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NUMBER I

The World Cup bobsled competition at the "Spiral," was just one of many pre-Olympic sports events at Nagano's Olympic venues.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Mark Maestrone

Some Changes at SPI

Yes, fellow members, over the last few weeks we have made a few changes – added a new face, and reassigned an old one!

First of all, I hope you will all join me in welcoming our new Secretary-Treasurer, Andrew Urushima. In a special board vote in July, Andrew was appointed to complete the two-year term of Peter Meade (whom I'd like to thank for all his help over the past year).

While Andrew is both Secretary and Treasurer of Sports Philatelists International, most, if not all, of your membership questions should continue to be directed to our Membership Chairman, Margaret Jones. Both Andrew's and Margaret's addresses are conveniently found on the inside cover of each journal. Or, if you have Internet access, feel free to drop them an email (see the box below).

On other fronts, we have a new Advertising Manager as well. Board member, Norm Jacobs, will be taking over from Stephen Rock. I really wish to thank Stephen for his dedication over the last few years. He's done much to increase our display advertising in the journal, not to mention taking that headache off my hands!

For all those dealer members, as well as individual SPI members, who wish to purchase display ads in the journal, you have a new point of contact. Norm's address is on the facing page, and his email address is in the box below.

As always, members desiring to place personal member adlets (which are free), should continue to send those directly to me, either by snail mail or e-mail.

I would like to stress that there are still volunteer jobs that need filling. We desperately need a Publicity Manager to help with "getting the word out" about our society!

For someone who enjoys a bit of a challenge ... how about volunteering to be our Convention Manager. It isn't as daunting as it may sound, and allows for some creativity. If you think either of these jobs may be of interest to you, please contact your President as soon as possible.

And finally (now I'm wearing my Editor's Hat), we need your articles! Exhibit your special knowledge to your fellow members, while at the same time contributing to that body of knowledge we call Sports & Olympic Philately.

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The Sixth World Cricket Cup

by Peter N. Street

During February and March, 1996, teams from the major cricketing nations met on the Indian sub-continent to contest the Sixth World Cricket Cup.

The tournament had all the elements of good drama, international competition, riots, political unrest, upsets and a final victory for the under-dog.

All the innovations introduced in the Fifth World Cricket Cup were preserved. These included the use of white balls and stumps with black side screens, day/night games and colored clothing for players. There were new hosts in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and a new major sponsor, the Wills Tobacco Company.

THE PARTICIPANTS

This latest challenge was expanded to twelve teams. The nine teams with full Test Match status were: Australia, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe (granted July 1992). These were augmented by Holland, Kenya and United Arab Emirates (UAE), the three top teams from the 1994 ICC Trophy.

Prior to the tournament, the highly disciplined and well-balanced sides of Australia and South Africa were installed as favorites. Hosts India and Pakistan were thought to have a good chance despite their share of injuries and internal strife. Sri Lanka was considered the side most likely to cause an upset. Of the remaining teams, England was thought to be in decline, the West Indies in disarray, and New Zealand, Zimbabwe and the ICC Trophy trio were not sufficiently strong to challenge for the prize.

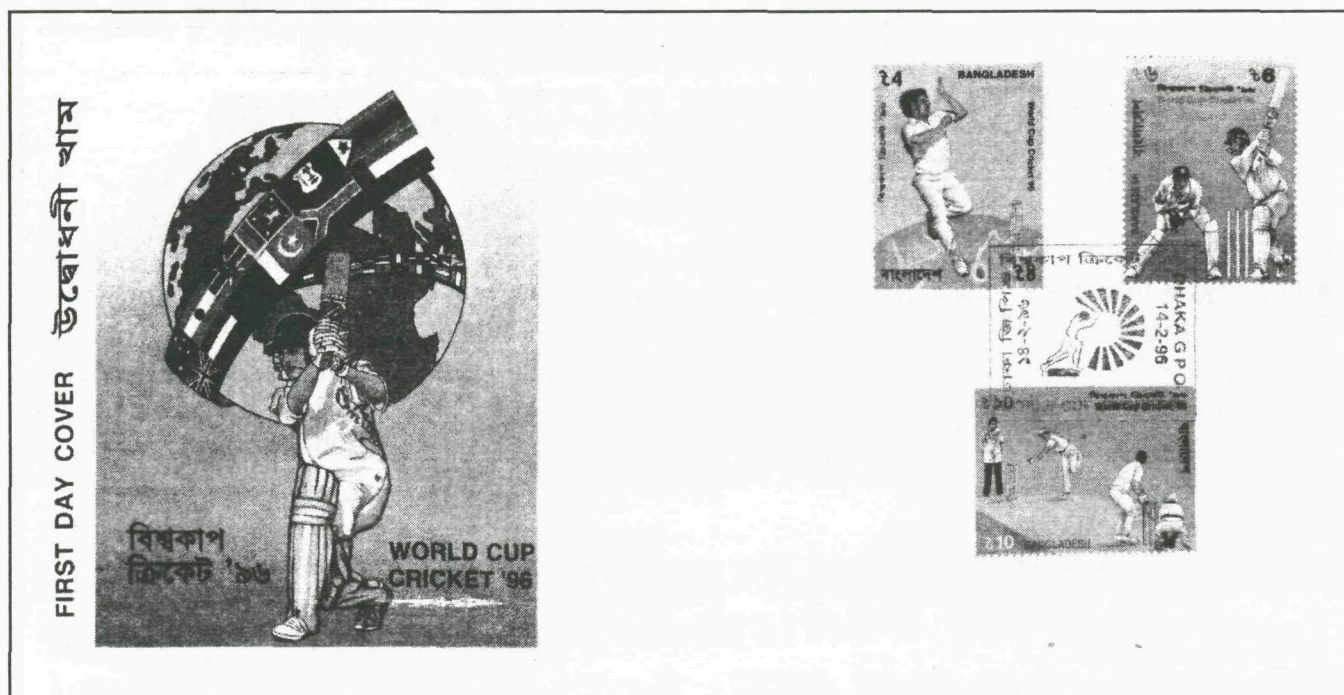


Figure 1. Bangladeshi stamps issued on opening day of World Cup.

1994 ICC TROPHY

The ICC Trophy contest was played in Kenya from 12 February to 6 March 1994, between teams from the twenty second-tier cricket nations. Holland was the favorite to win with Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, USA, Kenya, Canada, Denmark and Ireland given an outside chance.

The teams were split into four groups of five and the qualifying rounds consisted of forty matches played over a 10-day period. Each group qualified two teams for the quarter finals.

The 50 over games were played on grass wickets at twelve locations in and around Nairobi. This was the first time the ICC Trophy had been played outside Europe. In an effort to build a sense of comradeship, the twenty teams were all housed in the same hotel.

The luck of the draw found some of the early favorites in the same group. The eight qualifying teams were as follows:

- Group A Holland and Ireland
- Group B UAE and Bangladesh
- Group C Kenya and Canada
- Group D Bermuda and Hong Kong

The quarter final knock-out competition produced Kenya, Holland, UAE and Bermuda as winners. Because only three teams qualify for the World Cup, the third place playoff on 5 March was of greater interest than the finals (both of those teams automatically qualify).

Kenya won the semi-final against Bermuda by 64 runs. In the other semi-final, Holland lost to UAE by six wickets.

The third place play-off between Bermuda and Holland did not produce the anticipated excitement. Holland batted first and scored 306 for 2 in their 50 overs with Nolan Clarke getting his third century of the tournament. Bermuda was, unfortunately, not up to the task and was all out for 203 in the 42.2 overs and thus Holland was through to the World Cup.

The Kenya-UAE final was somewhat anticlimactic, with UAE winning by two wickets.

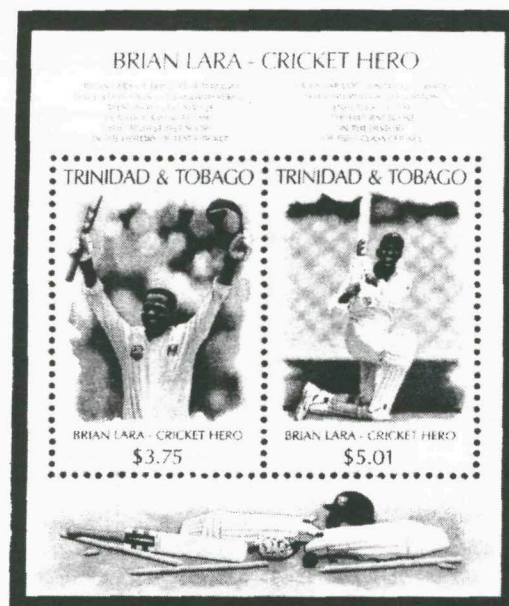


Figure 2. West Indian batsman, Brian Lara.

The competition went very smoothly with the only controversy being about residency qualifications. The UAE had only one Emirate on its team, captain Sultan Zarawani. The rest of the 16-man squad consisted of nine Pakistanis, five Indians and a Sri Lankan. In all fairness to the UAE, the charge of using foreign-born players could also have been leveled against some of the other teams. The Canadian and U.S. teams are dominated by West Indians and cricketers from the Indian sub-continent. (The Canadian team has sometimes been flippantly described as the West Indian Second XI).

It would seem likely that in future ICC Trophy tournaments, the number of expatriates will be severely limited. It has been proposed that a new regulation be introduced which will demand a minimum of seven native-born players.

Although not a participant in the World Cup, ICC Trophy team Bangladesh issued a set of three stamps showing cricketers in action on 14 February 1996, the opening day of the World Cup qualifying rounds (Figure 1).

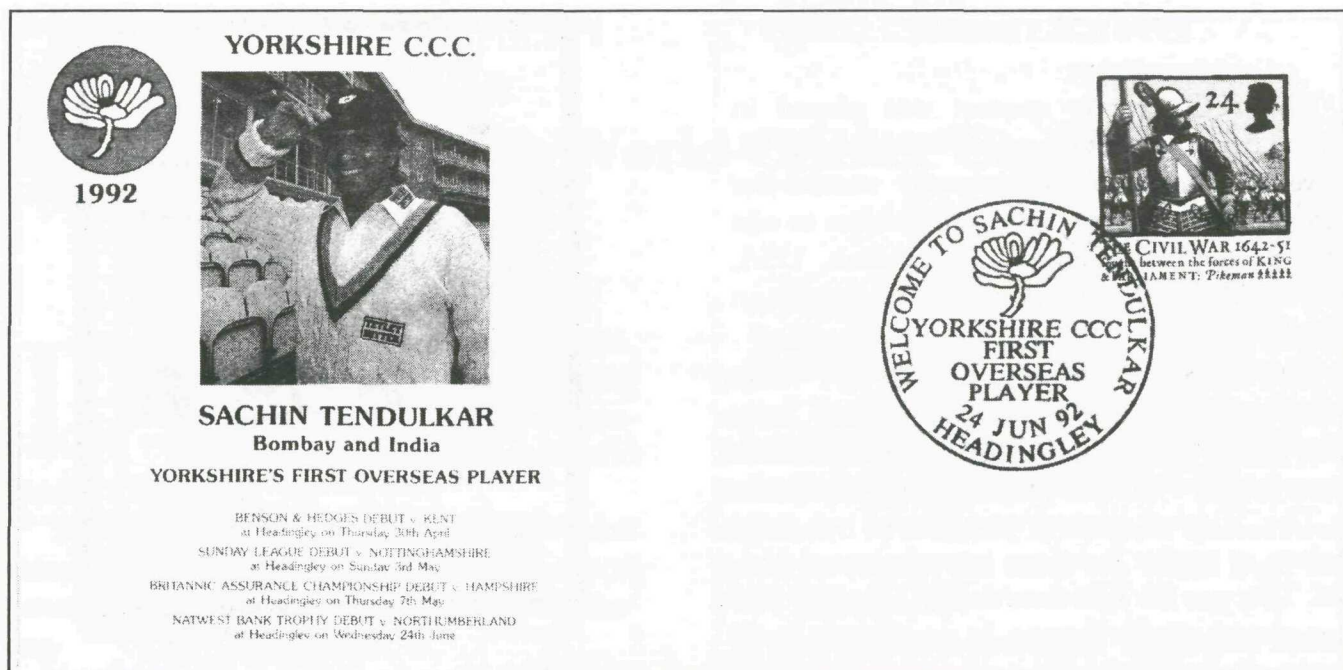


Figure 3. Indian batsman, Sachin Tendulkar.

FORMAT

The field of twelve teams for the World Cup was split into two groups of six (A and B). Group A consisted of Australia, India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, West Indies and Zimbabwe. Its games were played at fourteen different venues, eleven in India and three in Sri Lanka.

