

The XXIX Olympic Games will be held on 8–24 August 2008 in Beijing. Representatives of 28 sport events will compete for 302 medal sets. Organisers expect that flags of as many as 205 National Olympic Committees will be carried in the Olympic opening parade ceremony. Lithuania's flag will also be flapping among them. Although China has been famous for its philosophy from the old times, the Olympic movement philosophy has been alike during all times – to dignify the body, spirit and intelligence and unite them into one entirety, to propagate noble ideals, peace and freedom.

The National Olympic Committee under the name of Lithuanian Sports League (LSL) was established in Lithuania on 2 December 1923 in an extraordinary congress of LSL. The then Statute of this organisation established a provision obligating the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Sports League to organise the Olympic movement in Lithuania. Lithuania's sportsmen made their debut in the Summer Olympic Games in 1924 in Paris. 13 sportsmen – 11 football players and 2 cyclists took part in these games. In four years time a debut was made in the Winter Olympic Games by the skater Kęstutis Bulota in Saint Maurice. During the interwar period Lithuania had 25 Olympians. They competed in football, cycling, boxing, track-and-field, weight lifting and skating contests.

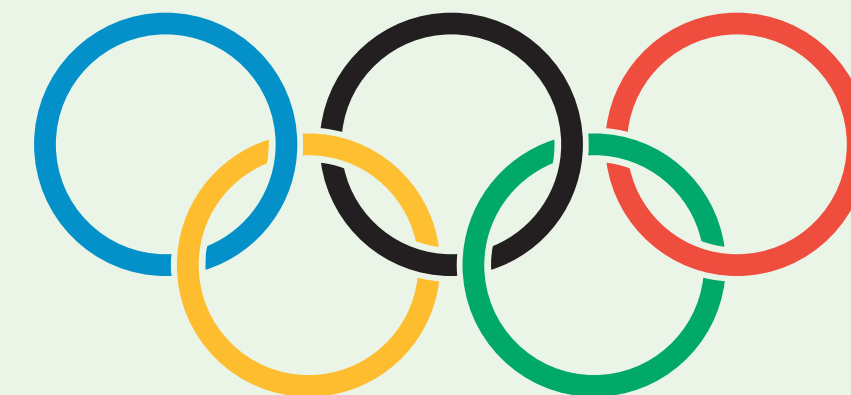
In the period 1952–1988 Lithuania's sportsmen could participate in the Olympic Games only as members of the USSR teams. 84 Lithuanian athletes competed in the Summer Olympic Games in Helsinki, Melbourne, Rome, Tokyo,



Mexico, Munich, Montreal, Moscow and Seoul and won 23 gold, 19 silver, and 15 bronze medals. In the Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo and Calgary the Lithuanians Algimantas Šalna was awarded a gold medal and Vida Vencienė earned gold and bronze medals.

The idea to re-establish the Lithuanian National Olympic Committee emerged in 1988. On December 11 of that year a congress of the Lithuanian sports federations, organisations and representatives of the public was held in Vilnius and it re-founded the Lithuanian Olympic organisation under the name the Lithuanian National Olympic Committee (LNOC). From that date the first attempts to recognise it on an international scale have been started. Only on 11 November 1991 the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne announced the recognition of LNOC, rehabilitated Lithuania to the international Olympic family and invited to take part in the 1992 Olympic Games.

In 1992 an independent delegation from Lithuania participated in the XVI Winter Olympic Games in Albertville and XXV Olympic Games in Barcelona. The Barcelona Olympic Games



became memorable for Lithuania – the discus thrower Romas Ubartas earned a gold medal and the basket-ball team was awarded a bronze medal for the first time in the history of the independent Lithuania. The XXVII Olympic Games in Sydney were the most successful for Lithuania. In these Games the shot Daina Gudžinevičiūtė and discus thrower Virgilijus Alekna won gold medals, cyclist Diana Žiliūtė, rowers Kristina Poplavskaja and Birutė Šakickienė as well as the men's basketball team were decorated with bronze medals. In the XXVIII Olympic Games in Athens in 2004, Virgilijus Alekna earned a second gold medal, and silver medals were presented to the track-and-field athlete Austra Skujytė and pentathlonist Andrejus Zadneprovskis. For the first time in the Olympic Games history the Lithuanian basketball players achieved a victory against the USA team. Unfortunately, they were left without any medals –dropped to the fourth place...

The Olympic Games history covers thousands of years, but the life of commemorative Olympic coins is shorter. Several coins commemorating games of ancient times are known. Historical sources prove that the first Olympic coin that is known was issued in 480 B.C. It was meant to immortalize the victory of Anaksylos, proprietor of the Sicilian region, achieved in the charioteers races.

The Lithuanian 50 litas coin to mark the XXIX Olympic Games in Beijing (People's Republic of China) will be the fourth Olympic coin in the set of Lithuanian Collectors Coins. The first 50 litas silver coin was issued to mark the XXVI Olympic Games in Atlanta (USA). Its reverse contains two basketball players.



The second 50 litas silver coin appeared on the eve of the Sydney Olympic Games – in 2000. Its reverse bears the image of a discus thrower. The reverse of the third coin contains images of cycling representatives. All sport events representatives depicted on the Lithuanian coins have won Olympic gold medals.

The reverse of the fourth Olympic coin bears the image of a stylized runner. It is not, perhaps, very much realistic for Lithuania's runners to dream about Olympic medals in Beijing, but Lithuania has a marathon runner Živilė Balčiūnaitė. She may compete for a medal in the most demanding and honest running event. Among the champions of previous Olympic Games we have the runner Remigijus Valiulis, two silver medal runners Nijolė Sabaitė-Razienė and Laimutė Baikauskaitė.

An Olympic coin is one of the best reminders and remembrances from the Games. What remains after Olympic Games? In our memory – battles and medals earned by athletes of our country, and in an album – photos, whereas the Olympic coin is among the most estimated souvenirs.

Bronius ČEKANAUSKAS



Citius Altius Fortius

50 LITAS COIN DEDICATED TO THE XXIX OLYMPIC GAMES

Silver Ag 925

Quality proof

Diameter 38.61 mm

Weight 28.28 g

*The words on the edge of the coin:
XXIX OLIMPIADOS ŽAIDYNĖS (THE XXIX OLYMPIC GAMES)*

*Designed by
Laura Grainytė
Evaldas Prižgins
Giedrius Paulauskis*

*Mintage 5000 pcs
Issue 2007*

Information is available at the Bank of Lithuania
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*The coin was minted at the
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www.lithuanian-mint.lt*

Lithuanian Collectors Coins

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LITHUANIAN COLLECTORS COINS



The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but participate, and not to defeat but compete in them.

Pierre de Coubertaine

