

OPENING CEREMONY

“Why did I re-establish the Olympic Games? To ennoble and strengthen sports, to assure them independence and duration and to enable them better to fill the educational role which falls to them in the modern world. For the exaltation of the individual athlete, whose existence is necessary for the muscular activity of the community, and the prowess displayed, to encourage the general emulation.”
Coubertin, 1894.

Coubertin provided the Olympic Movement with a coherent philosophical message. Did he not say that “Olympism is a state of mind”? He gave Olympism a series of emblems and rites that resulted in a ritual in which all cultures have a place; this is perfectly obvious in the spectacles that make up the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of each Olympic Games.

- 1980, Lake Placid: a temporary stadium was constructed for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Olympic Winter Games, as in Grenoble in 1968 and Albertville in 1992.

THE OLYMPIC PROTOCOL

The Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games symbolises the Olympic spirit of peace and harmony, which brings people from across the world together around Olympic sport. No other Olympic event or sports festival, no cultural, political or religious event has created a carefully planned, regularly held ceremony that always attracts so much attention world-wide and creates such emotions.

It is an impressive sight, following unchanging protocol set out in the Olympic Charter according to the ideas of its founder, Pierre de Coubertin. After the stadium is opened to the public, the Head of State of the host country is received at the entrance of the stadium by the IOC President accompanied by the OCOG President, and taken to his stand. The parade of participants then follows preceded by a name-board bearing the name of the country. A flag-bearing athlete follows behind. The countries' delegations parade in alphabetical order according to the language of the host country, except for Greece, which leads the parade, and the host country, which brings up the rear. The IOC President, accompanied by the OCOG President, proceeds to the rostrum positioned on the field in front of the official stand. The IOC and OCOG Presidents each give an address lasting a maximum of three minutes, then the Head of State proclaims the Games open by saying "I declare open the XIX Olympic Winter Games". While the Olympic anthem is being played, the Olympic flag, unfurled horizontally, is brought into the stadium and hoisted on the flagpole erected in the arena. The Olympic torch is brought into the stadium by runners relaying each other. The last runner circles the track before lighting the flame, which is not extinguished until the closing of the Games. The lighting of the Olympic flame is followed by a symbolic release of doves. The flag bearers of all the delegations form a semi-circle around the rostrum where an athlete and a judge take the oath. The national anthem of the host country is then played and the show begins.

- 1980, Lake Placid: two fireworks were let off for the first time at the Opening Ceremony, to replace the cannon fire, which was considered too military.

CITIUS, ALTIUS, FORTIUS

“These three words represent a programme of moral beauty. The aesthetics of sport are intangible.”
Coubertin (Selected Writings, Vol. II, p. 89, 1895).

“Let’s not be afraid of the passions that sport can arouse.” *Sir Philip Noel-Baker, Nobel Peace Prize winner, 1,500m silver medallist, Antwerp 1920.*

“Competition taught me self-control. It also taught me how to lose and how to win; although it is transposed into the world of sport, I believe it is an image of everyday life. Everyone should know how to lose one day and win the next. Always with the same smile on their face”. *Jean-Claude Killy, IOC member, triple Olympic champion, skiing, Grenoble 1968.*

A friend of Coubertin, Father Henri Didon, of the Dominican order, was principal of the Arcueil College, near Paris. An energetic teacher, he used the discipline of sport as a powerful educational tool. One day, following an inter-schools athletics meeting, he ended his speech with fine oratorical vigour, quoting the three words “Citius, Altius, Fortius” (faster, higher, stronger). Struck by the succinctness of this phrase, Coubertin made it the IOC’s motto, pointing out that “to try to adapt athleticism to a system of compulsory moderation is idealistic. Athletes need “freedom of excess”. That is why we gave them this motto ... a motto for people who dare to try to break records.”

THE OLYMPIC RINGS

“These five rings – blue, yellow, black, green and red – represent the five parts of the world now encompassed by Olympism and ready to compete against each other. Moreover, the six colours (including the white background) thus combined represent those of all nations, without exception. The blue and yellow of Sweden, the blue and white of Greece, the French, English, American, German, Belgian, Italian and Hungarian tricolours, the yellow and red of Spain are side by side with the new Brazilian and Australian flags, the old Japan and the new China. It is a true international emblem.”
Coubertin (Selected Writings II, p. 460, 1913).

As an image of Olympism, Coubertin thought the rings had deep significance: that of the union between men. He multiplied the image to create a total of five rings. He designed and commissioned the Olympic flag to mark the 20th anniversary of the IOC’s founding, on 23rd June 1914 in Paris. Coubertin never said nor wrote that he saw a link between the colours of the rings and the continents. For him, the five rings represented the union of the five continents, but the colours were merely those that appeared in all the different national flags at the time.

