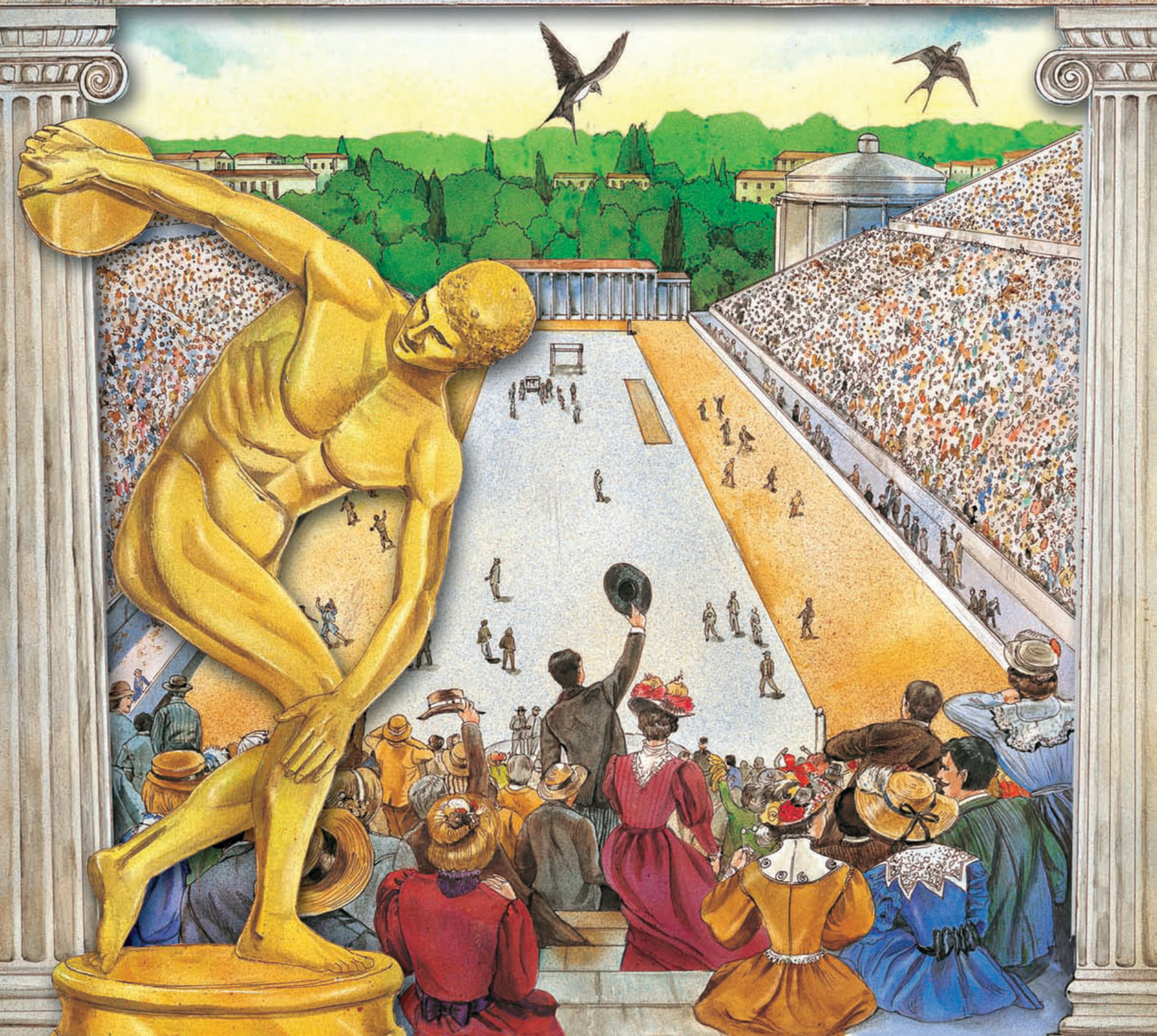


THROUGH TIME

# OLYMPICS

FROM ANCIENT GREECE TO THE PRESENT DAY

WRITTEN BY RICHARD PLATT ILLUSTRATED BY MANUELA CAPPON





# Tokyo 1964

High above a gigantic sports stadium, a young athlete lifts a flaming torch. A plume of fire bursts from the Olympic cauldron, and below him the vast crowd erupts in cheers and applause. Even before a single race is run, it's a triumph for Japan. For this is the first Asian Olympics.

Games of the 18th Olympiad: Tokyo, 1964



- Number of events: 163, across 21 sports
- Number of competing nations: 93
- Most gold medals: 36 (USA)
- Number of athletes competing: 5,151

5,700 competitors and officials watch from ground level

the Japanese emperor stands in the royal box

the opening ceremonies take place on a small stage below the royal box

trumpeters sound a fanfare after the emperor declares the Games open

For the first time, judo is included in the programme. Japan wins gold in three of the four categories.

