



Maria Rotkiewicz

Mascots and Symbols of the Olympic Games

Olympic Mascots

Mascots appeared in sport in the 1920s. Among the first of them were personal mascots, which were carried by athletes who believed in their magical power. Their presence at sports arenas was supposed to ensure athletes' fortune and victory.

The trend towards mascots appeared both among male and female athletes, independently of age or sports; it was, however, seen mostly among athletes practicing sports, in which the effect of performing an exercise is a matter of the judge's subjective assessment.

The diversity of mascots is enormous. Mascots are, most often, objects which have the character of children's toys: dolls, plushy animals (teddy bears, elephants, kitties, doggies, donkeys, fairytale characters), pebbles, shells, horseshoes, clothing articles (ornaments or parts of a favorite outfit: caps, T-shirts). There are diverse reasons of owning mascots: gift from a close friend or family member, custom prevailing in a particular sports circle, habit or a sign of flamboyance.

Owning a mascot is by many athletes regarded as a specific method of auto-psychotherapy, aimed at reducing situational anxiety, alleviating stress appearing before start and weakening the feeling of loneliness during competitions.

Sport success achieved "thanks" to the mascots strengthens the belief in their magical powers among athletes. A mascot is a knick-knack which hides many secrets.

Sports mascots were popularized especially by team sports (football). At first, small boys played the roles of football team's mascots while artificial mascots took up this role at a later stage. During the World Football

Championships in 1966, clever "Willie" became the mascot, and in 1974 footballers were accompanied by two mascots, "Tips and Taps", which had the appearance of swashbuckling rascals.

When mascots appeared at the Olympic Games they made a staggering career in terms of popularity, artistic vision and marketing, while the faith in mascots' magical powers gained a secret dimension.

The first unofficial Olympic mascot was a live mutt called "Smoky" which appeared during the Games of the X Olympiad in Los Angeles (1932). "Smoky" had a dark curly coat, a long trunk, short paws, protruding ears and a rolled up tail. A white cape covered the back of the dog with the emblem of the five Olympic rings and the inscription "Mascot".

It was as late as the 1960s when further unofficial mascots were introduced. A stylized rag doll of a skier named "Schuss", with its head in shape of the globe created according to Madame Lafargue's design, appeared during the X Olympic Winter Games in Grenoble in 1968. The figure of the mascot resembled a skier quickly going down the slope – hence the name "Schuss" (in French this word means to ski quickly downhill). "Schuss" was dressed in national colors of France: white, red and dark blue. Michele Verdier, at that time the IOC director for special projects, said the following about the mascot: "It was neither a person, nor an animal, one might say that it was the first 'What is it?'"

During the Games of the XIX Olympiad in Mexico in 1968, the Olympic athletes were accompanied by the following mascots: "Juanito" – a funny Mexican boy wearing a huge sombrero on his head, "Pico" –

a friendly bird, based on motifs of the traditional quetzala drawing – the saint emblem of Mexico – and the anonymous red jaguar, modeled on the shape of the throne in El Castillo, a step pyramid in Chichén Itza³, one of the symbols of Mexico. Their images were found on posters, official Olympic publications and all sorts of memorabilia.

At the Olympics in Mexico, a stylized white angel, “Paloma”, was a symbol of world peace; its authors were Eduardo Terrazas and Lance Wyman. It represented the motto of the Olympics: “Los Juegos de la Paz” (The Olympic Games of Peace). The signature “La Paloma de la Paz” was written under the image of the white pigeon, on a black background.

The initiators of introducing official mascots into Olympic symbolism were Germans, who fulfilled their plans at the Games of the XX Olympiad in Munich in 1972. Germans invented the first official Olympic mascot – a dachshund-doggie, called “Waldi” which represented the most popular dog breed in Bavaria.

Since that time, one or few various and attractive mascots have started to appear during consecutive Games of the Olympiad and Olympic Winter Games.

At first, Olympic mascots depicted animals or birds, characteristic to the given region or country; thanks to this, an entire “Olympic zoo” came into existence. Later, human figures representing cultural heritage of the given country, started to appear. As time passed, artists invented more and more sophisticated mascots which were an embodiment of fairytale abstraction, connected with elements of humor or created by modern computer graphic design. Each mascot is distinctive and

unique; it is usually connected with the tradition, folklore and natural environment of the region or host city of the Olympics but primarily with talent and ingeniousness of their authors. Mascots carry names connected to legends, connotations or events relating to cities or Olympic Games.

Along with the demand for and the development of their production, mascots were given a “sporty” character; for several years, mascots have been shown, especially in form of drawing, as contestants in nearly all sports or competitions of the Olympic Games. Therefore, mascots run, jump, swim, skate, ski or ride bicycles. They appear during the opening and closing ceremony of the Olympics. They act separately, in pairs or in groups of several mascots. They are surrounded by the sympathy of millions, especially children; they arouse pleasant memories.

The Organizing Committees of each of the Olympic Games attach great significance to the choice of mascots, because they are an excellent way of propagating Olympism, they express an original thought (slogan, message), promote the host city and country of the Olympics and ensure a commercial success. Since the 1970s, they have permanently entered symbolism of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, becoming their indispensable element. And so, since 1972, the story of the official Olympic mascots, which have celebrated their 40th birthday in 2012, unfolds.



The term “mascot” derives from the French word “mascotte”, particularly from the Provençal dialect word “mascoto” (amulet, talisman) or “masco” (sorcerer, wizard). The term entered common usage on 28 December 1880 in Paris, after the initial performance of “La Mascotte”, a French opéra comique in three acts, composed by Edmond Audran (1840-1901) to the text of Alfred

³ Chichén Itza – ruins of the Mayas in Mexico at the Yucatan Peninsula from around 9th century; the monument contains a vast amount of works of art.

Duru and Henri Charles Chivot. Below is a fragment from the French text:

*Ces envoyés du paradis
Sont de Mascottes, mes amis.
Heureux celui que le ciel dote d'une Mascotte*

The translation to English is the following:

*These envoys of paradise
Are mascots, my friends.
Lucky is the one, whom the heavens give a mascot.*

The great success of Madame Grizier-Montbazon in “La Mascotte” operetta inspired French jewelers to produce a specific type of product – a bracelet with a pendant in shape of a figurine of the artist in her stage costume. The jewelry, which allegedly brought good luck, gained huge popularity and popularized the word “mascotte”.

In the last twenty years of the 19th century, “La Mascotte” was performed 1700 times and Edmond Audran enjoyed fame until the end of his days. The operetta was translated into English. Its English title, “The Mascot”, initiated the use of the word ‘mascot’ in English language to mean an animal, human, or thing which brought luck. Later, the word spread to other languages and encyclopedic publications, however, in most cases in its original French form: “mascotte”.

Contemporary encyclopedia entries state that a mascot is a human, an animal or a thing, which serves as a talisman with magical properties and is supposed to bring luck, fortune and success. This complex phenomenon, which has accompanied people despite the progress of knowledge and the development of civilization, has become a theme of many publications. Mascots are also subjects of many anecdotes.