- The results of a survey carried out in six countries (Australia, Germany, India, Japan, Great Britain and the USA) in 1995 showed that 92% of those questioned correctly identified the Olympic rings, which made them the most-recognised symbol. They were followed by the McDonald’s and Shell emblems (88%), Mercedes (74%) and the United Nations (36%). (*SRI Sponsorship Research International*).
- 86% of those questioned associated the Olympic rings with the world’s greatest sports event: the Olympic Games. (*SRI Sponsorship Research International, 1995*).

THE OLYMPIC FLAG

Coubertin created the Olympic flag at a time of extreme international tension. He saw it as a symbol of peace and fraternity. However, he had to wait until the end of World War I before seeing the Olympic flag flying in an Olympic stadium.

- The Olympic flag flew for the first time in an Olympic stadium in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1920, during the Games of the VII Olympiad.
- Since 1924, the Olympic flag has been raised solemnly during the Opening Ceremony of the Games in the Olympic stadium.
- The Olympic flag for the Olympic Winter Games was given to the IOC by the mayor of Oslo in 1952.
- After the World War II, the IOC persuaded the two Germanies to form a unified team between 1956 and 1964. The team paraded behind a flag in German colours featuring the five Olympic rings and adopted Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* as its anthem.
- In 1980, most western delegations competing in Moscow despite their governments' reservations paraded behind the Olympic flag so that their respective countries, which had been in favour of the boycott, were not directly involved.
- 75% of people identify the Olympic symbol as being a sign of international co-operation and 60% as the symbol of a force for world peace (results of a 1995 survey carried out in six countries - Australia, Germany, India, Japan, Great Britain and the USA). (*SRI Sponsorship Research International, 1995*).

THE OLYMPIC RITUAL

“People used to gather in Olympia both to make a pilgrimage to the past and to demonstrate faith in the future. This should also be the case with the modern Olympiads. Their role and destiny is to unite the past and the future through the fleeting moments of the present. They are the ultimate celebration of youth, beauty and strength. Therefore, these elements should form the basis of the Olympic ceremonies.” *Coubertin, (Selected Writings, Vol. I, p. 464, 1910).*

« Large, mass choirs alternating with far-off fanfares constitute a sublime basis for the Olympic symphonies that future musicians will undoubtedly want to compose (...) So the Olympic ceremonies will be few yet important: the athletes’ oath, the proclamation of the opening of the Games, the distribution of rewards ...that is what the main days should be like, the compulsory days. » *Coubertin (Selected Writings, Vol. II p. 465, 1910).*

THE ATHLETES' PARADE

“What is admirable about an athlete is his ambition and desire: the ambition to do better than anyone else and the desire to achieve it.” *Conbertin (Selected Writings, Vol. II, p.89, 1895).*

The athletes' parade always creates great enthusiasm in the stadium. It is an important event for everybody concerned and the athletes always remember it with great fondness. Uniforms were first worn at the Opening Ceremony of the Games of the IV Olympiad in London in 1908, when each delegation also paraded behind its national flag for the first time. The delegations paraded in alphabetical order, a rule, which always used to arouse debate over which alphabet should be referred to. Finally, it was decided in 1928 that the alphabet of the host country should be used, that the Greek delegation, as founder nation of the Ancient Olympic Games, should always lead the parade, and that the delegation of the host country should be the last to enter the stadium.

- In 1924 in Chamonix, the athletes paraded in order of their competitions, in sports outfits, sometimes with their skates, skis and even their bobsleigh on their shoulders.
- In 1928, first participation of Asian athletes (Japan) in Olympic Winter Games.
- In 1956, first participation of Soviet athletes in Olympic Winter Games.

ATHLETES' MEMORIES OF THE ATHLETES' PARADE IN OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

“The Games are the ultimate dream for every athlete. The IOC’s role is to perpetuate this dream.”
Jacques Rogge, President of the IOC.

“The power of Olympism itself comes simply from its human, and therefore worldly, essence.”
Coubertin (Selected Writings, Vol. II, p. 299, 1910).

Accounts by athletes, some of whom became IOC members. (In alphabetical order).

“When the Olympic anthem was played, a great emotion swept over me, I suddenly realised that I was participating in an event unique in the world.” *Manuela Di Centa, IOC member, double Olympic champion Nordic skiing in Albertville 1992; double silver medallist, Lillehammer 1994, double bronze medallist, Albertville and Lillehammer.*

“Through the Nagano Olympic Games, I experienced the joy and the hard times, but it gave me great pleasure and it also taught me the importance of being able to participate in these wonderful sports. I would like to pass on this feeling to the rest of the world. » *Kazuyoshi Funaki (Japan), ski jumping, double Olympic champion and silver medallist, Nagano 1998.*

“At Innsbruck, in 1964, Christine and I were just kids. We nearly froze to death waiting for the parade behind the flag. We were so proud! A childhood dream had finally come true.” *Marielle Goitschel, skiing, double Olympic champion, giant slalom in Innsbruck 1964 and Grenoble 1968; silver medallist, slalom in Innsbruck. (Programme officiel des Jeux, Albertville 1992, p.108).*

