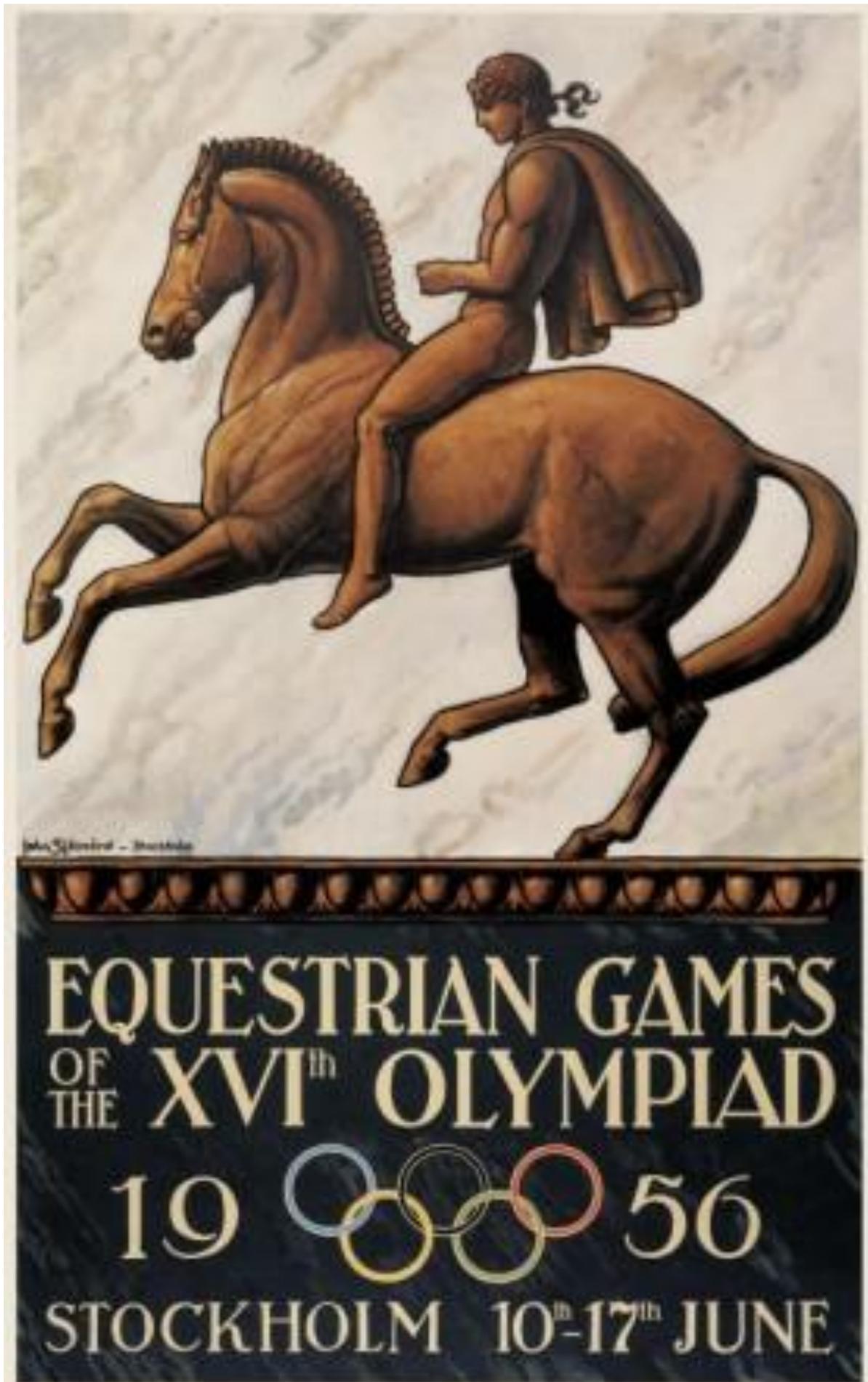


History of equestrian events at the Games of the XVI Olympiad



**Games of the XVI Olympiad
Melbourne (AUS) 22 November – 8 December 1956
Stockholm (SWE), 10 – 17 June 1956**

THE OLYMPICS GO DOWN UNDER

Melbourne won the right to host the 1956 Olympic Games by one vote over Buenos Aires. These would be the first Games to be held in the southern hemisphere.

