



Calgary to host games with 'Stampede' excitement



Saddledome in Calgary will be site of major Olympic events.

Mention Calgary and immediately the city's famous Stampede springs to mind. For ten days every July, ranchers, cowboys, farmers, workers from the nearby oil and gas fields and tourists from all over the world converge on the city. For the million or so visitors, Calgary erupts into a fiesta of rodeos, chuck wagon races, parades, dances, bands and theatre.

Next February, the city will take on quite a different character when it plays host to the 1988 winter Olympics. But the same air of excitement will doubtless prevail, as Calgarians again welcome the world and use the occasion as an excuse to celebrate.

Calgary takes on a cosmopolitan atmosphere

Calgary is a comparatively young city, having been founded in 1875 as a post for the North West Mounted Police. Yet the province of Alberta has been inhabited by Indian tribes for at least 10 000 years. There are still Indians in the area; 800 live on the Sarcee Indian Reserve to the south west of the city. But over the past century or so Alberta has attracted settlers from around the world, who have made it into one of Canada's most varied provinces.

Calgary (population, around 625 000) is situated at the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers where the great Canadian plains end and the Rockies begin. The scenery of the region is quite spectacular with its many lakes, mountain peaks, canyons, waterfalls and forests. A 1½-hour drive brings you to the Banff National Park or Lake Louise, and there are other picturesque resorts such as Jasper in the vicinity.

From the top of the 629-foot-high Calgary Tower,

you can enjoy a panoramic view of this dynamic city with its excellent hotels, shops and restaurants. Calgary's zoo is the largest in Canada, and a curiosity of the city is the Dinosaur Park which features life size models of these prehistoric beasts.

City plans Arts Festival for the winter Olympics

The arts are also well catered for, thanks to the Glenbow Alberta Institute which has built an art gallery, historical library and a museum. There is a planetarium too, and a new Centre for the Performing Arts which opened in 1985. The Calgary Philharmonic Society and Theatre Calgary offer a varied programme throughout the year.

During the Olympics, the city will be organising an international Arts Festival which will incorporate exciting aspects of the performing, visual and literary arts. The Calgary Philharmonic, for example, will be joined by major national and international orchestras and guest performers.

One of the exhibitions created especially for the Festival is entitled *Forget Not My World; Exploring the Canadian Native Heritage*. This will feature artefacts from 22 countries returned to Canada for the occasion. There will also be a competitive philatelic exhibition featuring winter sports.

Next February Calgary promises to have all the razzmatazz that characterises its famous Stampede ... as well as a good deal more. So whether you're a sports fanatic, an arts enthusiast or just someone out for enjoyment, southern Alberta might well prove the best place to be.

New facilities promise biggest sporting event

When the Olympic flame arrives in the McMahon Stadium on Saturday, 13th February, 1988, the curtain will go up on what promises to be the biggest winter sports event of all time. The fact that the Calgary Olympics are costing five times as much as the 1984 Winter Games in Sarajevo is some measure of what visitors to Calgary can expect.

Many of the facilities are brand new. Speed skating events will be held in the Olympic Oval — also on the university campus — which has just been completed at a cost of around £20 million. It is the world's first,

fully enclosed 400 metre speed-skating oval, and seats 4000 spectators.

Ski jumping, nordic combined, bobsleigh and luge events will be held in the Canada Olympic Park 15 minutes from the city centre. This used to be a small recreational ski area, but £35 million have transformed the spot. Now the Park boasts 70-metre and 90-metre ski jumps, as well as Canada's first bobsleigh and luge track. With more than 60 miles of refrigeration pipe, this is the most technically advanced track of its type in the world.



Luge racing was introduced as a Winter Olympic sport at Innsbruck in 1964.

First rate facilities for skating and ice hockey

Figure skating and ice hockey will be housed in the Olympic Saddledome, a unique structure with seating for 17 000 spectators. It features the world's largest concrete suspended roof. This means that every spectator has a perfect view, and no seat is more than 200 feet from the centre of the 30 x 60 metre rink. The Saddledome was completed in 1983 and is the home of the Calgary Flames Ice Hockey team.

Close to the Saddledome is the second venue for ice hockey and figure skating — the Stampede Corral, which seats 6500 and has fully up-to-date facilities. The Father David Bauer Arena, named after the coach of Canada's first national hockey team for the 1964 Winter Olympics, will also host some of the figure skating events.

Nakiska and Canmore host new Olympic skiing events

For the spectacular skiing competitions, you will need to head for the Rockies. Nakiska at Mount Allan is the venue for all the Alpine skiing competitions. The base area elevation of this 255-acre site is 5000 feet above sea level, and the vertical rise of the men's downhill run is nearly 3000 feet.

The Olympic Programme at Nakiska will include two new events: the Alpine combination and the super giant slalom. The Super G requires skiers to be very precise at high speeds, and the long sweeping high-speed turns should make this one of the most spectacular competitions in the Games.

The cross country skiing, nordic combined and the biathlon will be held at the Canmore Nordic Centre 55 minutes west of Calgary near the resort of Banff. The centre has 35 miles of competition, recreational and training trails, stadium facilities and a 32-target biathlon shooting range.

The Nordic team competition consists of a 70-metre ski jump and a 3 x 10km relay. The biathlon, on the other hand — introduced to the Olympic Games in 1960 — combines cross country skiing over distances of 10km and 20km and .22-calibre target shooting skills. There is also a relay event.

In addition to the sports competitions, there will be demonstration events in curling, short track speed skating and free-style skiing. A disabled skiing exhibition is also scheduled.

Organisers are confident of success

What happens if the unthinkable should occur and there is a shortage of snow? Calgary may have cold winters, but local meteorologists claim the city enjoys 20% more sunshine annually than does tropical Hawaii.

If there was to be an exceptionally mild winter, the

New ski jumps at the Canada Olympic Park (August 1986).