Group B games were played at eight different grounds, six in Pakistan and two in the Western Indian state of Gujarat. The teams in this group were England, Holland, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa and UAE.

Each team played the other five teams in its group with the four top teams going forward to the quarter finals.

In the knock-out quarter finals, the first team of each group played the fourth team of the other group and the second team played the third of the other.

QUALIFYING ROUNDS

Group A Highlights:

The opening match was between previous champion, West Indies, and recent addition to Test Match status, Zimbabwe. There was a full

house of 27,000 cricket lovers at Hyderabad (India) with many hundreds more on surrounding rooftops. They were there to see world record run holder Brian Lara (Figure 2) who obliged by winning the match with a towering six.

The Australians, and later the West Indians, both declined to travel to Sri Lanka for their qualifying round matches due to a terrorist threat. On January 31st, a bomb had exploded in Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital, killing 80 people.

India's favorite cricketing son Sachin Tendulkar (Figure 3) did not disappoint his many fans when he received two successive Man of the Match awards. He showed he is one of the world's great batsmen by being not out at 127 runs when India beat Kenya by seven wickets and run out for 70 when his team prevailed over the West Indies by five wickets. Although this latter match was billed as a contest between two of the world's greats, Brian Lara was dismissed for two. The India, Kenya match also saw another milestone when the Indian captain Azharuddin played in his 200th one day international.

Australia established early form, beating Kenya by 97 runs. The highlight of this match

was a World Cup record third wicket stand of 207 runs by Australian twins Steve and Mark Waugh. In fact, it was a record for any wicket in a World Cup.

Because of the bomb threat forfeitures, Sri Lanka did not enter the competition until 21 February. The lay off did not seem to affect them; they easily beat Zimbabwe with 13 overs to spare.

India's supporters were disappointed when its team was beaten by Australia by 16 runs. Pre-match publicity suggested it would be a contest between Indian batsman Tendulkar and Australian spin bowler Shane Warne. Neither disappointed. Tendulkar scored a sparkling 90 runs and Warne allowed only 28 runs off his 10 overs while getting the wicket of Mongia. However, the Man of the Match was Australian Steve Waugh who scored a magnificent 126 runs off 135 balls, his second successive century in this competition.

Undoubtedly, the surprise of the Group A matches was the defeat of the West Indies by Kenya. Although the West Indian team is not as powerful as it was in the 1970's and 1980's (it won the first two World Cups in 1975 and 1979, and was runner up to India in 1983) it was expected to easily beat Kenya. The Kenyan team had only one professional cricketer, Steve Tikolo, who played for Border in the Currie Cup competition in South Africa. To dismiss the normally dominating West Indian team for 93 runs in 35.2 was a significant achievement. Fortunately, the West Indians recovered from this humiliation by defeating Australia by four wickets. Richey Richardson (Figure 4), the West Indian captain, probably saved his job by scoring an undefeated 93.

Group B Highlights:

The favorites in this group were South Africa and reigning champion Pakistan.

While England was a long shot, their poor performance was still surprising. They only managed to win two matches against qualifiers Holland and UAE. In the opening match, they were beaten by New Zealand by 11 runs, due primarily to poor catching and fielding.

Group A: Final Qualifying Table				
	P	W	L	Pts.
Sri Lanka	5	5	0	10
Australia	5	3	2	6
India	5	3	2	6
West Indies	5	2	3	4
Zimbabwe	5	1	4	2
Kenya	5	1	4	2

Although England beat UAE by eight wickets, it was another lackluster performance. *The London Times* summarized the situation with the headline, "England prove nothing in sorry mismatch."

Against Holland, England won by 49 runs but again played well below their potential. *The London Times* headline, "England win lacks ring of confidence," again got to the root of the matter.

England were soundly beaten by South Africa at Rawalpindi on 25 February. South Africa batted first and scored 230 runs. England never looked likely to match this total after their captain Michael Atherton (Figure 5) was dismissed for zero in the fourth ball of the innings and was all for 152 in 44.3 overs.

Pakistan's initial match against first class opposition was with South Africa on 29 February. The reigning World Champions were outplayed in all departments – bowling, field and batting – and were beaten by five wickets.

Thus, the match on 3 March between Pakistan and England proved pivotal. *The London Times* headline, "Rival Captains united in feat of defeat," summed it up as both Wasrim Akram and Michael Atherton were in trouble.



Figures 4 & 5. West Indian captain, Richey Richardson (left) and England's captain, Michael Atherton (right).

Group B: Final Qualifying Table				
	P	W	L	Pts.
South Africa	5	5	0	10
Pakistan	5	4	1	8
New Zealand	5	3	2	6
England	5	2	3	4
UAE	5	1	4	2
Holland	5	0	5	0

England batted first and started well. However, from 147 for the first wicket they collapsed to 249 in their 50 overs.

Pakistan batted steadily and were never really extended by the English bowlers. They reached the required 250 with only three wickets down with two and a half overs to spare.

Meanwhile, South Africa was going on its "ruthless" way, to quote *The Times*. Its team beat UAE by 169 runs with Gary Kirsten scoring a record 188 not out, the highest individual score in World Cup history. New Zealand were beaten by five wickets and Holland by 100 runs.

Pakistan, who the sponsors hoped would be in the final, played well apart from its defeat by South Africa. In addition to its pivotal win over England, it defeated UAE by nine wickets. This

match showed the vast difference between the grades of world cricket. Holland were beaten when its total of 145 runs was overhauled in 30.4 overs.

The remaining team, New Zealand, won only three matches: against England; in the opener, as expected, against Holland (by 119 runs); and over UAE (by 109 runs).

The final qualifying table was:

India issued a cover with a cachet showing the flags and logos of the participants on 11 February to commemorate the opening ceremonies at Eden Gardens cricket stadium in Calcutta (Figure 6). Interestingly enough, the Vinoo Mankad stamp, one of a group featuring four Indian cricketers, was not officially issued until semi-final day a month later.

QUARTER-FINALS

On 9 March the competition moved to its knock-out phase with two matches.

The first match, between England and Sri Lanka, again showed the deficiencies of the English team. England batted first but only made 235 run with De Freitas, not a specialist batsman, being top scorer with 67 runs.

The Sri Lankan batmen attacked the English bowlers with relish. Jayasuriya scored 82 runs in first 44 ball. He and Gurusinha reached a century stand in 65 balls. Sri Lanka were able to pass England's total in only 40.4 overs.



Figure 6. Flags of the World Cup participating countries.

The second match between India and Pakistan brought the subcontinent to a virtual halt. The situation was summed up by this headline in *The London Times*: "Subcontinent smolders with hostility as Pakistan and India prepare for quarter finals."

The stadium at Bangalore was packed for the contest between the old rivals. India won the toss and elected to bat. They started steadily and reached 90 before Tendulkar was bowled for 31. Their middle order batsmen played steadily and the team ultimately reached a total of 287.

Pakistan received bad news even before the start of the first game when captain Wasim Akram was declared unfit due to a side strain. Their innings started with new captain Sohail and fellow left-hander Anwar putting on 84 runs in only 10 overs. But the team faltered in the later overs and could muster only 248 runs, thus losing by 39 runs.

Two days later, the other quarter-finals were played. South Africa was a clear favorite in its match against the West Indies. The question in most people's minds was whether the West Indian team had recovered from its loss to Kenya. As a result of this debacle, both the coach and the manager were dismissed. Also, captain Richey Richardson announced his retirement from international cricket.

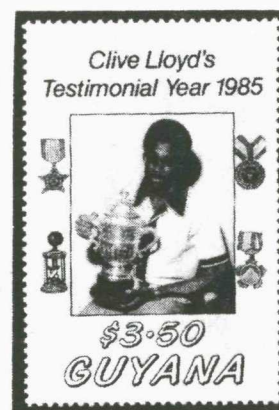
However, Brian Lara and his teammates were not intimidated. With Lara making 111, the team mustered 264 runs. South Africa had problems with the slower West Indian bowlers and they could only amass 245 runs and were thus beaten by 19 runs.

As the fourth quarter-final match between Australia and New Zealand proceeded, it looked as if another pre-match favorite would be eliminated. New Zealand at one stage were 44 for 3, but the middle order batsmen recovered. With Gernon making 89 and Harris 130, they reached a grand total of 286.

However, Australia were undeterred. Mark Waugh made his third century of the tournament, a record, and his twin Steve made a quick 59 so that Australia won with two overs to spare.

Two significant milestones were reached in this match. New Zealand's total was their highest ever one day total, and Australia's was their highest in batting second to win a one day international.

Figure 7. Former West Indian captain, Clive Lloyd.



SEMI-FINALS

The semi-final between Sri Lanka and India ensured that a team from one of the host countries would be in the final.

Indian captain Azharuddin won the toss and made Sri Lanka bat first, a decision for which he was later roundly criticized. It appeared initially that his gamble would pay off when Sri Lanka's opening pair were both out in the first over. However, a superb 66 by de Silva, as well as useful innings by Mahanama, Tillekeratne and captain Ranatunga, saw Sri Lanka's final total reach 251.

India started well with Tendulkar making 65 but their middle order collapsed to 120 for 8 from 34.1 overs. At this stage, the huge, mostly Indian crowd at Eden Gardens, Calcutta, began throwing objects onto the ground and starting fires in the stands. Mindful of the danger to the players, former West Indian captain and referee for this match, Clive Lloyd (Figure 7), took both teams off the field for a 20 minute "cooling-off" period. However, upon their return, more objects were thrown and Lloyd unhesitatingly awarded the match to Sri Lanka.

In the second match, the West Indies appeared sure winners at one stage of the game. Australia, batting first, had a shock at the beginning of their innings when their first four batsmen were back in the pavilion for only 25 runs. However, their middle order batsmen, Law, Bevan and Healy, restored some semblance of order to give their team a final total of 207.

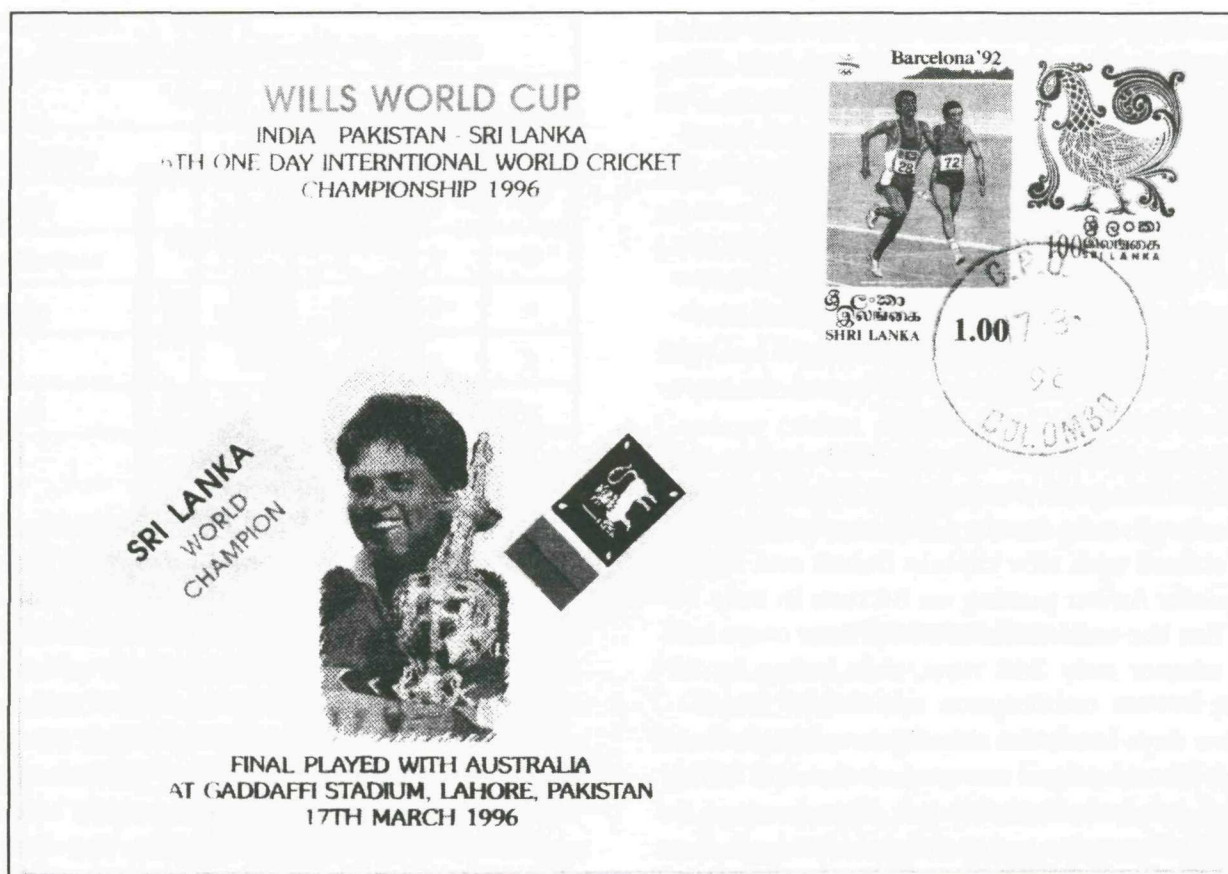


Figure 8. Cachet shows Sri Lankan captain, Ranatunga, holding Wills Cup.

