

Olympics become Australia's claim to fame

Viewers of the 2000 Sydney games were left in awe after the competitions came to a close.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SYDNEY, Australia — Sydneysiders watched their beloved bridge spit red fire, as it foamed gold into the harbor below. Then, in a final blaze of luminous glory, the five Olympic rings exploded to blackness.

"Bring back the rings," screamed Malena Cordera, a law clerk who watched in rapt amazement Sunday night with a more than a million others. "I miss them already."

Across the water, real estate mogul Peter Kampfer beamed with pride when Juan Antonio Samaranch pronounced Sydney 2000 the "best games ever." This time, he knew, the venerable Olympics czar was not exaggerating.

"I'm speechless," said Kampfer, who is usually not. "In my wildest dreams I did not expect everything to go so well. People will go home, and they

will remember us."

After seven years of preparation, Aussies had dazzled, charmed and — if medals are counted on a per capita basis — conquered a world that too often forgets about them.

"G'day," the introductory cliché, is widely replaced by the congratulatory: "Good on ya."

Tom and Louisa Shields, on a backpack honeymoon from San Francisco, came away as committed Oz lovers. "We were really impressed, with everything," Tom said. "The people, the transport, the whole thing."

And the final flourish, an orgy of pyrotechnics that seemed to light up half the Southern Hemisphere, elevated them to gush mode.

"My God, you didn't know where to look," Louisa Shields said. "Fireworks came from overhead, from the sides, from the tops of buildings."

She forgot to mention the streak of flame 1,000 feet up as an F-111 fighter bomber buzzed the harbor bridge trailing ignited fuel.

With every outsider's acco-

lade, Australians seemed to lose more of the condition known here as "cultural cringe," a collective anxiety about what everyone else thinks about them.

"Australians now realize how good they can be, and this will inspire us in other areas," said Paul Vlagsma, a University of Sydney engineer. "As far as I'm concerned, the Olympics can go on forever."

But the games ended Sunday night, and newspaper headlines predicted psychologists would be overwhelmed with cases of post-rings letdown.

Traffic, miraculously free-flowing during the Olympics because so many Sydneysiders left town, will go back to its habitual snarl. Bar talk will be deprived of the butt of so many jokes: the Sydney organizing committee.

The games seemed to bring out the Aussies' best. Praise was heaped upon 47,000 volunteers who shepherded visitors, hauled supplies, solved problems and, essentially, made the games happen.

Wry, irreverent wit pervaded

"Australians now realize how good they can be, and this will inspire us in other areas. As far as I'm concerned, the Olympics can go on forever."

Paul Vlagsma
University of Sydney engineer

the Aussie-style Olympics, making believers of the most cynical.

Each night at 11, Australia watched "The Dream," a sort of adults-only "Sports Night" with two commentators, Roy and HG, who reported on the day's action.

Their furry stuffed animal, Fatso the Wombat, eclipsed the three official cuddly mascots. Fatso was auctioned off for \$40,000.

After being turned away from the U.S. team's party venue, they gaped at Yankee unfriendliness. In references to past games, they say "toilet" for Atlanta. New slang for visiting the men's room is "going to Atlanta."

Beneath the surface, there was bitterness and dispute. Ric Birch, who directed the smash-

hit opening ceremony and the closing, announced he was moving to California with his American wife.

In an interview with the Australian Financial Review, he excoriated politicians who organized the games. As he was designing a show about tolerance and understanding, Birch said, officials tried to fire him.

On the 36th floor of Grosvenor Place, however, Steve Marando had only positive thoughts about his city's Olympics.

"When I saw reaction to the opening ceremony, I knew we'd done it," he said. "You could walk through the streets and feel the spirit. Before, everyone knocked the Olympics. Since they began, not one negative remark."

World/Nation

The Associated Press

Jerusalem

Negotiator's accusations, ideas result in violence

Palestinian gunmen, cheered by rock-throwing rioters, fired on Israeli troops from rooftops and abandoned buildings Sunday in clashes across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Nine Palestinians were killed when Israelis returned fire, for a total of 29 in three days of bloodshed over a contested Jerusalem shrine.

The latest fighting came as Israeli and Palestinian peace negotiators traded harsh accusations instead of new ideas on how to solve their disputes.

Vatican City

Pope admits belittling other religions was wrong

Pope John Paul II took personal responsibility Sunday for a controversial Vatican assertion of the primacy of the Roman Catholic Church, saying it was wrong to see it as a belittling of other religions.

"Our confession of Christ as the only son, the medium through which we see the face of God, isn't arrogance that deprecates other religions but an expression of joyous gratitude," the Pope said, saying that dialogue had to start with making one's position clear.

