

Curtain falls on Winter Games



LILLEHAMMER, Feb 28: Little Lillehammer bade a proud farewell to the "best Olympic Winter Games ever" on Sunday with a sparkling closing ceremony tinged by sadness for the shattered Olympic city of Sarajevo, reports Reuter.

A 40,000 crowd, and an estimated two billion television viewers worldwide, watched as the Norwegians handed on the Olympic baton to the Japanese city of Nagano, hosts in 1998.

Winners and losers from 16 days of top level competition, carrying the flags of 67 countries, screamed into the Olympic ski jump arena for the final show.

But before the fireworks, and a long night of celebration, Olympic leaders recalled the shattered host city of 1984 — and even claimed some credit for the current truce in Bosnia.

"Dear Sarajevo, we do not forget you. We will continue to support you," said International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch as he formally closed the Games.

"After many horrors, the situation now seems to be improving. Let us hope that this truce — to which, in our own very limited way, we may have contributed — let us hope that this truce will turn into lasting peace."

The 80-minute show was less formal but no less spec-

tacular than the icily haunting display put on by the Norwegians to open the Games of February 12.

Though Norway's rich folk culture and its eternal battle with the forces of nature were again to the fore, the closing ceremony showed a little more of the human touch that had made the coldest ever Winter Games so special for the fans.

Among the flag-bearers who led in a crowd of other athletes were some of the great names of the Games.

The United States chose Dan Jansen, the sprint skater who broke his Olympic jinx in the last race of his fourth Games.

Host Norway chose another speed skater, Johan Olav Koss earned the honour by winning three golds in three world record-breaking outings on the ice.

Mongolia chose a speed skater as well — although it had little choice. Short track skater Batchuluun Bat Orgil, who missed the opening ceremony because he did not know he had qualified, was his country's sole competitor at the Games.

Lillehammer's green-white message was not forgotten. Town mayor Audun Tron sent off a six-strong team of dog sledgers on a 18-month journey across Siberia to deliver an environmental message to the organisers of Nagano.

After Samaranch's formal closing declaration, came the main artistic part of the show.

Giant Trolls and Evil Nordic Sprites were to stalk the stage and the arena was to be bathed in a forest of light.

And 40,000 flashlights, each of them inscribed "remember Sarajevo" were to be pointed to the sky to remind the world of the horrors of the Bosnian war.

But the evening belonged to the people of Lillehammer, whom Samaranch described as "the real winners of these magic Games."

"You have presented to the entire world the best Olympic Winter Games ever," he declared.

MEDALS TABLE

Final medals table of the 1994 Winter Olympics which ended on Sunday (tabulate under gold, silver, bronze):

Russia	11	8	4
Norway	10	11	5
Germany	9	7	8
Italy	7	5	8
US	6	5	2
South Korea	4	1	1
Canada	3	6	4
Switzerland	3	4	2
Austria	2	3	4
Sweden	2	1	0
Japan	1	2	2
Kazakhstan	1	2	0
Ukraine	1	0	1
Uzbekistan	1	0	0
Belarus	0	2	0
Finland	0	1	5
France	0	1	4
Netherlands	0	1	3
China	0	1	2
Slovenia	0	0	3
Britain	0	0	2
Australia	0	0	1

A medley of memory's montage

LILLEHAMMER, Norway, Feb 28: Fame and fortune go to Olympic victors. Sympathy — and in some cases disgrace — go to the losers.

Bad luck and blunders took a toll of top athletes at these Winter Games, their failures magnified by the world spotlight on Lillehammer, reports AP.

Whole teams fell short, too, plunging nations into gloom and triggering demands for improving sports programs.

mmes before the 1998 Winter Games in Nagano, Japan.

In winning lesser medals, a few will be remembered more for having fallen short of golden expectations. The gallery includes:

— Alberto Tomba, Italian slalom star: He just failed to capture a fourth career Olympic gold and to settle for a silver in the special slalom on the final day. Failed to place in giant slalom after missing a gate on the second run.

