



NEARLY ONE THOUSAND LOS ANGELES POLICE OFFICERS, SPECIALLY ASSIGNED TO THE GAMES, RECEIVING FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

TRAFFIC CONTROL

THE traffic problem was not a new one for the Olympic Games, but for those of the Xth Olympiad it constituted a more serious problem than in previous celebrations of the Games.

The City of Los Angeles is spread over a large area of comparatively open or flat territory. There are few natural geographical conditions to force the development of the city into main converging lines, as is the case in many large cities. Instead of there being one or two principal lanes of rapid transit through subways or on elevated tracks, a great network of boulevards has been developed. The automobile has been adopted by all classes of people as the primary means of transportation and the favorable climatic conditions have augmented its use for purposes of pleasure as well as of business.

There are approximately one million automobiles in use within a radius of a hundred miles of Olympic Stadium. Under normal conditions the boulevards are crowded to near capacity. For the period of the Olympic Games, an additional heavy traffic load had to be anticipated on all main boulevards and particularly on streets leading to the Stadium. It was necessary to create new lanes piercing the public traffic around Olympic Stadium for vehicles carrying officials and contestants, so that these could quickly reach the Stadium at all times. Also, space had to be provided in a convenient location near by to park their automobiles and busses.

A Traffic Committee was organized consisting of traffic experts of the Los Angeles Police Department, and the Traffic Manager for the Organizing Com-

mittee. The Police Department relieved the men assigned to this work of all other duties, and instructed them to spend their full time perfecting the traffic plan for the Olympic Games in co-operation with the Traffic Manager and Organizing Committee. After several months of intensive work, the Traffic Committee completed a Traffic Plan, and this was printed and sent to all members of the Los Angeles Police Department, so that they would be familiar with all its details.

The members of the Traffic Committee were:

Roy E. Steckel	Chief of Police, City of Los Angeles
Deputy Chief James E. Davis	Chairman of the Committee
Willis O. Hunter	Traffic Manager, Organizing Committee
Inspector A. W. Gifford	Lieutenant Fred A. Therkorn
Lieutenant James B. Peyton	Lieutenant Herman F. Luedtke

It was necessary to secure the services of some 800 police officers to put the plan into effect. The Los Angeles Police Department was working under a very restricted budget and could not obtain sufficient funds to employ this number of additional men. The Chief of Police made an appeal to all of the men of the Department, first, to work twelve hours per day instead of the regulation eight, and second, to postpone vacations.. The men generously agreed to this, and thus made it possible for the Department to assign approximately 650 men to Olympic traffic duty each day during the period of the Games. As this number was short of the number called for by the Traffic Plan, the Organizing Committee agreed

to employ one hundred and fifty university students to assist the police and complete the organization.

Meetings were held with the executive officers of the Police Department, which culminated in one big mass meeting, of nearly a thousand police officers, in Olympic Stadium the day before the Opening Ceremony. At this meeting the highlights of the Traffic Plan were outlined, and the responsibilities of the police officers and the necessity



HALF A MILLION SPECTATORS PRESENTED A TRAFFIC PROBLEM ON THE MARATHON COURSE

for courtesy and efficiency was stressed.

Probably no other meeting had such an important bearing upon the success of the Games as this police meeting in Olympic Stadium. That the men fully realized their responsibilities, and that they grasped the spirit of the Olympic Games, is vividly demonstrated by the magnificent performance of their work. Great credit is due the Police Department of the City of Los Angeles, and particularly to the men who worked many extra hours without additional compensation. It was their contribution to the Games of the Xth Olympiad and is a splendid testimonial to the men themselves, as well as to the event which furnished the inspiration.

By the Traffic Plan, the principal streets leading to Olympic Stadium from the downtown section of the city were made one-way streets for traffic going *to* the Stadium *before* each event, and one-way streets for traffic going *from* the Stadium *after* each event. All counter traffic was diverted away from the area immediately surrounding the Stadium, for a distance of approximately one-half mile. No parking of automobiles was permitted on the main streets leading to Olympic Park. Left-hand turns were not permitted wherever they would interfere with the flow of traffic. One of the one-way streets was made the Official Route, and it was recommended that all officials going to and from the Stadium and the downtown section use this street. Police officers were stationed along the entire route to assist them through the traffic, and public traffic on this street was restricted to prevent crowding and to facilitate the rapid flow of the official cars.

Special Auto Passes to be attached to windshields were designed to identify official cars. These were issued to members of the International Olympic Committee, five to each International Federation, from two to ten to each National Olympic Committee, depending upon the size of their delegation in Los Angeles, to attachés, members and staff of the Organizing Committee, Government officials and special guests. A total of 682 of these special Auto Passes was issued.

The Auto Passes were divided into six groups, each indicated by a large red figure visible at some distance - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. This number indicated



T R A F F I C O F F I C E R S C L E A R E D T H E W A Y

the area in which the car should be parked at Olympic Stadium. A map on the back of each pass gave the route to follow to reach the indicated area.

