

XVth OLYMPIAD6,000 ATHLETES ASSEMBLE AT HELSINKI

Finland's capital welcomes sportsmen of seventy nations for the Olympic Games. Close to the stadium is the Olympic Village where most of them are staying during the Olympic fortnight. Here's a party of Hungarians. The 1940 Olympics were to have been held in Japan (from whence these athletes come) but it was changed to Finland; and then war cancelled the whole thing. These are Pakistani hockey players. Biggest contingent comes from America.

Little Jamaica, with Arthur Wint and Herb McKenley as chief stars, has her separate entry, as do all the Dominions.

And here's the Australian team. If it's anything to do with sport, the Aussies are always dangerous competitors.

Australia's got a fine women's entry too; just caught them in time! Collecting badges seems to be a big side-line with Miss Jackson.

British headquarters have an ominous number, but our entry of 349 hope to come back with good results. Plain but comfortable is the village motto.

Some distance away is the Russian Olympic village, where athletes from Russian-controlled lands are staying. It's good to have them competing although they take things a little more seriously. World friendship through sport was the ideas behind the revival 56 years ago of the ancient Greek Olympic Games. Russian athletes have made great strides in recent years.

Back in the Rest of the World camp it's lunch-time. Many teams have a special 'food-from-home' service laid on. It's good to hear our men claim they're the best-fed of the English-speaking teams. The one with the hat is Davidge, who stroked Oxford to victory in the Boat Race.

Now let's watch some practice. Francisco Castro of Puerto Rico, doing the hop, skip and jump; and Wanda da Santis skinning the hurdles. The Olympics bring together the world's finest sportsmen in what should be friendly rivalry. It isn't always that way, but if we ever get that spirit in its fullest, the chance of world peace and friendship will grow as bright as the Olympic torch that will mark the opening of the Games.

Now from London, the Duke of Edinburgh, who, by his work for the National Playing Fields Fund and by his own prowess, signifies the best in British sport, leaves for Helsinki. The stage is set for the curtain to rise on the 15th Olympiad.