These Games mark Japan's recovery from the terrible destruction of World War II. The wiry figure lighting the flame is Yoshinori Sakai. He was born in Hiroshima on the day the US dropped an atomic bomb on the city. The bomb's monstrous explosion perhaps helped to end the war, but it destroyed Hiroshima. Sakai's lighting of the flame remembers the past, but in all other ways the Tokyo Olympics look forward to a bright new future for Japan.

75,000 spectators fill the stands



military aircraft trace the Olympic rings in the sky



Satellites beam the drama of the Tokyo Olympics to television audiences all over the world.

The Games are the smartest and best-connected so far. Computers track races and records, such as UK sprinter Ann Packer's world record in the 800m. The world's fastest train brings visitors to watch champions such as American Don Schollander, who wins four golds in the pool. Even a satellite relays live TV of the Games.



flags of 94 competing nations fly above the stadium

an electronic scoreboard displays translations of the speeches

sprays above the spectators squirt perfume of chrysanthemum (a flower)

schoolgirls, each carrying 40 balloons, cut their tethers to release them

propane gas fuels the flame in the cauldron

the torch flame burns for just 14 minutes

a runner's relay has carried the flame through 14 countries, across 23,000km



After winning two golds, Soviet gymnast Larissa Latynina becomes the most successful competitor ever.



# Barcelona 1992

On the sunlit seafront of Spain's second city, a sporting ocean park has replaced derelict buildings. Apartments and arenas stand where there were once only factories and docks. When the Barcelona Olympics begin, these sparkling new buildings echo with foreign accents, as athletes and spectators from 169 countries fill the Olympic Village and the new stadiums.



Paralympian archer Antonio Rebollo lights the Olympic cauldron by firing a flaming arrow above it.

Soling-class yachts are 8m long and have a crew of three



In the blue Mediterranean waters, the world's best yachtsmen use their skills and strength to squeeze the last bit of speed from their boats. Among them is prince Don Felipe of Bourbon, heir to the Spanish throne and maker of the biscuits named after his family. He is competing in the Soling-class yacht races as an ordinary sportsman, just like the 9,300 others who have come to Barcelona in search of glory.

Spanish prince Don Felipe of Bourbon crews one of the boats

also on the prince's boat are skipper Fernando Leon and helmsman Alfredo Vazquez



The future king's boat finishes in sixth place, and Spain wins only 22 medals overall. But for Spanish fans, it hardly matters. The Games are a brilliant success. The costly Olympic building programme has been a triumph. It added valuable new transport links and chic urban streets. From a neglected industrial city, Barcelona has become an admired international destination.



*In sight of the Sagrada Familia, 13-year-old diver Fu Mingxia wins gold – China's youngest champion.*



*The US basketball 'Dream Team', including Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson, wins gold.*

twin skyscrapers the Torre Mapfre and Hotel Arts are completed this year

the Sagrada Familia church has been under construction since 1883

the Olympic Village wraps around the harbour area

the fish sculpture by architect Frank Gehry is a Barcelona landmark

'pocket' submarines guard the harbour

a weather buoy monitors the current and temperature

**Games of the 25th Olympiad: Barcelona, 1992**



- Number of events: 257, across 29 sports
- Number of competing nations: 169
- Most gold medals: 45 (USA)
- Number of athletes competing: 9,356



# Sydney 2000

As the 20th century ends, the Olympic movement is in trouble. News reports focus on everything that goes wrong. Athletes take drugs. Officials take bribes. Sponsors make big profits. But then, Sydney's success silences the critics. Australia's biggest, brightest city lays on a Games that everyone agrees is brilliantly organized, joyful, honest and fair.

The women's marathon sums up the Sydney spirit. Its route aims to give as many people as possible a 'free ticket' to the Olympics. Families on the course paint their houses and hold marathon barbecues. For the 53 competitors, though, the race is deadly serious. It is a showcase for the strength and determination of female athletes. Naoko Takahashi of Japan, who takes the gold medal, beats the winning time of 13 previous men's marathons.



the famous Sydney Opera House is the starting point for the triathlon

Sydney's vast natural harbour is the perfect setting for sailing races

the marathon commemorates 100 years of women's Olympic participation

the winner is Naoko Takahashi of Japan

a test event in April tried out the course



Australian Ian Thorpe – 'the Thorpedo' – takes two gold medals and sets a world record, all in one hour.

around 47,000 volunteers make sure everything runs smoothly

spectators offer to buy volunteers' uniforms as souvenirs



British rower Steve Redgrave's win makes him one of only four people to win gold in five straight Olympics.

