

BOOK REVIEWS

by Mark Maestrone

Athens 2004 Olympic NOC Pins and Related Memorabilia, Vol. 1, A Reference Guide by Ioannis Thomakos. Athens: Epsilon World, 2018, 264 pages, 9½" x 13", 4 lbs., in English. Price: €97 (hardbound, or softbound with spiral binding). Shipping charge (registered mail) varies by country. Purchase from website: www.AthensNocPins.com.

It's interesting that over the past two months I have received three different printed publications on different aspects of the Olympic Games. When was the last time we had such a bumper crop of Olympic literature to review? I simply cannot recall!

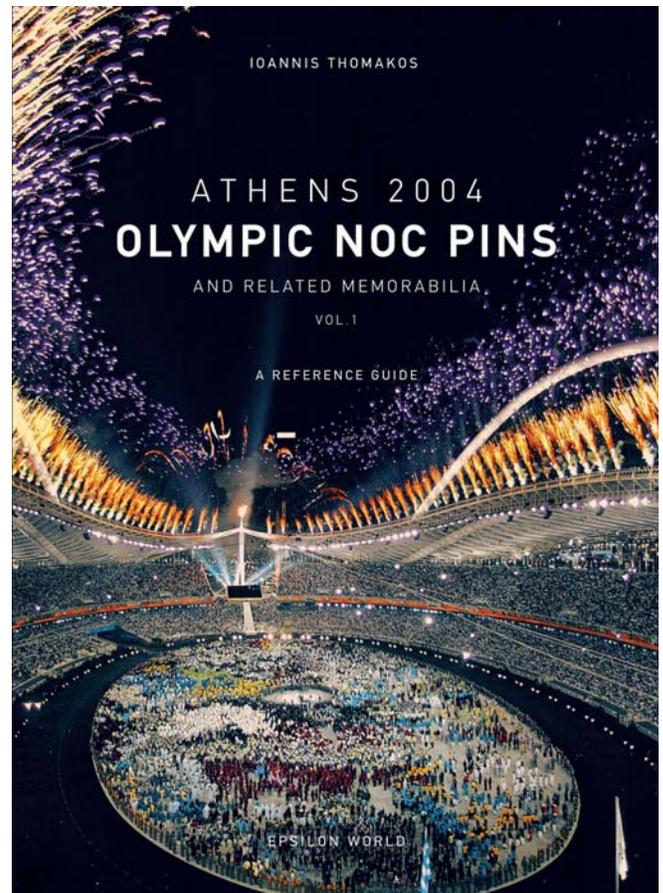
The first, and certainly the largest is a massive 264-page catalog of the "Athens 2004 Olympic NOC Pins and Related Memorabilia" by noted Greek Olympic scholar and collector, Ioannis Thomakos. The product of 15 years of collecting, this superb presentation purports to record and display 99% of all National Olympic Committee pins and badges brought to Athens during the 2004 Olympic Games. By the author's count, the book catalogs and illustrates each of the 1678 pins from all 201 nations that participated in those Games.

The casual collector may marvel at the vast numbers of pins for just one Olympiad. As Mr. Thomakos explains, however, there are two types of NOC pins and badges: dated pins which carry "the name and/or date of a specific Olympiad," and undated pins which are used over a longer period of time and at more than one Olympiad. It appears that the 2004 collection is about evenly split with 783 dated and 895 undated. For the completists among you, collecting only the dated pins would seem enough of a Herculean task!

This book would certainly qualify as the pin collectors' bible for these Games. Organized alphabetically by nation, they are catalogued in the following order: dated NOC pins; undated NOC pins; Chef de Mission and Delegation badges; dated Olympic Team pins; undated Olympic Team pins; Sponsor NOC pins; dated International Federation pins; and finally Olympic Village pins. The front of each pin is illustrated and its dimensions are provided in millimeters.

In addition to individual pins, Mr. Thomakos includes other NOC memorabilia: pin frames, plaques, medals, and plates and gifts.

The author provides interesting tables at the back. The first, and most useful, is an index of all the pins alphabetically by nation and catalog number, noting



the page on which the pin may be found. Two more tables are of interest mostly to statisticians, naming the top 50 countries with the most pins (USA leads the pack with 120) and most dated pins (again, USA with 75 pins).

Very helpful was Table 7 giving the order in which national teams marched into the stadium during the Opening Ceremony along with the name and sport of its flag bearer. This information is useful to any Olympic collector no matter their area of specialization.

The overall presentation of this hardbound book is flawless. The images of every pin and badge are at least full sized, if not larger, and razor sharp. The color reproduction looks (at least to my untrained eye) to be spot on. The heavy, glossy paper only enhances the illustrations.

All in all, I would heartily recommend this to any NOC pin and badge collector, especially those interested in the 2004 Olympic Games of Athens.

My only question to the author: if this is only Volume 1, what will be included in Volume 2?