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Story Headline: Eduard Casaneanu wins Romania's first ever Winter Youth Olympic Games medal after winning gold in the Men's Ice Hockey Skills Challenge at Lillehammer 2016

Event: Lillehammer 2016 Winter Youth Olympic Games

Date: 18 February

Place: Lillehammer, Norway

STORY SCRIPT

Eduard Casaneanu has won Romania's first ever Winter Youth Olympic Games medal after winning gold in the Men's Ice Hockey Skills Challenge at Lillehammer 2016.

The 16-year-old, who's a member of Clubul Sportiv Scolar in Miercurea Ciuc, finished in the top three of seven of the 12 disciplines across both qualification and the final to finish with a total of 14 points.

Gold is Romania's first ever YOG medal, after failing to finish on the podium at the Innsbruck 2012 Winter Youth Olympic Games.

Casaneanu finished ahead of Sebastian Cederle with 12 points (winning Slovakia's first medal of the Games) and Germany's Erik Betzold (11 points).

In total, 1100 athletes from 71 nations are competing at the Winter Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in Lillehammer Norway for a total of 70 Gold medals.

The 2nd Winter YOG is taking place between Friday 12th & Sunday 21st of February 2016.

Ice Hockey Skills Challenge explained.

Age Group: Born between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2001



Number of Athletes: 100
Venue: Stampsletta Ice Venues

Men's Skills Challenge

The skills challenge events are individual competitions. Sixteen athletes from different NOCs compete in each event.

Each event consists of a qualification phase and a grand final phase. The qualification phase consists of four rounds and the grand final phase is made up of three rounds (quarter-final, semi-final and final).

The format of each event is the same, with the players competing in the following six skills: fastest lap, shooting accuracy, skating agility, fastest shot, passing precision and puck control. In each skill the players are paired in head to head heats. In each phase an overall ranking is determined for each player based on the total number of points achieved in all six skills.

The top eight players from the qualification phase qualify for the grand final phase. The points from the qualification phase are not carried forward to the grand final phase.

What are the YOG?

The Youth Olympic Games are essentially about competing, learning and sharing. They are a celebration of sport, youth diversity and the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect. They also exemplify the Fundamental Principles of Olympism, blending sport with culture and education. The vision of the Youth Olympic Games is to inspire young people around the world to participate in sport and live by the Olympic values.

YOG Key Facts

- Hosted from 12 to 21 February 2016 in Lillehammer, Hamar, Gjøvik, Øyer and Oslo — demonstrating the use of a fantastic legacy of Olympic venues and the flexibility of the YOG.
- 71 NOCs and 1,100 athletes aged 15 to 18 will compete in 70 medal events at Lillehammer 2016.
- Lillehammer 2016 is the second winter edition of the YOG following Innsbruck 2012. The first summer edition took place in Singapore in 2010, followed by Nanjing in 2014.
- The YOG have been used as an incubator for innovation in sport and education. Lillehammer 2016 will feature Olympic debuts for a number of disciplines, including cross-country cross, snowboard cross, ski slopestyle, biathlon super sprint and monobob.



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- With regard to education, the Coaches' Corner will be a pioneering YOG first in Lillehammer, featuring dedicated workshops and talks by experts and Virtual Reality (VR) technology to explore and explain how new advances in technology can be applied to the science of coaching.
- The YOG have acted as a springboard to further Olympic glory for many alumni. Some 64 YOG athletes from Innsbruck 2012, for example, went on to compete at the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014, winning 6 medals in total. In addition, 200 YOG alumni from Singapore 2010 competed at London 2012, of whom 25 medalled.
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