“My most enduring memory is probably of the great pride and joy I felt as I walked into the stadium, with my country’s flag, during the Opening Ceremony of the Calgary Games. The emotion you feel at moments like that is hard to describe.” *Prince Albert of Monaco, IOC member, bobsleigh participant, Calgary 1988, Albertville 1992, Lillehammer 1994, Nagano 1998.*

“At each Opening and Closing Ceremony I felt very proud because the Olympic Games is the biggest event in sport.” *Vladimir Smirnov, IOC member, Nordic skiing Olympic champion and double silver medallist in Lillehammer 1994; double silver medallist and bronze medallist in Calgary 1988, participant in Nagano 1998.*

“You work progressively towards the Games, from one year to the next. Four years before, they are just a dream that is slowly taking shape.” *Katarina Witt, figure skating, double Olympic champion, Sarajevo 1984 and Calgary 1988. (Programme officiel des Jeux, Albertville 1992, p.108).*

THE HEAD OF STATE PROCLAIMS THE OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES OPEN

“With the Olympic Games, each generation celebrates its advent, its joy for living, its faith in the future, its ambition and its will to ascend.” *Coubertin (Selected Writings, Vol. II, p.169, 1931).*

Apart from a few minor adjustments, Olympic protocol as it appears today is the same as that devised by Pierre de Coubertin, who stressed the solemnity needed at such an exceptional event; for this reason the Games of the Ist Olympiad of the modern era were proclaimed open by King George I in Athens in 1896.

- In 1952, Princess Ragnhild became the first woman to open the Olympic Winter Games. She was representing King Haakon and Crown Prince Olav, who were attending the funeral of King George VI of England, who had died suddenly. .

PEOPLE WHO HAVE OPENED THE OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

Chamonix (France)	1924	Gaston Vidal, Under-Secretary of State
St. Moritz (Switzerland)	1928	President Edmund Schulthess
Lake Placid (USA)	1932	Governor Franklin Roosevelt
Garmish Partenkirchen (Germany)	1936	Chancellor Adolph Hitler
	1940	not celebrated
	1944	not celebrated
St. Moritz (Switzerland)	1948	President Enrico Celio
Oslo (Norway)	1952	Princess Ragnhild
Cortina d'Ampezzo (Italy)	1956	President Giovanni Gronchi
Squaw Valley (USA)	1960	Vice-President Richard Nixon
Innsbruck (Austria)	1964	President Dr Adolf Schärf
Grenoble (France)	1968	President Charles de Gaulle
Sapporo (Japan)	1972	Emperor Hirohito
Innsbruck (Austria)	1976	President Dr Rudolf Kirchschräger
Lake Placid (USA)	1980	Vice-President Walter Mondale
Sarajevo (Yugoslavia)	1984	President Mika Spiljak
Calgary (Canada)	1988	Governor General Jeanne Sauv�
Albertville (France)	1992	President Fran�ois Mitterand
Lillehammer (Norway)	1994	King Harald V
Nagano (Japan)	1998	Emperor Akihito
Salt Lake City (USA)	2002	

THE OLYMPIC ANTHEM

“Throw wreaths of fadeless flowers to the victors
In the race and in the strife!
Create in our breasts, hearts of steel!”

Kostas Palama, extract from the Olympic anthem.

The Olympic anthem was composed by Spiros Samara, based on the words of Kostas Palama, for the Games of the I Olympiad in Athens in 1896. It was played again in 1906, but subsequently replaced by anthems specially commissioned for the Olympic ceremonies. In 1954 the IOC held an international competition won by Polish composer Michael Spisiak, who had put a poem by Pindar to music. It was played in Melbourne in 1956, but the composer demanded such a large fee that it was subsequently abandoned. When the Japanese played the piece by Spiros Samara at the 55th IOC Session in Tokyo in 1958, everyone enjoyed it so much that it was unanimously adopted as the official anthem, at the proposal of IOC member Prince Axel of Denmark.

- Prince Pierre of Monaco, IOC member, offered the sum of US\$ 1,000 to the winner of the competition for an Olympic anthem launched by the IOC in 1954.
- The IOC received 392 entries from composers from 40 different countries. At its 51st Session, the IOC chose Michael Spisiak's composition.
- The current Olympic anthem was adopted at the 55th Session of the IOC in Tokyo in 1958.
- The Olympic anthem was played for the first time in Athens in 1896 and again in Rome in 1960.
- The Olympic anthem was played for the first time at the Olympic Winter Games in Squaw Valley in 1960.

THE OLYMPIC ANTHEM

Immortal spirit of antiquity,
Father of the true, beautiful and good,
Descend, appear, shed over us thy light
Upon this ground and under this sky
Which has first witnessed thy unperishable fame

Give life and animation to those noble games!
Throw wreaths of fadeless flowers to the victors
In the race and in the strife!
Create in our breasts, hearts of steel!

In thy light, plains, mountains and seas
Shine in a roseate hue and form a vast temple
To which all nations throng to adore thee,
Oh immortal spirit of antiquity!