— Franz Heinzer, Swiss downhiller: His run ended five meters from the starting gate when a ski binding broke. The dismayed former world champion announced his retirement.

— Russia's ice hockey team. The young and inexperienced heirs to the Soviet dynasty were shut out twice by Finland, including in the bronze medal match. They finished a humiliating fourth, the first time Russian hockey players have gone home without medals from the Olympics.

— Gunda Niemann, German speedskater: Favored to sweep three golds in the women's distance races, "Gold Gunda" fell in the 3,000 meters and managed only a bronze and a silver in the other distances.

— Tonya Harding, US figure skater: Fought her way into the Olympics with a lawsuit after being implicated in the attack on rival Nancy Kerrigan. Told fans she would win the gold, but managed only eighth place.

— Marc Girardell, Luxembourg's Alpine skier, maintained his string as the best Alpine skier never to have won an Olympic gold medal. Covered himself before the Games by announcing that Olympic races meant no more to him than any old World Cup event.

— Japanese ski jumpers: The large-hill team let a gold in its grasp with a disappointing last jump. World champion Kenji Ogiwara jumped less than his best in the individual Nordic combined event, settling for fourth behind team-mate Takanori Kono's silver.

— Alpine Ski teams of Austria and Switzerland: Shut out of golds in the first eight events. Switzerland and Austria finally salvaged some pride by taking the last two races in men's and women's slalo.

— Torville and Dean: The British ice dancers from Britain won over the crowd with their ballroom-style free skat-

ing program, but the judges were less impressed, giving the gold and silvers to Russian couples. The British press reacted with outrage.

— Katrina Witt, Brian Boitano, Viktor Petranko and Kurt Browning: Olympic and world champions who returned from the professional ranks, all were outshone by younger skaters and failed to win any medals.

— Zhang Yamei, China, and Cathy Turner, United States: Silver medalist Zhang heaved her ceremonial flowers in disgust to protest Turner's tactics in the 500-metre short-track race. Turner got her comeback-pace in the 1,000 meter race when she was disqualified for Roller Derby tactics.

— Dutch speedskaters: Only one silver and three bronze for a team that dominated the European and world championships. Hans Brinker, where are you?

— Swedish team: won only two medals — a gold and a silver — and shut out of cross-country, while archrival Norway romped away with 26. Norwegian schoolkids felt so sorry for their larger neighbour that they proposing sharing some of Norway's gold harvest with the poor Swedes.

— USA-2 four-man bobsled: Disqualified for warming the sled runners to make them faster — a no-no under international rules. Team officials said they were victimized by thermometers used to monitor the runners' temperatures before the race.

Lillehammer out of spell

LILLEHAMMER, Feb 28: Olympic athletes, officials and media personnel poured out of Lillehammer on Monday, leaving the town to clean up after the best party it has ever thrown, reports Reuter.

Lillehammer's 24,000 residents were allowed, to drive their cars for the first time since the start of the 16-day Games on February 12.

Elk in the forests, often victims of collisions with extra Olympic trains, won a reprieve as timetables returned to normal. "The elk can relax. We had up to 20 extra trains a day during the Games," said Mia Brambani, an official at Norwegian State Railways.

Thousands of people flooded south towards Oslo after a closing ceremony on Sunday night depicting the victory of good over evil and expressing hope for an end to the war in Bosnia.

International flights from Oslo were more or less on time despite 20 extra departures. Police, who had a 2,770-strong force in the region during the Games, reported no major jams on the roads.

"Most of the 2,500 athletes and team officials left today. Maybe there's only 300 left," said Solving Emilisen at the Olympic Village.

Fewer people than expected were arrested for drunkenness during the Games, in which Norway collected its best ever haul of 10 gold medals, one short of top-ranked Russia.

"Urging the Games we haven't had a big problem, not even a medium-sized problem. Just a few incidents," said police spokesman Alf Andersen.



