

# An interesting report

## *from the Organizing Committee 1960 Olympic Winter Games*

### SQUAW VALLEY - A PROGRESS REPORT

The following represents a major portion of the address given December 2nd, 1957 by Prentis Cobb Hale, Jr., President of the Organizing Committee, before the Quadrennial Meeting of the United States Olympic Association.

Before telling you what we are doing to make the 1960 Olympic Winter Games in California an outstandingly successful event, I would like to emphasize that we realize the Games belong to the world, and that their proper staging can bring honour and boundless goodwill to the host nation. Our conception of the significance of the Games, we feel, is shared by the Washington Administration, and steps are being taken now to support the Olympic ideal in a very real and tangible form. I will tell you of that development in a few moments.

Some of you may not be too familiar with the superb physical endowments of Squaw Valley, and I would like to describe them briefly to you.

Squaw Valley is an unspoiled area of granite peaks situated near Lake Tahoe, along the crest of California's mighty Sierra Nevada mountains — the highest mountains in the United States. The Valley itself is a compact natural amphitheatre so constructed by nature that practically all the competitive events will be in view of the spectators from the Valley floor. It is located only 200 miles from San Francisco ; 110 miles from Sacramento, the State capitol, and 40 miles from Reno, Nevada.

Major highways lead into the Squaw Valley area and the State is currently spending 43 million dollars to widen them.

Leading United States airlines fly to within a few miles of the Valley, while transcontinental trains stop at Truckee, California, only fifteen miles distant by auto. Bus lines serve the area on regular daily schedules.

We have made housing surveys of the entire Lake Tahoe area and Nevada, and find that within a forty-mile radius of Squaw Valley we will be able to accommodate a minimum of 30,000 people. Private homes will provide housing for thousands more.

As most of you know, Squaw Valley has the most reliable snow conditions of any winter sports area in the world. The average snow fall for the past sixty years has been 450 inches per season, and there has never been a year when the requirements of the

Winter Games could not be met. Temperature averages guarantee a regular frost during the Games and during the weeks immediately preceding them. The altitude is comparable to the altitude of the best Alpine winter sport areas and is sufficient to provide both a reliable snowfall and frost, with events being held from the 8,800 foot to 6,200 foot levels.

With all its natural endowments, however, Squaw Valley is still relatively undeveloped and the Organizing Committee is faced with the truly formidable task of installing millions of dollars in facilities in a virgin area during three short summer working seasons.

How far along are we ?

The Squaw Valley Olympic project involves the use of 400 acres of United States Forest Service land leased to the State of California for a term of thirty years, and other acreage being obtained through condemnation action against a private landowner. An additional 1,800 acres of Forest Service lands is at our disposal.

Our building programme is divided into three phases,

Phase I covers the construction of an Olympic Village, administration, maintenance and ice rink service buildings ; a spectators' centre, reception building and athletes' centre ; a press-radio-TV building ; a 400 metre speed skating rink ; three practice ice hockey rinks ; three ski jumps on Little Papoose Mountain ; the installation of a water distribution system ; roads, bridges and parking area installations, and flood control measures.

A \$155,000 chair lift extending 3,100 feet to the top of Little Papoose to serve the women's slalom, women's giant slalom and the Olympic jumps is nearly completed. Foundations have been laid for the four dormitory buildings of the Olympic Village which, for the first time in Winter Olympics history, will house every competing athlete — and we expect 1,200 — in a single residence area.

They will dine together in a huge dining-room seating 600 persons at a time. They will be entertained within its walls. They will find sauna steam baths, medical and dental services, a shoe repair shop, hair dressers, barbers laundry, dry cleaning, an international bank, and even an American type soda fountain all within the Village. Within five minutes walk of the Village they can reach every winter Olympic training or competition course, except the cross-country skiing courses. It will be like living on the campus of a small university

with athletic facilities grouped around the main building. The entire Village will be fenced and patrolled to protect the privacy of its occupants.

The Phase II contract, for approximately three and a half million dollars, is to be awarded next April and its principal structure will be the central theme building, or ice arena, which is now being redesigned because advance ticket demands have already demonstrated that its previously planned 8,000 seats will be inadequate.