ENTRANCE OF THE OLYMPIC FLAG

“The Olympic flag, as you know, has a white background, with five interlaced rings in the centre: blue, yellow, black, green and red; the blue ring is at the top on the left hand side, next to the flagpole. This design is symbolic; it represents the five continents of the world, united by Olympism, while the six colours are those that appear on all the national flags in the world at the present time.” *Coubertin (Selected writings, Vol. II, p. 470, 1931).*

The Olympic flag, designed by Coubertin, was introduced in 1914 on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the revival of the Olympic Games. It was hoisted for the first time at the Opening Ceremony of the Games of the VII Olympiad in Antwerp in 1920. One night, some athletes stole it as a memento. Eighty years later, Haig “Harry” Prieste, one of the people responsible for the theft handed back the stolen flag to the IOC President during the 111th IOC Session in Sydney, before the Opening Ceremony of the Games, recalling that he had stolen it following a bet. He had been a member of the American diving team and had won a bronze medal.

- The Olympic flag, unfurled horizontally, is brought into the stadium and hoisted up the flagpole erected in the arena.
- The flag hoisted up the flagpole in the stadium during the Olympic Winter Games is the one offered to the IOC by the Mayor of Oslo at the Closing Ceremony of the VI Olympic Winter Games in 1952.

- TORCH RELAY

“The power of this torch, when lit, is such that it burns all around the world.” *Coubertin, (Selected Writings, Vol. II, p. 281, 1924).*

Like the heralds who used to announce the Olympic Truce throughout Greece, the carrying of the torch is a sign of peace. It is a deeply moving and popular event.

The torch is lit during a traditional ceremony at Olympia. A high priestess, played by an actress, dressed in a draped white gown, lights the torch using the sun’s rays reflected in a parabolic mirror, before handing it to the first runner.

The Olympic torch is carried along a relay from Olympia to the host city, proclaiming the celebration of the world’s greatest sports festival. As it travels, it carries a spirit of peace and harmony, triggering a huge celebration in which the whole world participates. It is a strong symbol of the international dimension of the Games.

The first torch relay of the Olympic Winter Games was organised in 1952. On 13 February of that year, the flame was lit in the hearth of the house of the great ski pioneer, Sondre Nordheim, in Morgedal in the region of Telemark. The Olympic flame entered the stadium two-and-a-half days later. Some 94 famous skiers had carried it over 225km. The last torchbearer was Eigil Nansen, the son of the Polar explorer Fridtjof Nansen. This historic relay reminded the world that Norway was the birthplace of modern skiing.

- The first torch relay of the modern era was organised for the Games of the XI Olympiad in Berlin in 1936.
- 1952, Oslo: Olav Bjaaland, a member of the South Pole expedition team, lighted the flame in Morgedal, Norway, in 1919.
- The first torch relay for the Olympic Winter Games was organised in 1952.
- 1956, Cortina d’Ampezzo: the flame was lit in the Temple of Jupiter at the Capitol in Rome, by the Olympic walking champion Guiseppe Dordoni in 1952.
- 1960, Squaw Valley: the flame was lit in Morgedal as in 1952.
- 1964, Innsbruck: the flame of the Olympic Winter Games was lit for the first time in Olympia. Since then, it has always been lit in Olympia.

ARRIVAL OF THE OLYMPIC TORCH

The Olympic torch is a symbol taken from the ancient Olympia where a holy torch burned continuously on the altar of Hestia in the Prytaneion (administration centre). Fire is thought to be purifying in most cultures.

The relay runners' arrival in the stadium and the lighting of the cauldron are highly emotional moments, not only inside the stadium, but also throughout the world, thanks to television.

The tradition is enriched by constant innovations, which give the Opening Ceremony of each Olympic Games certain originality. The organisers of the Opening Ceremony thus give the last relay runners – whose names are kept secret – a highly symbolic role.

-In 1936, at Garmisch Partenkirchen, a symbolic flame was lit for the first time in the Olympic Winter Games stadium.

-1968, Grenoble. When Alain Calmat, the last of the 5,000 torchbearers, climbed the steps leading up to the cauldron, a miniature electronic device transmitted his heartbeats, which could be heard by the spectators present and by millions of television viewers.

-1980: there were 52 runners (26 men and 26 women representing each US State) who carried the flame from Washington DC to Lake Placid.

- 1992: the organisers of the Winter Games in Albertville surprised the world by entrusting the final leg of the torch relay to Michel Platini. The choice of the most popular footballer in France remained a secret until the last moment.

-1994, Lillehammer: Stein Gruben leapt from the 120 m ski jump, carrying the torch. Upon landing, he passed it to Crown Prince Haakon Magnus, who lit the cauldron.

