

= 1952 Winter Olympics =

The 1952 Winter Olympics (Norwegian : Vinter @-@ OL 1952) , officially known as the VI Olympic Winter Games (French : Les Vles Jeux olympiques d 'hiver) , took place in Oslo , Norway , from 14 to 25 February . Discussions about Oslo hosting the Winter Olympic Games began as early as 1935 ; the city wanted to host the 1948 Games , but World War II made that impossible . Instead , Oslo won the right to host the 1952 Games in a contest that included Cortina d 'Ampezzo in Italy and Lake Placid in the United States . All of the venues were in Oslo 's metropolitan area except for the alpine skiing events , which were held at Norefjell , 113 km (70 mi) from the capital . A new hotel was built for the press and dignitaries , along with three dormitories to house athletes and coaches , creating the first modern athlete 's village . The city of Oslo bore the financial burden of hosting the Games in return for the revenue they generated .

The Games attracted 694 athletes representing 30 countries , who participated in four sports and 22 events . Japan and Germany made their returns to winter Olympic competition , after being forced to miss the 1948 Games in the aftermath of World War II . Germany was represented solely by West German athletes because East Germany declined to compete as a unified team . Portugal and New Zealand made their Winter Olympic debuts , and for the first time women were allowed to compete in cross @-@ country skiing .

Norwegian truck driver Hjalmar Andersen won three out of four speed skating events to become the most decorated athlete at the Games . Germany resumed its former prominence in bobsleigh , with wins in the four- and two @-@ man events . Dick Button of the United States performed the first triple jump in international competition to claim his second consecutive men 's figure skating Olympic title . The 1952 Games featured one demonstration sport , bandy , but only three Nordic countries competed in the tournament . Norway dominated the overall medal count with 16 medals , seven of them gold . The Games closed with the presentation of a flag that would be passed from one Winter Olympics host city to the next . The flag , which became known as the " Oslo flag " , has been displayed in the host city during each subsequent Winter Games .

= = Host city selection = =

Oslo had unsuccessfully bid to host the 1936 Winter Olympics , losing to Germany , which had hosted the 1936 Summer Olympics . At that time , the nation that hosted the Summer Olympics also hosted the Winter Olympics . After the 1936 Games , the International Olympic Committee (IOC) decided to award the Winter and Summer Games to different countries , but the Games were suspended during World War II . London hosted the first post @-@ war Games , the 1948 Summer Olympics , and recommended Oslo as the host city for the 1948 Winter Games , but the city council declined . Instead , the 1948 Winter Olympics were held in St. Moritz , Switzerland .

Norwegians were undecided about hosting a Winter Olympics . Culturally , they were opposed to competitive winter sports , particularly skiing events , despite the success of Norwegian athletes at previous Winter Games . But the organizers believed the 1952 Games could be an opportunity to promote national unity and to show the world that Norway had recovered from the war . Vying with Oslo for the right to host the Games were Cortina d 'Ampezzo , Italy , and Lake Placid , United States . The IOC voted to award the 1952 Winter Games to Oslo on 21 June 1947 at the 40th IOC Session in Stockholm , Sweden . Later , Cortina d 'Ampezzo was awarded the 1956 Games , and Lake Placid ? which had hosted the 1932 Winter Olympics ? was chosen to host the 1980 Winter Games . Norway became the first Scandinavian country to host a Winter Olympics , and the 1952 Winter Games were the first to be held in a nation 's capital .

= = = Results = = =

= = Organization = =

A special committee was assigned to organize the 1952 Games , which consisted of four Norwegian sports officials and four representatives from the municipality of Oslo , including mayor Brynjulf Bull . The committee was in place by December 1947 . The city of Oslo funded the Games entirely , in exchange for keeping all the revenue generated . To accommodate the influx of athletes and coaches , quarters for competitors and support staff were designed and constructed , with three new facilities (forerunners of the athlete 's villages of later Games) built . The city of Oslo paid to have a new hotel constructed , the Viking , used for IOC delegates , out @-@ of @-@ town dignitaries , and as the communication hub of the Games . For the first time in a Winter Games , an indoor ice hockey arena was constructed , which hosted the eight @-@ team tournament . Oslo 's existing central arena , Bislett Stadium , was used for the opening and closing ceremonies , and for speed skating events . Improvements to the arena included better sound and lighting systems , remodeled club house and press rooms , and the addition of a medical center .

