

= Cricket at the 1900 Summer Olympics =

A cricket tournament , played as part of the 1900 Summer Olympics , took place on 19 ? 20 August at the Vélodrome de Vincennes . The only match of the tournament was played between teams representing Great Britain and France , and was won by 158 runs by Great Britain .

Originally , teams representing Belgium , France , Great Britain , and the Netherlands were scheduled to compete in the tournament . Belgium and the Netherlands pulled out of the competition , leaving Great Britain to play France . Neither team was nationally selected . The British side was a touring club , the Devon and Somerset Wanderers (alias Devon County Wanderers) , while the French team , the French Athletic Club Union , comprised mainly British expatriates living in Paris .

The two @-@ day game commenced on 19 August 1900 . Great Britain batted first and scored 117 , and bowled France out for 78 . Great Britain then scored 145 for 5 in their second innings , setting the hosts a target of 185 . The tourists bowled out France for 26 to win the match by 158 runs , a significant margin , but with only five minutes of the match remaining . The Great Britain team was awarded silver medals and the French team bronze medals , together with miniature statues of the Eiffel Tower . The match was formally recognised as being an Olympic contest in 1912 , and the medals were later reassigned as gold and silver .

= = Background = =

Cricket had been scheduled as an event at the first modern Olympics , the 1896 Summer Olympics , being listed in the original programme for the Athens Games . Due to an insufficient number of entries , the event was cancelled . Four years later , at the Paris Games , there was also a shortage of entries . Belgium and the Netherlands , who for a time had been considered as possibilities to co @-@ host the Olympics with France , withdrew from the cricket tournament when their co @-@ hosting bids fell through . Their withdrawal left only Great Britain and the host nation , France .

The slightly haphazard nature of the cricket tournament was mirrored throughout the rest of the 1900 Olympics . Events took place throughout a six @-@ month period from May through until October , and like the Games themselves , were often considered part of the Exposition Universelle , a world 's fair held in Paris from 15 April until 12 November 1900 .

= = Team selection = =

Neither side was nationally selected , nor representative . Great Britain , or England as they were called in the advertising handbills , were represented by a touring club side , the Devon and Somerset Wanderers . The side , formed by William Donne in 1894 for a tour of the Isle of Wight , had completed five other tours before travelling to France . The Wanderers were primarily formed from players of Castle Cary Cricket Club , five of whom played in the match , and also included four former pupils of Blundell 's School , a public school in Devon . The side was completed by a number of players from the surrounding areas who were able to get away from business and personal commitments for the two @-@ week period of the tour . Writing in the Journal of Olympic History , Ian Buchanan describes that both sides " were made up of distinctly average club cricketers " . Only two members of the Wanderers side , and none of the French side , played first @-@ class cricket . Montagu Toller played six times for Somerset County Cricket Club , all in 1897 , while Alfred Bowerman played for Somerset once in 1900 , and again in 1905 .

The French side was officially drawn from all the member clubs of the Union des Sociétés Françaises de Sports Athlétiques . Few of these clubs actually sported cricket teams , and so the eventual side was selected from just two clubs : the Union Club and the Standard Athletic Club . Both sides had strong English influences , and the majority of the team that competed for France in the Olympic match were British expatriates . The Standard Athletic Club had been formed ten years earlier by English workers who had moved to the country to help build the Eiffel Tower .

= = Match = =

== Summary ==

The match had been intended to be a standard eleven @-@ a @-@ side contest , but by mutual agreement from the captains this was increased to twelve @-@ a @-@ side , a move which the scorecard printers had not expected , resulting in the extra name having to be added by hand . Play commenced at 11 : 00AM on Sunday , 19 August with the touring Wanderers batting first . They were bowled out for 117 , with only four members of the team reaching double figures . Frederick Cuming , one of the four Old Blundellians , top @-@ scored for the side with 38 , followed by their captain , and Exeter Cricket Club opening batsman , C. B. K. Beachcroft with 23 . The French were then bowled out for 78 , the bowling led by Frederick Christian who claimed seven wickets . Play closed at 5 : 00PM after both sides had completed their first innings , and the Wanderers had a lead of 39 runs . The Wanderers batting improved the following morning , and they added 145 runs for the second innings , declaring their innings closed with five wickets down . Beachcroft was again successful , reaching a half @-@ century , a feat also achieved by Bowerman , who top @-@ scored with 59 runs . The French required 185 runs to win , but lost their first ten wickets for eleven runs . At this point they attempted to play out time , which would have meant the match was drawn . They succeeded for a time , and the match was just five minutes from the end when their eleventh , and final , wicket fell , granting the Wanderers a 158 @-@ run victory . Toller was the pick of the Wanderers bowlers in the second innings , claiming seven wickets and conceding nine runs .

After the match , the English side were awarded Silver medals , and the French side were given Bronze medals , and both teams were also given miniature statues of the Eiffel Tower . The match was not covered in any national newspapers in England or France , although some of the local Devon and West Country newspapers did publish reports .

== Scorecard ==

Scorecard notes

== Aftermath ==

The Devon and Somerset Wanderers played two further matches during their tour of France , both one @-@ day contests , and won them both . They were not impressed by the French , whom a journalist at the time described as " too excitable to enjoy the game " .

Neither of the teams realised that they had competed in the Olympic Games , with the match advertised as part of the world 's fair . The event was retrospectively recognised as an Olympic contest by the International Olympic Committee in 1912 , and the medals won by the teams were upgraded to Gold for Great Britain and Silver for France . The scheduled competition at the 1904 Summer Olympics , held in St Louis , was cancelled at short notice due to a lack of facilities , and the sport has not been included in the Olympic Games since .

As the match was 12 @-@ a @-@ side and scheduled for only two days it does not have first @-@ class status .

== Medalists ==