MASCOTS OF THE GAMES OF THE OLYMPIADS

Mascot of the Games of the XX Olympiad in Munich (1972)

“Waldi” the Dachshund

© International Olympic Committee



The first official Olympic mascot approved by the IOC was a stylized dog – dachshund, whose image appeared at the Olympics in Munich in 1972.

Dachshunds belong to the most popular dog breed in Bavaria. It had been calculated, that at the beginning of the 1970s only in Munich lived about 35 thousand dachshunds.

Dachshunds – is a breed of small hunting dogs from the group of limers, used mainly for scaring the game off from burrows or as lapdogs. They have a long, cylindrical body, short paws, a wedged, extended face and long ears. All kinds are bred: short-haired, long-haired and wire-haired with a red- or black-colored coat.

The originator of the mascot was Willi Daume, Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games in Munich, who had a dog of this race and gave it to the President of the International Sports Press Association, Félix Lévitán. Choice of the dachshund as the mascot was explained with the fact that dogs of this race

have certain traits which are essential for athletes: endurance, tenacity and agility.

The dachshund mascot was named “Waldi” and was produced in different forms and sizes, from plush to plastic. The thorax of the mascot was decorated with vertical stripes in three pastel colors: blue, green and yellow, while each of the colors had additionally two shades – brighter and darker. The face, the tail and ears were also colorful. Colors of the dachshund were supposed to reflect the landscape of Bavaria: blue – the blue of the sky and shining lakes along with green and yellow – the colors of alpine meadows and fields. Three colors referred to three colors of the five Olympic rings. Colorful “Waldi” symbolized happiness and joy.

A Munich graphic designer, Otl Aicher, was the designer of the mascot, and a 84-day-old red, long-haired dachshund of a resonant name: “Cherie von Birkenhof”, was the model of the mascot.

The mascot made a staggering commercial career. The image of the dachshund was put on posters, postcards, T-shirts and was a model for key rings, pendants etc.

The great demand for the mascot and its financial success determined the fact that mascots have been officially accepted by the IOC as one of the Olympic symbols for the next Games of the Olympiad or Winter Games, and later also at the Paralympic Games. The Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games retains exclusive rights to the mascot.

Mascot of the Games of the XXI Olympiad in Montreal (1976)

“Amik” the Beaver

Athletes arriving to the Games of the XXI Olympiad in Montreal from 92 countries were welcomed by “Amik” the beaver, an official Olympic mascot. Roger Rousseau, Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games justified this choice in the following way: “The beaver is one of Canada’s national symbols. The figure of this animal appears in the coat of arms of Montreal, as well as in the coat of arms of Kingston, the city of the Olympic sailing regatta.”

Beavers live along forested streams and rivers; they are unrivalled architects of dams and so called “beaver lodges”. They use branches and trunks of trees, which they cut with their sharp teeth, for the construction of their meticulous homes equipped with underwater entrances. In past centuries, they provided fine fur and castoreum, used as medicine. At present, the beaver, which belongs to the Castoroidea family, is a rodent protected by law; it has a big thorax with a flattened tail, covered with scales; it also has webbed hind feet.

We distinguish the European beaver (*Castor fiber*) and the Canadian beaver (*Castor canadensis*), living in Canada and America. Several years ago, the Canadian beaver contributed to the economic development of Canada because the trade in beaver fur became, at that time, the major commercial activity in North America.

The beaver was also closely connected to the Canadian folklore. “Amik” is the name for beaver in the lan-



guage of American Indian tribes of the Algonquin (Algonquian) ethnic group, in the Ojibwa dialect; these tribes formerly inhabited the areas of North America in the vicinity of the Ottawa River⁴. Accepting the name “Amik” for the beaver mascot, the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games thought that the word was both plain and simple to pronounce by people using all tongues of the world. The beaver is universally regarded as an example of patience and diligence.

Three Canadian visual artists were authors of the mascot: Guy St. Arnaud, Yvon Laroche and Pierre Yves Peltier. Amik had a dark-brown color and had his thorax tied around with a red strip which carried the emblem (logo) of the Montreal Olympics. The mascot also decorated the Olympic poster.

⁴ It is the most common “language family” amongst natives of Canada (about 20 tribes): Abenaki, Arapahó, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Delaware, Fox, Iroquois, Ojibwa, Shawnee and other. The social organization of these tribes is based on equality, solidarity and matriarchy.

Mascot of the Games of the XXII Olympiad in Moscow (1980)

“Misha” the Teddy Bear



© International Olympic Committee

The mascot of Games of the XXII Olympiad in Moscow was a dark brown, fluffy and joyful teddy bear named “Misha”. His beige tummy was tied around with a colorful belt; the belt’s buckle was in shape of five Olympic rings. His figure resembled an athlete. The mascot’s full name was: Mikhail Potapitch Toptygin.

The choice of teddy bear for an Olympic mascot was connected to an old-Russian tradition; stories and folk legends often present the motive of a bear which is a personification of courage and strength. Bears were national symbols of the Soviet Union.

Around 40 thousand spectators of the popular Soviet TV program entitled “In the Animal World” participated in the selection of the mascot of the Olympics. Viewers could choose between a fox, a deer and other animals

but the teddy bear, diminutively named “Mishka”, received most of the votes. On 19 December 1977, “Misha” was officially presented as the mascot of the Games of the XXII Olympiad.

The author of the adorable mascot was a Moscow-based visual artist and children’s books illustrator, Victor Chizhikov. Animals were his favorite illustration subjects. Before “Misha” was born, the author drew hundreds of sketches of the teddy bear. Prior to the Olympic Games, he won a few awards at the exhibition “Satire in Fight for Peace”. His illustrations for children’s books were exhibited in Bologna, Bratislava and Helsinki.

In his youth, Victor Chizhikov played basketball, and practiced skiing.

The teddy bear was made of plush, plastic, rubber, porcelain, glass, wood and metal – in form of key rings, brooches and pendants. When pressed, the plush mascot said: “I wish success”. Misha acted also in a cartoon, was present on commercial products and postage stamps, which were validated by a special stamp of the Olympics.

A group of young people dressed in colorful clothing formed a huge image of the mascot, on a green background, in one of the sectors of the stadium’s tribune during the opening ceremony of the Games of the XXII Olympiad.

During the closing ceremony of the Games of the XXII Olympiad, “Mishka” waved goodbye to athletes, while “Sam” the American Eagle, standing next to him, invited to the Games of the next XXIII Olympiad in Los Angeles.

In Tallinn, the city of the sailing regatta, along with “Misha” reigned an unofficial mascot – a small, adorable seal called “Wigri”, which also was very popular.

Mascot of the Games of the XXIII Olympiad in Los Angeles (1984)

"Sam" the Olympic Eagle

Athletes and spectators were invited to the Games of the XXIII Olympiad in Los Angeles by an American bald eagle (zool. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), a ca. 1-meter-long bird of prey; its plumage is evenly dark brown with a white head and tail.