THE OLYMPIC TORCH AT THE WINTER GAMES

Years	Towns	Names	
1952	Oslo	Eigil Nansen	
1956	Cortina d'Ampezzo	Guido Caroli	Speed Skating
1960	Squaw Valley	Kenneth Henry	Speed Skating
1964	Innsbruck	Josef Rieder	Alpine Skiing
1968	Grenoble	Alain Calmat	Figure Skating
1972	Sapporo	Hideki Takada	School boy
1976	Innsbruck	Christl Haas	Alpine Skiing
1980	Lake Placid	Charles M. Kerr	Doctor
1984	Sarajevo	Ivo Carman	Nordic Skiing
1988	Calgary	Robyn Perry	School girl
1992	Albertville	François Cyril Grange	School boy
1994	Lillehammer	Haakon Magnus	Prince royal
1998	Nagano	Midori Ito	Figure Skating
2002	Salt Lake City		

THE SYMBOLIC RELEASE OF DOVES

“King George officially proclaimed the revival of the Olympic Games, pronouncing the sacramental words: “I declare open the Games of the I Olympiad of the modern era.” The cannon salvoes immediately resounded, followed by the release of doves which flew joyfully over the stadium; choirs sang the beautiful cantata composed by the Greek musician Samara.” *Coubertin (Olympic Memoirs, ed. 1997, p. 43).*

Legend has it that the tradition goes back to the 84th Olympiad BC, when a wrestler sent a homing pigeon 160 km from Olympia to announce his victory.

Coubertin had already devised the main aspects of protocol for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies in time for the 1896 Games in Athens. They included the release of doves, a symbol of peace. His initial wish was that the number of doves should match the number of participating countries.

However, no rule was ever drawn up to set the number of doves and, in 1960 in Rome, 7,200 doves were released from the stadium.

The first release of doves took place at the Opening Ceremony of the Games of the I Olympiad in Athens in 1896. This symbol of peace was used again at the Opening Ceremony in Antwerp in 1920. From then on, the IOC decided that it should form an official part of the Opening Ceremony of the Games of the Olympiad.

There was no release of doves at the Olympic Winter Games in order not to expose the birds to the harsh cold. However, in Squaw Valley in 1960, doves were released for the first time at the Opening Ceremony, directed by the Walt Disney Company.

This did not become a tradition, but the symbol remains. In Lillehammer, white balloons were released which recalled the symbol. In Nagano, balloons in the shape of doves were released bearing the letters of children from Nagano requesting a united effort for peace.

- 1960: first release of doves at the Olympic Winter Games.
- 1994: symbolic doves (in the form of white balloons) were released.
- 1998, Nagano: release of 1,998 biodegradable balloons made of potato fibre.

THE ATHLETES'S OLYMPIC OATH

“ In the stadium, filled with a cosmopolitan crowd, they will swear an oath, each word of which will represent a commitment, an obligation in the name of honour, after which, I am sure, they will do their best.” *Coubertin (Selected Writings, Vol. II, p. 291, 1928).*

Another tradition to which the IOC attaches great importance is the oath sworn by a top athlete on behalf of his peers. Originally, this was mainly a promise to respect amateurism (“I declare that I am an amateur”). But from the presidency of Lord Killanin onwards, this notion faded away until it was completely removed from the Olympic Charter.

The most recent version of the oath is as follows: “In the name of all the competitors, I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, committing ourselves to a sport without doping and without drugs in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honour of our teams.”

In comparison with the previous text, the words “I swear” have been replaced by “I promise” and “our countries” by “our teams”. Since 1984, while swearing the oath, the athlete has held the Olympic flag rather than his national flag in one hand.

- The first athletes' oath was sworn at the Games of the VII Olympiad in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1920 by Belgian fencer Victor Boin.
- 1956, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Guiliana Chenal (bronze medallist, downhill Oslo 1952) was the first female athlete to take the oath.
- At Olympia, the athletes permitted to compete and the referees went to the Prytaneion (administration centre) and swore to uphold the law of the Games in full. They declare themselves to be honourable and worthy to appear in the stadium.

NAMES OF ATHLETES WHO HAVE TAKEN THE OLYMPIC OATH

1924	Chamonix	Camille Mandrillon	Skiing
1928	St. Moritz	Hans Eidenbenz	Nordic skiing
1932	Lake Placid	Jack Shea	Speed skating
1936	Garmirsch Partenkirchen	Wilhelm Bogner	Alpine skiing
1948	St Moritz	Riccardo Torriani	Ice hockey
1952	Oslo	Torbjorn Falkanger	Ski jumping
1956	Cortina D'Ampezzo	Guiliana Chenal	Alpine skiing
1960	Squaw Valley	Carol Heiss	Figure skating
1964	Innsbruck	Paul Aste	Bobsleigh
1968	Grenoble	Leo Lacroix	Alpine skiing
1972	Sapporo	Keichi Suzuki	Speed skating
1976	Innsbruck	Werner Delte-Karth	Bobsleigh
1980	Lake Placid	Eric Heiden	Speed skating
1984	Sarajevo	Bojan Krizaj	Alpine skiing
1988	Calgary	Pierre Harvey	Nordic skiing
1992	Albertville	Surya Bonaly	Figure skating
1994	Lillehammer	Vegard Ulvang	Nordic skiing
1998	Nagano	Kenji Ogiwara	Nordic combined
2002	Salt Lake City		

THE OFFICIALS' OLYMPIC OATH

Since 1972, an official has also taken an oath, holding the corner of his national flag (or the Olympic flag since 1984) in his left hand and saying the words: "In the name of all the judges and officials, I promise that we shall officiate in these Olympic Games with complete impartiality, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship."