A Japanese princess walks into the arena during the closing ceremony of the XVII Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer on Feb 27. The Japanese feature contributed to the ceremony in view of the 1998 Winter Games in Nagano. —AFP photo

Stich wins Rotterdam indoor title

ROTTERDAM, Feb 28: German top seed Michael Stich secured his first tournament victory of the year on Sunday when he beat Wayne Ferreira of South Africa 4-6, 6-3, 6-0 in the final of the 600,000 dollars Rotterdam world indoor tournament, reports Reuter.

Stich's success earned him 82,000 dollars and should see him rise from fourth to second in the world rankings when the new list is published today.

The German also reached the number two spot in November before dropping back to fourth but still has a long way to go to catch world number one Pete Sampras, winner of three Grand Slam titles in the last eight months.

Ferreira, seeded fifth, faded after a promising start which saw him take the first set with a mixture of good returns and baseline play.

"I didn't play bad in the first set. Wayne just returned and passed very well," said Stich later. "After the first set I dropped my serve-volley game and started to mix it up more and that gave Wayne more problems."

Ferreira admitted he had some problems with fatigue. "If you have to play one evening late and the next early in the day that is tough for your condition," he said.

Ferreira said he would go back to South Africa at the end of March to play the South African Open and would be interested to see what was happening in his country ahead of the first free elections.

He said he would not mind seeing ANC leader Nelson Mandela as new president.

"He is a well respected man and he could be a good leader of the country and I wish him well if he becomes president," said Ferreira, who spends most of his time off tour in his Paris apartment.

Big wins for SA, hosts in Indira Gandhi hockey

LUCKNOW, India, Feb 28: South Africa celebrated their debut in the Indira Gandhi Gold Cup men's hockey tournament with a crushing 6-0 win over Kenya on the opening day on Sunday, reports Reuter.

South Africa took an early lead through Shaun Cooke, who scored off their third penalty corner in the 11th minute.

Robert pulled added two more and Greb Ferrans, Gary Bodington and Mike Cullen contributed one each in the second half.

Host India, experimenting with several young players, also registered a big win, beating Japan 5-0 as centre-forward Dhanraj Pillay exploited gaps in their defence.

Egypt stunned South Korea with two first-half goals before the Asia Cup champions rallied to force a 2-2 draw and split the two points in their first outing of the six-nation round-robin.

Egypt surged to a two-goal lead in the first half but South Korea's Yeo Woongon banged in a rebound from the goal-keeper in the 40th minute and Kim Yong-Bae equalised with a rasping penalty shot.

China, ROK share titles

SINGAPORE, Feb 28: China and South Korea shared the two titles at stake in the finals of the Asian zone Thomas and Uber Cup badminton championships here Sunday, reports AFP.

China earned a hard fought 3-2 wip over South Korea in the Thomas Cup while the Korean women had an easier 4-1 victory over Japan in the Uber Cup.

The finals were of academic interests as all the four finalists had qualified for the final rounds of the Thomas and Uber Cup competitions to be held in Jakarta this May.

The Korea-China clash went to 1-1 then 2-2 with the second doubles decided after a rubber set.

Earlier Sunday Thailand scored a double when they won the playoff for third place in the two competitions to earn places in the Jakarta finals.

The Thais defeated Australia 5-0 in the Uber Cup while their men had a 4-1 victory over Chinese Taipei.

The three top teams form the Asian zone qualify for each of the two competitions.

The three European qualifiers for each of the two events will be decided after the competition still in progress in Glasgow.

Eight teams will play in each of the two competitions in Jakarta.

Indonesia as hosts have automatic entries in both competitions while Malaysia qualify as Thomas Cup defending champions.



The Nagano Olympic Committee president Tasuku Tsukada holds the Olympic flag after IOC chief Juan Antonio Samaranch's speech (R) at the closing ceremony of the XVII Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer on Feb 27. — AFP photo

Destination : Saa Nagano da

NAGANO, Japan, Feb 28: As the curtain came down on the Lillehammer Games, the thunder of Japanese drums and a jubilant cheer rang out from this city nestled deep in the Japanese Alps: "Saa, Nagano da!"