BUT IT IS BACK TO STOCKHOLM FOR HORSESPORT

The vote, however, had not taken into consideration Australian quarantine restrictions with their six-month pre-shipment quarantine. In 1953 – four years after the allocation of the Games – a meeting was held in Australia's capital city Canberra, attended by the federal authorities. They recommended not to alter quarantine laws, which meant the end of equestrian events at the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne. The following year, the IOC decided on a separate venue for the equestrian events and on 13 May 1954 chose Stockholm.

SWEDISH EFFICIENCY

The Swedes immediately created committees: an organising committee, mostly honorary, headed by Prince Bertil, and an executive committee. Its president was Count Gustaf-Frederick von Rosen, who had held a similar position in 1912 when horse sport had made its Olympic debut. After his death in early 1956, the former Olympic rider Arne Francke took over. Secretary General was another former Olympic rider, Robert Selfelt.

As in 1912, the Swedes preoccupied themselves with the finances. They secured deficit guarantees from the state (150,000 Crowns) and the city of Stockholm (50,000 Crowns). They got the permission for a lottery, run by the Swedish Equestrian Federation. From April to June 1955, 200,000 lottery tickets were sold producing a net profit for the Federation of 183,546 Crowns. To give an indication on money value, the cost of a room in a luxury hotel was 23 Crowns per day.

The total income from ticket sales was 1,938,751 Crowns – of which 282,583 Crowns went in taxes; in other words the government earned more in ticket taxes than it was willing to guarantee in deficit.

OLYMPIC PROTOCOL

King Gustaf VI and Queen Louise presided over the opening ceremony, in which all the participants were on horseback or in carriages. Guests of honour were the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. Hans Wikne, eight years later an Olympic rider, lit the Olympic flame. Henri St-Cyr, assisted by Gustaf-Adolf Boltenstem, pronounced the Olympic oath.

IT GETS TIGHT FOR THE PRESS

There were restrictions as to press accreditation. Originally only 400 were allowed, including TV and radio. In the end there were **500: 300 journalists, 100 radio, 50 TV and 50 photographers**. The restriction was explained by the small size of the Stockholm Olympic stadium. Built for the 1912 Games, it had a capacity of only 21,000.

Games facts & figures

- **72** nations
- **3,314** athletes (376 women; 2,938 men)
- **17** sports
- To allow for the equestrian sports to be held and avoid the problem of quarantine for horses entering Australia, the Games took place in two different cities (Stockholm and Melbourne), in two different countries (Sweden and Australia), on two different continents (Europe and Oceania) and in two different seasons (June and November). **This is the only time in the Games' hundred-year existence that the unity of time and place, as stipulated in the Charter, has not been observed.**

Equestrian facts & figures

- **29** nations (Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherland, Norway, Portugal, Rumania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, USA, Venezuela)
- **Australia, Cambodia** and **Venezuela** competed for the first time.
- Most of the countries sent **mixed teams composed of both military officers and civilians**. Switzerland, with six officers and three non-commissioned officers, was all in uniform as were the eight Portuguese. But Germany the United States and the Soviet Union fielded all-civilian teams.
- **159** entries (66 in Jumping; 36 in Dressage; 57 in Eventing)

JUMPING (66 riders from 24 countries)

The course, designed by Greger Lewnhaupt, Olympic rider of 1948, was demanding. It consisted of 14 obstacles resulting in 17 jumping efforts spread over 775m; the speed was 400m/min. It is considered by many as **the first modern course**.