Names of officials who have taken the Olympic oath:

1972	Sapporo	Masakutsi Asari	Ski jumping
1976	Innsbruck	Willy Köstinger	Nordic combined
1980	Lake Placid	Terence McDermott	Speed skating
1984	Sarajevo	Miodrag Perovic	Alpine skiing
1988	Calgary	Suzanna Morrow-Francis	Figure skating
1992	Albertville	Pierre Bornat	Alpine skiing
1994	Lillehammer	Kari Kaaringed	Figure skating
1998	Nagano	Junko Hiramatsu	Figure skating
2002	Salt Lake City		

THE HOST COUNTRY'S NATIONAL ANTHEM

Once the national anthem of the host country has been played, the show begins, the content of, which is closely kept secret by the organisers. It serves as an immense platform for the cultural promotion of the host city and country. Since the Games of the XXII Olympiad in Moscow, the show has ended with a fireworks display, more spectacular and less formal than the firing of the cannons that took place until 1980.

- In 1936 in Garmisch Partenkirchen, for the first time, fireworks were included in the Closing Ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games.

THE SHOW

See the synopsis of the ceremony.

- 1988, Calgary. Each delegation of competitors took its place in the stands where, for the first time at Olympic Winter Games, space had been set aside for the real heroes of the celebration.

CLOSING CEREMONY

“The Olympic ceremonies give the Games a solemn framework which distinguishes them from other sports competitions. Throughout this century, each Games has added a new element to the array of impressive rituals and protocol. This is how the Opening and Closing Ceremonies have been moulded, producing an atmosphere unique to the Games, the soul of which lies in the athletes’ parade and their appearance together in the stadium on the final evening.” *Zhenliang He, IOC member, Chairman of the IOC Commission for Culture and Olympic Education.*

“As reviver of the Olympic Games, what interests me most of all about them is their international nature and eclectic character, and secondly the mind set of the competitors.” *Coubertin, September 1924.*

“Each Olympic Games is a great rite of passage, in which millions and millions of people are, so to speak, taken on a voyage: away from their routine and daily lives; through a special time and space; and then returned. Some, like the athletes, who are now “Olympians”, are changed permanently by this voyage.” *John MacAloon, University of Chicago.*

- The Closing Ceremony takes place on the final day of competition.

THE ATHLETES' PARADE

“We must remember that the Games are not the property of any country or any race, and they cannot be monopolised by any group whatsoever. They belong to the world; all nations must be admitted without discussion and all sports must be treated on the basis of equality, without any regard to the fluctuations or whims of public opinion.” *Coubertin, Olympic Congress, Prague 29th May 1925.*

The Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Olympic Games have, for a long time, been among the world's greatest spectacles, some say among the most moving of them all. To see thousands of athletes from every continent, dressed in sparkling colours, proud to represent their country and pleased to participate in the greatest sports event on the planet, always generates a great deal of emotion in the packed stadium.

The flag-bearers of all participating delegations enter the arena in single file in the same order and take up the same positions as they did for the Opening Ceremony. Behind them march the athletes, without protocol or grouping by nationality. This tradition dates back to 1956 in Melbourne, when John Ian Wing, a 17 year-old Australian of Chinese origin, suggested that the athletes should parade together, in no particular order, at the Closing Ceremony, expressing the Olympic spirit of unity and fraternity. In Sydney, 44 years later, he was invited by the then IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, to take a seat in the official box to attend the Closing Ceremony of the Games of the XXVII Olympiad.

“I had dreamed about hearing the Bulgarian anthem at the Olympic Games one day. I did not realise it would come so soon.” *Ekaterina Dafoska, biathlon 15km, Olympic champion, Nagano 1998.*

“Participating in the Olympic Games allowed me to compare myself with the best athletes in the world, thus realising proudly that I was one of them.” *Manuela Di Centa, IOC member, double Olympic champion, Nordic skiing, Albertville 1992, double silver medallist Lillehammer 1994, double bronze medallist, Albertville 1992 and Lillehammer 1994, participant in 1984 and 1988.*

“At the Games, there is no room for error: the stakes are too great, and your whole life depends on the outcome – your opponents are the same and the technical difficulties too. That is the magic of the Olympic Games.” *Marielle Goitschel, double Olympic champion, giant slalom, Innsbruck 1964 and slalom in Grenoble 1968; silver medallist, slalom, Innsbruck. (Programme officiel des Jeux; Albertville 1992, p.109)*

“The Games still fascinate me. They are like a dream because they have changed my life. They continue to watch over me as my Olympic title has enabled me to become a CBS commentator.” *Scott Hamilton, Figure skating, Olympic champion, Sarajevo 1984; participant in Lake Placid 1980. (Programme officiel des Jeux; Albertville 1992, p.98)*

