

Olympic-Facts:

- ❖ The first Olympic Games took place in the 8th century B.C. in Olympia, Greece. Held every four years, in honor of the Greek God Zeus, records show the Ancient Olympic Games began in 776 BC in Olympia and weren't halted until 394 AD. Then, in the 4th century A.D., all pagan festivals were banned by Emperor Theodosius I and the Olympics were no more.
- ❖ However, the athletic tradition was resurrected about 1500 years later: The first modern Olympics were held in 1896 in Greece.
- ❖ The Modern Olympic Games are based on the Olympic Games of Ancient Greece.
- ❖ The prize for event winners in the Ancient Olympics was an olive branch wreath.
- ❖ Since the 1904 Olympics, medals have been awarded in each event, with gold medals for first place, silver for second and bronze for third.
- ❖ The Olympic motto is "Citius, Altius, Fortius", which is Latin for "**Faster, Higher, Stronger**". It was proposed by Pierre de Coubertin upon the creation of the International Olympic Committee in 1894.
- ❖ Since the opening of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896, the international sports competition has only been canceled three times: once during World War I (1916) and twice during World War II (1940, 1944). Until the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak, which postponed the Summer Olympic games for a year, the Olympics weathered politically charged boycotts and two separate terrorist attacks without being canceled or postponed during peacetime.
- ❖ Originally scheduled to take place between 24 July and 9 August 2020, the 2020 Olympic Games were rescheduled for 23 July to 8 August 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Games of the XXXII Olympiad will keep the name Tokyo 2020 for marketing and branding purposes despite being held in 2021.

- ❖ The five rings of the Olympic symbol – designed by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, co-founder of the modern Olympic Games – represent the five inhabited continents of the world (Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and the Americas), they are linked together in friendship.
- ❖ The six colors – blue, yellow, black, green, red, and the white background – were chosen because every nation's flag contains at least one of them.
- ❖ The Olympic flame is lit at Olympia in Greece every two years (Summer and Winter Olympics) before it journeys to the next host nation where it is paraded around until the lighting of the Olympic Cauldron at the opening ceremony.
- ❖ The Olympic torch is lit the old-fashioned way in an ancient ceremony at the temple of Hera, in Greece: Actresses, wearing costumes of Greek priestesses, use a parabolic mirror and sun rays to kindle the torch.

From there, the torch starts its relay to the host city: It is usually carried by runners, but it has traveled on a boat, on an airplane (and the Concorde), on horseback, on the back of a camel, via radio signal, underwater, and in a canoe.

The relay torch and the Olympic flame are supposed to burn during the whole event. In case the flame goes out, it can only be reignited with a backup flame, which has been lit in Greece as well, and with never a regular lighter!

- ❖ The unlit Olympic torch has also been taken to space several times.
- ❖ SINCE WHEN HAVE THE SUMMER AND WINTER GAMES NO LONGER BEEN HELD IN THE SAME YEAR?

At its 1986 Session in Lausanne, the IOC decided to introduce this change. From 1924 to 1992, the Summer and Winter Games were each held in the same year, every four years. This four years period is called the "Olympiad".

The last Summer and Winter Games held in the same year were in Barcelona (Summer) and Albertville (Winter) in 1992. Since then, the Summer and Winter Games are each still held every four years but the Summer Games are

celebrated during the first year of an Olympiad and the Winter Games held in the third year

- ❖ Tarzan competed in the Olympics: Johnny Weissmuller, an athlete-turned-actor who played Tarzan in 12 movies, won five gold medals in swimming in the 1920s.

- ❖ The Olympic Games have been hosted by 23 different countries.

- ❖ The 2012 London Games were the first Olympics in which all participating countries sent female athletes.

- ❖ Tug of war was contested as a team event at every Summer Olympics from 1900 to 1920.

- ❖ 1904 Olympics Marathon :

At the 1904 Olympics in St. Louis, the marathon was a total mess: The first place finisher did most of the race in a car, the guy in second almost died from eating rat poison, and the fourth place finisher raced in dress pants and shoes, and took a nap by the side of the road for part of the race.

First off, the entire course was very dusty and breathing in that dust caused all kinds of injuries, including one runner who was hospitalized with hemorrhaging after the dust tore his esophagus and stomach lining. The organizer of the race purposefully withheld water in order to test the effects of dehydration. So the whole thing was a nightmare from the start.

That first-place finisher, Fred Lorz, hitched a ride in a car to the end of the course after he was struck with serious cramping. He got out shortly before the finish line and crossed it, which fooled some of the onlookers. He claimed he did it "as a joke."

That second-place finisher, Thomas Hicks, was given a mixture of egg whites and strychnine, a poison that is often used to kill rodents or birds, as an attempt at a performance-enhancing drug. He was carried across the finish line by his handlers.

That fourth-place finisher, Andarín Carbajal (pictured above), was a Cuban national who raised money to attend the Olympics by running the entire length of Cuba. He gambled away all the money when he arrived in the States, and showed up for the race in dress clothing. Thankfully, another runner used a knife to cut his pants into shorts. Carbajal stopped at a roadside orchard for a snack during the race, but the apples were rotten so he was struck with stomach cramps and had to sleep it off.