## Games of the 27th Olympiad: Sydney, 2000



- Number of events: 300, across 28 sports
- Number of competing nations: 199
- Most gold medals: 37 (USA)
- Number of athletes competing: 10,651

press photographers ride in special trucks



the marathon course ends at the Olympic stadium, 14km from the bridge.

Sydney Harbour Bridge

the winning time beats 13 of the 24 men's marathons

giant Olympic rings decorate the famous bridge

competitors dress in glamorous outfits and make-up

a long blue line painted on the streets marks marathon route

41 runners finish in under 3 hours, and 14 in less than 2 hours 30 minutes



Aboriginal Australian sprinter Cathy Freeman lights the Olympic flame – then wins gold in the 400m



Huge television screens set up in parks and squares give a grandstand view to those without tickets.

To the watching crowds it hardly matters that the fastest Australian finishes in 14th place. For they have enjoyed an unforgettable experience. Many take home pieces of blue barrier tape as souvenirs. Even after the closing ceremony, a week later, Australians carry on partying. They have not won the most medals, but they have made the Games a celebration of their nation's sporting, outdoor lifestyle.



# Beijing 2008

In China's ancient capital, the most lavish Olympics ever are reaching a peak of excitement. China's rulers have organized these Games with military precision. They want nothing to spoil the picture of fairness and athletic skill in the stadium. So, 100,000 volunteers mingle with the spectators to ensure that only sport makes the news.



The Olympic stadium is called the 'bird's nest' thanks to its oval shape and twig-like structure.

Games of the 29th Olympiad: Beijing, 2008

- Number of events: 302, across 34 sports
- Number of competing nations: 204
- Most gold medals: 51 (China)
- Number of athletes competing: 10,942

Bolt's shoes have golden spikes on the sole

paramedics stand by in case of injury to the athletes

civilian security personnel mingle with the crowd

the Jamaican flag covers Bolt's shoulders for the victory lap

Olympic judges watch the start to ensure fairness

Chinese soldiers help to keep order

track crews prepare the running surface and equipment

a technician checks the anemometer, which measures wind speed

the track is rubber coated, with a high-grip surface for speed and safety

Today, 16 August, every camera lens is pointing at Usain Bolt. The 21-year-old Jamaican has already broken world sprinting records. Now, he is the favourite to win the 100m. He does not let the crowd down. After a shaky start, he surges into the lead. Twenty metres from the finish, he is so sure of winning that he slows down and beats his chest in triumph!





Trackside cameras show Bolt crossing the finishing line an amazing 2m ahead of his rivals.



Chris Hoy leads the British team to scoop seven of the 11 gold medals in track cycling events.



Two billion people worldwide watch the televised opening ceremony, featuring 15,000 performers.



press photographers jostle to capture Bolt's celebration pose

a timekeeping expert monitors the photo-finish camera

a video cameraman balances on a two-wheeled Segway cart

at 195cm, Bolt is the tallest man ever to win the 100m

if Bolt's shoelace had not become untied, he would have run faster still!

It is an extraordinary win, even by Olympic standards: wind gauges show zero, so he won without any help from a breeze, and his shoelaces came undone during the race. Bolt completes a victory lap, then poses for pictures near to the scoreboard that shows his record time of 9.69 seconds. In four days' time he will win again, in the 200m. No wonder his nickname is 'Lightning' Bolt.



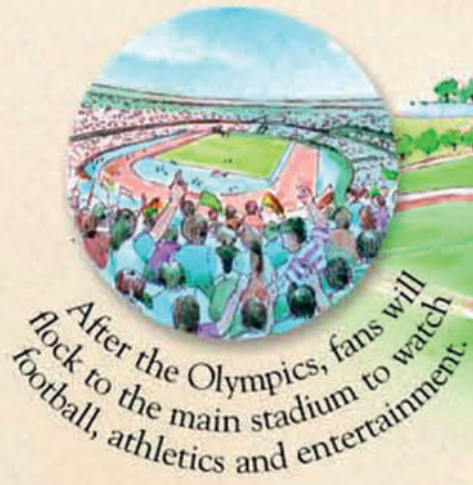
# London 2012

the Orbit Tower, designed by British sculptor Anish Kapoor

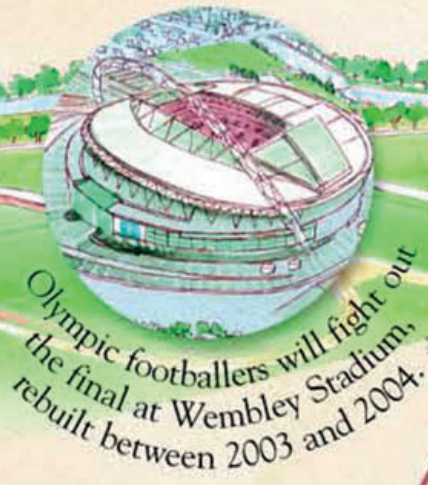
As the world's best athletes expectantly check their calendars, the venues where they will compete in 2012 are almost ready. On London's eastern fringes, pools are filled, tracks are laid, and stadiums smell of paint and polish. London is hosting the Summer Olympics for the third time – an honour no other city shares. Britain's capital aims to make these Games unforgettable.