The author of the mascot was Robert Moore and the producer – Walt Disney Studio Productions. The artist used the eagle – the national emblem of the United States of America – for the creation of the official mascot of the Olympics, using the name and characteristics of "Uncle Sam" – a personification of patriotism and a national symbol of the USA. "Sam" the Olympic Eagle was as elegant as Uncle Sam himself. He wore a top hat of Uncle Sam, colored in white-red stripes and a blue rim which served as background to the five Olympic rings. He also wore a brown dress, with a white tail sticking out of it. A big bow tie, also in white-red stripes, decorated the neck.

"Sam" the Olympic Eagle was a joyful imitation of one of the greatest birds of prey. The mascot symbolized tenacity, valor, self-confidence and courage. Usually, it was pictured with an Olympic torch held up high or as standing on the highest podium of the Olympic champions with the American flag and an inscription on his vest: "Go for the Gold"; this slogan was supposed to inspire American athletes to compete in sports and win Olympic gold medals. It seems that the mascot's encouragement was effective because Americans won as many as 174 medals at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles, including 83 gold. However, the boycott of the communist countries, especially the USSR, also contributed to this result. "Live Sam" appeared already before the beginning



© International Olympic Committee

of the Olympics on the Olympic torch relay route, traveling throughout the United States of America. Additionally, during the Olympics, a huge "Sam" walked around the Olympic village and sports venues; Olympic athletes eagerly took pictures of themselves with the big mascot of the Olympics.

"Sam" the Olympic Eagle also turned out to be a "goose laying the golden eggs". The revenue from selling 10 millions of the "eagle mascots" was 200 million dollars.

Mascot of the Games of the XXIV Olympiad in Seoul (1988)

“Hodori” the Tiger



© International Olympic Committee

The Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIV Olympiad particularly heavily committed itself to the symbolism of international rapprochement; this symbolism which took from the Korean tradition was poorly known in Europe. Both the mascot and the logo were elements constituting a well thought-over symbolism.

A young, confidence-inspiring tiger cub – the symbol of courage, strength and valor – was the mascot of the Olympics. The Asian tiger (zool. *Panthera tigris*) is a predator from the family of cats (length to 3 m) with a yellowish-rust-colored coat in black stripes. This animal appears in many Korean legends, however not as a predatory animal but a friend of the people. And “Hodori” was such a tiger. He was, moreover, supposed to help Koreans win Olympic laurels. Representatives of Korea were supposed to win in a way characteristic of wild cats: quietly, quickly and relentlessly.

The Mascot was named “Hodori” which in Korean language means “little tiger”: (ho – tiger; dori – common masculine diminutive). The mascot’s name was chosen from 2295 proposals which flowed into the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games. The drawing of the mascot was created by Kim Hyun. The happy Korean tiger cub, of a gentle and friendly nature, symbolized friendship and play.

“Hodori” had a ribbon hung on the neck with the five Olympic rings and on the head he wore a small round hat with a long ribbon, attached to it in the center, called “Sang-mo” – known for the traditional Korean folk theatre “kwanno”. A dancer in such a hat runs in at the end of the spectacle and by turning his head performs a brisk whirl of the ribbon through which he “seizes”, like with a lasso, the actors, musicians and the audience inviting them to have fun together. “Hodori” transferred this symbolism of universal meaning to the international Olympic community which meant: “let’s have fun together, let us enjoy the Olympics together”. Sang-mo also symbolized the host city of the Olympics. The ribbon hanging from the center of the tiger cub’s hat formed, at the movement of its head, the letter “S” – as in “Seoul”.

“Hodori” was everywhere – on all products, souvenirs and means of transport; it was present in the Olympic stadium during the opening ceremony of the Olympics, in the Olympic village and during competition among athletes in sports venues. Created in form of an Olympic athlete which took part in sports competitions included in the program of the Olympic Games, the tiger cub played the role of a specific logogram on sports facilities and venues. The little tigress “Hosuni” appeared unofficially along with “Hodori”.

Mascot of the Games of the XXV Olympiad in Barcelona (1992)

“Cobi” the Sheep Dog



Barcelona – the capital city of Catalonia is famous for its designs, avant-garde art and artists such as Salvadore Dali, Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso and Antonio Tàpies. Catalan art inspired the architecture and decorations of the Olympic venues, publications of the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games, numerous clothing articles and memorabilia as well as the design of the Olympic mascot.

A cubist sheepdog called “Cobi” was chosen for the mascot of the Games of the XXV Olympiad. The name was an abbreviation of the Spanish name of the Organizing Committee in Barcelona – Comité Organizador Olímpico Barcelona (COOB). Catalan visual artist Javier Mariscal, a well known designer of applied art (furniture, templates, fabrics etc.), awarded with numerous medal distinctions, was the author of the mascot. The vision of the artist found difficulty in gaining public approval of the mascot. Mariscal had the same number of fans as critics.

The avant-garde drawing of “Cobi” presented a character difficult to recognize, yet showing similarity to dog or, actually, a puppy. Its nose was shifted a bit to the side, with a distinctive grimace and protruding ears. Its head was connected to a wide and short torso. Hands and legs of this bizarre dog were childlike. As a whole, it looked amicably but, at the same time, a bit ridiculously.

Undoubtedly “Cobi” was an innovative phenomenon, altering the traditional way of showing animals. This was precisely the reason of a press witch-hunt against Coby, since it reflected cubist connotations. Many illustrators made fun of “Coby”, caricaturing it. However, Javier Mariscal didn’t feel embarrassed by such opinions. On the contrary, he drew his “doglike child” in all sorts of poses, practicing different sports, livening “Coby” up to such an extent that it turned up in appropriate sportswear as a runner, swimmer, basketball player, fencer, sailor, “Cobi” with the Olympic torch etc. Thanks to versatile sports abilities, the mascot was adapted by numerous producers of Olympic memorabilia. “Cobi” decorated thousands of T-shirts, caps, bags, key rings, stickers and other accessories advertising the Barcelona Olympics. Many months ahead of the Games, shops in Barcelona and other Spanish cities sold already on a large scale memorabilia with “Coby’s” image.

Ultimately, the mascot won hearts of spectators and athletes and when the “Great Cobi”, made of inflated plastic, emerged from the port swimming pool of Barcelona, all Catalonians also started to like him.

Javier Mariscal was also a designer of the first mascot which appeared on the Paralympics in Barcelona in 1992. This mascot was “Petra”, a shoulderless girl, full of energy and smile.

Mascot of the Games of the XXVI Olympiad in Atlanta (1996)

Abstract figure “Izzy”



© International Olympic Committee

“The Mascot of the Century of the Olympic Games” in Atlanta was an abstract figure of a children’s cartoon-like appearance. It was the first computer-designed mascot, created by John Ryan. Since the mascot was hard to de-

fine, at first it was described as a “Whatizit” which was a joint combination of the words “What is it”?

The amorphous character of the mascot was demonstrated during the closing ceremony of the Games of the XXV Olympiad in Barcelona (1992). Already then, it aroused much controversy and criticism of the media.

