

## = 2009 Mediterranean Games =

The 2009 Mediterranean Games , officially the XVI Mediterranean Games ( Italian : XVI Giochi del Mediterraneo ) and commonly known as Pescara 2009 , was a multi @-@ sport event held in Pescara , Italy , from 26 June to 5 July 2009 . It was governed by the International Committee of Mediterranean Games ( ICMG ) ( French : Comité international des Jeux méditerranéens ) . A total of 3 @, @ 368 athletes ( 2 @, @ 183 men and 1 @, @ 185 women ) from 23 National Olympic Committees ( NOCs ) participated in the Games . Montenegro participated for the first time at the Mediterranean Games , after their independence in 2006 . The program included competitions in 24 different sports , including three non @-@ Olympic sports ? bocce , karate , and water skiing ? and golf , which will be reinstated as an official Olympic sport in 2016 Summer Olympics . Water skiing was introduced as a demonstration sport . Two disabled sports , athletics and swimming , were also contested in the Games . Italy became the first nation to host the Mediterranean Games three times , having previously hosted them in Naples ( 1963 ) and Bari ( 1997 ) .

Pescara was awarded the Games on 18 October 2003 in Almeria , Spain , which was the host of 2005 Mediterranean Games , defeating bids from Rijeka and Patras . The organising committee of the Games , Comitato Organizzatore dei XVI Giochi del Mediterraneo ( COJM ) , was created in 2006 to oversee the staging of the Games . A total of 33 venues were used to host the events , including Stadio Adriatico ? main stadium of the Pescara Games , hosted both the opening and closing ceremonies , as well as the athletics competition and football final . Many events took place in several different cities . The official logo of the 2009 Mediterranean Games featured simple graphical illustrations of mountains and sea of the Abruzzo region , and the Marsican brown bear was chosen as the mascot of the Games .

Athletes from 21 countries won medals , leaving two countries without a medal ; 18 of them won at least one gold medal . A total of 782 medals ? 243 gold , 244 silver and 295 bronze ? were awarded . Competitors from the host nation , Italy , led the medal table for the eleventh time in the history of the Games , with 64 gold medals . Italian swimmer Federica Pellegrini and Spanish swimmer Aschwin Wildeboer Faber set new world records in their respective events .

## = = Background = =

The Mediterranean Games is a multi @-@ sport event , much like the Summer Olympics ( albeit on a much smaller scale ) , with participation exclusively from countries around the Mediterranean Sea where Europe , Africa , and Asia meet . The Games started in 1951 and are held every four years . The idea of holding the Mediterranean Games originated with Muhammed Taher Pasha , who was the chairman of the Egyptian Olympic Committee and the vice @-@ president of the International Olympic Committee ( IOC ) , at a meeting during the 1948 London Olympics . The Games " were designed specifically to bring together the Muslim and European countries surrounding the Mediterranean basin " to promote understanding through sporting competition .

The first edition of the Mediterranean Games was held in the Egyptian city of Alexandria in 1951 , attracting 734 competitors from 10 nations . Female athletes were not allowed to compete . Italy hosted the Games for the first time in 1963 in Naples ? the fourth edition of the Games . Naples was the second in Europe ( following Barcelona in 1955 ) to host the Games . Thirty @-@ four years later , another Italian city , Bari , hosted the Games .

## = = Organisation = =

## = = = Selection of host city = = =

Pescara was elected as the host city for the 2009 Mediterranean Games on 18 October 2003 in Almeria , Spain , defeating bids from Rijeka and Patras . The decision for the host city was made after the voting by members of the International Committee of Mediterranean Games , held in

Almeria , host of the 2005 Mediterranean Games . Croatia 's bidding city , Rijeka , was the first city to be eliminated , followed by Patras , Greece 's bidding city . This was the third time that any Italian city hosted this multi @-@ sport event .

Croatian delegates were outraged by the final decision , particularly as this was their third bid in recent years ; Croatia made bids in 1995 and 1999 for the 1997 and 2001 Mediterranean Games , respectively . Former Prime Minister of Croatia and the president of the Croatian Olympic Committee Zlatko Mate?a expressed his disappointment , " it just shows , once again , that small countries have no chance of competing with the big ones . " The Croatian bid was supported by the president and CEO of Formula One Management and Formula One Administration Bernie Ecclestone , 1992 Olympic bronze medallist in tennis Goran Ivani?evi? and 1998 FIFA World Cup Golden Shoe Award winner Davor Suker .