“The Olympic Games are one race, one day, in which anything can happen.” *Diann Roffe, skiing, Olympic champion, Super Giant slalom, Lillehammer 1994.*

“I had an increasingly emotional feeling as the Opening Ceremony unfolded and I was proud at the Closing Ceremony to have participated in the Olympic Games.” *Vladimir Smirnov, IOC member, cross country skiing, Olympic champion and double silver medallist in Lillehammer 1994, silver and bronze medallist in Calgary 1988, bronze medallist in Nagano 1998.*

THE FLAG CEREMONY

Following the joyful athletes' parade, the flag-bearers form a semi-circle behind the rostrum, on which stand the IOC President and the President of the Organising Committee. To the strains of the Greek national anthem, the Greek flag is solemnly hoisted up the flagpole that stands to the right of the central flagpole. The flag of the host country is then hoisted up the central flagpole, while the national anthem is played. Then the flag of the host country of the next Olympic Games is hoisted up the left-hand flagpole to the strains of its national anthem.

In 1952, at the Closing Ceremony of the VI Olympic Winter Games, the Mayor of Oslo presented a silk flag to the IOC Vice-President as a souvenir of the city. He accepted it on behalf of the IOC President and declared that, from then on, this flag would be hoisted at all Olympic Winter Games, as the Antwerp flag was hoisted at the Games of the Olympiad. Furthermore, immediately after this announcement the Vice-President gave back the flag to the Mayor of Oslo telling him to keep the flag for the following four years and to send it to the city of Cortina d'Ampezzo where the VII Olympic Winter Games would be held in 1956.

It is only since 1984 in Los Angeles that the protocol of the flag ceremony has changed. Once the flags are hoisted, the mayor of the host city returns the Olympic flag to the IOC President, who then entrusts it to the mayor of the host city of the next Olympic Games to be held in four years' time. This flag is then kept in the latter city's main municipal building until the Opening Ceremony of the next Olympic Games.

The President of the Organising Committee for the Olympic Games then gives a brief address, which is followed by a speech by the IOC President, who concludes with the following words: "I declare the ... Olympic Winter Games closed and, in accordance with tradition, I call upon the youth of the world to assemble four years from now at ..., to celebrate with us there the ... Olympic Winter Games."
(Olympic Charter, bye-law to rule 69, 2.5)

THE OLYMPIC ORDER

The Olympic Order is an honour created in 1974 to reward individuals who have distinguished themselves either by exceptional services rendered to the Olympic and sports movement, or through a remarkable personal achievement.

Although awarding the Golden Olympic Order is not part of the ritual, from the Olympic Winter Games in Albertville in 1992 until those in Nagano in 1998, the IOC President has presented this award to the president of the Organising Committee of the Olympic Games as a sign of gratitude.

- The Olympic Order was created in 1974.
- There were three categories of Olympic Order between 1974 and 1984: gold, silver and bronze.
- Since 1984, there has been no distinction between silver and bronze, while the Olympic Order in gold is only awarded in exceptional circumstances, and mainly to heads of State.

CLOSING SPEECHES

After an address by the President of SLOC, the IOC President gives the closing speech of the Olympic Games, which he will end with these words: “I declare the XIX Olympic Winter Games closed and, in accordance with tradition, I call upon the youth of the world to assemble four years from now at Turin, to celebrate with us there the XX Olympic Winter Games.”

EXTINGUISHING THE FLAME AND LOWERING THE FLAG

A fanfare sounds; the Olympic flame is extinguished, and while the Olympic anthem is played, the Olympic flag is slowly lowered from the flagpole, unfurled horizontally and carried out of the arena, followed by the flag-bearers. A farewell song resounds.

THE SHOW OF THE CLOSING CEREMONY THEN BEGINS

See the synopsis of the ceremony.

OLYMPIC MEDALS

“For the champion, the podium is the culmination of his dream; for the loser, it symbolises the merciless rigour of sport.” *Jean-Claude Killy, IOC member, triple Olympic champion, downhill skiing, slalom, giant slalom, Grenoble 1968, participant in 1964.*

From the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896, up until the 1928 Games in Amsterdam, all medals were awarded during the Closing Ceremony. Starting with the Los Angeles Olympic Games of 1932 medals have been awarded after each competition.

Over the years the nature of the medal ceremony has evolved. At the Games of the I Olympiad, only the first two competitors in each event received a medal: the winner received a silver medal and a crown of olive branches, while the runner-up was awarded a bronze medal. Although winners at the Games of the II Olympiad held in Paris in 1900 received a gilt bronze plaque, gold medals were not awarded until the Games of the III Olympiad held in St. Louis in 1904.