Later, its appearance was changed and it got a new name – “Izzy” (a variation of the term Whatizit). A selected group of 32 children aged 7-12 chose the name “Izzy” for the mascot, out of a total of 3300 proposals sent from children from the entire United States of America. The choice of the name was justified in such a way that “Izzy” sounded proudly, like a winner.

“Izzy” was a funny yet a bit clumsy figurine of a teenager which lived in the world of fantasy – inside of the Olympic flame. For this reason when the mascot appeared in drawings it usually held the Olympic torch in its hand and the torch blazed with colorful stars.

The Film Animation Studio Roman Inc. produced an entire series of short TV films whose main character was “Izzy”.

Mascots of the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney (2000)

"Syd" the Platypus, "Millie" the Echidna, "Olly" the Kookaburra

The Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney (2000) chose as official mascots three animals, endemic to the natural environment of Australia and Tasmania: the duck-billed platypus, the echidna and the kookaburra (kingfisher). There was no kangaroo among them, which according to natives – Aborigines – was their spiritual primogenitor and protector. Today's Australians regard the kangaroo as symbol of the entire continent.

The three chosen mascots are specimens of rare and protected Australian animals which symbolize the natural environment. They live: platypus – in water, echidna – on land, kookaburra (kingfisher) – in the air.

Platypus (zool. *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) – is a water mammal from the order of monotremes (length of ca. 60 cm); its jaws end with a corneous bill, as in a duck.

Short-beaked echidna (zool. *Tachyglossus aculeatus*) belongs to the order of terrestrial monotremes (length of ca. 50 cm); its back is covered with numerous spines, has a distinctive snout and a specialized tongue. It is an ant- and termite eater and lives in burrows.

Kookaburra belongs to the family of protected birds of the Coraciiformes order; it is called "kookaburra" in the language of Australian natives. It is a large to very large terrestrial tree kingfisher (length from 28 up to 42 cm), which emits a shrilling sound, similar to a rough outcry and is sometimes associated with echoing human laughter. Its plumage is generally bright, with azure-blue and rufous under parts. It has a big head with a crest and a short, daggerlike bill. It has short legs with four toes and a stubby tail. Although Kookaburras are close cousins of kingfishers, they are generally not closely associated with



water and can be found in several different habitats, ranging from humid forest to arid savanna. They are carnivorous and will eat insects, mice, snakes, small reptiles or the young of other birds. They also get used to eating raw or cooked meat offered by humans when they live in suburban and residential areas with tall trees or near running water and where food can be searched for easily.

All three mascots received names symbolizing the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney and referring to their valuable features.

The Platypus named “Syd” (contraction from Sydney) symbolized the environment and leadership qualities of Australians – energy and vigor; Echidna “Millie” (from

Millennium) symbolized the new millennium, activeness and creative ideas, while the Kookaburra “Olly” (from Olympic Games) symbolized the Olympic spirit and generosity.

The author of the mascots was Matthew Hatton, a visual artist and resident of Sydney. He gave the animals a close-to-nature look, yet designed them in more colorful patterns than those seen in nature; they were made of plush. Polish athletes found resemblance of the three amicable animals to the animals from the children’s “Sesame Street” TV series. The Olympic mascots: “Syd”, “Millie” and “Olly” were also an excellent commercial product.

Mascots of the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad in Athens (2004)

“Athena” and “Phevos” Dolls

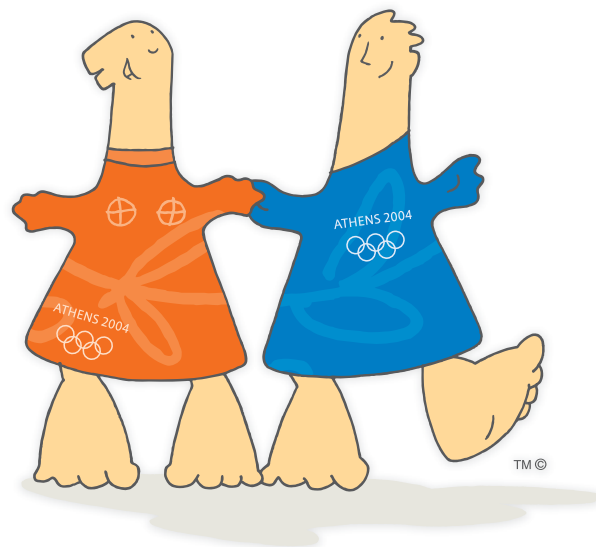
Two Greek dolls, symbolizing characters of mythological Greek gods: Athena (Athenà), the goddess of wisdom and protector of the city of Athens, and Phevos (Phèvos), god of light and music, were the official mascots of the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad in Athens in 2004.

On 26 February 2001 the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games in Athens (ATHOC) announced a contest for the Olympic mascot. Design offices and individual artists from the entire world submitted 196 different designs and proposals. As many as 127 proposals were qualified to the final stage. On 26 October 2001, the Assessment Committee announced that the design of Spyros Gogos, a Greek visual artist, produced by “Paragraph Design” Ltd., had won.

Two years before the Olympics, the organizers presented the designs of the official Olympic mascots which were modeled on ancient terracotta dolls figurines, displayed in the National Archeological Museum in Athens.

Dolls are the oldest and most favorite toy of children, especially girls. In the “golden age” of Greek culture, the doll developed from earlier figurines of gods and symbols of fertility. The oldest Greek dolls date back to 8th-7th century BC. They were made from ceramics, terracotta, wood or fabric; ancient Greek dolls became a source of inspiration to choose Athena and Phevos as mascots of the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad. Mascots were made from ceramics or colored plush: Athena – orange plush and Phevos – blue plush.

Gods of ancient Greece were identified with basic values of the modern Olympic movement such as legacy, brotherhood, equality and noble rivalry. The “Athena”



and “Phevos” Olympic mascots were supposed to constitute a bridge between the history of Ancient Greece and the modern era, between Ancient Olympics in Olympia and Olympiads of the modern era. Both mascots were twin siblings and thus symbolized the “bond of the Olympic family”.

In ancient Athens the biggest sports event, the Panathenaic Games organized from the year 566 BC, were devoted to Athena. The Games of the I Olympiad in 1896 were held in the stadium which was built on the place of the ancient Panathenaic stadium. The center of Apollo’s worship – the Games’ mythological founder – was Delphi, where Pythian Games have been organized since 586 BC (the name derives from the “Pythia” oracle); the Olympics in Delphi included sports and musical agons patronized by Apollo who carried the epithet “Pythius”.

Mascots of the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing (2008)

Stylized dolls: “Beibei” the Fish, “Jingjing” the Panda, “Huanhuan” the Olympic Flame, “Yingying” the Tibetan Antelope and “Nini” the Swallow

Five mascots in colors of the five Olympic rings accompanied the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing in 2008. These stylized dolls, although similar in appearance, differed from each other through characteristic elements and patterns on their heads which symbolized their species and nature: water, forest, fire, earth and sky. They referred to the origins of Chinese folklore, famous for its rich in ornament art. Han Meilin, an artist, was the creator of mascots. They were produced from color plush by the “Shanghai Haixin Toys” company.