The West Indies batmen started confidently and at 165 for 2 in the 42nd, victory seemed assured.

Leg spinner, Shane Warne, with a final bowling average of 4 wickets for 36 runs in 9 overs including a 3 for 6 spell, caused the West Indies lower order batmen to panic. By attempting big hits rather than careful singles, their last eight wickets fell for 37 runs in 50 balls and Australia was the winner by five runs.

India issued a special cover to commemorate their semi-final match with Sri Lanka. The cachet features the flags and captains of the two teams, Mohammad Azharuddin (India) and Arjuna Ranatunga (Sri Lanka).

THE FINAL

At the start of this World Cup tournament, Australia had been installed as one of the favorites but the suggestion that Sri Lanka would be the

other finalist would have been greeted with some skepticism. However, these were the two teams that faced each other in Lahore, Pakistan at 2:30 p.m. on 17 March. The mainly Pakistani crowd augmented by a group of Sri Lankan supporters flown in for the occasion were understandably sympathetic for the underdog.

Australia batted first and started authoritatively. Halfway through their innings, they were 134 for 1. Mark Waugh, one of the batmen of the competition with a total of 484 runs, being out for 12 in the eighth over. However, Ricky Ponting and captain Mark Taylor scored 101 runs over the next nineteen overs and the Australians looked set for a total approaching 300. At this stage, they began to lose their poise. With accurate spin bowling, especially from Man of the Match Aravinda deSilva, the Australians could muster only 92 runs from their last twenty overs. Their final total of 241 for 7 was far short of what they and their supporters had hoped for.



Figure 9. Souvenir sheet issued by Sri Lanka reproducing the Wills Cup.

Sri Lanka made a disastrous start with both Jayasuriya, who had been awarded Player of the Tournament prior to the final, and Kaluwitharana out with the score at 23. Enter deSilva who, firstly with Gurusinha and later with captain Ranatunga, scored an unbeaten 107 to win the match for Sri Lanka by 7 wickets with 22 balls to spare. Fittingly, it was their captain Ranatunga that made the winning runs. Thus, unexpectedly, Sri Lanka were the World Champions of one day cricket.

Sri Lanka issued a special cover on 17 March to celebrate their winning the World Cup (Figure 8). The cachet shows victorious captain Ranatunga holding the Wills Trophy. Later, in August, Sri Lanka issued four triangular stamps and a souvenir sheet. Three of the stamps show action shots of a bowler, wicketkeeper and batsman, while the fourth stamp and souvenir sheet feature the Wills Cup itself (Figure 9).

RETROSPECT

The outstanding legacy of the tournament was undoubtedly the ascendancy of Sri Lankan cricket. The normal approach to limited overs cricket is to bat cautiously but steadily for the first fifteen overs, to consolidate in the middle overs, and to

hit out in the last fifteen overs. England's captain, Michael Atherton, whose team Sri Lanka had beaten so decisively in the quarter-finals, remarked that "the Sri Lankans play the first fifteen overs as though they were the last fifteen."

Sri Lanka had only received full Test Status in 1982. In the 1992 World Cup, they finished second to last in the qualifying round. Not only was their ultimate triumph richly deserved, but had there been an Entertainment Prize, they would have won it too. Throughout the tournament the team scored at more than six runs per over. They established a one day record of 398 for 5 against Kenya and scored 121 runs for their first fifteen overs in their quarter-final match against England.

In contrast, this World Cup also saw the decline of the English team and, to a lesser extent, the West Indies.

Several explanations have been offered for England's poor performance. Certainly, injuries played a part. Other critics have said that the English cricketers play too much first class cricket and therefore are too tired to play well all the time. Team selection also seemed to be a problem. The batting line-up seemed to be haphazard with, for instance, three different pairs opening the innings, and captain Atherton batted first, second, fourth and fifth at various times in the tournament.

The West Indies endured until the semi-final, but then collapsed in that match and were beaten by Kenya in the qualifying round.

In the previous five contests, England had been runners-up three times and the West Indies had won twice and were runners-up once.

Clearly, both countries will have to reevaluate their approach to the limited overs game.

Another bone of contention was the format. In the previous contests, only eight or nine teams had been in the contest with the top four from the qualifying round(s) going to the semi-finals.

The format for this World Cup had two groups of six teams with the top four from each group going to the quarter-final round. As each group contained two "weaker" teams, it was almost guaranteed that the eight major cricketing nations would proceed beyond the preliminary round.

We thus have the situation where two of the teams, England and the West Indies, win only two of their preliminary round matches but were assured of going to the next level.

Cricket writers in England desecrated this format as a farce with qualifying rounds as virtually mean-

ingless. There was even the specter of teams losing deliberately to gain a favorable draw in the next round. It seems imperative that a more meaningful and competitive structure be instituted for the 1999 competition in England.

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① — GUYANA - 2086 GOLD OVERPRINT SHIFTED LEFT @ 1"

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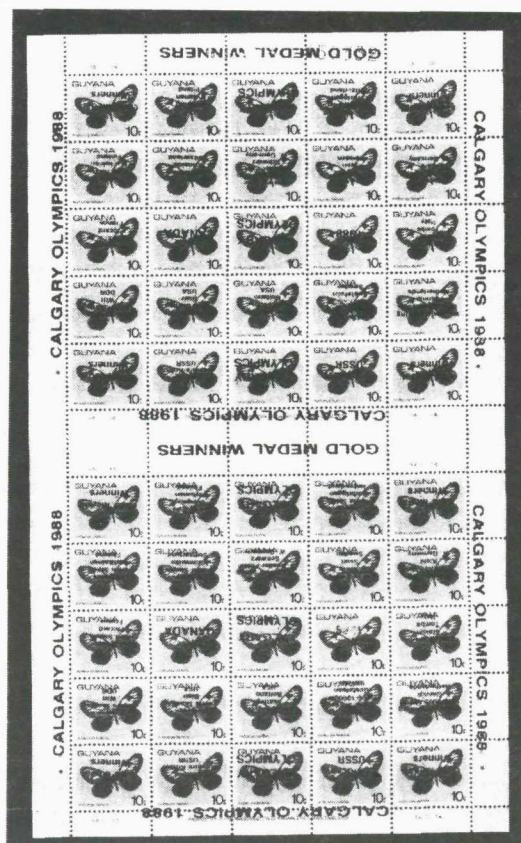
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Countdown To Nagano 1998

by Thomas Lippert
contributed to by Masaoki Ichimura

With the Centennial Olympic Games of Atlanta still fresh in our minds, we have already passed the one-year mark in the countdown to Nagano 1998.

THE BID PERIOD & COUNTDOWN DAYS

First, let us review. In the evening of 15 June 1991, more than 700 Japanese supporters from Nagano crowded the area around the Birmingham (England) Convention Center to celebrate the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) decision to award the 1998 Olympic Winter Games to their city (Figure 1).

Originally, there were six candidates bidding for the Games. However, IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, announced only five in his opening speech. Apparently the Russian candidate, Sochi, withdrew its bid at the last moment. In the



Figure 1. The IOC selected Nagano as the 1998 host city during their session in Birmingham.

first round of voting, Aosta, Italy and Jaca, Spain were eliminated. The Swedish candidate city, Ostersund, followed suit in round two. In the final round, the Mormon city of Salt Lake City, Utah lost to Nagano.

The people of Nagano strongly supported the candidature of their city through a citizens' organization known as *Wave In Nagano*. The group's enthusiasm was quite evident during the entire election process, and can be documented philatelically. Several different postcards were created featuring children's paintings, and these were mailed to IOC members to express broad support for the Nagano bid (Figure 2).

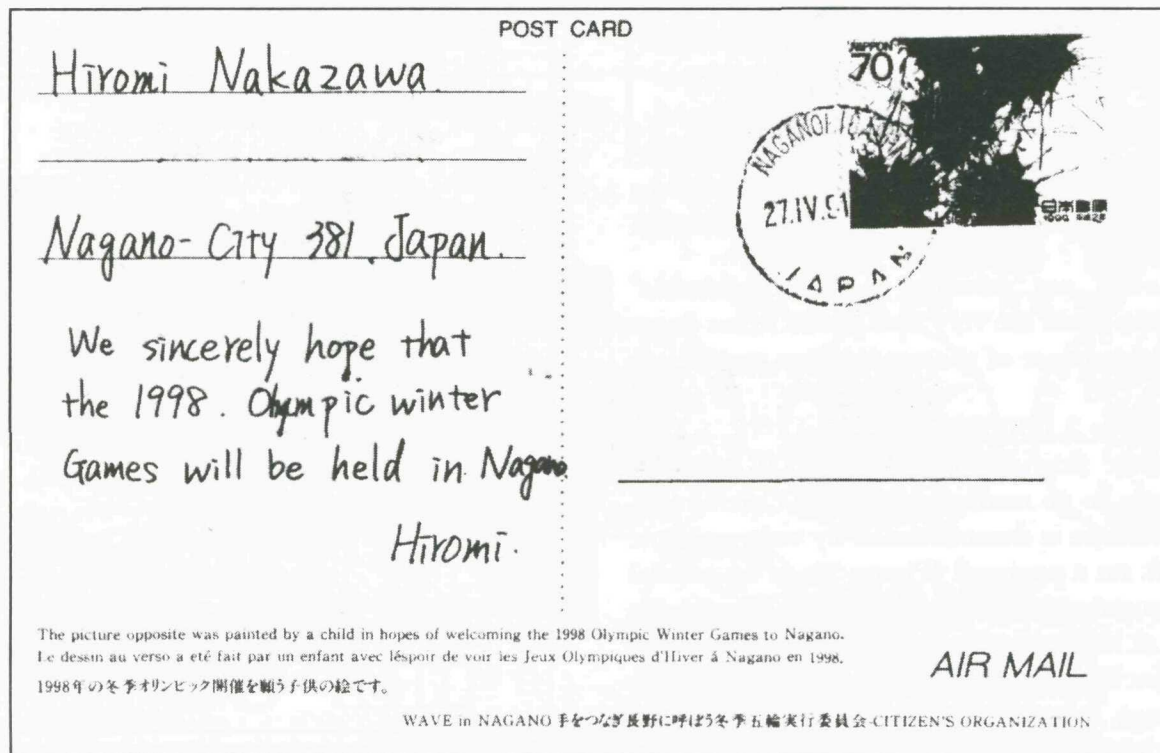


Figure 2. "Wave In Nagano," a citizens organization, mailed post cards to each IOC member to bolster Nagano's chances for being named host of the 1998 Olympic Winter Games.



Figure 3. 2,000 days to the Games. Postcard from Nagano to Sapporo (host of 1972 Winter Games).

Although not valuable in an “exhibitable” sense, these cards are very nice postal items documenting this phase of the candidature period.

Countdown: 2,000 Days

Now we skip ahead to August 17, 1992 – 2,000 days to go until the Opening Ceremonies. This milestone is demonstrated by only a simple postmark on a postcard (Figure 3), as no official commemorative cancels were available. The private cachets at the bottom of the card introduce the mascot for Nagano’s bid-period, Ocho, as well as the bid logo. It wasn’t until January 26, 1993 that the official logo of the Games, the snow flower, was unveiled in Nagano, Tokyo, and Los Angeles.

The new logo appears as a private cachet on a postal card (Figure 4). Why the logo debuted in Los Angeles remains a mystery. Can any SPI member provide an explanation?

Countdown: 1,000 Days

May 14, 1995 arrived signaling 1,000 days until the Games at Nagano. For the occasion, a series of five postal stationery cards (50 yen value) were privately-imprinted with illustrations of some of the sports venues (Figure 5). The five cards carried text identifying each facility:

- Aqua Wing*: Ice hockey stadium B (in brown)
- Big Hat*: Ice hockey stadium A (in red)
- M-Wave*: Speed skating hall (in green)
- Spiral*: Bob and luge course (in yellow)
- White Ring*: Figure skating and short-track speed skating hall (in purple)



Figure 4. The new logo of the Games, unveiled on January 26, 1993. Private cachet on postal card.