= = = Organising committee = = =

The Comitato Organizzatore dei XVI Giochi del Mediterraneo ? Pescara 2009 ( English : Organizing Committee of the XVI Mediterranean Games ? Pescara 2009 ; abbreviated as COJM ) was created in 2006 to oversee the staging of the Games . The committee was in charge of implementing and staging the Games , and to maintain the infrastructure and provide other services . The committee 's board of directors consisted of politicians , IOC members from Italy , and presidents of the various Italian sports governing bodies . Mario Pescante was appointed as the Commissioner Extraordinary of the Games in 2008 by the Italian Government . He had held the same office during the 2006 Winter Olympic , held in Turin .

A few weeks before the Games on 18 May 2009 , Sabatino Aracu resigned from his post of the president of the organising committee in order to allow its dissolution , which according to him was " incapable of taking urgent measures . " Aracu 's decision was reportedly motivated by the bureaucratic reasons . He was later appointed Honorary President of the Games .

= = = Logo and mascot = = =

The official logo of this edition of the Mediterranean Games featured simple graphical illustrations of mountains and sea of the Abruzzo region . Pescara is the capital of Province of Pescara which is situated in the Abruzzo region . The official mascot was a Marsican brown bear wearing a diving mask and flip @-@ flops with swimfins in his hands . The Marsican brown bear is a highly threatened , unrecognised subspecies of the Brown bear , with a range restricted to the Abruzzo National Park . The mascot was unveiled by the Mediterranean Games Executive Committee during their meeting in Pescara from 24 to 28 March 2008 .

= = = Medals = = =

The medals of the Games were designed and produced by the Italian company , Coinart , specialising in the manufacture of medals , jewellery , badges , plaques , and trophies . The medals were made up of brass , bronze , and gold . The obverse features the Games logo , stylised shape of an athlete posed to plunge into the waves , with the inscription " Pescara 2009 " and XVI Jeux méditerranéens in French and the ICMG logo at bottom ? three interlocking rings , representing Africa , Asia and Europe . The reverse features the Warrior of Capestrano ( Italian : Guerriero di Capestrano ) , a fourth @-@ century BC statue , measures more than two metres in height . The statue was discovered in 1934 in Capestrano , Province of L 'Aquila , Abruzzo region . It is widely considered to be an archaeological evidence of the pre @-@ Roman settlements in Abruzzo .

= = = Venues = = =

The main stadium of the 2009 Mediterranean Games was Stadio Adriatico . The stadium received major renovations and upgrades at a cost of about ? 10 million . It hosted both the opening and

closing ceremonies as well as the athletics competition and football final . A total of 33 venues were used to host the events during the Games . Many events took place in several different cities .

The Mediterranean Village provided accommodation and training for athletes of the Games . It was designed by the Italian architect Paolo Desideri , and the total cost of the project was ? 150 million . It was located in the municipality of Chieti and was spread over an area of 18 acres ( 7 @ .@ 3 ha ; 0 @ .@ 028 sq mi ) , including a 7 acres ( 2 @ .@ 8 ha ; 0 @ .@ 011 sq mi ) public park . More than 450 apartments accommodated athletes and team officials .

The village was designed according to modern architecture and was said to have adopted green features like solar water heating . Key facilities such as a restaurant , medical centre , and a conference hall with a seating capacity of 800 people were hosted there . Rhythmic gymnast Fabrizia D 'Ottavio was appointed the mayor of the village .

= = Calendar = =

In the following calendar for the 2009 Mediterranean Games , each blue box represents an event competition , such as a qualification round , on that day . The yellow boxes represent days during which medal @-@ awarding finals for a sport were held . On the left the calendar lists each sport with events held during the Games . There is a key at the top of the calendar to aid the reader .

Although , the Games officially began on 26 June 2009 , the first football games were held on 25 June . Opening ceremony was held on 26 June , and on the same day Tunisian weightlifter Khalil El @-@ Maaoui won the first gold medal of the Games in the men 's 56 kg event .

= = Games = =

= = = Opening ceremony = = =

The opening ceremony officially began at 9 : 00 pm Central European Summer Time ( UTC + 02 : 00 ) on 26 June 2009 in the Stadio Adriatico . Italian entrepreneur Marco Balich , who coordinated the opening ceremony of the 2006 Winter Olympics , held in Turin , was its producer and director , with " music moments and stage actions " were developed by the choreography director Doug Jack . K @-@ events ( now Filmmaster Events ) , subsidiary of the Italian holding company Filmmaster Group , was responsible for the organisation of the opening and closing ceremonies .

