

**At the inaugural parade for the Sydney 2000 Games the Italian national team, dressed by Benetton, becomes as multicolored and universal as the five Olympic circles ALL THE COLORS OF THE ITALIAN OLYMPIC TEAM The sports clothing to be worn by the athletes throughout the Games is also designed by Benetton under the brand Playlife**

Ponzano, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2000. United Colors of Italy: next Friday, the Italian national team will parade in the opening ceremony of the 2000 Olympic Games, at the Olympic Stadium in Sydney, wearing an absolutely innovative uniform, designed by Benetton. Before a television audience of at least 2 billion, our male and female athletes will wear a navy blue blazer teamed with trousers and skirts, respectively, in colours inspired by the five Olympic circles: yellow, turquoise, green, ice white and red. A colour combination that overturns tradition and convention to reaffirm the Olympic spirit of multi-racial cohesion, at the same time restating the universal message of peaceful cohabitation which has always been a major element in Benetton communication.

The representative uniform, completed by a white cotton poplin shirt (worn with open neck and no tie) and white sports shoes in ice white leather with para rubber soles, confirms, in an informal way, the lively elegance and quality of Italian style. With its in-depth know-how, which combines traditional and casual clothing with the sporting experience of the Playlife brand, Benetton has also created the sports clothing, including rest shoes and track suits, which will be worn by the Italian delegation throughout the duration of the Games.

This Playlife sports clothing combines a style in line with the classic, almost 60's-style, sporting spirit (the dominant colours are grey-blue and ice white, with the inscription "Italia" clearly visible on both front and back) with avant-garde materials. The collection has in fact been created on the basis of studies which the Benetton research centre is carrying out with the Italian Space Agency for supplies to astronauts.

In addition to the supply of a total look for the athletes, technicians, executives and team managers at the Sydney Olympics, the agreement between Coni and the Benetton Group provides for further cooperation at the Mediterranean Games and at the European Youth Summer Games which will be held in 2001. Furthermore, for the first time in the history of relations between Coni and private companies, this agreement also provides for a significant financial contribution from Benetton in support of the team of Italian disabled athletes at the Paraolympic Games, which will be held in October 2000, again in Sydney.

Within the Benetton sporting division, Playlife, which represents the sportswear brand for men, women and children (the other brand, Killer Loop, is aimed at a younger, trendier market), offers a sporty and comfortable style, designed for maximum freedom of leisure time use. Like its mirror-image logo, which has now become a communication feature in the international sporting universe, Playlife represents a new approach to sport, not just competitive, but a total expression of fun and vitality.