= = Politics = =

In the aftermath of the German occupation of Norway during World War II , anti @-@ German sentiment began to affect preparations for the 1952 Olympics . Discussions were held to consider whether Germany should be allowed to participate in the Games . When in 1950 , the West German Olympic Committee requested recognition by the IOC , it raised the question of whether their participation would cause political boycotts in the upcoming Games . Once the IOC recognized the West German Olympic Committee , West Germany was then formally invited to compete at the 1952 Winter Games . East Germany was invited to participate with West Germany , as a unified team , but they declined .

At first Norway was reluctant to welcome German athletes and others considered Nazi sympathizers . For example , Norwegian speed skater Finn Hodt was not allowed to compete in the Norwegian speed skating team because he collaborated with the Nazis during the war . Eventually , despite the concern , Norway agreed to allow German and Japanese athletes to compete . The Soviet Union sent no athletes to Oslo , despite being recognized by the IOC . They had intended to enter a team in the ice hockey tournament , but applied too late to join the International Ice Hockey Federation .

= = Events = =

Medals were awarded in 22 events contested in four sports (eight disciplines) .

Bobsleigh (2) ()

Ice hockey (1) ()

Skating

Figure skating (3) ()

Speed skating (4) ()

Skiing

Alpine skiing (6) ()

Nordic skiing ()

Cross @-@ country skiing (4) ()

Nordic combined (1) ()

Ski jumping (1) ()

= = Opening ceremonies = =

The opening ceremonies were held in Bislett Stadium on 15 February . King George VI of Great Britain had died on 6 February 1952 , eight days before the start of the Games . As a result , all national flags were flown at half @-@ mast , and Princess Ragnhild opened the Games in place of her grandfather , King Haakon VII , who was in London attending the funeral . This was the first time an Olympic Games had been declared open by a woman . The parade of nations was held

according to tradition , with Greece first , the rest of the nations proceeding by Norwegian alphabetical order , with the host nation last . The British , Australian , Canadian and New Zealand teams all wore black arm bands at the opening ceremonies in memory of their monarch . After the parade of nations the Olympic flame was lit . On 13 February , at the start of the inaugural Winter Olympics torch relay , the torch was lit in the hearth of the Morgedal House , birthplace of skiing pioneer Sondre Norheim . The torch relay lasted two days and took place entirely on skis . At the opening ceremonies the final torch bearer , Eigil Nansen , received the Olympic torch and skied to a flight of stairs where he removed his skis , ascended , and ignited the flame .

The bobsleigh and alpine skiing events were held the day before the opening ceremonies . Competitors in these events were unable to attend the festivities in Oslo ; consequently simple opening ceremonies were held at Frognerseteren , site of the bobsleigh events , and Norefjell , site of the alpine skiing events .

= = = Bobsleigh = = =

After a 16 @-@ year hiatus from the Olympics Germany made a triumphant return to the bobsleigh competition , winning the two- and four @-@ man events . The results for both bobsleigh events were the same , with the United States and Switzerland taking silver and bronze respectively . Fritz Feierabend from Switzerland competed in both the two- and four @-@ man competitions . His two bronze medals were the fourth and fifth in an Olympic career that spanned 16 years and three Olympics . There were no weight restrictions on the bobsleigh athletes , and the average weight for each member of the winning German four @-@ man team was 117 kg (258 lb) , which was more than the Olympic heavyweight boxing champion in 1952 . Seeing the undue advantage overweight athletes brought to their teams , the International Federation for Bobsleigh and Tobogganing instituted a weight limit for future Olympics .

