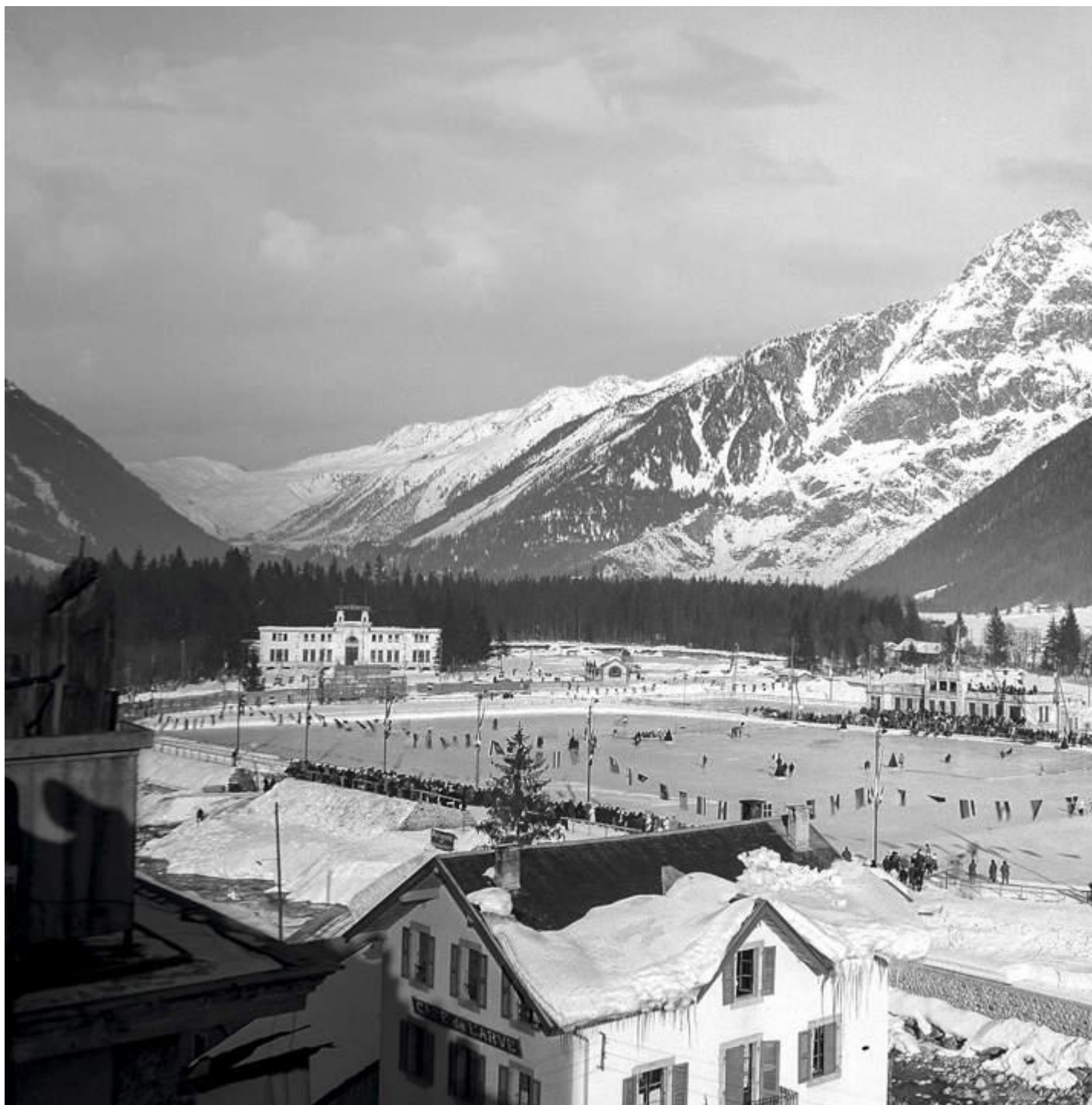


Chamonix 1924: A Century of Winter Olympic Games [B1]

I Giochi olimpici moderni si ispirano a quelli celebrati in Grecia tra il 776 a.C. e il 394 d.C. Tuttavia, gli antichi greci non praticavano sport invernali, per cui le prime gare si svolsero sulla neve solo nel 1924.



The Winter Olympic Games is a multi-sport event [held](#) every four years. Participants compete in different disciplines on snow or ice, with gold, silver and bronze medals [awarded](#) to the winner and the [runners-up](#). Until 1984, both Olympic Games were amateur events: no professional athletes were allowed!

MAIN SPORTS

The first Winter Olympics were [held](#) in 1924 in Chamonix, France. The ten-day event had participants from sixteen countries competing in five main sports: bobsleigh, curling, ice hockey, skating and Nordic skiing, where only the toe of the boot is attached to the ski. There were four types of skiing, including [cross-country skiing](#) and ski jumping; and two kinds of skating, [figure skating](#) and speed skating.

PERSISTENT ISSUES

The very first gold medal was [awarded](#) to Charles Jewtraw of the United States in the 500-metre speed skate. Norway won most medals overall, and has dominated the Winter Olympics ever since! In the third event, [held](#) in Lake Placid, New York in the US in 1932, [issues arose](#) that have persisted throughout the Games' history. In this case, some nations could not afford to make the journey, and the entire event was delayed [due to](#) insufficient snowfall.

INNSBRUCK

Other controversies have arisen, from the process of choosing the host city, to doping scandals and even deaths. The Austrian event in 1964 was particularly tragic: first the entire US figure-skating team was killed in a plane crash, then one skier died and two more were seriously injured while training on [hazardous slopes](#), where melted snow left obstacles in their [path](#).

CHEATING

In 1984, the rule that prohibited professionals from competing was reversed, but this didn't stop some athletes [behaving](#) badly. In 1994, US figure skater Tonya Harding asked two men [to injure](#) teammate Nancy Kerrigan in a failed plan to stop her rival competing. This was nothing, however, compared to the 2014 event in Russia, where nepotism, corruption and human rights abuses were all prevalent even before the Games started. Later it was revealed that dozens of Russian athletes had participated in a [state-run](#) doping programme.

ITALY 2026

Recent years have seen security [tightened](#) and more rigorous drug testing. New sports and disciplines have been permanently added to the agenda, including freestyle skiing (in 1992) and snowboarding (in 1998). [Ski mountaineering](#) makes its debut in the 2026 Winter Olympics, to be [held](#) in Italy. However, according to scientists, the biggest problem is still the weather: within fifty years, they say, the climate in eleven of the twenty-one Winter Olympics [venues](#) may be too [unreliable](#) to host the Games there.

Glossary

- **figure skating** = pattinaggio artistico
- **to injure** = ferire
- **state-run** = gestito dallo Stato
- **tightened** = rafforzare
- **venues** = sedi
- **awarded** = assegnare
- **issues** = problemi
- **behaving** = comportarsi
- **runners-up** = classificati
- **cross-country skiing** = sci di fondo
- **arose** = sorgere
- **Ski mountaineering** = sci alpinismo
- **unreliable** = inaffidabile
- **held** = tenere
- **hazardous** = pericoloso
- **slopes** = piste
- **path** = cammino
- **due to** = a causa di