- Starting in 1908 at the Games of the IV Olympiad in London, athletes went to the medals ceremony in sport dress. Until then, they had gone in evening dress.
- 1932, Los Angeles, the medals ceremony took place after each event.
- 1932, Lake Placid, a podium was used for the medals ceremony.
- 1968, Grenoble, for the first time the pictogram of the sport concerned appeared on the medal.
- The name of the particular sport must be mentioned on the medals, which must be fastened to a detachable chain or ribbon.
- The medals must be at least 60 mm in diameter and 3 mm thick. The medal for first place must be gilded with at least 6 grams of pure gold, while the other two medals are of silver of at least 925-1000 grade.
- Medals and diplomas are awarded to competitors placed first, second and third.
- Diplomas are awarded to competitors placed fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth. In the case of a tie for first, second or third place, each competitor is entitled to a medal and a diploma.
- The names of all medal winners are subsequently inscribed on the walls of the main stadium in which the Olympic Games have taken place.

“At the 1984 Winter Games in Sarajevo, I was concerned to see the Austrian team win just one medal. I felt that to be an injustice. At the time, I was 12, and I swore to myself that I would become an Olympic champion for Austria.” *Hermann Maier, alpine skiing, double Olympic champion, giant slalom and super-G, Nagano 1998. (Nagano 1988, OSB, München)*

OLYMPIC MEDALS IN OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

Year	Date	Town	N ^o	Design ^a	Mint ^a	Total medals by events ^b
1924	25.1-5.2	Chamonix	1 st	Raoul Benard	Paris Mint, Paris, France	49 ^c
1928	11.2-19.2	St. Moritz	2 nd	Arnold Hünérwadel	Huguenin Frères, Locle, Switzerland	41 ^c
1932	4.2-15.2	Lake Placid	3 rd		Robbins Company, Attleboro, Mass., USA	42 ^d
1936	6.2-16.2	Garmisch-Partenkirchen	4 th	Richard Klein	Deschler & Sohn, München, Germany	51 ^d
1948	30.1-8.2	St. Moritz	5 th	Paul-André Droz	Huguenin Frères, Le Locle, Switzerland	68 ^c
1952	14.2-25.2	Oslo	6 th	Vasos Falireus & Knut Yran	Th. Marthinsen, Tønsberg, Norway	67 ^d
1956	26.1-5.2	Cortina D'Ampezzo	7 th	Costantino Affer	Lorioli Bros. Ltd, Milan, Italy	72 ^d
1960	18.2-28.2	Squaw Valley	8 th		Herff Jones Co., Indianapolis, Ind., USA	81 ^c
1964	29.1-9.2	Innsbruck	9 th	Martha Coufal	Austrian Mint, Vienna, Austria	103 ^d
1968	6.2-18.2	Grenoble	10 th	Roger Excoffon	Paris Mint, Paris, France	106 ^d
1972	3.2-13.2	Sapporo	11 th	Kazumi Yagi & Ikko Tanaka	Mint Bureau of the Finance Ministry, Tokyo, Japan	105 ^d
1976	4.2-15.2	Innsbruck	12 th	Martha Coufal	Austrian Mint, Vienna, Austria	111 ^d

1980	13.2-24.2	Lake Placid	13 th	Tiffany & Co. New York	Medallic Art Co., Danbury, Conn., USA	115 ^d
1984	8.2-19.2	Sarajevo	14 th	Nebojša Mitrić	Majdanpek / ZIN, Belgrade, Yugoslavia	117 ^d
1988	13.2-28.2	Calgary	15 th	Friedrich Peter	Jostens Inc, Toronto, Canada	138 ^d
1992	8.2-23.2	Albertville	16 th	Marie-Claude Lalique	Lalique, Paris, France	171 ^{c/d}
1994	12.2-27.2	Lillehammer	17 th	Ingjerd Hanevold	Th. Marthinsen, Tønsberg, Norway	183 ^c
1998	7.2-22.2	Nagano	18 th	Takeshi Ito	Kiso Kurashi Craft Center	205 ^c
2002	8.2-24.2	Salt Lake City	19 th			
2006	4.2-19.2	Torino	20 th			

a) References: Jim Greensfelder, Oleg Vorontsov & Jim Lally, *Olympic Medals: A reference guide*, Saratoga, USA: GVL Enterprises, 1998 and Karl Lennartz, Walter Borgers & Andreas Höfer, *Olympische Siege Medaillen Diplome Ehrungen*, Berlin: Sportverlag Berlin, 2000.

b) Note: For team competitions we count the number of gold, silver and bronze medals won by a team, and not by a participant. In case of a draw all medals are counted. Demonstration and exhibition sports and incomplete or unfinished events are not included.

c) References: *Rapport Officiel* for the corresponding Olympic Winter Games ; Manfred Bergman ; Volker Kluge, *Olympische Winterspiele: die Chronik: Chamonix 1924 – Nagano 1998*, Berlin:Sportsverlag,1999.

In 1924, a medal was awarded to the team which won the Alpine event. This medal is not included in the 49 medals.

d) References: Nikolay Guéorguiev, *Les Médailles des Jeux Olympiques d'Hiver*, Lausanne: Maison Olympique, 1990 and David Wallechinsky, *The Complete Book of the Winter Olympics 1998*, New York: The Overlook Press, 1998.