



OLYMPIC GAMES



LONDON

April 27 - October 31, 1908



The longest Olympics

The 1908 Summer Olympics, officially the Games of the IV Olympiad, were held in 1908 in London from 27 April to 31 October 1908. The selection process for the 1908 Summer Olympics consisted of 4 bids, and saw Rome selected ahead of London, Berlin and Milan. The selection was made at the 6th IOC Session in London in 1904. Italian authorities were preparing to hold the games when Mount Vesuvius erupted on 7 April 1906, devastating the city of Naples. Funds were diverted to the reconstruction of Naples, so a new venue was required. Lasting a total of 187 days, or 6 months and 4 days, these games were the longest in modern Olympics history.

The games were surrounded by controversy. On the opening day, following the practice introduced at the Intercalated Games of 1906, teams paraded behind national flags. However, the arrangement caused complications. Since Finland was part of the Russian Empire, members of the Finnish team were expected to march under the Russian rather than Finnish flag, so many chose to march without a flag at all. The Swedish flag

had not been displayed above the stadium, so the members of the Swedish team decided not to take part in the ceremony. The flag of the United States had also not been displayed above the stadium before the opening. The United States' flag bearer, Ralph Rose, refused to dip the flag to King-Emperor Edward VII in the royal box.

The distance from the start of the Marathon to the finish at the stadium was established at these games. The original distance of 25 miles was changed to 26 miles so the marathon could start at Windsor Castle and then changed again at the

request of Princess Mary so the start would be beneath the windows of the Royal Nursery. To ensure that the race would finish in front of the King, the finish line was moved by British officials. As a result of these changes, the marathon covered a distance of 26 miles 385

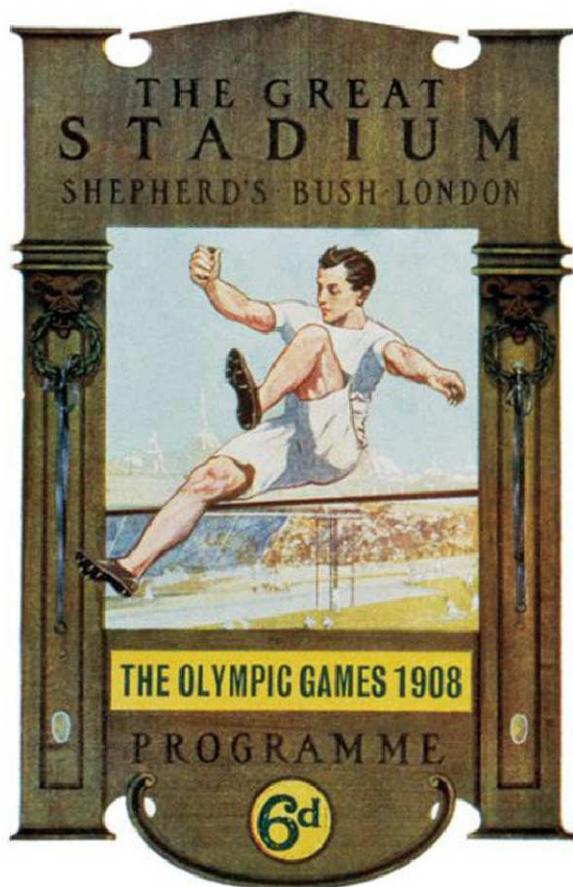
yards (42.195 km), which became the standard length starting with the 1924 Summer Olympics.



Based on www.wikipedia.org



Funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



SPORTS

22 sports, representing 110 events in 24 sporting disciplines, were contested. Swimming, diving and water polo are considered three disciplines of the same sport, aquatics. At the time, tug-of-war was part of athletics and the two different football codes (association and rugby (union)) were listed together. The International Olympic Committee now considers tug-of-war a separate sport, as well as referring to association football as simply "football" and to rugby union as "rugby". In one of seven Cycling events (Cycling sprint) no medals were awarded. The Sailing program was open for a total of five sailing classes, but actually only four Sailing events were

contested. The number of events in each discipline is given in parentheses.

