

At Cortina

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Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Swiss textiles [English edition]**

Band (Jahr): - **(1956)**

Heft 1

PDF erstellt am: **26.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-798585>

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AT CORTINA,

Pearl of the Dolomites and scene of the 1956 Winter Olympic games



and blood that they were watching. And when the lithe greyhound-like figures that twisted and twined their way down through the gates of the slalom took off their heavy dark goggles, when the champions of the downhill races showed their faces at last, the crowd was struck every time by their smiling youth and poise, Renée Colliard, the blonde student with the mischievous eyes, Madeleine Berthod, the clear-eyed girl from the mountains, Lucy Wheeler with her satiny cheeks and Penelope Pitou, Evgeniya Sidorova, the young Russian, Andrea Lawrence-Mead, all showed a patience and quiet strength that amazed all beholders.

When the crowd of spectators had thinned a little, the village streets resumed their normal character. Modest shop-windows, little restaurants selling *pasta asciutta*, the local co-operative store where the women buy their long black-fringed shawls and the silver pins for their chignons... When the sun shone high and bright in the turquoise sky, it was interesting to go off towards the old skating rink and sit on the wooden stands to watch the figure skaters practising. What perseverance! Ten, twenty, a hundred times they would repeat the same figure, traced out on the sparkling mirror of the ice by their silver skates. It was here that they prepared their victories of the big stadium, it was here that they worked on the brilliant and intricate gyrations which, later, in the bowl of the tightly packed grandstands were to draw applause from the tens of thousands of admiring spectators.

In the morning, the bobsledders climbed towards the narrow serpentine track hemmed in by high walls of gleaming ice and, under the eyes of numberless fans and photographers, sped down the treacherous slopes like visitants from another planet. Meanwhile on Lake Misurina, with its setting of dark grey forests capped with snow, Dutchmen, Koreans, Russians and Scandinavians, their hands behind their backs, peaked caps on their heads went doggedly round and round the lake, their arms flailing like the sails of a windmill as the last laps approached.

The hotels were a veritable Babel of all tongues. In the press rooms, the communiqués were printed in characters of all kinds. The microphones were set up in the snow,

Never had so many people from all parts of the world been seen gathered together in this mountain village: Japanese skiers, Russian skaters, Finnish jumpers, Swiss women skiers, hockey players, bob sledders and sedate officials, doctors, trainers, etc. — and even the snow did not fail to put in an appearance just in time. With regard to the spectators, there were the real sports enthusiasts, the idle rich, the President of the Republic and even the stars of Cinecittà come to show themselves to their public...

In the huge, finely proportioned stadium, a marvel of design with its bold, graceful lines, the contests were followed closely by a crowd that applauded enthusiastically or roared its disapproval. The ski races were held in a somewhat calmer atmosphere. The tall figures of the cross-country skiers vanished into the distance at almost incredible speed towards the sparkling valleys of the Dolomites. The skiers who flashed downhill at speeds of over 60 m.p.h. left the spectators breathless and wondering whether these were really men of flesh





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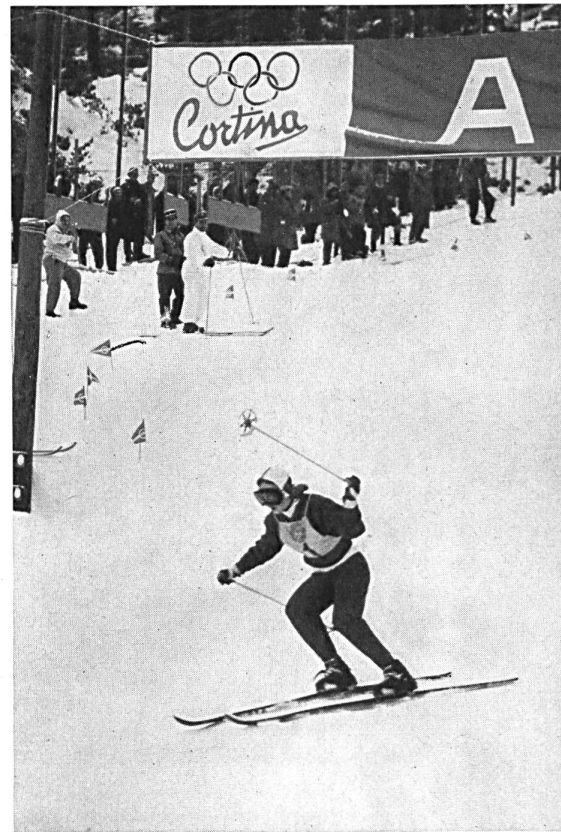


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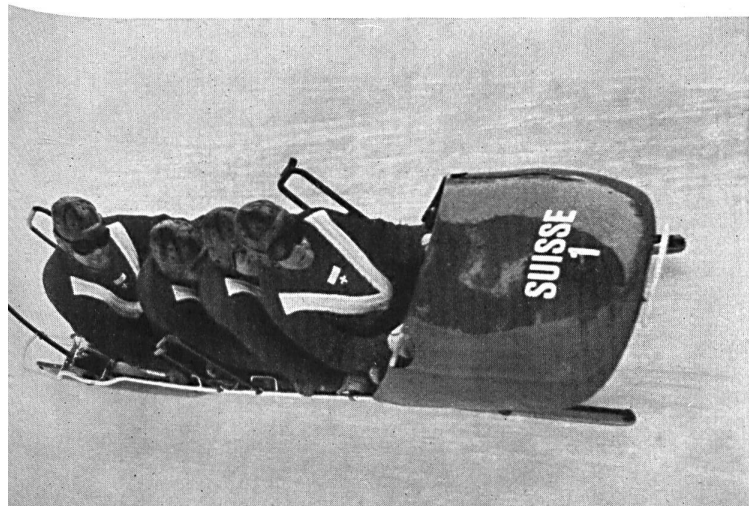
the telephone kiosks, narrow boxes of perforated aluminium, had almost an air of beach huts in the snowy scene. Among the host of reporters was an old Finn who had been to all the Olympic Games since 1936, among the athletes the first Bolivian ever to take part in the Games, who had done his training in the Andes at an altitude of over 18,000 feet, and — of course — Toni Sailer.