As many as 662 designers applied for the creation of the official mascot of the Olympics. Proposals came in from different regions of China and mainly referred to animals; the western Chinese Qinghai province lobbied for the Tibetan antelope at risk of becoming extinct; the Fujian province proposed the Chinese tiger; Gansu was fascinated with a mythical dragon and Jiangsu promoted the legendary King of Monkeys.

For the first time, the Chinese mascots were officially presented on Friday, 11 November 2005 in Beijing; a considerable interest and media recognition accompanied the event. The presentation was connected to the beginning of the countdown before the opening of the Games of the XXIX Olympiad on 8 August 2008, at eight o'clock in the evening. From 12 November 2005 to the opening ceremony of the Olympics, 1000 days were left.

Mascots were a special gift of Beijing to the world and the entire Olympic Movement; they expressed wishes of “peace, friendship, prosperity and harmony” – said du-

ring his presentation Lin Qi, Chairman of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG). During a formal gala, large mascots accompanied artists performing on stage.

President of the IOC, Jacques Rogge, sent to the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games a congratulatory letter in which he wrote, “China should feel happy with so many animals representing the Olympic spirit. I like all of them and I believe that this small group of friends will become extremely popular and will help deliver the Olympic message to the entire world. I am also certain that the mascots will move the hearts of people in the whole world”.

The Mascots represented the multi-century and multi-ethnic culture of China; they expressed characteristic national traits and the traditional philosophy of a harmonious co-existence of people with nature. The number and colors of the five mascots were connected to five Olympic rings and symbolized the five powers and elements of nature: water, forest, fire, earth and sky, regarded by ancient Chinese as the origins of the world.

In order to popularize the mascots, a series of animated TV cartoons was filmed in China. The broadcast of 55 episodes of the series began in the second half of 2007. According to the scenario, mascots illustrated the hundred years' history of the modern Olympic Movement in consecutive episodes.

Lai Ming, marketing director of the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games, announced that profit from sales of mascots and gadgets, carrying the logo of



Beibei



Jingjing



Huanhuan

the Olympic Games, exceeded 300 million dollars and was higher than in Athens.

Four of the mascots represented the most popular and characteristic animals of China: the fish, the panda, the Tibetan antelope and the swallow; the fifth mascot symbolized the Olympic flame and, at the same time, the Olympic spirit. Their names were: “Beibei” (fish); “Jingjing” (panda); “Huanhuan” (Olympic flame); “Yingying” (Tibetan antelope) and “Nini” (swallow). The name of each of the mascots was formed of two identical (repeated) syllables, reflecting the traditional way of expressing satisfaction in China. Thus, with their expression, mascots symbolized joy and play of small, amused children. Together, all five of the Olympic mascots carried a resonant name “Fuwa” which in Chinese means “good-luck dolls”. The five names originated from the Chinese phrase: “Bei jing huan ying ni” which meant “Welcome to Beijing”. The mascots’ tummies bore an embroidered logo of the Olympic Games; below it was the inscription “Beijing 2008” and drawn were the five Olympic rings.

The white-blue mascot named “Beibei” was a fish representing rivers, lakes and the Chinese sea; it brought with itself blessing, auspiciousness and prosperity. The wavy patterns on its head were taken from old Chinese paintings. “Beibei” was an anchor of gentleness and purity, patron of water sports and represented the blue Olympic ring.

The white-black-green mascot named “Jingjing” was a panda, symbolizing Chinese forests and nature. It brought smile, happiness and joy with itself. It symbolized man’s need of living in harmony with nature and the protection of nature’s resources for future generations. The image of the lotus plants on its head was taken from the patterns of Chinese ceramics dating back to the Song dynasty. “Jingjing” represented physical strength and the black Olympic ring.

The red-white mascot named “Huanhuan” was the main character among the five “Fuwa”. It symbolized the Olympic flame, a friendly welcoming and the warm reception on the part of the host of the Olympics – Beijing. The fiery patterns on the head of the mascot were inspired



Yingying



Nini

with Dunhuang paintings. “Huanhuan” was the patron of ball games; it represented the red Olympic ring.

The yellow-beige-green mascot named “Yingying” was a fast and agile Tibetan antelope, moving with grace and charm. Tibetan antelopes were the first animals to enjoy legal protection. The mascot symbolized the extensiveness of the Chinese landscape, harmony and nature. It promoted the values of health and powers stemming from coexistence with nature. Decorative ornaments on its head referred to traditional elements of Tibetan culture and Sinkiang tradition representing western parts of China. Thanks to its versatility, “Yingying” was associated with track and field competitions; it represented the yellow Olympic ring.

The purple green mascot named “Nini” was a swallow. Its wings symbolized infinity and space. It brought with itself wishes of auspiciousness and success in life. The name of the swallow in Chinese language is “yan”, and “Yanjing” – is the former name of Beijing. Amongst the “Fuwa”, “Nini” was an innocent and joyful creature. The mascot patronized gymnastics and represented the green Olympic ring.

A tradition of good wishes, expressed through signs and symbols, characterized the ancient culture of China. “Fuwa” perfectly reflected this tradition through their symbolism. Apart from that, “Fuwa” symbolized the motto of the Beijing Olympics: “One World – One Dream”.

Mascots of the Games of the XXX Olympiad in London (2012)

“Wenlock” and “Mandeville”



Wenlock

Mandeville
(Paralympic Games)

On 19 May 2010, during an evening broadcast of the BBC's "The One Show", two futuristic mascots of the Games of the XXX Olympiad („Wenlock”) and the Paralympic Games („Mandeville”) in London in 2012 were officially presented. Organizers of the Games in London usually presented both of the mascots together.

The mascots were two steel, one-eyed figurines: “Wenlock” and his cousin “Mandeville”, both carrying names of British historical background. They bring closer the beginnings of the Olympic Movement and the birth of the Paralympic Games. The author of story concepts for Wenlock and Mandeville was Michael Morpurgo and the creator – the Iris Creative Agency.

Both the Mascots have an appearance from science fiction movies. It is thanks to a combination of streamlined shapes with eye-catching “additions”. Their steel-blue shape wasn't accidental because they were created

from drops of steel alloy, used for the construction of the Olympic stadium.

“Wenlock's” head shape represented the three Olympic medals: gold, silver and bronze; at the top of its head there was a trapezoidal light, inspired by the London taxi hire sign. “Mandeville's” head shape represented the agitos – the three crescents from the Paralympics logo; it contained the same trapezoidal light as “Wenlock”. “Faces” of the mascots were video cameras, recording important events during the Olympic Games. The cameras were supplied with an eye lens and their shape resembled the Olympic stadium in London.

“Wenlock” had five friendship rings on his wrists, corresponding to the five Olympic rings: blue, black and red – on its left forearm, and yellow and green – on its right; “Mandeville” carried a stopwatch for measuring results and personal bests during the Games – on its right wrist. Both mascots were added the logo of the Games.