Aquatics:

Diving (2 events)

Swimming (6 events)

Water polo (1 event)

Archery (3 events)

Athletics (26 events)

Boxing (5 events)

Cycling (7 events)

Fencing (4 events)

Figure skating (4 events)

Football (1 event)

Gymnastics (2 events)

Field hockey (1 event)

Jeu de paume (1 event)

Lacrosse (1 event)

Polo (1 event)

Rackets (2 events)

Rowing (4 events)

Rugby (1 event)

Sailing (4 events)

Shooting (15 events)

Tennis (6 events)

Tug of war (1)

Water motorsports (3 events)

Wrestling:

Wrestling Freestyle (5 events)

Wrestling Greco-Roman (4 events)

These Games were the first to include winter events, as had originally been proposed for the Games. There were four figure skating events, although held on October 28 and 29, months after the other events.

Venues

VENUE	SPORTS
ALL ENGLAND LAWN TENNIS AND CROQUET CLUB	Tennis
BISLEY RANGES	Shooting
FRANCO-BRITISH EXHIBITION FENCING GROUNDS	Fencing
HENLEY ROYAL REGATTA	Rowing
HUNTERS QUAY, RIVER CLYDE	Sailing
HURLINGHAM	Polo
NORTHAMPTON INSTITUTE	Boxing
PRINCE'S SKATING CLUB	Figure skating
QUEEN'S CLUB	Jeu de paume / Rackets
SOLENT	Sailing
SOUTHAMPTON WATER	Water motorsports
UXENDON SHOOTING SCHOOL CLUB	Shooting
WHITE CITY STADIUM	Archery / Athletics / Track cycling / Diving / Field hockey / Football / Gymnastics / Lacrosse / Rugby union / Swimming / Tug of war / Water polo / Wrestling

MISCELLANEA

The 1908 Olympics also prompted establishment of standard rules for sports, and selection of judges from different countries rather than just the host. One reason was the 400 meter race, in which a US runner was accused of interfering with a British runner. Part of the problem was the different definition of interference under British and US rules. The race was re-run, but the Americans refused to participate. The British runner, Wyndham Halswelle, won by running around the track on his own, because three of the four original runners had been American, the only walkover in Olympic history.

At the 1908 Summer Olympics in London, Great Britain, an official football tournament between national representative selections was contested for the first time: football at the two previous games had been played between club teams. Eight teams entered (including two from France), although Hungary and Bohemia withdrew before the start. Denmark's Sophus "Krolben" Nielsen set a record by scoring 10 goals in a 17-1 win against France. Great Britain won the gold. Among those representing the Danish team was the famous mathematician Harald Bohr.