Figure 5. Privately printed postal card showing the Aqua Wing (Ice Hockey Hall B) in Nagano.

Countdown: 365 Days

On February 7, 1997, exactly one year before the opening of the Olympics, a set of two 90 yen Olympic se-tenant stamps were issued. The stamps were printed in sheetlets of 20 stamps (ten pairs). Their designs feature the official logo on one stamp, while the new Games mascots appear on the other. These small cuddly "Snowlets," a combination of "snow," "let's" (as in "let's get together") and "owlets," replaced the Disney-like mascot, Okojo, from the bid period.

Figure 6 illustrates both stamps. The postage of 80 yen covers, among other classes of mail, the printed matter rate to Europe. Remarkably, the 10 yen surcharge on all 40 million sets goes to the Nagano Olympic Organizing Committee (NAOC).

Two first-day cancel types were used for these stamps: the logo (hand cancel) and the mascots (machine-applied cancel). The true number of different varieties is significantly higher. According to Japanese postal regulations, first-day hand cancels are available at about 61 different post offices. The cancel at each post office has its own station designation inscribed in the cancel. The machine-applied cancel was used at eight different central post offices (Figure 7).

A brief word about Japanese large-style cancels. Instead of using the standard "calendar year" designation, the year is represented by the number

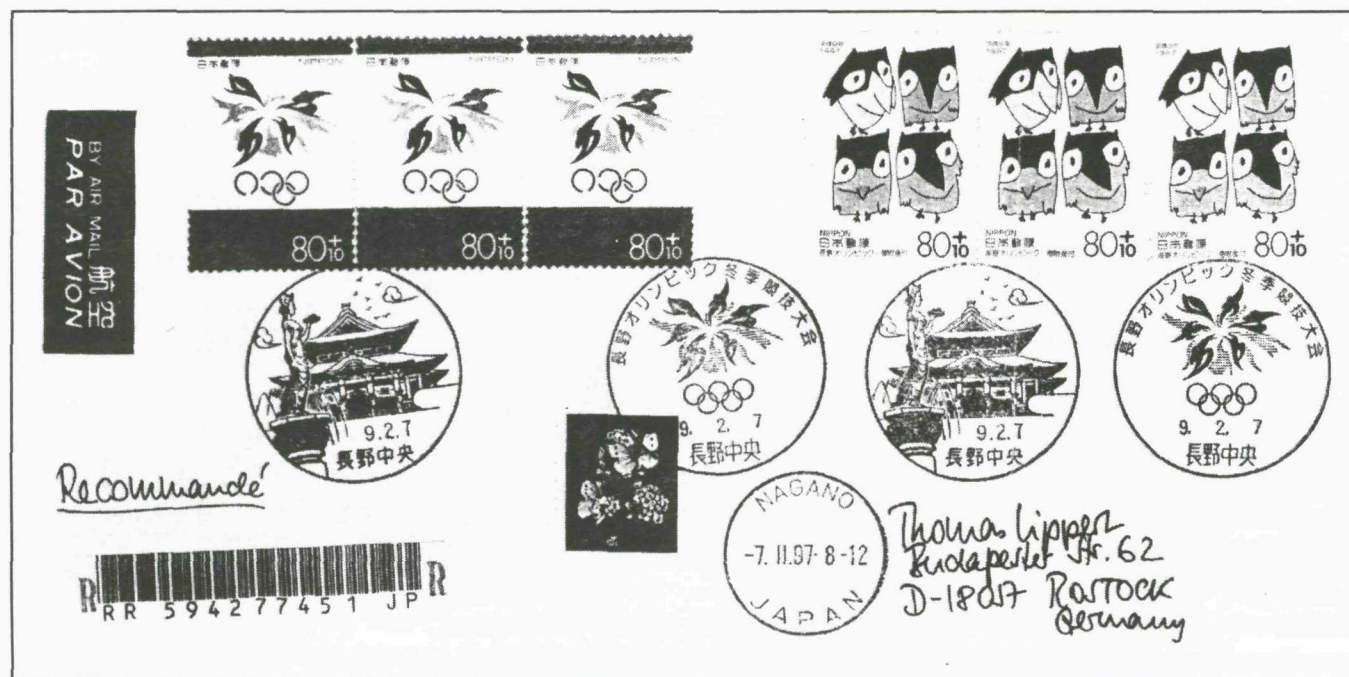


Figure 6. Registered Nagano first day of issue of the two new Olympic stamps. Nagano Prefecture landscape-type cancel is at left; special Olympic logo cancel is at right.



Figure 7. First day cancels (Osaka varieties). Logo hand cancel at left, and Snowlets machine-applied cancel at right.

of years the reigning Emperor has been on the throne. In this case the numeral "9" indicates that 1997 is the 9th year of Emperor Akihito's regency.

Readers will also note that in Figure 6 there is an additional pair of cancels showing a statue and Japanese-style architecture. These are termed "landscape type" cancels and show a typical scene in that post office's region. These types of cancels are used either permanently or on special occasions at the discretion of the local postal authorities.

I would like to remark that after the experiences of the Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta, it is nice to see that Olympic stamps have already been issued for Nagano – despite the fact that United Parcel Service (UPS) remains a TOP IV Olympic Sponsor. Let's hope no battles loom on the horizon.

This one-year-until-the-Games date was also celebrated not only in Nagano, but also with cultural activities at the Olympic Museum in Lausanne. In a special ceremony, invitations were mailed to the 197 National Olympic Committees (NOC) inviting their participation at the Nagano Olympic Winter Games. IOC President Samaranch symbolically signed some of them. For the first time, Internet surfers could follow the ceremony and simultaneous delivery of the invitations to each NOC by UPS, the official courier service of the Games.

As seen through European eyes, and considering my own experiences with postal administrations around the world, the overseas dissemination of postal information by the Japanese post office is remarkably underdeveloped. There is a collector's service which operates out of the central post office in Tokyo, and their colorful printed announcements of stamps are very informative, yet frequently arrive too late for action. For example, in March of 1997, the author received an announcement for a new stamp issued in the summer of

1996! And yet, Japanese collectors must receive notice in a more timely fashion, for crowds thronged the post office in Nagano on February 7 for the new stamps and cancels (as reported by the NAOC).

PRE-OLYMPIC COMPETITIONS

The NAOC published a very helpful listing of pre-Olympic competitions at the various Olympic venues (see table at end of this article). The word

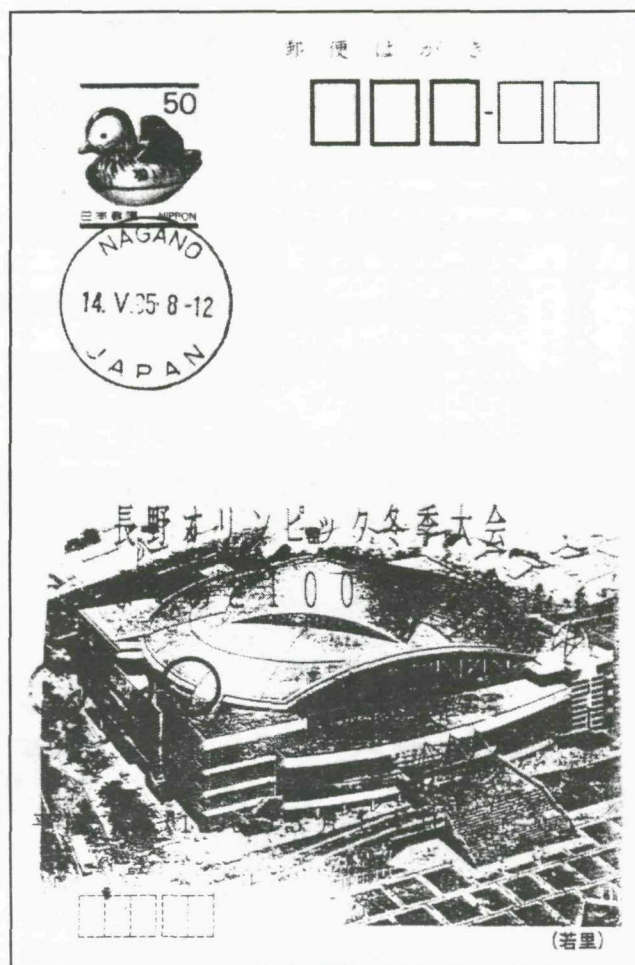


Figure 8. Big Hat (Ice Hockey Hall A).

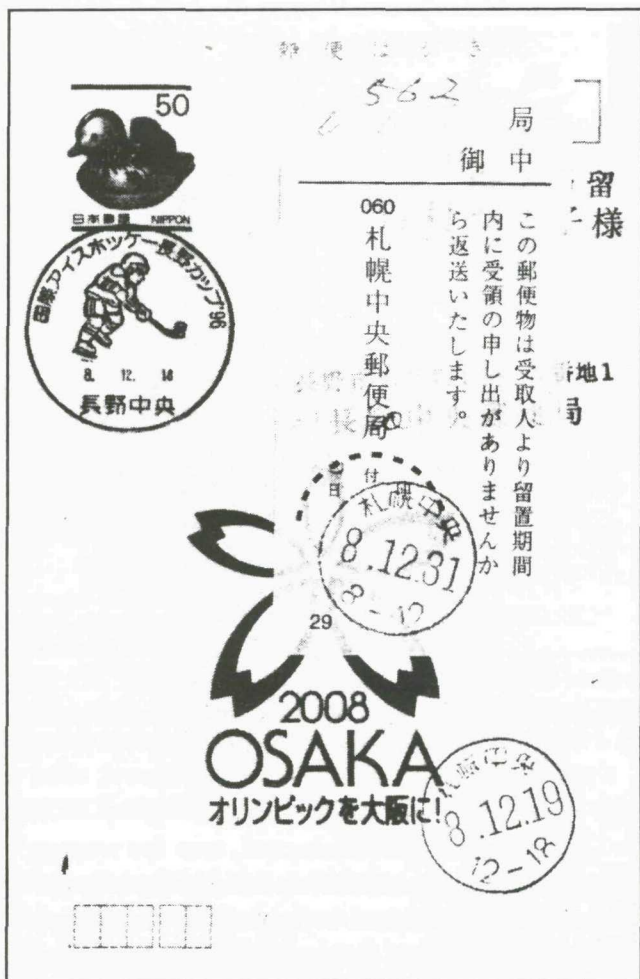


Figure 9. Postal card from ice hockey tournament in December, 1996. From Nagano to Sapporo. Private cachet showing Osaka 2008 bid logo.

“pre-Olympic” was not their official terminology, but one used in the mass media. Rather, the NAOC properly identified the competitions as World Championships, World Cup events, etc. For sports philatelists, these events proved a bonanza, with at least one special postmark introduced for each competition. Let’s now take a look at the venues and these sports events.

Ice Hockey

Ice hockey Hall A (Figure 8), also known as “Big Hat,” is located in the Wakasato District of Nagano. Construction on the hall began in March, 1993, long before most other venues. The aim was to finish construction by the Countdown 1,000 date (May 14, 1996) – a goal that was indeed met. The official inauguration of the hall was held that day.

Shortly before Christmas 1996, the Nagano Cup was held (Figure 9). This was the first of 14 announced pre-Olympic competitions. Six teams participated, with the team from Finland leaving the ice as the winner.

Speed Skating

Construction on the speed skating arena, “M-Wave,” began in March 1994 and was completed on December 14, 1996 (Figure 10). Situated in Nagano’s Asahi-Mamejima District, it was inaugurated one week later with the 23rd All-Japanese Speed Skating Championships. As well-received as that event was, the big event was yet to come.

In February, 1997, the World Speed Skating Championships for both men and women came to Nagano. German skater Gunda Niemann finished as world champion, becoming the first woman to win six overall titles. This turn of events certainly couldn’t have been foreseen at the beginning of the



Figure 10. M-Wave Hall (Speed Skating).



Figure 11. World Speed Skating Championships (February 1997) with both commemorative and landscape-type Olympic-related cancels.

season. There had been a new technical development in the sport which initially eluded the German team. They had to become accustomed to using a new type of skate in which the blade is released from the heel with each stroke. Even with having to learn new skating techniques required by the modified equipment, the German team still placed very respectably. Ids Postma of the Netherlands was the best male all-around skater.

The postmark for the event (Figure 11) does not distinguish between old and new blades. It was used at the Nagano Higashi post office. In contrast to most of the other pre-Olympic postmarks, this one does not note the IF conducting the event, the ISU (International Skating Union). A second Olympic-related cancel falls into the category of a "landscape type" postmark. As it shows the M-Wave Hall, it can be considered Olympic.

