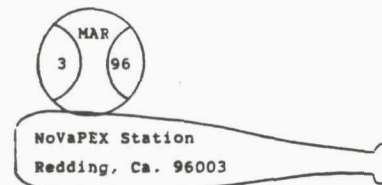
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Exhibition of Olympic Collectibles  
Atlanta, Georgia  
July 19 - August 3, 1996  
\*Five months and counting.\*  
Feb. 15, 1996  
OLYMPIHEX '96 Station  
Lexington GA 30648

96215-306 Lexington, GA 2/15-7/18



MARCH 1-10, 1996  
DAYTONA BIKE WEEK  
POSTMASTER  
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DAYTONA BEACH, FL 32114-5007

96301-321 Daytona Beach, FL 1-10



96302-960 Redding, CA 2-3

Commemorating the  
100th Anniversary  
Modern Olympics



SOPEX STATION  
ANDOVER, MA. 01810  
March 10, 1996

96309-018 Andover, MA 9-10



96309-444 Warren, OH 9



9639-923 Redlands CA 9



NAIA Station  
March 13, 1996  
March 13-19, 1996  
Jackson, Tennessee  
38301-9998

96313-383 Jackson, TN 13-19



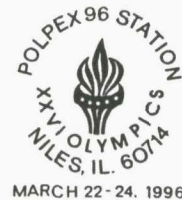
96316-604 Park Forest, IL 16-17



MAR 19 1996

NJCAA Division I  
National Championship  
Hutchinson Arena Station  
Hutchinson KS 67501

96319-675 Hutchinson, KS 19-23



96322-607 Niles, IL 22-24



96330-486 Saginaw, MI 30-31



96401-435 Ney, OH 1



YEAR OF THE "RATS" STATION  
APRIL - 13 - 1996  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12207

96413-122 Albany, NY 13

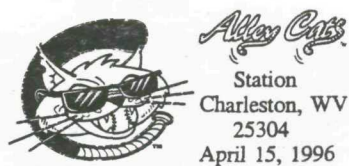




96413-152 Pittsburgh, PA 13-14



96413-319 Columbus, GA 13



96415-253 Charleston, WV 15

HALL HIGH SCHOOL STATION  
RED DEVIL FOOTBALL  
ILLINOIS 3-A STATE CHAMPIONS  
APRIL 1996  
SPRING VALLEY, ILL., 61362

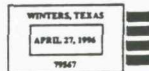


96426-613 Spring Valley, IL 26-27

ROGERS 1896 HORNSBY 1963



STATION



BASEBALL  
HALL OF FAME

96426-795 Winters, TX 26



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96428-303 Atlanta, GA 28



96430-402 Louisville, KY 30



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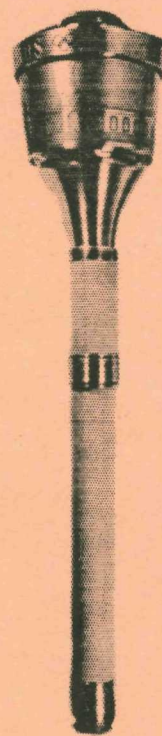
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