= = = Speed skating = = =

All of the speed skating events were held at Bislett Stadium . Americans Ken Henry and Don McDermott placed first and second in the 500 @-@ meter race , but Norwegian truck driver Hjalmar Andersen electrified the partisan crowd by winning the 1 @,@ 500 , 5 @,@ 000 and 10 @,@ 000 @-@ meter events ; his margins of victory were the largest in Olympic history . Dutchman Wim van der Voort placed second in the 1 @,@ 500 meters and his countryman Kees Broekman placed second to Andersen in the 5 @,@ 000 and 10 @,@ 000 @-@ meter races , becoming the first Olympic speed skating medalists from the Netherlands . Absent from the competition was former world champion Kornél Pajor . The Hungarian @-@ born speed skater had won both long distance races at the World Championships held in Oslo in 1949 and then defected to Sweden , but was unable to obtain Swedish citizenship in time to compete in 1952 .

= = = Alpine skiing = = =

There were three alpine skiing events on the Olympic program : the slalom , giant slalom and downhill . Both men and women competed in all three events , held at Norefjell and Rødkleiva . The giant slalom made its Olympic debut at the 1952 Games . Austrian skiers dominated the competition , winning seven out of a possible 18 medals , including Othmar Schneider who won gold and silver in the men 's slalom and downhill . Norwegian Stein Eriksen won gold in the men 's giant slalom and silver in the slalom . Greek slalom skier Antoin Miliordos fell 18 times on his run and crossed the finish line backwards . American skier Andrea Mead Lawrence was the only double gold medalist , winning the giant slalom and the slalom . She was the first skier from the United States to win two alpine skiing gold medals .

= = = Cross @-@ country skiing = = =

All the cross @-@ country events were held next to the ski jump hill at Holmenkollbakken . As had been the case in 1948 there were three men 's events : 18 kilometers , 50 kilometers , and a relay . Added to the Olympic program for the first time was a ten @-@ kilometer race for women . All the cross @-@ country medals were won by Nordic countries , and Finnish skiers won eight of the twelve possible . Lydia Wideman of Finland became the first female Olympic champion in cross @-@ country skiing ; her teammates Mirja Hietamies and Siiri Rantanen won silver and bronze respectively . Veikko Hakulinen won the 50 @-@ kilometer men 's race to begin an Olympic career that would culminate in seven medals , three of them gold . Hallgeir Brenden won the 18 @-@ kilometer race and helped Norway take the silver in the 4 x 10 @-@ kilometer relay . Brenden went on to win another gold in the men 's 15 @-@ kilometer race in 1956 , and a silver in the relay in 1960 .

= = = Nordic combined = = =

The nordic combined event was held at the cross @-@ country and ski jump venues . For the first time , the ski jump part took place first with competitors taking three jumps from the Holmenkollbakken . The 18 km cross country skiing event took place the next day . Results were tallied by the best two marks were scored , along with the results of the cross @-@ country race , to determine a winner . Norwegians Simon Slåttvik and Sverre Stenersen won the gold and bronze respectively . Stenersen went on to win the gold at the 1956 Games in the same event . Heikki Hasu from Finland won the silver , preventing a Norwegian sweep of the medals .

= = = Ski jumping = = =

Crowds in excess of 100 @, @ 000 greeted the ski jumpers as they competed at Holmenkollbakken . In 1952 there was only one event , the men 's normal hill , which was held on 24 February . The King , Prince Harald , and Princess Ragnhild were in attendance . The Norwegian athletes did not disappoint the crowd , as Arnfinn Bergmann and Torbjørn Falkanger placed first and second ; Swedish jumper Karl Holmström took the bronze . Norwegian athletes won the ski jumping gold medal in every Winter Olympics from 1924 to 1952 .

= = = Figure skating = = =

There were three events in the Olympic figure skating competition : men 's singles , women 's singles and mixed pairs . The events were held at Bislett Stadium on a rink constructed inside the speed skating track . The collusion of judges to influence results was an emerging trend in the years leading up to the Oslo Games . Between 1949 and 1952 the International Skating Union had banned five judges for attempting to fix scores , although no evidence of wrongdoing was found in the judging of the Olympic competitions .

