

# Dressed To Win

## SYNOPSIS

**Scope:** As in any sport, the goal of a gymnast is to win. This single-frame exhibit examines how what a gymnast wears helps him achieve that goal in three ways. Firstly, competition rules specify how he must be attired for each of the six men's events. Secondly, the mechanics of the sport, commercialism and culture have all contributed to the evolution of gymnastics apparel. Lastly, politics – historically a frequent force in the gymnastics movement – has often dictated defining elements of a uniform.

**Treatment:** While it can be said that each of the hundreds of stamps or other philatelic elements depicting a gymnast shows him in gymnastics apparel, the variation is limited enough to make a single-frame thematic exhibit a challenge. The depth of the exhibit is reflected by the attention to such detail as the corporate insignias or national flags on jerseys.

**Thematic & Philatelic Knowledge:** There are no known studies on the history of men's gymnastics apparel so all research is original. The exhibit uses a wide variety of philatelic elements to tell the story including original artwork, trial color proofs, die proof, postage stamps (including mint, overprints, coils, booklet panes and EFOs), souvenir sheets, postal stationery (including PTPO and postal advertising covers), postage meters, hand cancels, machine slogan cancels and atypical or unusual usages (registered, free-franking, provisional).

## EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS (in order of appearance)

- ❖ 1981 North Korean preliminary artwork, watercolor on posterboard (likely unique).
- ❖ 1899 German PTPO card, Allgemeine Deutsche Sport Ausstellung (scarce with festival cancel).
- ❖ 1936 German Olympic stamp booklet, scarce "red stripe" variety.
- ❖ 1964 Hungary Olympic gymnastics, major error, missing gold Olympic rings on pair.
- ❖ 1931 Bulgarian Balkan Games, 5 trial color proofs.
- ❖ 1996 Belarus Olympic souvenir sheet, original pastel-on-paper artwork, artist signed (likely unique).
- ❖ 1939 Swedish Die Proof, Per Ling, 5 øre value (rare, 3-5 known copies).
- ❖ 1930 Belgian Postal Check Advertising Envelope (used example during 28-day period).
- ❖ 1938 German Sudetenland Occupation Cover (used during period of validity, Oct. 1-19, 1938).

## EXHIBITING RECORD (PARTIAL)

The exhibit, which debuted in 2003, has undergone a number of changes since it was last shown in competition at NY2016, including updating and fine tuning thematic text and the addition of new material.

**International Competition:** London 2020/2 (accepted); NY2016 (FIP Large Vermeil - 87 pts); Sport-O-Net 2007 (FIP Vermeil); Washington 2006 (FIP Silver); Olymphilex 2004 (FIP Silver).

**National Competition:** StampShow 2019 (Gold & Single-Frame Grand); Westpex 2011 (Gold & SPI Single-Frame Award); Sandical 2009 (Gold & Single-Frame Grand); Napex 2007 (Gold); Texpex 2005 (Vermeil).

## ORIGINAL RESEARCH REFERENCES

Maestroni, Mark. "Genesis of an Olympic Stamp," *The Journal of Sports Philately*, Vol. 58, #1 (Fall 2019), pp. 21-25.

Maestroni, Mark. "Sports-Related World War II Ration Application Postal Cards of Norway," *The Journal of Sports Philately*, Vol. 32, #6 (July/August 1994), pp. 14-19.