1928 Summer Olympics

The **1928 Summer Olympics** (Dutch: *Olympische Zomerspelen 1928*), officially known as the **Games of the IX Olympiad** (Dutch: *Spelen van de IXe Olympiade*) and commonly known as **Amsterdam 1928**, was an international multi-sport event that was celebrated from 28 July to 12 August 1928 in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The city of Amsterdam had previously bid for the 1920 and 1924 Olympic Games, but was obliged to give way to war-torn Antwerp in Belgium for the 1920 Games and Pierre de Coubertin's Paris for the 1924 Games.

The only other candidate city for the 1928 Olympics was Los Angeles, which would eventually be selected to host the Olympics four years later. In preparation for the 1932 Summer Olympics, the United States Olympic Committee reviewed the costs and revenue of the 1928 Games. The committee reported a total cost of US$1.183 million with receipts of US$1.165 million, giving a negligible loss of US$18,000, which was a considerable improvement over the 1924 Games.[2]

The United States won the most gold and overall medals.

Host city selection

Dutch nobleman Frederik van Tuyll van Serooskerken first proposed Amsterdam as host city for the Summer Olympic Games in 1912, even before the Netherlands Olympic Committee was established.

The Olympic Games were cancelled in 1916 due to World War I. In 1919, the Netherlands Olympic Committee abandoned the proposal of Amsterdam in favor of their support for the nomination of Antwerp as host city for the 1920 Summer Olympics. In 1921, Paris was selected for the 1924 Summer Olympics on the condition that the 1928 Summer Olympics would be organized in Amsterdam. This decision, supported by the Netherlands Olympic Committee, was announced by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on 2 June 1921.

Los Angeles bid for the 1928 Summer Olympics was without success in 1922 and again in 1923.[3] The city was eventually selected as host city for the 1932 Summer Olympics, being the only bidder for that year.[4]: p.915

Games of the IX Olympiad

Poster for the 1928 Summer Olympics

Host city	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Nations	46
Athletes	2,883 (2,606 men, 277 women)
Events	109 in 14 sports (20 disciplines)
Opening	28 July 1928
Closing	12 August 1928
Opened by	Prince Hendrik[1]
Stadium	Olympisch Stadion
Summer	
Winter	

Highlights

- These were the first Olympics to be organized under the IOC presidency of Henri de Baillet-Latour.
- A symbolic fire was lit for the first time for the duration of the Olympics, a tradition that continues to this day.[5] The first Olympic flame and torch relay, however, would not take place until the 1936 Summer Olympics.
- For the first time, the parade of nations started with Greece, which holds the origins of the Olympics, and ended with the host country, a tradition which has also continued ever since.
- The Games were officially opened by Prince Hendrik, consort of Queen Wilhelmina, who had authorized her husband to deputise for her.[4]: p.294 The Queen was unable to attend the opening ceremony as she was on holiday in Norway and did not want to disrupt her trip.[6] This was the second time a head of state had not personally officiated at an Olympic opening ceremony (the first occasion being the 1904 Games in St. Louis, Missouri, which were officially opened by David R. Francis, the Mayor of St. Louis). The Queen had initially refused to make an appearance at either the opening or closing ceremony; it is thought that she objected to the Netherlands hosting the 1928 Games as she considered the Olympics to be a demonstration of paganism.[7] However, she returned from Norway before the conclusion of the Games, to be present at the closing ceremony,[8] and she presented the first prizes at the prize distribution which was held immediately beforehand.[4]: p.913
- The American company Coca-Cola made its first appearance as an official sponsor of the Olympic Games, remaining the oldest Olympic sponsor to this day.[9]
- Many cars were expected for the Games, but Amsterdam had no more than 2,000 single car parking spaces. Consequently, a number of new parking sites were provided and a special parking symbol was launched to show

foreign visitors where they could park. The white P on a blue background was to become the international traffic sign for parking, which is still used today.[10][11]

- These Games were the first to bear the name "Summer Olympic Games", to distinguish them from the Winter Olympic Games (held since 1924).
- These Games were the first to feature a fixed schedule of sixteen days, which is still followed since 1984. In previous Olympics, competition had been stretched out over several months.
- Athletics events were held on a 400-meter track, later becoming the standard for athletics tracks.
- Germany returned to the Olympic Games for the first time since 1912, after being banned from the 1920 and 1924 Games due to its role in World War I. The German team immediately finished second in the 1928 medal count.
- Lithuania competed at the Summer Games as an independent nation for the last time until 1992, as a result of political problems and its occupation by the Soviet Union.
- South American football made a definite breakthrough, as Uruguay retained its title by defeating Argentina.
- India took its first ever gold medal in field hockey, beginning a streak of six consecutive gold medals in the sport.

The Olympic cauldron in front of the Amsterdam Olympic Stadium.