They name “Wenlock” was given to the mascot in honor of the village of Much Wenlock in Shropshire, England, where in 1849 William Penny Brookes (1809-1895), a doctor and teacher, initiated local Games under the name of “Much Wenlock Olympian Games”, whose task was comprehensive physical education of the youth and enrichment of the village's cultural life. In October 1850, William Penny Brookes established, also in Wenlock, the Much Wenlock Olympian Society which took patronage over the Games and popularized moral values of sport inspired by ancient Greece. During the opening of the Games a flag with a Greek inscription was carried; additionally, winners received olive wreaths and medals in shape of the Maltese cross. Every medal had an image of Nike, the goddess of victory, with the quote of Pindar: “There are Rewards for

Glorious Deeds". Residents and neighbors (i. a. Birmingham) of Much Wenlock participated in the competitions. The program of the Games was constantly updated; it included a few track and field competitions (including the pentathlon), leaping in distance race as well as football and cricket games. In 1859, William Penny Brookes introduced also the poetry and essay writing contest into the Games. He kept close contact with organizers of the then "Olympics" – the Greek Games held in Athens in 1859, 1870, 1875 and 1889. In 1865, the local Wenlock Olympian Society transformed into the National Olympian Association, under the aegis of which competitions were held in London (1866), Birmingham (1867), Shrewsbury (1877) and Hadley (1883). These competitions later evolved into the tradition of the Games of the British Empire which, after the Second World War, were renamed to the Commonwealth Games.

In October 1890, Pierre de Coubertin watched the Much Wenlock Olympian Games, which he described on 25 December 1890 in an article entitled "Les Jeux Olympiques à Much Wenlock. Une page de l'histoire de l'athlétisme", in the "La Revue Athlétique" (No. 12, pp. 705-713) magazine. It is commonly believed that this visit inspired Pierre de Coubertin to organize the Olympic Games of the modern era.

The name of the second mascot "Mandeville" comes from the name of Stoke Mandeville town in Bucking-

hamshire, where the idea of the Paralympic Games was born. In 1944, at the local hospital, the "National Spinal Injuries Centre" was established. Four years later, on the occasion of the Games of the XIV Olympiad in London (1948), the hospital's neurosurgeon Ludwig Guttmann organized the first unofficial games in Stoke Mandeville under the name of "International Wheelchair Games". The competitions turned out to be effective both in motor as well as mental rehabilitation, rebuilding the self-confidence of handicapped people and reducing their feeling of social isolation. In the following years, ninepins, track and field, archery, fencing and table tennis were included in the Games. In 1952, the first "Stoke Mandeville Games for the Paralyzed" were organized and subsequently continued on a yearly basis. They were held under the aegis of the "International Stoke Mandeville Games Federation (ISMGF)". The first Paralympic Games were held in Rome in 1960 (directly after the Games of the XVII Olympiad), under the patronage of the International Stoke Mandeville Games Federation and the IOC. The participants of the Games were received in a private audience by Pope John XXIII who said to Ludwig Guttmann the famous sentence: "You are the Coubertin of the Paralympic Games".

This way a tradition of the Wheelchair Olympics whose name was changed in 1984 to "Paralympics", and later to "Paralympic Games", has begun.

MASCOTS OF THE OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

Mascot of the XII Olympic Winter Games in Innsbruck (1976)

“Mandele” the Little Snowman

The first official mascot of the Winter Games appeared at the XII Olympic Winter Games in Innsbruck in 1976. It was a little snowman (in German: Schneemann) named “Mandele” thus it was often called “Schneemandl”. The designer of the mascot was Walter Poetsch, an Austrian visual artist. The mascot was made from white plastic; the hands and feet of the little snowman were attached directly to its head.

The little snowman had a red nose in shape of a carrot, big black eyes, it wore a red Tyrolean hat with a white string around it and cheerfully smiled “from ear to ear”. The little snowman character represented: snow and winter, singing and dancing Tyrol and the famous Tyrolean hospitality.

A second version of the mascot, a little plush snowman, which enjoyed particular popularity among children, was produced especially for collectors. The image



© International Olympic Committee

of the “Mandele” little snowman mascot was found on all sorts of memorabilia from the Winter Games in Innsbruck. The little Olympic snowman mascots were also present in all sports facilities and venues.

Mascot of the XIII Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid (1980)

“Roni” the Raccoon



The Mascot of the XIII Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid was an arboreal predatory mammal – the raccoon (zool. *Procyon lotor*), which was named “Roni”. The animal (ca. 65-80 cm long) has valuable fur of a yellow-bronze-gray color and a characteristic long, striped tail (25 cm long). For this reason, the raccoon is sometimes bred by humans on farms. The animal becomes easily domesticated. The choice of raccoon for the mascot of the Olympics was highly accurate. This is because it was believed that the area of black fur around the raccoons eyes, contrasting sharply with the surrounding white face coloring, as well as its big, prominent eyes, resemble goggles carried by skiers. Hence, “Roni” was usually shown as a skier in ski outfit and with ski equipment. The mascot had the emblem of the XIII Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid printed on its torso.

Raccoons are associated with the symbol of American success. They live mainly in forests and on rivers but

are able to adapt to all sorts of living conditions. They are both carnivores and herbivores but before eating they rinse their food in water. In addition, they flap their paws in such a way it seems as if they were washing something. Hence the nickname “washer” is often added to the name of the raccoon in many languages.

A stylized drawing of the raccoon was chosen as the Olympic mascot from 500 projects sent to the contest, which was announced by the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Winter Games. The winner was Donald Moss, an artist, while the producer – “Capital Sports” company. The model for the mascot was a real raccoon named “Rocky” from Lake Placid which, however, didn’t live to see the Olympics.

The competition for the mascots name was won by a 12-year-old boy with a family name of Polish origin, Tom Golonka from Guilderland, NY, who named the friendly raccoon “Roni”. It was an abbreviated form of the raccoon’s name, used by American Indians from the tribe of Iroquois who dwelt these areas before the arrival of white settlers. Before inventing the name “Roni”, Tom read a lot of books about the life of American Indian tribes. Among them was the “Iroquois culture” written by Judith Drumm, containing many expressions in the irokua-kaddo, tongue such as Oniente Ati-Ron and Niwa-a Ati-Ron, which were names used by the Iroquois to call the white raccoon or the small raccoon.

Long before the opening of the XIII Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid, the mascot of the raccoon welcomed the viewers of the ABC Corporation’s popular TV program “Good Day America” as well as guests visiting the Great New York State Fair in Syracuse.

Mascot of the XIV Olympic Winter Games in Sarajevo (1984)

“Vučko” the Wolf Cub

The mascot of the XIV Olympic Winter Games in Sarajevo was a mountain wolf cub with a knowing look and smile. His creator was a Slovenian artist named Jože Trobec from Kranj at the Sava River. The wolf cub was chosen as the Olympic mascot by readers of a few popular Yugoslav newspapers, after a competition with other contest finalists: a snowball, a lamb, a hedgehog, a mountain goat and a weasel. The decision to choose the wolf cub as the Olympic mascot was made due to its attributes: courage and strength, needed by athletes in fight for Olympic medals. The name “Vučko” given to the mascot derived from the Serbo-Croatian term for wolf (vuk).