Incidentally, our ticket programme is well in hand, and we expect to place tickets on public sale next Fall.

The Phase III and final contract will be awarded late next year, and will involve relatively minor installations.

We have made excellent headway in the installation of Alpine, Nordic, and other courses.

In the category of Alpine events, with the aid of expert technicians we have completed the men's downhill, the men's and ladies' slalom, and the ladies' giant slalom. The men's downhill was tested last winter in the North American championships sponsored by the Organizing Committee, and three-time Olympic medal winner, Toni Sailer of Austria, said he was impressed by the enormous speed; Anderl Molterer, also of Austria, confessed that the course far exceeded his expectations. Fred Roessner, coach of the Austrian ski team and one of the foremost authorities on Alpine skiing in Europe today, stated that the Squaw Valley slopes contain the best slalom terrain he has ever seen.

Final touches will be given to the ladies' downhill and the men's giant slalom next summer, and these courses will be tested in the winter.

In the Nordic events we have completed the ladies' ten kilometre and three-by-five kilometre relay courses, and have also finished the men's four-by-ten-kilometre relay and fifteen kilometre special courses. Land has been cleared for the eighty metre special jumping hill, and the sixty metre combined jumping hill, and work is under way on the fifteen kilometre, thirty kilometre and fifty kilometre cross-country courses.

Next summer we will start construction of a 400-metre oval ladies' and men's speed skating rink, and three outdoor artificial frozen ice hockey rinks each 85 x 190 feet, which will be completed in time for testing under actual competitive conditions next winter. The speed skating rink, incidentally will be comparable to a 440-yard track around an American football field and will constitute the largest expanse of artificial frozen ice ever refrigerated for skating competition.

For the first time as an official Winter Olympic event, we will stage a biathlon

— a cross-country skiing event combined with marksmanship. This event will be held over a twenty kilometre cross-country course with four shooting ranges 100, 150, 200 and 250 metres in length. To obtain expert guidance in the construction of this course, we are sending representatives to Salzburg next February where the first World Champion Biathlon Event will be held.

Many famous names in Olympic competitions are serving as members of our technical committees or as members of the Organizing Committee. They include Mr. Olaf Ulland of Seattle, coach of the U. S. F.I.S. Jumping Team; Willy Schaeffler, coach of Denver University's NCAA Championship ski team and our Chief Technical Advisor for Alpine events; Wendall Broomhall of Maine, who laid out the cross-country events; and Mr. Birger Torrisen of Connecticut, champion skier and coach of many U. S. Army biathlon teams.

We are expecting a total of 300,000 spectators to visit the Valley during the Games, including 34,000 at peak periods each day. To accommodate this huge influx we plan to park some 12,000 automobiles on compacted snow in the meadowlands of the Valley.

We will accommodate the 600 press correspondents, as well as several hundred Games personnel, within an area of a few miles of Squaw Valley. Olympic officials will be housed within the Valley itself.

You will be interested. I think, to know that we are perfecting a world-wide air lift to transport athletes and their trainers to the Games in chartered or regularly scheduled air lines from central pickup points in the world's capital cities. This has never before been undertaken. The Organizing Committee will provide round-trip transportation, plus living accommodations and board, for a period of ten days in advance of, and during the entire period of the Games to all competing athletes and team officials for a total charge of \$500.00. (A Royal Gift. *Ed.*)

Another "first" in Winter Olympics will be television coverage. (They were given at Cortina in 1956! *Ed.*) The Games, of course, have never before been exposed to the eye of television in the United States since TV was unknown in 1932, when they were last held in this country. But the 1960 Winter Olympics in California should enjoy the greatest television coverage of any sports event in history — and quite possibly the broadcasts will be in colour.

We are working on plans for national and international television network broadcasting, which experts tell us could bring the Games to a potential audience in the United States of 140 million people, and to a potential European audience of 40 million people.