Athlete highlights

- Paavo Nurmi of Finland won his ninth, and final, gold medal in the 10,000 m race.
- Canadian athlete Percy Williams exceeded expectations by winning both the 100 m and 200 m sprint events.
- Crown Prince Olav, who would later become King of Norway; won a gold medal in the 6 meter sailing event.
- Pat O'Callaghan won the first ever medal for a newly independent Ireland, taking gold in the hammer throw.
- Mikio Oda of Japan won the triple jump event with a result of 15.21 m (49 ft 10.82 in), becoming the first gold medalist from an Asian country.
- Betty Robinson of the USA won the women's 100 metres in a world record time of 12.2 seconds. She was still just 16 years of age at the time.
- Algerian-born marathon runner Boughera El Ouafi won a gold medal for France in the men's marathon.
- Johnny Weissmuller, who later appeared in several Tarzan movies, won two gold medals in swimming: an individual gold in the men's 100 m freestyle, and a team gold in the men's 4 x 200 m freestyle relay.[12][13]

Prince Hendrik watching the football match Netherlands–Uruguay (0–2)

Sports

During the 1928 Summer Olympics, there were 14 sports, 20 disciplines and 109 events in the tournament. In parentheses is the number of events per discipline.[4]:pp.973–985

- Aquatics
  - Diving (4)
  - Swimming (11)
  - Water polo (1)
- Athletics (27)
- Boxing (8)
- Cycling
  - Road (2)
  - Track (4)
- Equestrian
  - Dressage (2)
  - Eventing (2)
  - Show jumping (2)

- Fencing (7)
- Football (1)
- Gymnastics (8)
- Field hockey (1)
- Modern pentathlon (1)
- Rowing (7)
- Sailing (3)
- Weightlifting (5)
- Wrestling
  - Freestyle (7)
  - Greco-Roman (6)

Women's athletics and team gymnastics debuted at these Olympics,[14] in spite of criticism. Five women's athletics events were added: 100 meters, 800 meters, high jump, discus, and 400 meter hurdles. In protest of the limited number of events, British women athletes, boycotted the Games.[15] Halina Konopacka of Poland became the first female Olympic track and field champion. Reports that the 800

meter run ended with several of the competitors being completely exhausted were widely (and erroneously) circulated. As a result, the IOC decided that women were too frail for long-distance running, and women's Olympic running events were limited to 200 meters until the 1960s.[16]

Tennis disappeared from the program, only to reappear in 1968 as a demonstration sport.

Demonstration sports

- Kaatsen (not considered official by the IOC)[17]
- Korfball
- Lacrosse

These Games also included art competitions in five categories: architecture, painting, sculpture, literature, and poetry. However, the IOC no longer considers these to be official medal events, so the medals awarded are not included in today's Olympic medal counts.[18]

Venues

Fourteen sports venues were used for the 1928 Summer Olympics. The Swim Stadium was demolished in 1929.[4]:p.193 The Het Kasteel football stadium was renovated in 1998–99. The Monnikenhuize stadium was demolished in 1950. The Schermzaal sports hall has also been demolished. The Olympic Stadium was renovated between 1996 and 2000, and is still in use. The Old Stadion was demolished in 1929 and replaced with housing in the Amsterdam area.


The Olympisch Stadion in 1928

Venue	Sports	Capacity	Ref.
Amersfoort	Modern pentathlon (riding)	Not listed	[4]:p.277
Amsterdam	Cycling (road)	Not listed	[4]:p.264
Buiten-IJ	Sailing	2,263	[4]:pp.271–4
Hilversum	Equestrian (dressage and cross-country), Modern pentathlon (running)	4,763	[4]:pp.167, 236, 694
Krachtsportgebouw	Boxing, Weightlifting, Wrestling	4,634	[4]:pp.200–1, 205
Monnikenhuize (Arnhem)	Football	7,500	[19]
Old Stadion	Field hockey, Football	29,787	[4]:pp.173–80
Olympic Sports Park Swim Stadium	Diving, Modern pentathlon (swimming), Swimming, Water polo	6,000	[4]:pp.205–9
Olympic Stadium	Athletics, Cycling (track), Equestrian (jumping), Football, Gymnastics, Korfball	33,025	[4]:pp.173–205
Schermzaal	Fencing, Modern pentathlon (fencing)	559	[4]:pp.170, 202, 205
Sloterringvaart, Sloten	Rowing	2,230	[4]:pp.172, 267–72
Sparta Stadion Het Kasteel (Rotterdam)	Football	11,026	[20][21]
Zeeburg Shooting Grounds	Modern pentathlon (shooting)	10,455	[4]:p.277
Zuiderzee	Sailing	2,263	[4]:pp.271–4