And now, Nagano!

Well, four years from now. But at 5 am, in a city that has waited half a century for its turn to be host of the Winter Olympics, who's to quibble? Certainly not Nagano, site of the 1998 Games, reports AP.

"It's getting closer every day," said Chieko Ninomiya. "I really feel it."

Ninomiya was one of more than 200 hard-core Olympic boosters who spent the wee hours today gathered at the Nagano Farmers Co-op Hall to watch Lillehammer's closing ceremony live via satellite and celebrate their claim to the Olympic flame.

The crowd, waved Japanese flags and erupted into applause as Mayor Tasuku Tsukada accepted the Olympic flag at almost 4:30 am.

It was a moment Nagano, a city of about 350,000 in central Japan, has long awaited.

A 20-foot (6.1 metre) Olympic torch with flickering electric flames is the first thing that greets visitors at Nagano's train station. Next to the flame is the official countdown billboard: "1,440 Days to Go."

Nagano got its first taste of Olympic fever when it mounted a bid for the 1940 Games.

Nagano lost out to Sapporo, and then World War II forced the 1940 Games to be canceled all together. Sapporo, however, finally got its chance to play host in 1972.

Nagano residents are still vaguely worried something might once again snatch the Games away.

They are also fretful of all the little things that could go wrong four years hence: Will there be enough snow? Will all the facilities satisfy the athletes? Will they be able to communicate in all those

strange languages?

"We've got four years and we're going to do everything we can to make this a success," said Shohel Gozu, head of the local Chamber of Commerce. "Even better than Lillehammer."

Organising committee officials say their most immediate task is lining up sponsors, a chore made all the more difficult by Japan's sluggish economy, which is in its worst recession since World War II.

The slowdown has already put several construction projects on ice, and organizers fear that if the economy doesn't recover soon they could end up in the red.

Nagano got a much-needed shot in the arm last month, however, when CBS bid a record \$375 million for exclusive broadcast rights in the United States, or \$75 million more than it paid for Lillehammer.

American TV rights are the biggest single source of income for the Games, which are expected to cost \$690 million.

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Yeltsin greets athletes

MOSCOW, Feb 28: President Boris Yeltsin on Monday sent a message to Russia's Olympic team, congratulating the athletes on their "outstanding achievements," reports AP.

"You demonstrated to the whole world the physical and moral character of the people of the new Russia," Yeltsin said in his letter.

With 23 medals, Russia's team claimed the third highest medal total in its first-over Winter Games.

Russia won 11 gold medals, more than any other country, getting three in each of figure skating, skiing and the biathlon.

"Your marvelous performance has been a support to many people, inspiring them with optimism and confidence in the future, reaffirming their dignity and pride for Russia," the message said.

In the recent past, winning the Olympics was a matter of political prestige for the communist system. From their 1952 debut to their last appearance in 1988, Soviet teams won the most medals at every Summer Games and in all but two Winter Games.

But Yeltsin's message underscored the importance of national self-esteem.

"I am convinced that all the people of Russia are proud of you," he told the athletes in his letter.

Ondieki will take 'em on

LONDON, Feb 28: Australian Commonwealth champion Lisa Ondieki will take on the formidable Chinese in the London Marathon on April 17, reports Reuter.

Ondieki, 33, the 1988 Olympic silver medalist and winner of the 1992 New York Marathon, finished second to German Katrin Dorre in last year's race.

China condones FINA's step

BEIJING, Feb 28: China's National Sports Association said on Monday that swimmer Zhong Weiyue deserved a two-year ban after failing a drug test, reports Reuter.

On Saturday the International Swimming Federation (FINA) imposed the ban after she tested positive for doping.

A brief statement issued after a FINA meeting said Zhong's 50, metre and 100 metre short course world records would not stand.

"At the Swimming World Cup event held in Beijing in January 1994, the swimmer Zhong Weiyue was found positive to the doping control test," the statement said.

"FINA suspended her for 3

period of two years and the world records, she established in 50m and 100m butterfly were not approved," the statement added.