Europeans, like Americans, in fact, may be able to watch the Games at home at the very hour they are being staged. Live television broadcasting from this country to Europe is no longer a dream, and we are told this service may be in operation by 1960. One of the existing NATO coaxial channels between the United States and Europe may be available by that time to provide live or delayed video tape television broadcasting hookups from Squaw Valley to Europe.

Another television innovation on which we are working involves the construction of towers along the various competitive courses, so that TV cameramen can provide a complete pictorial sequence of each-racer's effort from start to finish in each event, with his racing time automatically flashing on the TV screen as he breaks a photoelectric cell at the finish line. Still another innovation we are exploring is the use of closed circuit television to permit the press and spectators seated in the Ice Arena to witness the various ski events without having to climb the slopes of the mountains.

You can imagine also the impetus to winter sports development in America that the California Olympics will provide when the Games become a living part of the daily viewing pleasure of millions of families who have never before been exposed to the joy and thrill of winter sports.

We will of course have complete facilities for press and radio correspondents, and will provide them with every means for on-the-spot coverage and quick communication of the day-by-day story of the Games to millions of newspaper readers and radio listeners throughout the world.

I would like to digress a moment to discuss a matter that has caused some disappointment in quarters concerned with bobsled competition. As you are aware, the bobsled competition was eliminated from the 1960 Winter Olympics at the International Olympic Committee Session in Sofia this past September. I believe you should have the background of this decision.

The Organizing Committee, through last summer, had spent over \$50,000 in surveys of the bobsled run and in the preparation of detailed plans, working drawings and specifications for the construction of the course, including the bringing of M. Louis Saint-Calbre of Paris, France, to California on two occasions to lay out the course and work with our engineers. M. Saint-Calbre is acknowledged to be the foremost bobsled designer in the world and was recommended to us by the International Bobsled Federation. The drawings were completed and were put out to bid last summer, in anticipation of starting construction this fall.

To ascertain the amount of sled housing which was to be constructed adjacent to the run, the Committee surveyed all nations

which have ever participated in the sport to determine the extent of the bobsled entries in the 1960 Games. Of sixteen potential entries, only two advised us they definitely would compete in the 1960 Games; eight ranged from "probable" to "doubtful"; and six were in the negative. While we were aware the time for final decision by the nations canvassed had not expired, we were faced with the dilemma of proceeding to build a very costly facility that might never be used at all, or at best, as our poll indicated, would be used by only a very few competitors.

Obviously, with six of the sixteen nations eliminated, Olympic Rule 30 which requires twelve nations to compete in an event, could never be satisfied. Our dilemma was increased when a Bobsled Federation official expressed the view that in all probability only four or five nations would enter the bob event. Certainly one would not have a true Olympic test with that few competitors. We informed the International Olympic Committee at Sofia of this situation; with our recommendation, and the International Olympic Committee, quite sensibly, I believe, made the decision that the event be eliminated from the programme for the 1960 Games.

The Organizing Committee worked on this event in good faith for two years and today stands ready and willing to attempt to put it on, if the Bobsled Federation is able to guarantee to the International Olympic Committee it can meet all Olympic requirements.

Meanwhile, if enough nations desire to compete, we plan to substitute luge or tobogganing. We are presently investigating this so that we can be in a position to make a recommendation to the International Olympic Committee at Tokyo next May.

As I have previously stated, we have received the utmost cooperation during the past eighteen months from the Federal Government — from Administration officials in Washington, the State Department, and the Department of Defense. In their view the proper staging of the Winter Olympics to be held in California two years hence is more than a matter of State and National pride. Washington realizes that the success of the Games can be an important instrument in the promotion of understanding and friendship in a world situation where these essential ingredients of peace are being dangerously undermined.

As you know, the Congress of the United States unanimously passed the Joint Resolution inviting the International Olympic Committee to award the Games to the United States, and President Eisenhower signed the Resolution with enthusiasm. Last September, Secretary of State Dulles approved a major policy revision by lifting the State Department's ban on travel to the United States from Red China and the East European countries, to permit athletes

representing those countries to compete in the Games.

The Army has expressed its willingness to assign ski troops to the Valley to undertake avalanche control, and provide field communications and other important services before and during the Games as part of the ski-troop training programme.