Nordic Skiing

The small city of Hakuba in Kamishiro District with only 8,600 inhabitants was selected to host the Nordic and several Alpine skiing events. The initial test for the new Olympic courses was the Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS) World Cup in cross-country held February 11-12, 1997 (Figure 12).

Four races were conducted, two for women (5 km classical style and 10 km freestyle), and two for men (10 km classical style and 15 km freestyle). The Italian team swept the first-place medals. Forty women and 55 men from 21 countries competed on the courses named "Snow Harp" which were completed in November 1996.

The ski jumping hills, located at Happo, saw World Cup ski jumping on January 25-26, 1997 (Figure 13). While events had been planned on both the normal (short) and large hills, those on the normal hill had to be canceled due to high winds. Competitors reported that the wind shelters were inadequate and couldn't be corrected. The governor of Nagano Prefecture responded quickly by holding a news conference at which he announced that a permanent wind net for the jump-



Figures 12-14. World Cup Nordic Skiing cancels. Cross-country (left), ski jumping (center), and Nordic combined (right).

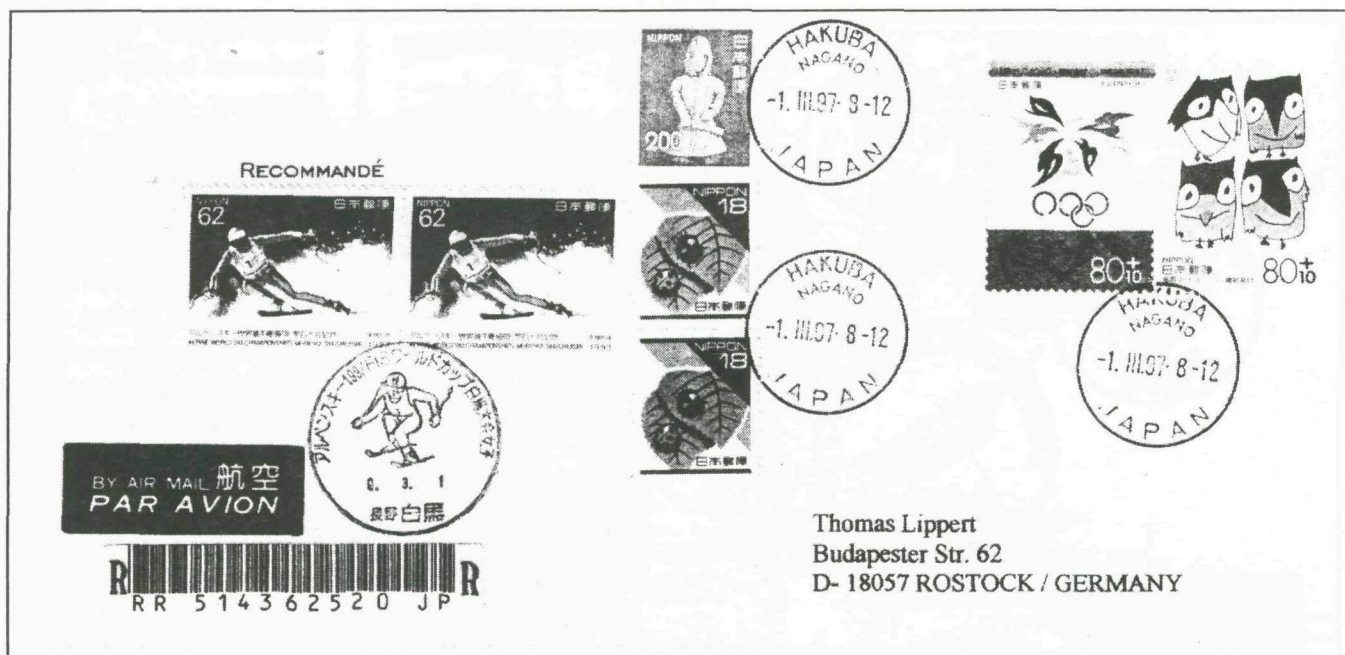


Figure 15. Registered cover from the downhill race course at Hakuba. The postage correctly covers the rate for a 20g. airletter to Europe and the U.S.A. (110 yen postage, 410 yen registration fee).

ing hills would be included in the prefecture's financial budget for 1997.

As a result of the problems at the jumping venue, only one winner was crowned: Malysz of Poland. Second and third places went to two Japanese ski jumpers, Kasai and Harada. A large crowd of 21,630 spectators watched as Kasai set the hill record of 131.5 meters. Fifty competitors from 13 countries took part in this event.

The Nordic Combined competitors came to Hakuba from January 30 to February 1, 1997 for their World Cup event (Figure 14). While the Finnish relay team won, the crowds were thrilled to watch Japanese athlete Kenji Ogiwara compete.

Both designs in the Nordic Combined commemorative postmark reflect the changes that have occurred in both style and aesthetics. The skating style of the cross-country skiing portion of the cancel is easily recognizable. However, the jumping portion displays the classic "V-style." Before changes to the rules, this style of jumping would gain points. Nowadays, though, points are deducted for jumping in this manner.

Alpine Skiing

Some of the Alpine skiing courses were planned for the area surrounding Hakuba at Hap'one, a peak east of Mount Karamutsadakes.

These are for the slalom and downhill specialists. Environmental concerns, certainly a current topic, played a major part in the planning. As happened during discussions in Oyer/Lillehammer (1993-1994) where women complained about the lack of difficulty in their courses, this time it was the men. They protested that the planned downhill course was "approximately 30 seconds too short." Only recently was a compromise solution found between the organizers, FIS officials, and environmental organizations.

On February 21, 1997, another change occurred in the venues, this time for the Alpine combined competition. Originally, Hakuba was to hold the downhill event, while Yamanouchi/Shiga Kogen was to host the slalom discipline. The distance between the two sites, roughly 100 km., was not acceptable because it would prevent quick rescheduling in case of bad weather. FIS insisted the two disciplines be contested at the same location, and Hakuba agreed to host both.

By the way, Warwara Zelenskaya of Russia won both downhill races (Figure 15). Hillary Lindh (USA) placed second in the first race, just 0.42 seconds behind Zelenskaya and 0.02 seconds ahead of Carole Mintillet (France), who came in third.

Freestyle Skiing

The Olympic freestyle skiing course is at the



Figure 16. The first day of issue of the Olympic stamps coincided with the Freestyle Skiing competition. Both cancels appear on this correctly-franked airletter to Germany.

Izuna Kogen ski area on the northern edge of Nagano City (Asakawa District). A World Cup event had been held there as early as 1990. This year, the World Championships were contested on the Olympic course. In addition to the moguls and aerials, which are both Olympic events, championships in acro and the combined (all three individual events) were also conducted (Figure 16).

Freestyle skiing is a very trendy and exciting sport – a made-for-television event, one might say!

Bobsled and Luge

The Izuna Kogen bobsled/luge track – the “Spiral” – was begun in November 1993 and completed on April 4, 1996 (Figure 17).

Luge racers (97 “sliders” from 20 countries) assembled on February 15-16, 1997, to compete for World Cup points on the Olympic track (Figure 18). Angelika Neuner of Austria succeeded in winning the women’s singles event. Men’s doubles, not surprisingly, went to South Tyroleans, Plankensteiner and Haselrieder of Italy. The big upset, though, was the American, Suckow, who won the men’s singles!

Six days later (February 22-26), the bobsled specialists took over the track for their two events (JSP Cover). Unfortunately, these pre-Olympic

competitions were overshadowed by the disqualifications of the Swiss team at the recent World Bobsled Championships in St. Moritz. It was discovered that the Swiss teams, which had dominated, were using unapproved equipment. The discussions disrupted the normally harmonious world of bobsledding.

Snowboarding & Alpine Skiing

Yamanouchi/Shiga Kogen, a well-known ski resort, will host Alpine skiing and the new Olympic sport of snowboarding.



Figure 17. The Spiral (Bobsled/Luge Track)



Figure 18. Nagano applied the special cancels for the World Cup luge competition at Izuna Kogen.

The snowboarding competitions were noteworthy for two reasons (Figure 20). First, this sport had a very short "application" period before being admitted as an Olympic medal sport by the IOC. No doubt this was, in part, due to its attractiveness for both television audiences and spectators alike.

Second, is the manner in which the sport met IOC guidelines for admittance. The regulations require that a *single* international governing body (IF) be responsible for the sport. In this case, however, two federations claimed responsibility: the International Snowboarding Federation (ISF), and the Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS). The IOC recognized the FIS as the governing body. This caused some friction between current athletes who are already qualified/ranked by the ISF, for now they must requalify at an FIS-sanctioned competition. The media have reported on some protests by athletes.

The events contested at these World Championships were the giant slalom and halfpipe events, attracting some 240 competitors from 17 countries. Austrian sportsmen and -women dominated the competition which was very popular with both athletes and spectators.

The Alpine skiing World Cup technical events were conducted March 8-9, 1997 (Figure 21).

Slalom was held at Mt. Yakebitai, while the giant slalom discipline took place at Mt. Higashidate.

Biathlon

The village of Nozawa Onsen is a skiing and hot springs resort of about 4,800 people. Three Olympic biathlon events were conducted (March 6 and 8-9, 1997) for both women and men: a sprint (7.5 km. women/10 km. men), a standard race (10 km. women/20 km. men), and a team relay for each. The winners were from Slovenia (Grasic), Russia (Romasko, and men's relay team), Germany (Kirchner and Fischer), and Ukraine (women's relay team).

In addition to the special cancellation (Figure 22A), which interestingly did not include the name of the IF, the post office had two special cachets (Figure 22B).

Curling

The curling competition was hosted by the town of Karuizawa, population 15,600 inhabitants. It previously had conducted speed skating World Championships and World Cups. This time, however, it was selected for curling, which will be included as a medal sport for the first time at the Nagano Games. It has been a demonstration event



Figure 20. The commemorative cancel for the snowboarding competitions made mention of the governing body for the sport: the FIS!



Figure 21. The Alpine skiing cancel previously used for the Downhill and Super G events at Hakuba (see Figure 15), was reused for the Slalom/Giant Slalom events – this time from Yuadanaka.



Figures 22A & B. At left, the special cancellation for Biathlon competition (without IF designation), and two special post office cachets for the event (center and right).

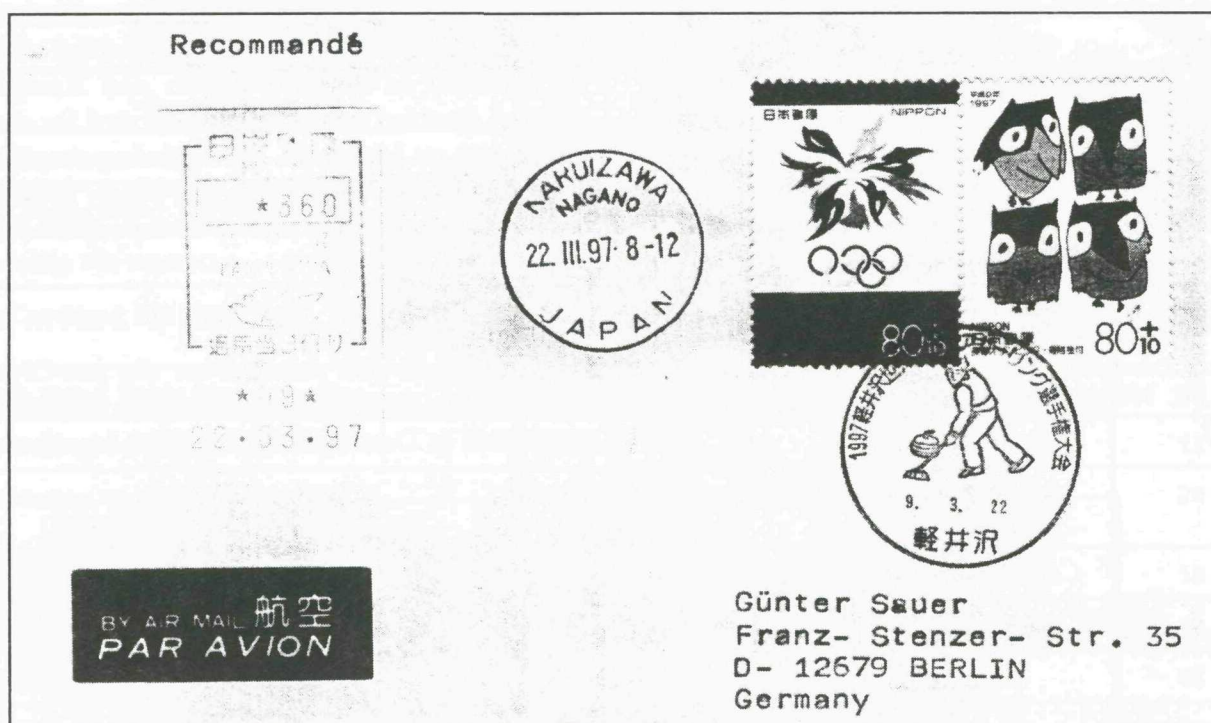


Figure 23. Registered cover (with postage partially paid by a meter) for the World Junior Curling Championships, the test event for curling's debut as a medal sport at the Olympic Winter Games.

at six previous Olympic Winter Games. In the framework of pre-Olympic test events, the World Junior Curling Championships were conducted from March 22-30, 1997 (Figure 23).