Zhong stunned the swimming world with her two records.

A National Sports Association spokesman said Zhong had told them she had taken medicine because she was feeling ill.

"No matter what the reason she took the drug, she should be banned," he told Reuters. "We must strictly observe the rules of FINA," he told Reuters. He made no further comment.

FINA gave no details of what drug Zhong, 18, had taken.

She set her new discredited world best times on successive days, clocking 26.44 seconds in the 50 metres but-

terly to shave 0.49 seconds off Australian Angela Kennedy's time and 58.71 in the 100 metres to break a 12-year-old record by American Mary Meagher.

The government body of the sport in Australia, Australian Swimming, urged FINA to introduce immediate random testing.

Executive director Simon Allatson said in Sydney the credibility of this year's World Championships in Rome in September would be seriously undermined unless tougher action was taken against drug use.

He said it had been invited to conduct tests during the run-up to Australia's Commonwealth Games trials in Brisbane next month.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 "Rikki-Tikki—" reception woe

5 Worms, often 38 Affected by caffeine

9 Wire measure 40 Yon bloke

12 Not "ler" 41 Acclaim

13 Division word 43 Danny of "Do the Right Thing"

14 "Foucault's Pendulum" author 47 Here, in Paris

15 That's a keeper 48 Thespian of a sort

17 Actor Silver 51 Guidonian note

18 Prepares to propose 52 Oriental side dish

19 "Dallas" name 53 Sea bird

21 Neighbor of Mont. 54 It'll get you moving

22 Blasé 55 News-paper page

27 Tyke

28 Nutritionist's recommendation

31 Lyricist Gershwin

32 Delaying activity

33 Past

34 Courteous chap

36 Columnist Smith

37 TV

56 Father, in the nursery

DOWN

1 Pushpin

2 "Son of —"

3 Big clamp

4 Aim

5 "The Price Is Right" guesses

6 Blackbird

7 Call —

8 Modified the color

9 City in Mississippi

10 Pedestal perch

11 Actress Shelley

16 On in

20 Became one

22 Foster of filmdom

23 The gamut

24 Least bit

25 Is for you?

26 Kind of bacon or football

27 Chatter

29 Concert

30 AAA task

35 Seesaw quorum

37 Like some grapes

39 Houston athlete

40 Waste not a moment

41 Ukraine's capital

42 Bruns' sch.

43 See 16 Down

44 Milanese money

45 Polaroid inventor

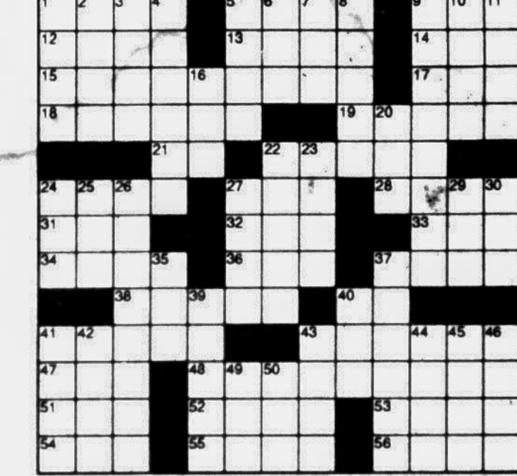
46 Draft status

49 Sartorial embarrassment

50 Expert

Solution time: 22 mins.

COED PJS ABAT
ONGE LAP LOBO
BOTSWANA ITEM
BROKEN REBATE
SET KLAN
COB PEN ABIDE
WHOA ROW ASOF
MOTTO WOK TOT
CLUB RED
SAHARA SPORTS
ERTIN BOTTLEUP
GANT EWE LANE
OLGA LED SLAW



CRYPTOQUIP

W Y K V K W B E N X Y P U X H Y G

E U G V T N O U N O B E

X K P U C A Y B E K C

N O Y X K A H E

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TRICKY CHICKEN THIEF RAN A-FOWL OF THE LAW.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: X equals R

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.