Official routes to all other stadiums were designated on maps included in the book of information supplied to all Olympic visitors. The cars with these Auto Pass stickers were given special consideration by the police at all points in the city, and along these official routes they were given right-of-way over all other traffic. A large red circle was prominently printed on the Auto Passes issued to the International Olympic Committee, the presidents and secretaries of National Olympic Committees, the presidents and secretaries of the International Federations, members of the Organizing Committee, and others who had responsibilities at stadiums. Parking space was reserved at all stadiums for cars bearing the windshield sticker with this special red circle. All Auto Pass windshield stickers were detachable, and the officials carried them in their pockets and used them on any car in which they were riding to the Olympic events.

The street leading from the Olympic Village to Olympic Stadium was patrolled by police officers at all times, and official cars and busses carrying athletes were given right-of-way over all traffic.

On the day of the Opening Ceremony, the hundreds of official cars, and the sixty-eight busses carrying nearly 2,000 athletes from the Olympic Village and other points to Olympic Stadium, were enabled to travel rapidly and without a single stop over the entire distance, through the dense traffic created by the 105,000 spectators going to the Stadium. The running time of the busses from the Olympic Village to the Stadium averaged from ten to twelve minutes.



FACSIMILE OF OFFICIAL AUTO PASS, FACE AND REVERSE SIDE

The street adjacent to the Stadium on the west was closed to the public for a distance of approximately 1,000 feet, and no public parking was permitted on this street for a distance of over 2,000 feet. This street was used for the purpose of loading and unloading athletes on and off the busses, and for parking.

The Marathon, the 50,000 Metre Walk, the 100 Kilometre Cross Country Cycling Race, and the Cross Country Equestrian competitions all created special traffic problems. Of these, the Marathon presented the greatest difficulty. Beginning and ending at Olympic Stadium, the Marathon course extended approximately twenty-six miles, mostly through a thickly populated section of the city. Due to its historic character, a great deal of publicity had been given the event in the newspapers and tremendous public interest was aroused. It occurred, also, on Sunday afternoon, when most of the people of the city were at leisure.

It was necessary to patrol the entire distance of the course in order to avoid any interference with the runners on the part of the public. Chain controls were erected along the course for a distance of approximately 1,000 feet, from the point where the runners would leave and re-enter the Stadium. From the end of this chain control, for a distance of approximately four miles through the most congested part of the course, provision was made to close the course to all traffic for half an hour while the athletes were out-bound and for an hour at the time the athletes were returning.

At the end of this four-mile section, the course was laid out in the form of a large loop returning to the same point and thence to the Stadium over the same route as out-bound. Several hundred police officers were stationed at the dangerous intersections around this loop, to cut off all traffic in advance of the runners and to hold it until the last runner was past.

In addition to this, over one hundred police officers mounted on motorcycles met the runners at the beginning of the loop, one stationed at each of the first hundred intersections or streets crossing the course, to cut off all traffic and to see that the course was kept open. After the last runner passed the last motorcycle officer, the officer would immediately proceed past the others and take his position at the first intersection beyond the first motorcycle officer. In this way the motorcycle men progressed with the athletes, thus forming a "moving sleeve" of protection within which the athletes ran around the loop. Part of the officers



WILLIS O. HUNTER
TRAFFIC MANAGER, ORGANIZING
COMMITTEE

assisted in clearing the remainder of the course to the Stadium. Additional chain controls were installed around the refreshment stations. These proved to be invaluable. The course was kept open for all of the runners and no interference on the part of the public was reported by any of the officials or by any of the runners.

Although there was no way of accurately counting the number of people who witnessed the Marathon, it has been estimated that no less than one-half million persons thronged the twenty-six mile course outside the Stadium.

The course for the Cross Country phase of the Equestrian championship unavoidably bisected all of the numerous busy thoroughfares and highways between the city of Los Angeles and the Santa Monica bay district, and this event was scheduled to be held during the peak of the morning traffic. The route of the course followed the rural districts, through which sections motor cars travel at high speeds. It was not only necessary to protect the horses and riders from actual injury, but also to stop the traffic at sufficient distance from the course so that the high-bred animals would not be frightened or disturbed by automobiles or other vehicles. Through the co-operation of the local police departments of the districts through which the course was laid out, and with the additional assistance of Los Angeles and State police, traffic was either detoured around the course or rigidly controlled. Cars were not allowed to cross the course at any point during the period of the event unless it was absolutely safe for them to do so. Chain controls were installed at the finish to prevent crowding by the public.

In the cases of the 50,000 Metre Walk and the 100 Kilometre Cycling Race, highways which could be shut off from all public traffic were chosen as courses, and sufficient police officers were assigned to duty to keep spectators within bounds.

The California Highway Patrol, under the direction of E. Raymond Cato, co-operated with the Committee in every possible way, particularly in furnishing motorcycle officers wherever required to protect the athletes or to expedite traffic.

The Automobile Club of Southern California assisted the Organizing Committee in numerous ways such as surveying, and measuring and mapping all cross country courses. This civic spirited organization was of particular service to the Traffic Committee in making and supplying maps, printing and posting thousands of traffic signs, supplying emergency cars, and in many other ways. Its traffic experts gave unselfishly of their time whenever called upon during the Games.

It is a matter of gratification to all concerned that not a single accident of any kind was reported involving any athlete or official, nor was a single protest made on account of interference by spectators, during the entire period of the training and competition of the Olympic Games, and furthermore, police records show that traffic accidents actually decreased during this period in spite of the increase of traffic occasioned by the Games.