Archers will aim for gold on the historic pitch of Lord's Cricket Ground in central London.



After the Olympics, fans will flock to the main stadium to watch football, athletics and entertainment.



Olympic footballers will fight out the final at Wembley Stadium, rebuilt between 2003 and 2004.

most spectators travel by rail to two nearby stations

So, in six busy years, workers have cleared, cleaned and landscaped a polluted wasteland to create the Olympic Zone. They have planted 4,000 trees, and re-homed 2,000 newts. Six smart new sports arenas have risen from the mud. New rail lines will bring sports fans here on four trains each minute. Beyond the Olympic Zone, a dozen improved venues will host contests such as sailing.

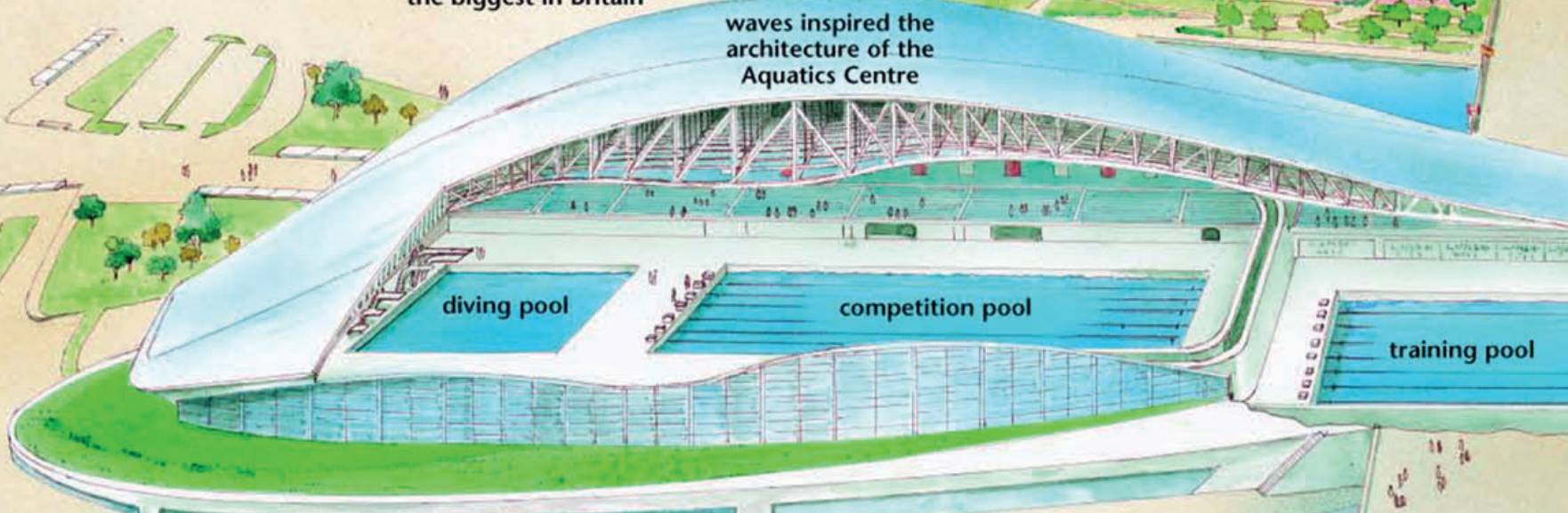
the Orbit Tower is taller than New York's Statue of Liberty

4,000 newly planted trees decorate the Olympic Zone

visitors enter from a giant bridge that crosses over the Aquatics Centre

the Aquatics Centre is the biggest in Britain

waves inspired the architecture of the Aquatics Centre





the towers of the City, London's financial district, rise just 5km away

When the Games end and the athletes head home with their medals, these new stadiums will have different uses. The London 2012 organizers want to avoid the mistakes of Athens, where all but one of the 22 Olympic sites are empty and vandalized. So the London venues will be moved, shrunk or adapted. They will carry on welcoming champions into 2016, when the Olympic flame burns bright over Rio de Janeiro, and long after.

the main stadium is the lightest ever built

changes after the Olympics will halve the number of seats

the stadium stands on an 'island' between the Lee river channels

Games of the 30th Olympiad: London, 2012



- Number of events: 318, across 26 sports
- Number of competing nations: 205
- Number of athletes competing: 10,950

new wetland areas on riverbanks prevent flooding

water polo warm-up pool

water polo pool

two-thirds of building material arrived by rail or barge

up to 80,000 spectators watch the most popular events