How can one describe the magic of the Games — the bringing together in common understanding of people as unlike as the little typist from Venice, who came up by bus for the week-end, and the Grandee of Spain, who had driven up in his custom-built sports car; the spirit of friendly rivalry between athletes of different nations, skiers, skaters and hockey players? It is all this perhaps and even the bond of fellowship between the spectators, who simply want to spend a few wonderful days of relaxation in the healthy, open atmosphere of sport, in the setting of these pale mountains, the Dolomites, which give the valley a rare beauty and grandeur.

Camille Saugé



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1. The Swiss delegation entering the stadium.
2. Renée Colliard (left), Madeleine Berthod (right), the winners of the Women's Slalom and Downhill Race respectively.
3. Madeleine Berthod, gold medal for the Women's Downhill Race.
4. Raymond Fellay, silver medal for the Men's Downhill Race. His trousers are fastened below the knee to reduce the air resistance.
5. Renée Colliard, gold medal for the Women's Slalom.
6. The Swiss No. 1 four-man bob team, gold medal.



The outfits of the Swiss-team

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As everyone knows, the Swiss team carried off several gold and silver medals at the recent Winter Olympic Games at Cortina d'Ampezzo. It is interesting to note in this connection that Switzerland's representatives were specially equipped by Swiss clothing firms. The whole delegation — athletes and officials — wore double

breasted grey suits by the firm of *PKZ, Burger-Kehl & Co. Ltd.*, Zurich (fig. 1), for their entry into the stadium. The bobsledders and speed skaters wore light blue track suits with yellow stripes made by *Nabholz Co. Ltd.* of Schoenenwerd (fig. 13).



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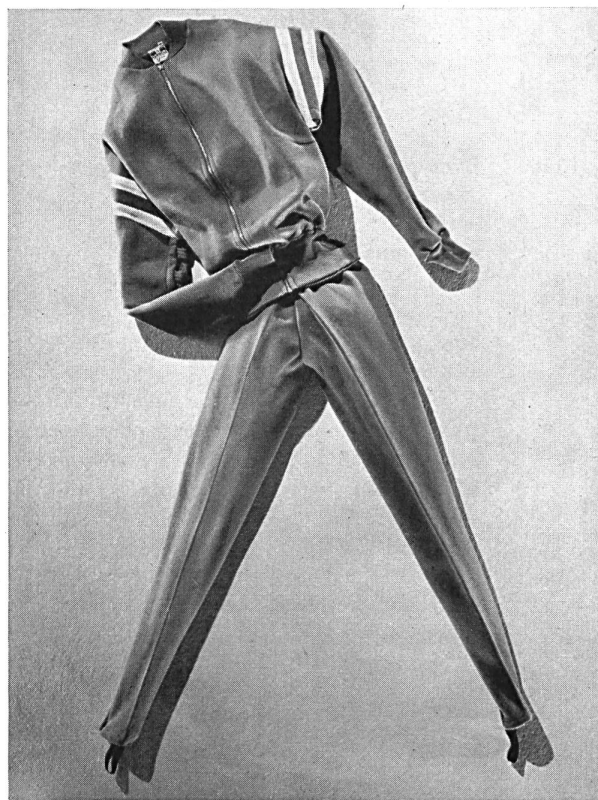
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The ski team was entirely fitted out with clothes made by different Swiss firms and specially designed for the occasion by Mr Willy Roth (fig. 10), a designer at Berne, except for the men's underpants, the ladies' red tights (fig. 12) and pullovers for the evening, supplied directly by Nabholz Co. Ltd. The outfits for the skiers were as follows : a yellow shirt by *Beltex Co. Ltd.*, Arzo ; a pure wool red pullover with white stripes and badge by *Walter Knöpfel*, Teufen (figs. 2 and 9) ; slate grey ski-pants in a special elastic fabric with a patented built-in elastic belt, an impregnated gabardine lumber jacket of the same colour with knitted collar (fig. 8), and a duffle coat in « Olympic » grey wool melton (the new colour for next year's winter sports) lined with cotton poplin (fig. 7), all by « *Croydon* » *Respolco Co. Ltd.*, Zurich ; a jacket in white impregnated jersey with red stripes and a cap to match by « *Porella* » *C. Burgi & Co.*, Kreuzlingen, (figs. 2, 3, 4) ; a poplin windjack by *Wintro Co. Ltd.*, St. Gall, (figs. 10, 11) ; as well as after-ski boots by *Bally Footwear Manufacturers Co. Ltd.*, Schoenenwerd, (with which the whole Swiss team was equipped) (figs. 1, 7, 8).

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- 7. The Swiss skiers before their departure for Cortina.
- 8. and 9. The Swiss women skiers :
 - * Mad. Berthod, gold medal, Women's Downhill Race.
 - ** Frieda Dänzer, silver medal, Women's Downhill Race.
 - *** Renée Colliard, gold medal, Women's Slalom.
- 10. The designer, Willy Roth, Berne, an experienced skier and former champion, trying on the windjacks.
- 11. Olympic windjacks, in double-twist poplin, ventilated hood, knitted inside collar, elastic cuffs.
- 12. Ski tights, « sanitized », bacteria resistant.
- 13. Track suit.