Jews and leaders of some Christian denominations objected to last month's Vatican document, which renewed longstanding church assertions of its primacy over other denominations.

China

Falun Gong supporters removed from China parade

BEIJING — Police beat and dragged away hundreds of Falun Gong followers who emerged from crowds to chant and unfurl banners during China's National Day celebrations on Sunday in a protest that forced the brief closure of much of Tiananmen Square.

The banned sect's protest in Beijing's main square, one of its biggest acts of civil disobedience, was an embarrassment to Chinese leaders, showing that the meditation group remains unbowed despite a brutal 14-month crackdown.

In the morning, small groups of Falun Gong sect members seemed to materialize from among the tens of thousands of Chinese tourists who gathered on the square to mark the 51st anniversary of communist rule.

Washington D.C.

Nader, Buchanan fail to meet criteria for debate

Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan staged a mini-debate of their own Sunday and groused about being shut out of Tuesday's faceoff between George W. Bush and Al Gore.

"What are they afraid of?" asked Buchanan, the Reform Party nominee. Green Party candidate Nader said he'll be in Boston for the Bush-Gore event and joked: "Maybe I'll crawl up on the stage there."

The bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates, organizer of three 90-minute debates this month between the Republican Bush and Democrat Gore, said last week that Buchanan and Nader had failed to meet its criteria for participation Tuesday.

Candidates' names must appear on enough state ballots to have a chance of winning a majority of Electoral College votes, and they must average 15 percent support in five major national polls.

Mexico

Hurricane Keith creates havoc for part of Mexico

CHETUMAL — Coastal residents of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and northeastern Belize fled their homes Sunday as the dangerous core of Hurricane Keith came ashore, bringing strong wind and torrential rain.

With the storm packing 125-mph winds, scores of people in Chetumal, a bay-side city of 130,000, abandoned their homes.

Mexican authorities set up 15 shelters and evacuated 800 people from high-risk areas in the region, about 190 miles south of Cancun.

Austria gathering rebuilds lost youth

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ULRICHBERG, Austria — Austria's right-wing firebrand Joerg Haider joined veterans of Adolf Hitler's army on a mountaintop Sunday, and called for respect and tolerance for the generation that "lost their youth" in World War II.

Haider, former chairman of the far-right Freedom Party, received a spontaneous standing ovation from a crowd of about 2,000 aging Austrians and Germans who served in the Nazi forces.

The annual gathering has been criticized by those who see it as glossing over the horrors of the Nazi regime. Nevertheless, Haider insisted that the gathering serves to "thank those who built the peaceful Europe we enjoy today."

"Most who come here are not old Nazis or neo-Nazis," Haider said. "They are old citizens who suffered during the war and lost their youth to the war and then began to rebuild."

The Ulrichsberg gathering, held each year on the first Sunday of October, has been harshly criticized as a festival for old Nazis that

serves as a feeding ground for neo-Nazis. Three years ago, the ruin of a church that serves as a monument to Nazi soldiers who died in the war was attacked and severely damaged. It has since been restored.

Whether the criticism has sunk in or the veterans have simply mellowed with age, the theme of this year's 41st gathering centered largely on democracy for all of Europe.

During his speech to the crowd, Haider called for compensation for slave laborers, who were forced to work on farms and in factories throughout Hitler's Third Reich. He also endorsed tolerance for ethnic minorities in Europe.

Those remarks were far different from comments he made to the veterans nine years ago when he praised Hitler's employment policy. That touched off a firestorm of criticism which forced him to resign as governor of Carinthia state.

Despite those words, many plaques on the walls of the ruined church echoed Nazi-era themes which have made this gathering controversial.

At the entrance, the old SS slogan "Die Ehre Unserer Soldaten Heisst Treue" (the honor of our soldiers is patriotism) is carved in large elaborate letters on the wall.

Haider's party joined the Austrian coalition government in February, triggering diplomatic sanctions by the 14 other European Union members. They were lifted last month after an EU commission found Austria in compliance with EU standards of democracy and human rights.

Putin leans to Yugoslav challenger

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW — Russia appeared on Sunday to be accepting the western view that Slobodan Milosevic's days as president are over, after a week of refusing to take sides in Yugoslavia's election dispute, observers said.

But while Russian President Vladimir Putin indicated support for opposition presidential candidate Vojislav Kostunica in conversations with western leaders this weekend, he hasn't abandoned Milosevic yet.

Putin is treading carefully, keeping in mind Russians' strong support for fellow Slavs in Serbia and powerful anti-NATO sentiments, commentators said.

Losing support from Russia, which played a key role in negotiating an end to NATO's air strikes on Yugoslavia last year, would be a major blow to Milosevic.