There were no clears in the first round. **Hans Günter Winkler** of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was in the lead with only one knock-down riding the great mare **Halla**, whose exploits are numerous and are to be counted amongst the ranks of Olympic legends. Halla had taken off early for the penultimate fence and Winkler was thrown into the air and went on to land heavily back in the saddle, pulling a groin muscle in the process. He knew that if he withdrew from the final round, the Federal Republic of Germany team would be eliminated. Dizzy and in pain, he rode anyway. Halla completed the course without a fault. They earned gold in both the individual and team events. Winkler went on to win another five gold medals at various Olympics and **is the only Jumping rider to win a total of seven Olympic medals and the only rider in any equestrian discipline to earn medals in six Olympic Games**.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Hans Günter Winkler (FRG)	Halla
2. Silver	Raimondo d'Inzeo (ITA)	Merano
3. Bronze	Piero d'Inzeo (ITA)	Uruguay

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	Federal Republic of Germany	Hans Günter WINKLER (Halla), Fritz THIEDEMANN (Meteor), Alfons LÜTKE-WESTHUES (Ala)
2. Silver	Italy	Raimondo D'INZEO (Merano), Piero D'INZEO (Uruguay), Salvatore OPPES (Pagoro)
3. Bronze	Great Britain	Wilfried H. WHITE (Nizefela), Pat SMYTHE (Flanagan), Peter ROBESON (Scorchin)

DRESSAGE (36 riders from 27 nations)

Among the 36 starters were 11 ladies, of whom two took an individual medal and a third was placed in the top 10. Lis Hartel and Jubilee repeated their silver medal of 1952.

The Olympic champion of 1952, Henri St-Cyr, repeated his victory four years later, this time riding the 14-year-old thoroughbred gelding Juli. Team gold went to the same three riders who had already won in 1952 (and had been in 1948 disqualified after winning).

The judging was an issue of much criticism. Both the Swedish and the German judges saw their riders as 1st, 2nd and 3rd. This time there were consequences. Although it was argued by some that with no common international conception of Dressage, each judge tended to favour the style and method of his country, both the FEI and the IOC took action. The judges from the Federal Republic of Germany and Sweden, both generals, were suspended by the FEI. The IOC threatened to take Dressage out of the Olympics. Only after long negotiations it was agreed that there would be no team competition in Rome in 1960; only two individual riders per country were allowed and three judges had to be from non-participating countries. All rides were filmed and their performances were reviewed during one entire day before the result were publicly announced.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Henri St-Cyr (SWE)	Juli
2. Silver	Lis Hartel (DEN)	Jubilee
3. Bronze	Liselott Linsenhoff (FRG)	Adular

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	Sweden	Henri ST.CYR (Juli), Gehnäll PERSSON (Knaust), Gustaf A. BOLTENSTERN (Krest)
2. Silver	Federal Republic of Germany	Liselott LINSENHOFF (Adular), Hannelore WEYGAND (Perkunos), Anneliese KÜPPERS (Afrika)
3. Bronze	Switzerland	Gottfried TRACHSEL (Kursus), Henri CHAMMARTIN (Wöhler), Gustav FISCHER (Vasello)

EVENTING (57 riders from 29 nations)

Incidents at obstacle 22 overshadowed the Eventing competition. The fence, a trakehner ditch, 2.50m in width and 1m in height with rails in the centre and sloping sides, caused 28 refusals, 12 falls and one horse fatality.

Medallists – Individual

1. Gold	Petrus Kastenmann (SWE)	Illuster
2. Silver	August Lütke-Westhues (FRG)	Trux von Kamax
3. Bronze	Frank Weldon (GBR)	Kilbarry

Medallists – Team

1. Gold	Great Britain	Frank WELDON (Kilbarry), Arthur Laurence ROOK (Wild Venture), Albert Edwin HILL (Countryman III)
2. Silver	Federal Republic of Germany	August LÜTKE-WESTHUES (Trux von Kamax), Otto ROTHE (Sissi), Klaus WAGNER (Prinzess)
3. Bronze	Canada	John RUMBLE (Cilroy), James ELDER (Colleen), Brian HERBINSON (Tara)