The Navy Department desires to undertake snow compaction tests over a two-year period in Squaw Valley to obtain information on the value of this method, and determine whether the 12,000 car parking area we plan to build can be installed through snow compaction.

The United States Forest Service, as I previously reported, has given the State of California, under thirty-year lease, more than 400 acres of Federal lands in the Valley. These lands, together with the installations built on them, will become a permanent California State Park after the Games for the enjoyment of tens of thousands of visitors annually, and as a training ground for future Olympic champions.

The most recent confirmation of the Federal Government's desire to foster the Olympic ideal is evidenced by the enthusiastic reception in Washington for a plan to sponsor

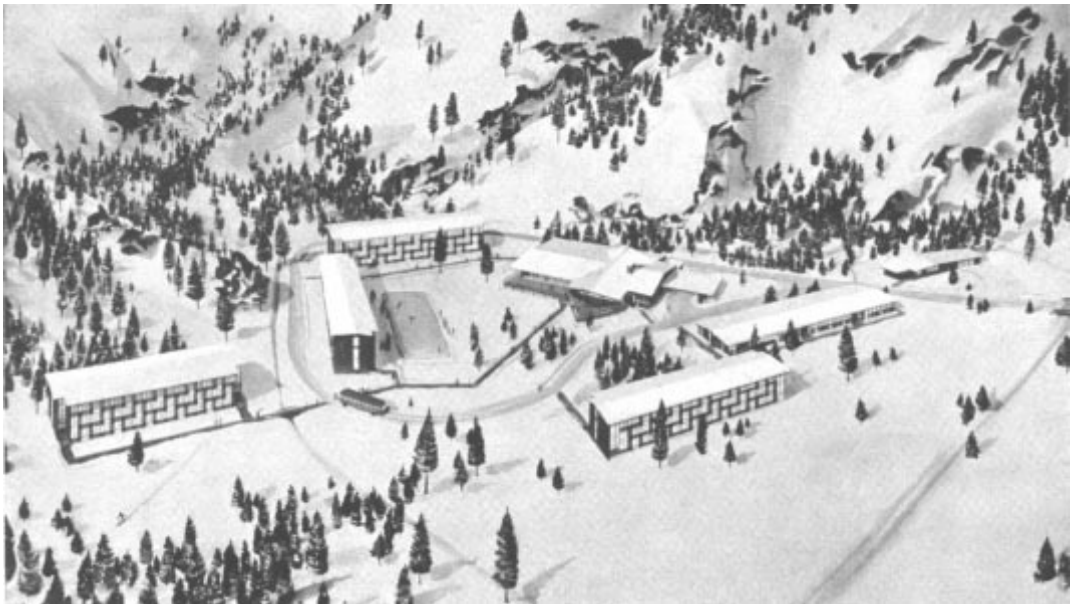
and finance the construction of the theme building of the Games — the Ice Arena — as a project of the Federal Government.

As you are aware, California has appropriated \$7,990,000 to finance the Games. But delays in land acquisition, inflation and unforeseen cost factors involved in a pioneering project of this kind, have made it plain that the State's appropriation will not be adequate to do the job in a manner reflecting the greatest possible credit upon the nation.

In this situation, both United States Senators and 22 of California's 30 Congressmen so far contacted already have advised us they will join in requesting a Federal appropriation as part of a non-partisan programme directly identifying national policy with support of the Olympic ideal.

With this report I hope you will agree with me that we have in the making in California one of the finest Winter Olympic classics in history. Our job is far from finished ; but we face the tasks ahead with confidence and enthusiasm — and with gratitude that we have been chosen to carry them through to success. (Who said that the Squaw Valley Games would be a fiasco ? *The Editor.*)

(See our two photos in this edition. *Ed.*)



*Sketch of the Squaw Valley **Olympic Village** which will provide housing for 1200 athlètes. The central building will be the athletes' Centre and the building before it is a reception Centre for athletes.*

*Plan des installations prévues à Squaw Valley (voir texte dans le présent bulletin).*

*The main Squaw Valley Olympic Games area (see report in the present edition).*