"Putin knows it's time to leave Milosevic behind, but is accepting this rather unwillingly," said political analyst Andrei Piontkovsky. "Putin knows that that will anger our patriots, nationalists who support Slavic Serbia."

Yugoslavia is at odds over who won last week's presidential vote. Kostunica, citing figures from the opposition's poll watchers, says he beat Milosevic outright; Milosevic says a runoff is necessary because he claims Kostunica got less than 50 percent of the vote.

Western countries have dismissed talks of a runoff and urged Milosevic to concede defeat.

President Clinton called Putin on Saturday, and the White House said both leaders agreed "that it is important for Milosevic to respect the will of the Serbian people."

The Russian presidential press service would not comment on what was said in the conversations.



Braca Nadezic/NewsMakers

A protester shouts during an anti-Milosevic street rally Sunday that stopped traffic on a major road in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The rally of several thousand people was a dress rehearsal for a street blockade in downtown Belgrade. The opposition plans to block all the roads in Serbia and announce a general strike today to protest President Milosevic's alleged election fraud.

Weather
TODAY
Partly cloudy
high 80, low 54
TOMORROW
Partly cloudy
high 79, low 51

Questions? Comments?
Ask for the appropriate section editor at
(402) 472-2588
or e-mail: dn@unl.edu

Editor: Sarah Baker
Managing Editor: Bradley Davis
Associate News Editor: Kimberly Sweet
Opinion Editor: Samuel McKewon
Sports Editor: Matthew Hansen
Arts Editor: Dane Stickney
Copy Desk Co-Chief: Lindsay Young
Copy Desk Co-Chief: Danell McCoy
Photo Chief: Heather Glenboski
Art Director: Melanie Falk
Design Chief: Andrew Broer
Web Editor: Gregg Stearns
Assistant Web Editor: Tanner Graham

General Manager: Dan Shattil
Publications Board Chairman: Russell Willbanks, (402) 436-7226
Professional Adviser: Don Walton, (402) 473-7248
Advertising Manager: Nick Partsch, (402) 472-2589
Assistant Ad Manager: Nicole Woita
Classified Ad Manager: Nikki Bruner
Circulation Manager: Imtiaz Khan

Fax Number: (402) 472-1761
World Wide Web: www.dailyneb.com
The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during the summer sessions.
The public has access to the Publications Board. Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling (402) 472-2588.
Subscriptions are \$60 for one year. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.
ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 2000 DAILY NEBRASKAN

Opponents contest drug as unsafe

FDA approval of RU-486 spurs debate on the possible action to limit the use of the abortion pill.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Abortion opponents contended Sunday that the new abortion pill may be unsafe and raised the possibility of government action to limit its use.

Reform Party presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan called RU-486, the early-abortion method approved Thursday by the Food and Drug Administration for use in the United States, "a human pesticide."

"As president, I would use all the power of my office, including appointments at the FDA, to prevent its being put on the market," Buchanan said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Green Party candidate Ralph Nader, also on NBC, countered that use of the drug is "up to the woman, not the government."

"This is a pill that's been shown to be safe in Europe for numerous years," Nader said. "And it's preferable to surgical procedure."

Sen. Tim Hutchinson, R-Ark., said on ABC's "This Week" that there are "a lot of questions" surrounding the safe-

"They can protest as much as they want. This is a safe, effective method."

Eleanor Smeal
president, Feminist Majority Foundation

ty of the pill — and that the outcome of next month's election will determine whether Congress has enough votes next year to put limits on its use.

Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, also on ABC, said the drug had undergone "tremendous review" by the FDA.

"They can protest as much as they want," she said of abortion foes. "This is a safe, effective method."

One lawmaker, Rep. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., said after the FDA's decision that he would promote legislation calling for severe limits on which doctors could administer mifepristone, the pill's chemical name.

The Christian Coalition's Pat Robertson said on CBS's "Face the Nation" that the drug's approval was a "political ploy" by Democrats to corner Republican presidential nominee George W. Bush on the subject.

Bush, whose father's administration banned RU-486 imports in 1989, opposes abortion.

Vice President Gore supports the

pill option.

Robertson said the pill should be reviewed to determine if it's a "danger to women."

The pill blocks action of a hormone essential for maintaining pregnancy. It has been used by millions of European women since it was approved nearly a decade ago. Anti-abortion advocates have fought hard to keep the drug out of the U.S. since it first appeared in France.

FDA Commissioner Jane Henney approved mifepristone based on studies that found it 92 percent to 95 percent effective in causing abortion.

Complications are rare; serious bleeding occurs in 1 percent of women.

But the pill-caused abortion requires three doctor visits and, to ensure it is performed accurately, the FDA restricted its use to doctors with certain training and mandated that detailed patient-information brochures be given to every woman.