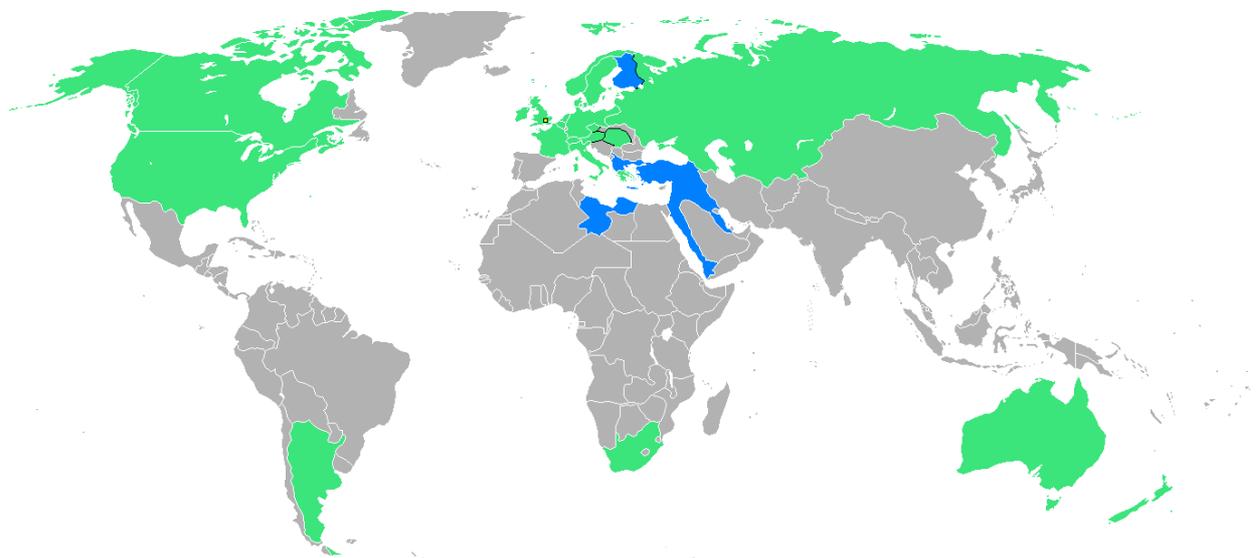
White City Stadium (originally The Great Stadium) was built in White City, London, for the 1908 Summer Olympics and is often seen as the precursor to the modern seater stadium and noted for hosting the finish of the first modern distance marathon. It also hosted swimming, speedway and a match at the 1966 World Cup, before the stadium was demolished in 1985. It was the first Olympic Stadium in the UK. From 1927 until 1984 it was the premier venue for greyhound racing hosting the English Greyhound Derby.

NATION	PARTICIPANTS
ARGENTINA 	1
AUSTRALASIA 	30
AUSTRIA 	7
BELGIUM 	88
BOHEMIA 	19
CANADA 	87
DENMARK 	81
FINLAND 	67
FRANCE 	363
GERMANY 	81
GREAT BRITAIN 	676
GREECE 	20
HUNGARY 	63
ITALY 	68
NETHERLANDS 	113
NORWAY 	69
RUSSIAN EMPIRE 	6
SOUTH AFRICA 	14
SWEDEN 	168
SWITZERLAND 	1
TURKEY 	1
UNITED STATES 	112

The 1908 Games featured athletes representing 22 National Olympic Committees. Finland, Turkey and New Zealand (as part of the team from Australasia) made their first appearance at the Olympic Games. The fact that the United Kingdom competed as a single team was upsetting to some Irish competitors, who felt that Ireland should compete on its own, despite being part of the UK at the time. Fearing an Irish boycott, the authorities changed the name of the team to Great Britain/Ireland, and in two sports, field hockey and polo, Ireland participated as a separate country, winning silver medals in both. Irish athletes in the United States were not affected by this controversy, and

many Irish born athletes competed for the U.S. Olympic team as members of the Irish American Athletic Club. Members of the Irish American Athletic Club won ten of the U.S. Olympic team's total 23 gold medals, or as many as the nations of France, Germany and Italy combined.

Australasia was the name given to the combined team of athletes from Australia (making its fourth Olympic appearance) and New Zealand (competing for the first time). The host team included a number of athletes from Ireland, at the time part of the United Kingdom. In contrast, Finland, which was integrated in the Russian Empire, competed in London as a separate country.



Medal count

RANK	NATION	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
1.	GREAT BRITAIN	56	51	39	146
2.	UNITED STATES	23	12	12	47
3.	SWEDEN	8	6	11	25
4.	FRANCE	5	5	9	19
5.	GERMANY	3	5	5	13
6.	HUNGARY	3	4	2	9
7.	CANADA	3	3	10	16
8.	NORWAY	2	3	3	8
9.	ITALY	2	2	0	4
10.	BELGIUM	1	5	2	8
11.	AUSTRALASIA	1	2	2	5
12.	RUSSIAN EMPIRE	1	2	0	3
13.	FINLAND	1	1	3	5
14.	SOUTH AFRICA	1	1	0	2
15.	GREECE	0	3	1	4
16.	DENMARK	0	2	3	5
17.	BOHEMIA	0	0	2	2
	NETHERLANDS	0	0	2	2
19.	AUSTRIA	0	0	1	1
		110	107	107	324

Argentina, Switzerland and Turkey were the only nations that did not earn any medals

MAJOR STARS

Oscar Swahn (Sweden) - won the gold medal for running deer shooting, became the oldest Olympic champion of all time (60 years old), and set another age record by being 72 years and 279 days old during his triumph at the 1920 Summer Olympics in Antwerp, Belgium. In all of the team competitions that Oscar Swahn entered at the three Olympic games of 1908, 1912, and 1920, he was accompanied by his son Alfred Swahn, who also won one bronze, one silver and two gold medals in individual events.