In terms of artistic design, “Vučko” belonged to the most expressive and successful Olympic mascots. From the beginning, he aroused positive feelings, since he resembled the funny and well-known characters of Disneyland. “Vučko” was a hero of thousands of press articles, radio reports and TV broadcasts. He appeared as a skier, a ski jumper and a skater on numerous drawings; he showed ambition, fighting spirit and courage, this way making up for his lack of sports skills.

According to the IOC, thanks to the mascot it was possible to change the unfavorable stereotype about wolves in the region.



© International Olympic Committee

Mascots of the XV Olympic Winter Games in Calgary (1988)

“Hidy” and “Howdy” Polar Bear Cubs

© International Olympic Committee



Participants of the XV Olympic Winter Games in Calgary were welcomed by two polar bear cubs, created by Sheila Scott and produced by “Great Scott Productions”. It was the first pair of mascots in history of Olympiads and or the Olympic Winter Games. As many as 7000 projects flowed into the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Winter Games. The choice of mascots and their names took as long as three years.

The polar bear cubs were siblings. The girl was called “Hidy”, and the boy “Howdy”. The godmother of the friendly mascots was Kim Johnstone, a schoolgirl from a school in Calgary. The siblings personified cordiality and hospitality of Canadians. The pair invited all athletes and spectators to the Olympic Games in Calgary in two official languages of Canada – in English: “Come Together in Calgary” and in French: “Rassemblez-vous à Calgary”.

In contrast to the brown bear which hibernates, polar bears (zool. *Ursus maritimus*) remain active during freezing winter and live in the neighborhood of people, dwelling this Arctic region.

Centuries ago, these extensive areas, covered with forests, full of wild game and inhabited by American Indian tribes, were lonely traversed by adventurers and hunters – the first settlers of Canada. They established the new state in remarkably difficult conditions.

Mascots, referring to those times (dressed in cowboy suits), were supposed to trigger among Canadian Olympic athletes the qualities of the first settlers of the Maple Leaf Country: courage, resistance to difficulty and the will to win.

Mascot of the XVI Olympic Winter Games in Albertville (1992)

“Magique” the Snow Imp

The original concept of the mascot of the XVI Olympic Winter Games in Albertville was a mountain goat – the symbol of the Savoy Alpine region. Ultimately, a snow imp won the Olympic contest – a mischievous mountain spirit which, according to old folk legends, once haunted local villages and, with a sudden, upsetting giggle, broke the silence and peace of their inhabitants.

The mascot was called “Magique” (magician, wizard), because it was supposed to bring the French team luck and the organizers – fabulous profits.

This mysterious mascot with a playful smile was invented by Corinne Requet who based it on an IBM computer drawing and was designed by Philippe Mairesse in a unique star shape. The mascot resembled a star-shaped mountain imp and the name referred to the association of star and magic. The mascot’s dress was in national colors of France: red, white and royal blue. A pointed, red hat with a small pompom on a string decorated the head – a type of hat wore by dwarfs in fairytales.

“Magique” performed the role of coach to the volunteers of the Winter Games in Albertville. It was programmed into computer terminals, used by thousands of volunteers involved in helping with the Games. Thanks to a special educational program, volunteers gained knowledge about history of the Winter Games, essential in their daily work. The terminals were installed in all



© International Olympic Committee

sorts of places: on Olympic venues, in travel agencies, at schools, where, with the help of “Magique”, all those interested could obtain necessary information about the Games program, athletes, sports results etc.

During the Games, the “Magique” mascot appeared at several places and in different situations. It also led the spectacular, simply magical, opening ceremony of the XVI Olympic Winter Games in Albertville.

Mascots of the XVII Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer (1994)

“Håkon” and “Kristin” Children Pair

Norwegian visual artists Kari and Werner Grossmann designed a pair of royal children: Håkon and Kristin as mascots of the XVII Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer. They were the first Olympic mascots in form of human figures and the first mascots with a historical background.

Legend says that in the 13th century, Sverre the King of Norway, backed by his supporters – the Birkebeiners, fought a war against Baglers, his avid for power enemies. During clashes, two royal soldiers fled the enemy at night from Lillehammer with a 18-month-old Håkon, the grandson of King Sverre, and forced their way with the child on skis through forests and snowstorms to Østerdalen in the north. During the escape, Håkon’s aunt Kristin, daughter of King Sverre, granted them refuge. Later, in 1217, Håkon became the King of Norway.

Mascots were presented as two fair-haired, blue-eyed royal children dressed in traditional Norwegian clothing, which carried the logo of the XVII Olympic Winter Games. They were produced from all sorts of materials and in dif-



© International Olympic Committee

ferent sizes e.g. as plush puppets, carved wooden figurines, plastic souvenirs and metal ornaments. They also decorated posters of the Winter Games and all sorts of occasional publications.

Mascots of the XVIII Olympic Winter Games in Nagano (1998)

“Sukki”, “Nokki”, “Lekki” and “Tsukki” Snowlets

© International Olympic Committee



A little weasel, dressed in red jacket and cap with a small pompom, designed by a Japanese artist Susumu Matsushita according to the concept of Masako Ootsuki, was designed as the Olympic mascot of the XVIII Olympic Winter Games in Nagano (1998). It was named “Snowple”, in Japanese language “Okajo”.

However, during the blazing of Olympic ski tracks a group of snowy owls – a protected species – was found. In order not to frighten them away, the track was changed and the four snowy owls – “Snowlets”, in Japanese “Yukinko” – became mascots of the Olympics in Nagano and the symbol of respect for the natural environment.

Snowy owls (zool. *Bubo scandiaca*) from the Strigidae family belong to a protected predatory bird species. They have a chunky body, about 60 cm long, with a ca. 150 cm wingspan. They have a thick white plumage with dark scalloping. Their big forward-facing eyes and a sharp

hooked beak make them easy to recognize. They have excellent eyesight (binocular vision) and hearing. Dawn and dusk are their time of hunting. They live on treeless, hilly areas of Scandinavia, Central Asia and North America. Owls are regarded as the symbol of wisdom.

The English name of snowy owls, “Snowlets”, comes from merging the first letters of the owls’ names called: “Sukki”, “Nokki”, “Lekki” and “Tsukki”. Each of them symbolized one of the four consecutive years between the Olympic Games. Four owls represented simultaneously the four main Japanese islands: Hokkaido, Honshū, Kyushu and Shikoku.

The images of mascots pictured very little resemblance to snowy owls. They were rather avant-garde animated cartoons with a characteristic expression of owl’s eyes. The artist painted the white owls in different colors probably for marketing purposes.

Mascots of the XIX Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City (2002)

“Powder” the Snowshoe Hare,
“Coal” the Black Bear and “Copper” the Coyote



© International Olympic Committee

The Organizing Committee for the XIX Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City chose three protected animals from the family of mammals, living in forests of the Rocky Mountains, as the Games' mascots. They were:

a white hare – a snowshoe hare (zool. *Lepus americanus*), smaller than the European hare (ca. 55 cm long) which has a changeable coat color; in summer the coat is colored in various shades of brown, and in preparation for winter it molts into a white pelage with black tufts of fur on the tips of its ears;

an American black bear (zool. *Ursus americanus*), a predator (ca. 1.2 m – 2.5 m body length) of mainly black coat and a massive body build;

a coyote (zool. *Canis latrans*), a predator, with the appearance of a small wolf (ca. 1 m long and 55 cm stand), of a yellowish pelt with grey and black maculae.