Short-Track Speed Skating

The final pre-Olympic event of the season was the Short-Track Speed Skating World Championships at the "White Ring" arena (Figure 24). Construction on the arena began in January, 1994, and

was completed exactly one year prior to these championships.

From March 28-30, 1997, the world champions were selected. The South East Asian and North American skaters dominated. Kim of South Korea defeated Canadian Gagnon in the men's individual event, just ahead of third place winners Terao of Japan and Campbell of Canada. The women's competition was won by two athletes – Yang of China and Chun of South Korea. The relay events

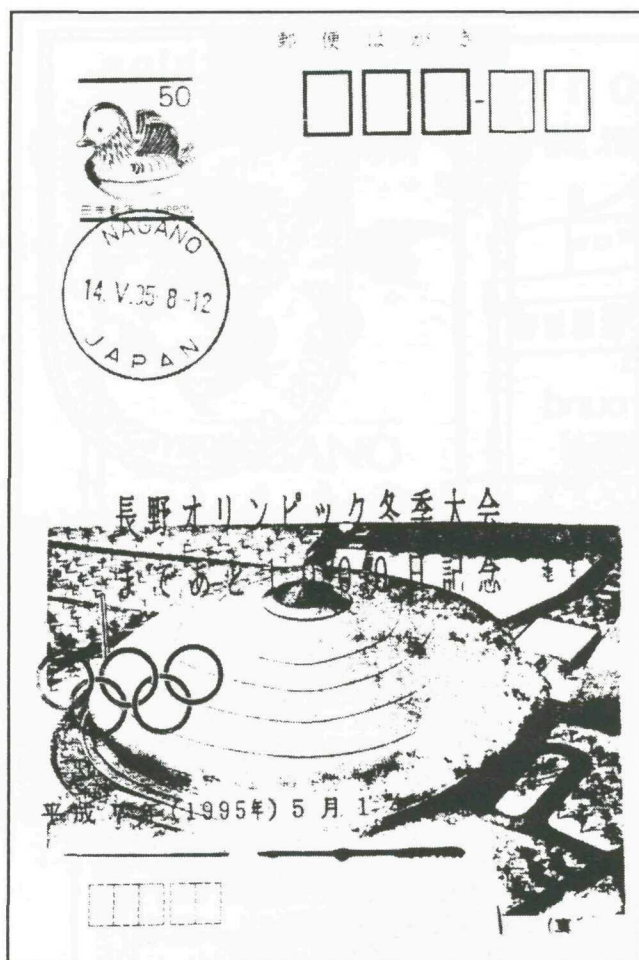


Figure 24. White Ring (Short-Track Speed Skating Arena).

(two for the men over 5,000 meters, and two for women over 3,000 meters) went to Canada and South Korea. They divided the first and second place honors between them. A single bronze medal went to a European team: the Italian men in the relay.

This time, the post office in Kawankajima was equipped with a special postmark for the event (Figure 25). The landscape-type cancel had a traditional rather than Olympic-related design.

Paralympic Events

Among the test competitions were events associated with the Paralympic Winter Games which will take place immediately following the Nagano Games. Three events were commemorated by special postmarks (Figure 26). First, were cross-country and biathlon events for disabled athletes in February at Nozawa Onsen and Kamishiro. Second, disabled ice hockey players vied for awards in Nagano on March 20, 1997. Unfortunately, the winners of these events were not widely publicized in the media, so I am unable to report the results here.

Epilogue

One event still remains on the pre-Olympic calendar: the NHK Trophy for figure skaters to be contested in December, 1997. With less than two

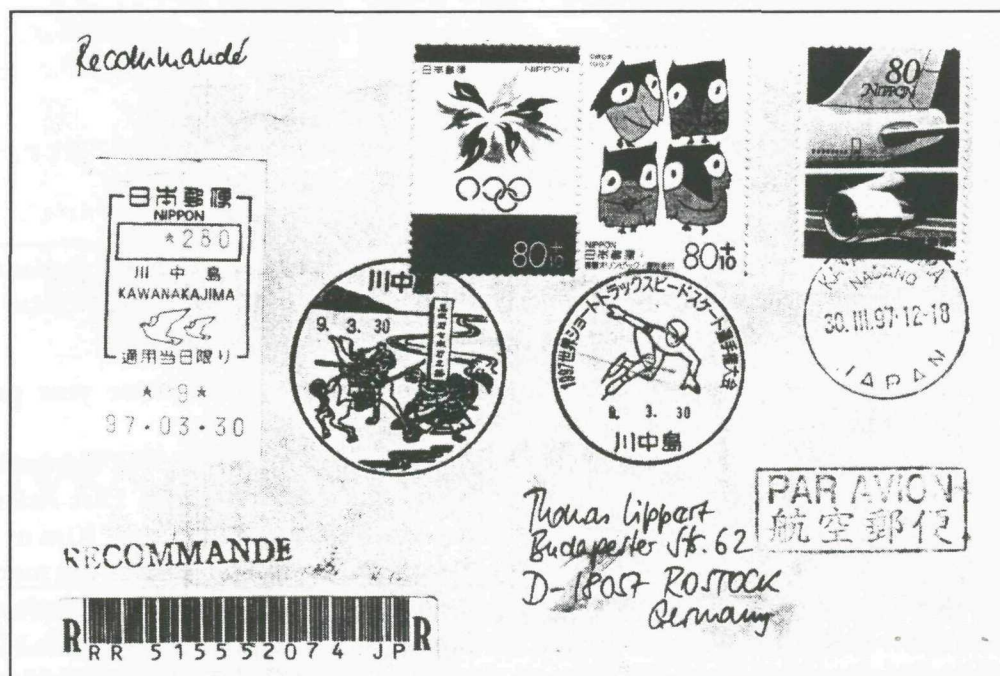


Figure 25. Registered letter from Short-Track Speed Skating at Kawankajima.

months remaining until the opening of the Games, will another special cancel be available? We shall have to wait and see.

At the end of the 1996-1997 winter sports season, one must certainly agree that the pre-Olympic competitions resulted in winners from a wide-range of countries, hopefully indicating an exciting Olympic Games next February. For philatelists, these test events provided extensive material to assist us in reporting on the preparations for the Games. Let's just hope that information from the postal administration will improve so that collectors abroad have sufficient advance warning to prepare their Olympic covers.



Figures 26. Postmarks for the 3 Paralympic Games tests: cross-country skiing, biathlon, and ice hockey.

Nagano 1998 Pre-Olympic Competitions At-A-Glance

Sport:Event	Dates	Postmarks	Figure #
Ice Hockey: Nagano Cup 1996	December 18-22, 1996	Nagano CPO	9
Cross-Country Skiing: FIS World Cup	January 11-12, 1997	Hakuba	12
Ski Jumping: FIS World Cup	January 25-26, 1997	Hakuba	13
Nordic Combined: FIS World Cup	January 30-February 2, 1997	a) Hakuba b) Kamishiro	14
Freestyle Skiing: World Championships	February 4-9, 1997	Nagano CPO	16
Speed Skating: World Championships	February 14-16, 1997	Nagano Higashi ¹	11
Snowboarding: World Championships	February 14-16, 1997	a) Shiga Kogen b) Yuadanaka	20
Luge: FIL World Cup	February 15-16, 1997	Nagano Higashi	18
Bobsledding: FIBT World Cup	February 22-26, 1997	Nagano Higashi	19
Downhill/Super G: FIS World Cup	February 28-March 1, 1997	Hakuba	15
Slalom/Giant Slalom: FIS World Cup	March 8-9, 1997	a) Yuadanaka b) Shiga Kogen	21
Biathlon: World Cup	March 6, 8-9, 1997	Nozawa Onsen ²	22
Curling: Junior World Championships	March 22-30, 1997	Karuizawa	23
Short-Track Speed Skating: World Championships	March 28-30, 1997	Kawanakajima	25
Figure Skating: International NHK Trophy	December 11-14, 1997	Nagano ?	
Disabled Cross-Country/Biathlon ³	February 11-13, 1997	a) Nozawa Onsen b) Kamishiro	26 26
Disabled Ice Hockey ³	March 20, 1997	Nagano	27

1. So-called "Landscape Type" postmark featuring the M-Wave Olympic venue.

2. Two different postmarks were in use for this World Cup event. The post office also printed two cachets.

3. Considered test events for the Winter Paralympic Games that follow the Nagano Olympic Winter Games.

European Small Nations' Games

by Gudni Gunnarsson

The 7th European Small Nations' Games were held in Iceland from June 3-7, 1997. The President of the International Olympic Committee, J.A. Samaranch, initiated the Small Nations' Games of Europe. The first were conducted in San Marino in 1985.

The idea behind these games was to provide a program of competitive sports events between small nations that would reinforce the spirit of the Olympic Games and its ideals, while as the same time strengthen ties of friendship between them.

All nations with fewer than 1 million inhabitants qualify for participation. Currently, the member nations are: Andorra, Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco and San Marino. The previous games, in 1995, were hosted by Luxembourg.



Stamps (top) issued by Iceland to commemorate the 1997 European Small Nations' Games, and the First Day Cancel (below) of May 13, 1997.



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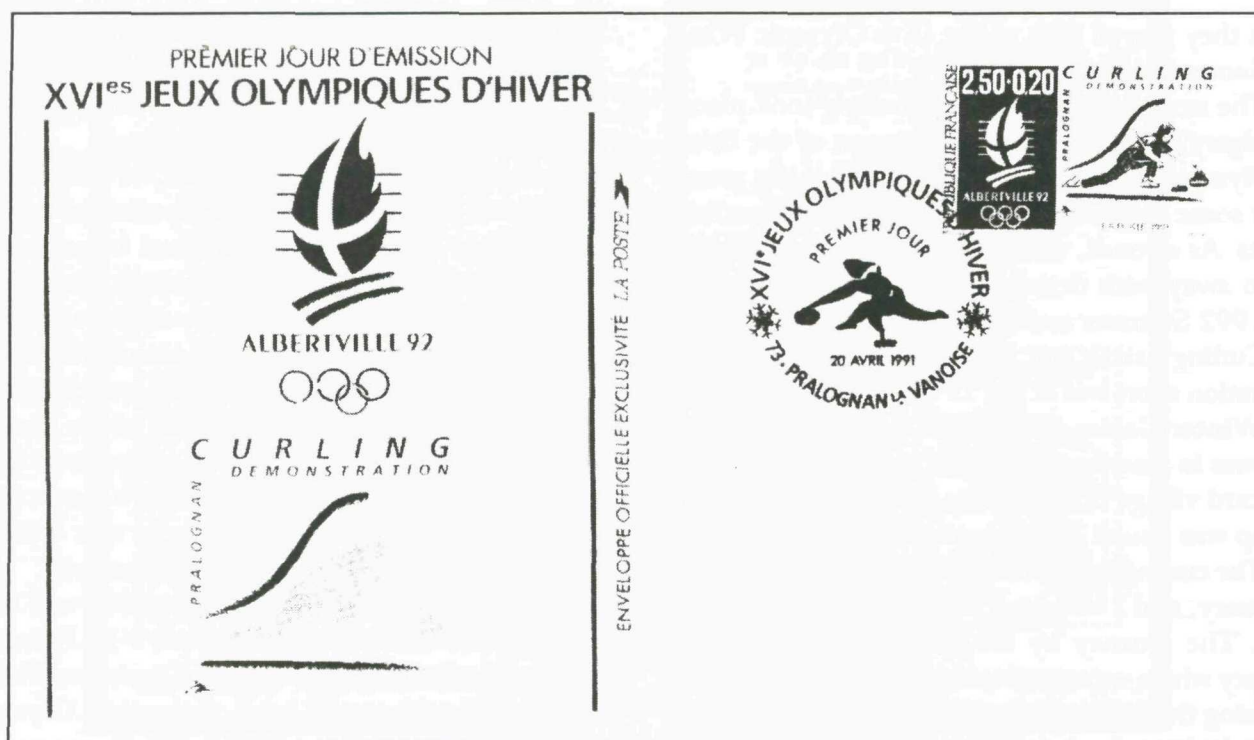


Figure 1. 1992 Albertville Olympic FDC for the curling stamp.