The ceremony , among other dignitaries and guests , included the president of the International Olympic Committee Jacques Rogge , president of the ICMG Amar Addadi , Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi , Albert II , Prince of Monaco , Commissioner Extraordinary of the Games Mario Pescante , president of the Pescara Games organising committee Sabatino Aracu , European Olympic Committee ( EOC ) president Patrick Hickey , president of the Italian National Olympic Committee ( Italian : Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano ( CONI ) ) Gianni Petrucci and the EOC and CONI secretary general Raffaele Pagnozzi .

The cultures of Abruzzi Region and Mediterranean were highlighted in the two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half hours long opening ceremony . The stadium was full to its 25 @ ,@ 000 capacity . A special tribute was presented to the victims of the 2009 L 'Aquila earthquake , occurred in the region of Abruzzo on 6 April 2009 ; Italian flag was carried by the Italian Special Forces , " who were the first to arrive in L ? Aquila " . The ceremony featured a special performance by the Italian Air Force . Italian musician and singer @-@ songwriter Eros Ramazzotti sang " L 'orizzonte " from his 2009 studio album Ali e radici . The main attraction of the ceremony was the " Water Ceremony " . The " water journey " took place through the villages most stricken by the earthquake and ended at the stadium .

= = = Sports = = =

The programme for the Pescara Games included 24 sports and 245 events . Two disabled sports ?

athletics and swimming ? were also held , each comprising two events . Three sports were open only to men ? boxing , football and water polo ? while rhythmic gymnastics and two events of fencing ( foil and sabre ) were open only to women . Equestrian was the only sport in which men and women competed together . Water skiing was added as a demonstration sport .

Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of medal events contested in each sport .

= = = Closing ceremony = = =

The 2009 Mediterranean Games closing ceremony concluded the Pescara Games on 5 July 2009 . It began at 9 : 00 pm Central European Summer Time ( UTC + 2 : 00 ) , and took place on the streets of the city . The " main element " of the ceremony was white , and spectators were asked by the organisers to wear white clothing . The event was directed by Marco Balich and organised by K @ - @ events .

The ceremony included the handover of the Games from Pescara to Volos , co @ - @ host of the 2013 Mediterranean Games with Larissa . The Italian army 's brass band played the Italian national anthem , Il Canto degli Italiani . The Mayor of Pescara , Luigi Albore Mascia , then handed the Mediterranean Games flag to the president of the International Committee for the Mediterranean Games , Amar Addadi , who in turn passed it to Aleksandros Voulgaris , the Mayor of Volos . The closing act of the ceremony was the romanza of Mario Cavaradossi " E lucevan le stelle " , performed by local pop singer Piero Mazzocchetti , who was specially chosen for this purpose by the president of the organising committee Sabatino Aracu .

= = = Medal count = = =

Athletes from 21 countries won medals , leaving two countries without a medal , and 18 of them won at least one gold medal . Andorra and Lebanon did not win any medal . Athens Olympics silver medallist in 200 metre freestyle , Federica Pellegrini of Italy made a new world record in the 400 metres freestyle event . Spanish swimmer Aschwin Wildeboer Faber set a new world record in 100 metres backstroke .

Key

\* Host nation

= = Participation = =

A total of 3 @ , @ 368 athletes ( 2 @ , @ 183 men and 1 @ , @ 185 women ) from 23 member nations of the International Committee of Mediterranean Games participated ( ICMG ) in the Games . The number of participating countries was the greatest in Mediterranean Games history ( equivalent to Tunis 2005 ) . The total number of female athletes was an all @ - @ time high . Women took part in the Games for the first time in 1967 . Italy and Greece had the largest teams , with 452 athletes for Italy and 391 for Greece . Andorra sent the smallest delegation of 13 members .

All but one of the 24 National Olympic Committees that were member of the ICMG , as of 2009 , participated in the Pescara Games , the exception being Republic of Macedonia . Montenegro , after their independence in 2006 , participated for the first time at the Mediterranean Games . The states of Serbia and Montenegro , which participated at the 2005 Mediterranean Games jointly as Serbia and Montenegro , competed separately . The Montenegrin Olympic Committee was accepted as a new National Olympic Committee by the International Olympic Committee in 2007 .