Dick Button of the United States won the men 's singles event . Helmut Seibt of Austria took silver and James Grogan of the United States won bronze . Button became the first figure @-@ skater to land a triple jump in competition when he performed the triple loop in the men 's free skate . British skater Jeannette Altwegg won the gold medal in the women 's singles , the silver was awarded to American Tenley Albright , who went on to win gold at the 1956 Winter Games in Cortina d 'Ampezzo , and Jacqueline du Bief of France won the bronze . The German husband and wife pair of Ria and Paul Falk won the mixed pairs competition . They defeated Americans Karol and Peter Kennedy , who placed second , and Hungarian siblings Marianna and László Nagy , who won the bronze medal .

= = = Ice hockey = = =

A majority of the ice hockey matches took place at Jordal Amfi , a new hockey stadium built for the Olympics . Nine teams played in the tournament and Canada again won the gold medal . Canada

had won all but one Olympic hockey tournament thus far , but in 1956 the Soviet team began to compete and ended Canadian dominance . Canada was represented by the Edmonton Mercurys , an amateur hockey team sponsored by the owner of a Mercury automobile dealership . Canada played the United States to a three all tie on the final day to clinch the Gold , and assure the Americans of Silver . Norwegian newspaper Dagbladet criticized the result , calling the game , " fixed in advance . " Sweden and Czechoslovakia ended up tied for third and played an extra game for the bronze medal , which went to Sweden . The Czechs believed they had already won the Bronze when they defeated the Swedes on the final day , calling the decision to play a tie @-@ breaking game a , " plot of the capitalist countries . " Teams from North America were criticized for their rough play ; although body checking was legal , it was not often used by European teams , and opponents and spectators alike took a dim view of that style of play .

= = = Bandy = = =

The IOC lobbied the organizing committee to host either military patrol or curling as a demonstration sport . The committee instead selected bandy , which had never been included in the Winter Games . Bandy which is popular in nordic countries , is played by teams of eleven on an outdoor soccer field @-@ sized ice rink , using a small ball and sticks about 1 @. @ 2 m (3 @. @ 9 ft) long . As it was a demonstration sport , the players were ineligible for medals . Three nations participated : Finland , Norway and Sweden . Each of the three teams won one game and lost one game ; with Sweden winning the competition based on number of goals scored , followed by Norway in second place , and Finland in third place . Two of the games were played at Dæhlenenga Stadium and one at Bislett Stadium .

= = = Closing ceremonies = = =

At the 1952 Winter Games the closing ceremonies were a distinct program listing , unlike previous Winter Games when the closing ceremonies were held directly after the final event . The closing ceremonies were held in Bislett Stadium , on Monday evening , 25 February . The flag bearers entered the stadium in the same order they followed for the opening ceremonies . That evening four medal ceremonies were also held for the women 's cross @-@ country race , the men 's cross @-@ country relay , the ski jumping competition , and the ice hockey tournament .

Since 1920 , the " Antwerp flag " has been passed from host city to host city during closing ceremonies for the Summer Games . The city of Oslo gave an Olympic flag to establish the same tradition for the Winter Games . Brynjulf Bull , Oslo 's mayor , passed the flag to the president of the IOC , Sigfrid Edström , who declared the flag was to pass from host city to host city for future Winter Games . The flag , which came to be known as the " Oslo Flag " , has since been preserved in a display case , with the name of every Winter Olympics host city engraved on brass plaques , and is brought to each Winter Games to be displayed . A replica is used during the closing ceremonies .

After the flag ceremony the Olympic flame was extinguished , a special speed skating race was held , and the figure skating competitors gave an exhibition , followed by 40 children dressed in national costumes performing an ice dance . For a finale , to the close the Games , the lights were extinguished and a 20 @-@ minute fireworks display lit up the night sky .