Participating nations

A total of 46 nations were represented at the Amsterdam Games. Malta, Panama, and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) competed at the Olympic Games for the first time. Germany returned after having been banned in 1920 and 1924.[22]
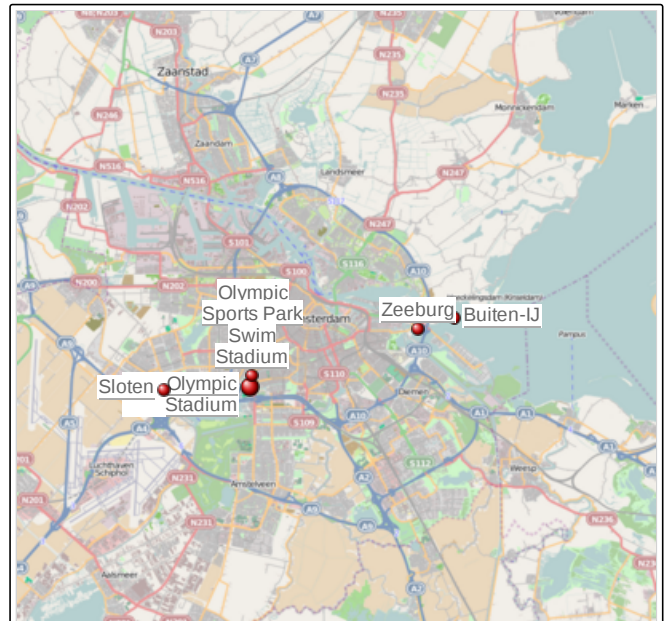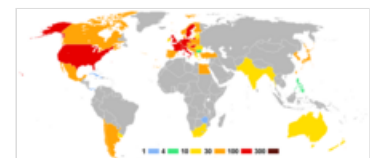
Map of the Amsterdam region with Olympic venues marked. The Krachtsportgebouw, Oude Stadion and Schermzaal were located next to the Olympic Stadium.

Map of the Netherlands with Olympic venues marked. [a]

Participants

Number of athletes

Participating National Olympic Committees

- Argentina (81 athletes)
- Australia (18)
- Austria (73)
- Belgium (186)
- Bulgaria (5)
- Canada (69)
- Chile (38)
- Cuba (1)
- Czechoslovakia (70)
- Denmark (91)
- Estonia (20)
- Egypt (32)
- Finland (69)
- France (255)
- Germany (296)
- Great Britain (232)
- Greece (23)
- Haiti (2)
- Hungary (109)
- India (21)
- Ireland (27)
- Italy (174)
- Japan (43)
- Latvia (14)
- Lithuania (12)
- Luxembourg (46)
- Malta (9)
- Mexico (30)
- Monaco (7)
- Netherlands (264) **(host)**
- New Zealand (10)
- Norway (52)
- Panama (1)
- Philippines (4)
- Poland (93)
- Portugal (31)
- Rhodesia (2)
- Romania (29)
- South Africa (24)
- Spain (80)
- Switzerland (133)
- Sweden (100)
- Turkey (31)
- United States (280)
- Uruguay (22)
- Yugoslavia (34)

Number of athletes by National Olympic Committees

IOC Letter Code	Country	Athletes
GER	Germany	296
USA	United States	280
NED	Netherlands	264
FRA	France	255
GBR	Great Britain	232
BEL	Belgium	186
ITA	Italy	174
SUI	Switzerland	133
HUN	Hungary	109
SWE	Sweden	100
POL	Poland	93
DEN	Denmark	91
ARG	Argentina	81
ESP	Spain	80
AUT	Austria	73
TCH	Czechoslovakia	70
CAN	Canada	69
FIN	Finland	69
NOR	Norway	52
LUX	Luxembourg	46
JPN	Japan	43
CHI	Chile	38
YUG	Yugoslavia	34

EGY	Egypt	32	
POR	Portugal	31	
TUR	Turkey	31	
MEX	Mexico	30	
ROM	Romania	29	
IRL	Ireland	27	
RSA	South Africa	24	
GRE	Greece	23	
URU	Uruguay	22	
IND	India	21	
EST	Estonia	20	
AUS	Australia	18	
LAT	Latvia	14	
LTU	Lithuania	12	
NZL	New Zealand	10	
MLT	Malta	9	
MON	Monaco	7	
BUL	Bulgaria	5	
PHI	Philippines	4	
HAI	Haiti	2	
RHO	Rhodesia	2	
CUB	Cuba	1	
PAN	Panama	1	

Total 2,883

Medal count

These are the top ten nations that won medals at the 1928 Games.

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	United States	22	18	16	56
2	Germany	10	7	14	31
3	Finland	8	8	9	25
4	Sweden	7	6	12	25
5	Italy	7	5	7	19
6	Switzerland	7	4	4	15
7	France	6	10	5	21
8	Netherlands*	6	9	4	19
9	Hungary	4	5	0	9
10	Canada	4	4	7	15
Totals (10 entries)		**81**	**76**	**78**	**235**

Poster

The official poster for the Games displaying a running man in a white shirt was designed by Jos Rovers however the IOC never succeeded in obtaining the copyright of the image. The IOC used a different poster, with the German text *Olympische Spiele*, and an athlete partly covered in the Dutch national flag, holding a peace leaf in his hand. The poster was made for a German book about the Amsterdam Olympics.[23]

Last surviving competitor

The last living competitor of the 1928 Summer Olympics was Carla Marangoni, a member of the silver medal-winning Italian gymnastic team who had been twelve years old during the Olympics. Marangoni died 18 January 2018, at the age of 102 as the oldest living Olympic medalist at the time of her death.[24]

Official poster

See also

🔘🔘🔘 **Olympic Games portal**

- 1928 Winter Olympics
- List of IOC country codes

Notes

a. Although Flevoland is depicted in this map, it did not exist at this time.

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