Curling: Seventh Time Lucky

by Brian Hammond

Curling has been a demonstration sport at six Olympic Winter Games: 1924, 1932, 1936, 1964, 1988 and 1992. In 1995, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) added it the Olympic schedule as a full medal sport for both men and women. After six attempts, competitors in curling will receive gold, silver and bronze medals beginning at the upcoming Nagano Olympic Winter Games in 1998.

The sport is thought to have originated in Scotland in the 16th century. It spread through Europe, and was introduced to North America by British emigrants.

Curling is a team sport with four players per team: the lead, the second, the third, and the *skip* or team captain. Play alternates between the two teams, with each player delivering two 20 kilogram granite stones towards the *house* (tee), a circle with a radius of six feet (1.83 meters). The object is to place the stone nearest to the center of the house. A round of play, also known as an *end*, consists of

16 throws (8 per team; 2 per player). Games are ten ends long, and last about two and one-half hours. All four members of a team are active when it is their turn to throw. The skip directs the delivery, while another releases the stone. The remaining two players are *sweepers*, using their brooms on the ice in front of the moving stone to control momentum and direction, thereby maneuvering the stone to where the skip has indicated.¹

At the 1924 Olympics at Chamonix, France, a three-country demonstration contest was held. Great Britain defeated both Sweden and the host country team. A bi-national competition took place in Lake Placid in 1932. Both Canada and the United States had four teams present, with the Manitoba, Canada team winning the event.

Eight teams were also entered in the 1936 competition in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. Austria and Germany each sent three teams, while Czechoslovakia was represented by two. This was a specialized German version of the game. An Austrian team from the Tyrol triumphed. The Austrians again demonstrated the sport in 1964

when they played host to the IXth Olympic Winter Games in Innsbruck.²

The next demonstration of curling took place at Calgary in 1988. The official report of the British Olympic Association gives no results, but mentions some difficulties with all the demonstration sports. As a result, the IOC subsequently decided to do away with demonstration sports following the 1992 Summer and Winter Olympics.³

Curling's sixth and final appearance as a demonstration sport was at the 1992 Albertville Olympic Winter Games. The venue for the curling events was in a newly constructed rink at the picture-postcard village of Pralognan-Lavanoise. A special stamp was issued on 20 April 1991 (Figure 1).

The curling competition began on Monday, 17 February, and I obtained a ticket for the first session. The journey by car and coach from Lake Annecy where we stayed took the better part of the morning through snow-covered mountains. As we walked through the village past the church, it began to snow creating a Christmas card scene. We visited the local post office to mail some cards with the special cancellation (Figure 2), but were sad to learn that the Olympic Games had driven away most of the town's regular winter visitors, leaving

few guests other than the competitors who stayed locally. The tourist office kindly gave me a copy of the official curling poster which is of similar design to the stamp.

Arriving at the hall in good time, we were disappointed to find that due to ice conditions on two of the four rinks, competition had begun early, with two matches already completed. The media were out in force trying to learn about the sport from the spectators who were mainly from the U.S.A. and had never seen a curling match before. The rest of the audience seemed to be mainly French school children there to support to their team. Eight men's and eight women's teams took part in the event. The men's event was won by Switzerland, and the women's by Germany.

At Nagano, the curling competition will take place in three sessions per day from 9-15 February at the Kazakosh Park Arena in Karuizawa Town. The competitors will have their own Olympic Village there as well.

ENDNOTES

1. Nagano Olympic Winter Games World Wide Web site.
2. *Guinness Olympic Games Records* by Stan Greenberg.
3. *British Olympic Association Official Report*, 1988.
4. *British Olympic Association Official Report*, 1992.

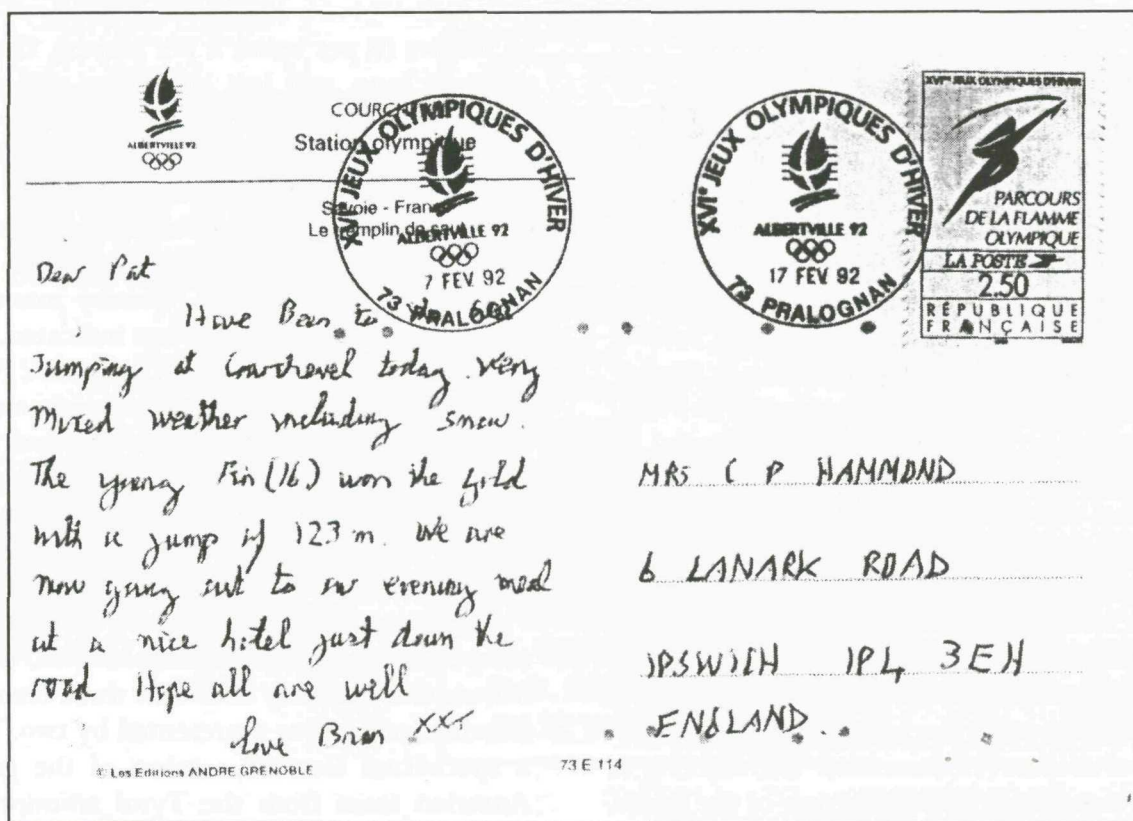


Figure 2. Commemorative Olympic cancel from the town of Pralognan, venue for curling.



Figure 1. Souvenir sheets commemorating the Winter Universiade '97 in South Korea.

Winter Universiade '97

by George E. Killian

Winter Universiade '97 was held in the cities of Muju and Chonju, located in Chollabukdo province in South Korea, from January 24 through February 2, 1997.

The Muju and Chonju Winter Universiade was outstanding in every respect and the entire University sports movement offered its thanks to Mr. Byung Woo Koh and the entire Organizing Committee of FISU's (International Federation of University Sports) 18th Winter Games.

Many records were toppled, and participation levels were exceptional, with 1,406 athletes and officials present from 48 countries.

The throng of spectators was impressive in both Muju, where the snow events were held, and in Chonju, host city for the ice events competitions. The Korean spectators literally invaded the sports venues to the immense pleasure of the competitors.

As a bonus, Universiade '97 turned out to be a philatelic bonanza for collectors of winter sports as well as those specializing in the Universiade movement.

Philatelic commemoration of Winter Universiade '97 began with the release on July 1, 1996 of two 150 won stamps. One featured the official logo of Universiade '97 while the other showed a short-track speed skater.

On January 24, 1997, two additional 150 won Universiade 97 stamps were issued. These depicted the sports of figure skating and skiing.

While in Chonju, I had the pleasure of meeting with the postmaster, and viewing the Winter Universiade '97 Philatelic Exhibition. Twenty exhibits comprising 98 frames of material were displayed in the Chonju Post Office from January 24 through February 2. Four of the exhibits had previously been shown at Olymphilex '96 in Atlanta. The philatelic exhibition drew extremely large crowds indicating a keen interest in philatelic endeavors in this Korean city.

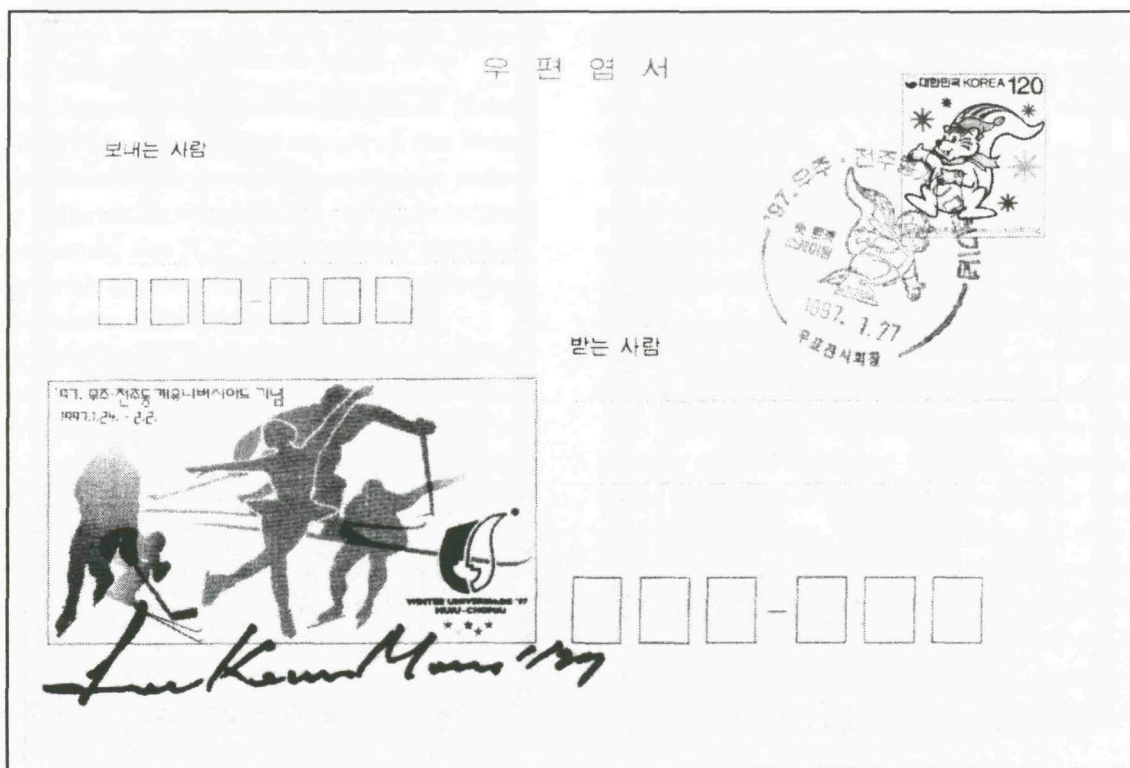


Figure 2. The game's postal card bearing the autograph of one of the two stamp designers. The commemorative cancel is one of nine used during the games. This one shows the mascot as a short-track speed skater.

During my visit, the postmaster presented me with two postal cards autographed by the designers of the stamps. Mr. Kim Hyun designed the stamp showing the skater, while Mr. Kim Ok-Nam designed the one featuring the skier. The stamps were produced in six-color photogravure in sheets of 20, as well as in souvenir sheets of two (Figure 1), by Korean Security Printing and Minting. A total of 3 million sets and 555,000 souvenir sheets were printed.

In addition to the stamps and souvenir sheets, a postal card was also issued (Figure 2). The imprinted 120 won stamp shows the mascot. A cachet in the lower left corner illustrates various winter sports.

A total of nine commemorative postmarks were available at both the athlete village post offices of Muju and Chonju (Figure 3). The nine postmarks included two for short-track speed skating, and one each for figure skating, ice hockey, Alpine skiing, ski jumping, biathlon, the game's logo, and the mascot with text reading "I Love Muju."



Figure 3. The nine commemorative sports cancels for the Winter Universiade '97.



Figure 1. An Olympic Identity Card for travel on the Belgian Railway System during the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp, Belgium.