= = Calendar = =

All dates are in Central European Time (UTC + 1)

The official opening ceremonies were held on 15 February , although two smaller ceremonies were held on 14 February to conform with competition schedules . From 15 February until 25 February , the day of the closing ceremonies , at least one event final was held each day .

? Bandy was a demonstration sport at the 1952 Winter Games , and no medals were awarded .

? The numeral indicates the number of event finals for each sport held that day .

= = Venues = =

With a seating capacity of 29 @, @ 000 , Bislett Stadium became the centrepiece of the Games . It was the venue for the speed skating events and the figure skating competition . Bislett was large enough for a 400 m (1 @, @ 300 ft) speed skating track , and a figure skating ice @-@ rink of 30 by 60 m (98 by 197 ft) ; a snow bank separated the track and the rink . Because Bislett was an outdoor arena , the organizing committee chose Tryvann Stadion and Hamar Stadion as secondary alternative skating venues to be used the case of bad weather . In 1994 Hamar became the venue for the speed skating events at the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer .

The Oslo Winter Games were the first to feature an Olympic ice hockey tournament held on artificial ice . A new stadium was built for the hockey tournament in a residential area of eastern Oslo , called Jordal Amfi , which accommodated 10 @, @ 000 spectators in stands rising steeply from the rink . Twenty @-@ three of the 36 hockey matches were played at Jordal Amfi , with the remaining matches played at Kadettangen , Dælenenga idrettspark , Lillestrøm Stadion and Marienlyst Stadion .

The cross @-@ country races and ski @-@ jump competition were held at Holmenkollbakken , located roughly 8 km (5 mi) from the center of Oslo . The expected number of spectators caused concerns about traffic , so a new road was constructed and the existing thoroughfare widened . Holmenkollbakken was built in 1892 and improvements were needed to meet international standards . The original wood ski @-@ jump was replaced with a concrete tower and jump that was 87 m (285 ft) long . New stands were built to seat 13 @, @ 000 people , and an area was added at the base of the hill to accommodate 130 @, @ 000 spectators .

The hills and terrain in the surrounding area met the competitive demands for an elite cross @-@ country ski event . A notice board was posted at the start and finish lines to help spectators monitor the progress of the competitors . The cross @-@ country and nordic combined races began and ended at the base of the ski jump hill . The stands for the ski jump competition had to be removed during the cross @-@ country races ; spectators had only a small area from which to watch the races but were allowed on the course to cheer on the competitors .

The alpine skiing events were split between Norefjell and Rødkleiva . The slalom courses were at Rødkleiva , located on the same mountain as Holmenkollen and Frognerstøseter . The course had an elevation difference , from start to finish , of 200 m (660 ft) and was 480 m (1 @, @ 570 ft) in length . A rope tow had to be built to bring the skiers from the bottom to the top of the hill . The downhill race and the giant slalom ? which made its Olympic debut in 1952 ? were held at Norefjell , which was 113 km (70 mi) from Oslo and the only venue located away from the capital city . Work had to be done to make the area suitable for Olympic competition . A bridge across Lake Krøderen was built to help alleviate transportation congestion . A new hotel , two ski lifts , and a new road were also constructed .

There was no permanent bobsleigh run in Norway . Instead the organizers built a temporary course out of snow and ice . This is often wrongly assumed to have been built at Korketrekkeren . From Frognerstøseter a separate 1,508 m (4 @, @ 948 ft) long , thirteen @-@ turn course was designed and built . The bobsleigh run was first constructed and tested in 1951 , then rebuilt for the Games in 1952 . A car was used to return the bobsleighs to the start of the track .

= = Participating nations = =

Thirty nations sent competitors , which was the highest number of participants at a Winter Games . New Zealand and Portugal took part in the Winter Olympic Games for the first time . Australia , Germany , and Japan returned after a 16 @-@ year absence . South Korea , Liechtenstein , and Turkey competed in 1948 but did not participate in the 1952 Games .

= = Medal count = =

These are the nations that topped the medal count at the 1952 Winter Games .