These three mascots symbolized tradition, natural environment and legends of the American West.

Centuries ago American Indian tribes – indigenous inhabitants of the State of Utah – engraved on rock walls silhouettes of animals which lived in that area. The primitive cave petroglyphs became a base of beliefs, legends and native stories which taught entire generations of people the esteem and respect for the animal world and living in accordance with the natural environment. Cave drawings of animals in Utah State became a source of inspiration for authors of the Games' mascots: Landor/ Publicis.

The official presentation of the mascots was made exactly 1000 days before the opening ceremony of the XIX Olympic Winter Games. At the same time, the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Winter Games

announced a contest for names of mascots. The “Three Names for the Games” campaign started on 1 July 2000. It was a broadly propagated action of activating children and the youth in line with the slogan: “Olympic Mascots form the bond of children with the Olympics”. As many as 42 000 proposals were submitted, mainly from school-children in the State of Utah.

Having regard to the animals’ natural coat coloration, the mascots were named: the mountain hare – “Powder”, the coyote – “Copper” and the bear – “Coal”.

Distinctive features of these animals reflected the Latin Olympic motto *Citius-Altius-Fortius* (Faster, Higher, Stronger). Each mascot wore a charm around its neck with an original Anasazi or Fremont-style petroglyph picturing the animal to underline their connection to symbolism of the American Indians. The animals are major characters in the legends of local American Indians, and these legends are reflected in the story of each mascot. The stories also expressed the type and character of these animals: the speed and keenness of the hare, the agility and the ability of the coyote to climb up high mountain peaks and the huge strength of the bear.

The “Powder” snowshoe hare represented the word *Citius* – Faster. The Native American legend says that when the sun was too close to the earth and was burn-

ing it, the hare ran to the top of a mountain, and shot her arrow into the sun. This caused it to drop lower in the sky, cooling the earth.

The “Copper” coyote represented the word *Altius* – Higher – because it was able to climb up to the mountain peaks. The Native American legend says that when the earth froze and turned dark, the coyote climbed to the highest mountaintop and stole a flame from the fire people. He returned and brought warmth and light to the people.

The “Coal” black bear, an eternal symbol of power and strength, represented the word *Fortius* – Stronger. The Native American tale says that hunters were never able to kill the mighty bear. Today the sons of these hunters still chase the bear across the night sky, as constellations.

Plush mascots (\$20 a piece) and other knick-knacks with images of mascots (T-shirts, bags, key rings, pendants, stained-glass decorations, cartoons) were sold at the airport, downtown, in hotels, restaurants, at Olympic venues and in the Olympic village, assuring organizers a marketing success and buyers – joy. They also foretold luck during the stay at the Olympic Games.

Beneath the ski jump the spectators and fans were entertained by ... “real” Olympic mascots, to their great delight.

Mascots of the XX Olympic Winter Games in Turin (2006)

“Neve” the Snowball and “Gliz” the Ice Cube

On 25 March 2003 the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Winter Games (TOROC) announced an international contest for the mascots of the XX Olympic Winter Games. The contest was won by a 38-year-old Portuguese designer, Pedro Albuquerque, who found his artistic inspiration in winter landscape.

In September 2004, 500 days before the opening ceremony of the Winter Games, organizers presented the Olympic mascots: two cartoon characters resembling a snowball and an ice cube named “Neve” and “Gliz”. Pedro Albuquerque said his mascots represented the Olympic values of friendship, fair play and spirit of competition. According to the author’s intention, both mascots reflected two natural elements of winter: snow and ice, in lack of which the Olympic Winter Games could not be held.

“Neve” was a roundly shaped, delicate, nice and elegant snowball dressed in a red costume; “Gliz” was an ice cube dressed in a blue costume. The emblem of the Winter Games was depicted on mascots’ dresses. The plush mascots enjoyed a great demand.

© International Olympic Committee



Both of the mascots smiled playfully and radiated with joy, enthusiasm, passion and culture. Together they were a symbol of the young generation, full of life and energy. Mascots resembled the characters from comic books, cartoons and computer games for children.

Mascots of the XXI Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver (2010)

“Miga” the Mythical Sea Bear, “Quatchi” the Sasquatch
and “Mukmuk” the Vancouver Island Marmot



Three characters named “Miga”, “Quatchi” (official mascots) and “Mukmuk” (an unofficial mascot accompanying them) were chosen as mascots of the XXI Olympic Winter Games. The mascots were designed by Vicki Wong and Michael Murphy and produced by “Meomi Design” studio. Mascots portrayed creatures which, according to Canadian legends and beliefs of primal American Indian tribes, were the first to inhabit the Pacific Coast of Canada.

“Miga” was a mythical sea bear, part orca and part kermode bear. Orca (zool. *Orcinus orca*), also known as killer whale, is a predatory mammal of the Delphinidae family, Cetacea order, 6-10 meters long with the weight of about 5 tons; it lives in the Pacific Ocean in the vicinity of Vancouver, British Columbia. It has a black back, white chest and sides, and a white patch above and behind the

eye. It has a rounded head, large and rounded pectoral fins and a long triangular-shaped dorsal fin.

Kermode bear (zool. *Ursus americanus kermodei*) – the most common white bear, inhabiting islands, coasts and ice fields round the North Pole. It has a white or creamy-colored coat. Its head is relatively small with a long neck, long torso (2.5 m) and wide feet. Its height at the withers reaches 1.60 m. According to old legends, the kermodei bear was also called as the “Bear Spirit”.

“Miga” resembled a teddy bear, colored black with a white face, white tummy and a black dorsal fin. Its neck was wrapped around with a green scarf, which contained the logo of the Winter Games. The mascot represented snowboarding.

“Quatchi” was the second official mascot. The name of the mascot derived from the English name: “Sas-

quatch" (ape-like creature), also known as the "Big Foot". Sasquatch was a big (ca. 2 m – 2.40 m tall) hairy ape-like creature (anthropoid), well-known from the American Indian legends, moving on two long, big feet. In the past, it dwelt the mysterious forests of Western Canada. It is the North American equivalent of "Yeti". Quatchi – a red-brown, shaggy mascot resembled a wild creature. It represented ice hockey.

The official mascots "Miga" and "Quatchi" were often accompanied by a friendly, unofficial mascot named

"Mukmuk" – a Vancouver Island marmot (zool. *Marmota vancouverensis*), rodent from the family of Sciuridae. The marmot has a chunky body, a chocolate-brown fur color with white patches and a long tail. It uses loud whistles when alarmed.

All three mascots represented the slogan of the XXI Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver: "With Glowing Hearts" – taken from the anthem of Canada entitled "O Canada".