Olympic Identity Cards

by Mark Maestroni

SI PI member, Laurence Jonker, of The Netherlands recently came upon some rather interesting items for his Olympic collection. Hopefully, some members who may have seen similar pieces will be able to elaborate on the few details we present here.

Usually when we, as Olympic collectors, think of Olympic identity cards, the first thing that comes to mind are those laminated hi-tech "posters" that every Olympic athlete and official has permanently dangling on a chain from his or her neck. These are issued by the Olympic Organizing Committee (OOG), providing both a means for securing the Games as well as access control to the various venues. The issuance of Olympic identity cards, in one form or another, has been required by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) since the early years of the Games.

What Mr. Jonker has stumbled upon are a variation of these. Apparently issued by the Belgian Olympic Committee, they entitle the person

named on the card to reduced fares on the Belgian railway system. An example is illustrated in Figure 1 at the top of this page. A translation of the body of the card follows:

"Belgian Committee for the VIIth Olympiad

This card certifies that Mr. _____ is a competitor/official of the Olympic Games in 1920 and, as a result, has the right, as per the decision of 31 January 1920, to a reduction of 50% of the normal fare on the railways of Belgium, for his trip Round trip from Antwerp to _____

Signed by: The Secretary of the Committee

Signed by: the President of the Committee
[Cte. H. de Baillet-Latour]

N.B. Valid for a single trip only."

Noteworthy is the signature stamp of Count Henri de Baillet-Latour who in 1925 succeeded

Baron Pierre de Coubertin as President of the International Olympic Committee. At the time of the 1920 Games, Baillet-Latour was both President of the Belgian Olympic Committee and one of the two Belgian IOC members.

The "philatelist" in us is probably wondering what this rather unassuming rose-colored card has to do with philately! The reader will note the rectangular handstamped black box near the center of the card. This is a Belgian railway post office cancel. At top is the text "Anvers Centrale" (the main railroad station in Antwerp). Below that is the date "31 VIII 1920," a competition day at the Games. According to Mr. Jonker's inquiries in various philatelic circles, this railway post office cancel on the identity card makes it exhibitible. Certainly an unusual philatelic element!

After Mr. Jonker contacted a few more philatelic friends in Europe, another card (Figure 2) surfaced from fellow collector Karl-Heinz Köller of Germany. Again for travel on the Belgian railway system, this identity card was issued to members of the Belgian Olympic delegation to the 1928 Amsterdam Games.

The text on this 1928 card is quite similar to that of 1920, the major difference being in the amount of the fare reduction – just 35%! Also, the

itinerary is indicated very specifically: Liege to Antwerp. This card also identifies the bearer, a Mr. Jean Crousse. Following a call to the Amateur Athletic Foundation in Los Angeles, it was discovered that Mr. Crousse was indeed a member of the Belgian Olympic rowing team to the 1928 Games. He competed in the eight-oared shell with coxswain. The official report does not list the team's placing in that event. And why was the card endorsed only to Antwerp? Mr. Jonker believes that the Belgian team assembled in Antwerp, from which point they traveled *en masse* to Amsterdam.

In addition to the boxed railway post office cancel dated "30 VII 1928," this time from the Liege railway station, there appears a cachet at upper left. This appears to be the official seal of the Belgian Olympic Committee. The signature of Count de Baillet-Latour continues to be used. Even though he had already succeeded to the presidency of the IOC by that time, I believe that he remained president of the Belgian Olympic Committee as well.

So there we have two Olympic identity cards for two different Olympic Games. Might there be others out there, perhaps from other European countries? Your editor would welcome any additional information.



Figure 2. A similar identity card issued by the Belgian Olympic Committee for Olympic representatives traveling by rail to Amsterdam for the 1928 Olympic Games.

REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

by Mark Maestrone

Esprit: Sports et Olimpisme No. 6, May 1997

The lead article in the journal of the French Olympic and sports collectors society covers the sport of rowing. Rene Christin discusses the evolution of the sport, the equipment, and the competitions. A plethora of cancels, meters and stamps effectively illustrate his report.

Additional articles and columns discuss: handicap sports; PHILFOOT-France '98 (the first philatelic exhibition devoted to Soccer) which coincides with next year's World Cup in France; and a short piece on 100 years of Tennis in Monaco.

Contact: Mr. Pierre Berle, Rue Georges Clemenceau, 82370 Reynies, France. - M.M.

IMOS Journal May/June 1997 (No. 94)

Headlining this issue of the *IMOS Journal* from our sister society in Germany, is a separate pamphlet by Kurt Wernet on the Olympic Flame. This 36-page booklet describes and illustrates the history of the Olympic Flame from ancient times through the 1994 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer.

In addition, the 1992 supplement of the IMOS Sports Stationery Catalog is included, along with articles on 100 Years of the Berliner Fussball-Verband, and Berlin commemorative sport and Olympic cancels.

Current sports-related events and press clippings from German newspapers round out this issue.

Contact: Dieter Germann, Postbox 1128, D-63534 Grosskrotzenburg, Germany - M.M.

Podium June 1997 (#16)

This issue of *Podium*, the Spanish-language journal of the Argentine Thematic Sports Group, carries a series of brief articles on a variety of different topics. Most are reports on current philatelic events from around the world. Included are: Olympic table tennis, the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics, the 1998 World Cup of Soccer, Haitian sports philately, "extreme" sports, Winter Universiade '97, and preparations for the 2002 World Cup of Soccer in Korea. New stamps and cancels are also reproduced.

Contact: Jorge A. Casalia, C.C. 30 Suc. 19, C.P. 1419, Buenos Aires, Argentina. - M.M.

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E-mail: markspi@internetmci.com

NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

by Margaret Jones & Dorothy Crockett

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2102R David L. Prensky, 373 Janes Lane, Stamford, CT 06903 USA. He is a retail consultant. *Baseball, Football, Basketball, Golf.* (Jones)

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Dave Body, 80 Parkdale Rise, Whickham, Tyne and Wear NE16 5JR, Great Britain.

Harry Johnson, % Expat Department, One Bowerman Drive, Beaverton, OR 97005 USA.

Joseph Lopreiato, 7 Pipestem Court, Rockville, MD 20854 USA.

Y.S. Shin, P.O. Box 77, Inchon 400-600, Korea.

RESIGNED

Frank L. Shively.

Total Membership, June 30, 1997 = 423.

Thanks to all the members who renewed by July 15, as well as those who renewed for multiple years. If you renewed late (after the September/October mailing list had been run), you will receive this issue with the next mailing. This procedure is necessary because SPI must use bulk mail for USA members due to the ever-increasing cost of postage.

Members' E-mail Addresses

Members wishing to have their e-mail addresses listed both here and in the upcoming supplement to the Membership Handbook, must e-mail their permission to the editor, Mark Maestrone:

markspi@internetmci.com

Exhibit Awards

NATIONAL SHOWS

ROPEX '97: Alice Johnson, "Figure Skating," silver and ATA Third Place medal.

REGIONAL SHOWS

Louisplex 97: SPI Vice-President, Charles V. Covell, Jr., took a gold and reserve grand award for his exhibit, "Soccer (Just For Kicks)."

Nashville Philatelic Society: Heinrich Hahn received a silver award for "The Brown Ribbon Races in Germany."

Toledo Stamp Expo'97: Junior exhibit, Harold Laramie, Jr., "U.S. Baseball on Stamps," bronze.

WANTED: Machine cancels "Olympiska Spelen I Stockholm 19 Juni - 1912 - 22 Juli"; "Sports d'hiver Chamonix - Mont Blanc Janvier 1924"; hand cancel "St. Moritz Dorf" dated early 1928. Also wanted: Official Report of St. Moritz 1928 (48 pages). Write with information and prices to: R.A. Huurman, Gooiergracht 145, 1251 VE Laren NH, Holland.

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. For more information send a self-addressed stamped envelope to William E. Fraleigh, RD #3, Box 176, Red Hook, NY 12571, U.S.A.

NEW STAMP ISSUES

by Dennis Dengel

Anguilla: 12 December 1996. 100th Anniversary of the Modern Olympics. 20 cents, runners; 80 cents, javelin; \$1.00, jumping; \$3.50, flags of nations.

Argentina: 5 April 1997. 50th Anniversary of the Buenos Aires to Rio de Janeiro Regatta. 75 centavos value showing the yacht Fortuna II.

Burkina Faso: 1996. 1998 World Cup Soccer Championships. 50 francs, 150fr, 250fr, 450fr: soccer scenes.

Belarus: 15 July 1996. 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics. Four 3,000 ruble stamps: rhythmic gymnastics, discus throw, wrestling, weightlifting; 5,000 ruble s/s, shooting.

Chad: 1996. Michael Schumacher F1 race car driver. Four se-tenant 700 Franc stamps: Ferrari F1 race car, Schumacher, Schumacher in Benetton uniform and a Benetton F1 race car; 2000 Fr s/s, Schumacher.

Djibouti: 1996. 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics. 105 franc, the Olympic flag.

Dominican Republic: 3 April 1997. 11th National Youth Games. 2p, mascot; 3p, the mascot bat; 5p, runner.

France: 31 May 1997. 1998 Soccer World Cup. Four 3.00 franc stamps: soccer players in action each stamp with a different venue name (Lyon, Marseille, Nantes and Paris) plus the emblem of the games.

Iceland: 15 May 1997. European Small Nations Games. 35 kronur, hurdler; 45kr, yachting.

Japan: 7 February 1997. Nagano 1998 Winter Olympics. Two se-tenant, 80+10 yen stamps: snowflower emblem of games, figure skater, alpine skier, speed skater, ski jumper and Olympic rings; owl mascots.

Kazakhstan: 19 June 1996. 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics. 4 tengers, cycling; 6te, wrestling; 30te, boxing.

Maldives: 27 May 1996. 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics. Nineteen stamps. 1 rufiyaa, 3rf, 10rf, 12rf, a pane of nine 9fr, pane of six 5fr. All stamps show previous Olympic winners.

Monaco: 1997. 100th Anniversary of the Monaco Tennis Tournament. 4.60 franc, tennis scene.

Portugal: 29 May 1997. Radical Sports. 49 escudos surfing; 80esc, skate boarding; 100esc, inline skating; 140esc, paragliding.

San Marino: 19 May 1997. Sporting Events. 500 lire, bicycle and stop watch; 550l, tennis racket and ball; 750l, Ferrari race car; 850l, soccer ball; 1,000l, bowls; 1,250l, motocross; 1,500l, steering wheel and instrument panel.

Senegal: 14 Jan. 1996. The Paris to Dakar Rally. 215, 275, 290, and 665 franc values: scenes of the Rally.

1 July 1996. 100th Anniversary of the International Olympic Committee. 215 franc value: track and field athletes.

15 July 1996. 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics. 10 francs, swimming; 80fr, gymnastics; 175fr, running; 260fr, hurdles.

Tonga: 24 March 1997. 75th Anniversary of the Tonga Rugby Union. Overprint of the 1995 Rugby World Cup stamps: 1 seniti overprint on 80s stamp; 1pa overprint on 2pa stamp.

24 March 1997. A Silver for Tonga overprint on the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics issue. The stamps have been revalued to 10s except for the 3pa value.

Uganda: 8 December 1996. 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics. 350/- scenes from the 104 Olympics; 450/- George Ginnegan, boxer; 500/- the quadriga race from the ancient games; 800/- John Flanagan, hammer throw.

COMMEMORATIVE STAMP CANCELS

by Mark Maestrone

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. 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 JUNE-JULY 1997

Baseball: 97621-402.
Cycling: 97621-803, 97712-961.
Equestrian: 97619-402.
Golf: 97712-971, 97714-391.
Rodeo: 97704-824.
Running: 97620-558.



97619-402 Louisville, KY 19-22



97620-558 Duluth, MN 20



97621-402 Louisville, KY 21



97621-803 Boulder, CO 21



JULY 4, 1997
TEN SLEEP WY 82442-9998

97704-824 Ten Sleep, WY 4



97712-961 Markleeville, CA 12

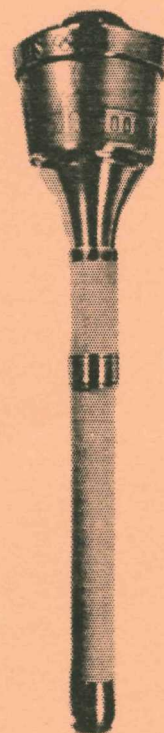


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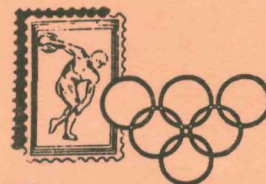
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