John Taylor (USA) - was a member of the winning medley relay team, making him the first African-American athlete to win an Olympic gold medal.

Ray Ewry (USA) - added two golds in standing high jump and standing long jump to six Olympic golds won in 1896 and 1900

Mel Sheppard (UK) - won 3 golds: 800m, 1500m and medley relay

Ulrich Salchow (Sweden) - gold medal in figure skating. In 1909, Ulrich Salchow first landed a jump in competition in which he took off on the back inside edge, and landed on the back outside edge of his other foot. This jump is now known as the Salchow jump in his honor.

Sophus Nielsen (Denmark) - he became the top scorer of the football tournament with 11 goals in three matches... 10 of them he scored in the semifinal against France



The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner

The most famous incident of the games came at the end of the marathon. The first to enter the stadium, Dorando Pietri of Italy (1885-1942), collapsed several times and ran the wrong way. Not far from the finish-line, two of the officials, Jack Andrew, the clerk of the course and Dr Michael Bulger of the Irish Amateur Athletic Association and the chief medical officer that day, went to his aid. Pietri eventually crossed the line in first place, but the runner-up, American Johnny Hayes of the Irish American Athletic Club protested, leading to Pietri's disqualification. Since he had not been responsible for his disqualification, Queen Alexandra awarded him a gilded silver cup the next day.

In September 1904 the most famous Italian runner of the time, Pericle Pagliani, took part in a race in Carpi. According to tradition, Pietri was attracted by the event and, still wearing his work clothes, ran to the finish ahead of Pagliani. A few days later Pietri debuted in a distance race, finishing second in the 3,000 m of Bologna. The following year he achieved his first international success, winning the 30 km in Paris. On 2 April 1906 Pietri won the qualifying marathon for the Olympic Games to be held in Athens that same year. In the Olympic race he retired due to intestinal illness when he was leading by 5 minutes. In 1907 he won the Italian championships. He was by then the undisputed leader of Italian long distance races from 5000 metres to marathon distance.

After the incident in London, Conan Doyle proposed the Daily Mail to start a subscription to raise money and help Pietri to open a bakery in his native town. The fund reached the consistent sum of 300 pounds (equivalent to 28,746 pounds in 2016), to which the same Conan Doyle contributed the initial 5 pounds (equivalent to 479 pounds in 2016). Pietri suddenly became an international celebrity. Composer Irving Berlin dedicated a song to him entitled "Dorando"

and Pietri received requests to participate in exhibition races in the United States. On 25 November 1908, in Madison Square Garden, New York a race between Hayes and Pietri was organized. Pietri won the race as well as a second similar race on 15 March 1909. Pietri won 17 of the 22 races on his tour of America. He returned to Italy in May 1909 and



continued racing professionally in his native country and abroad for two more years. He ran his final marathon in Buenos Aires, on 24 May 1910, where he achieved his personal

best of 2h 38min 48:2s. Pietri's last race in Italy was a 15 km (9 mi) race held in Parma on 3 September 1911, which he won. He also won his very last race this time in Gothenburg (Sweden), in October of the same year. He was 26 at the time. In three years as a professional runner he earned 200,000 lire in prize money alone, an enormous sum for the time.

He invested his earnings in a hotel he opened in collaboration with his brother. He was not as successful an entrepreneur as he was athlete, and the hotel went bankrupt. He moved to Sanremo,



where he directed a car workshop. Pietri lived in Sanremo until his death, of a heart attack, at the age of 56.

Source: www.wikipedia.org



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