

THE
OLYMPIC
MUSEUM

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW
**THE OLYMPIC
GAMES?**

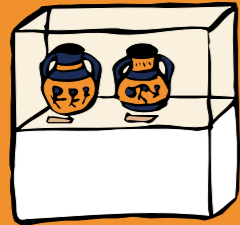
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This manual, which is intended for the general public, provides an introduction to the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games. The brochure is made up of 15 sections, each one introduced by a question. Each section provides basic information and some additional details about the topics that it covers.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW
**THE OLYMPIC
GAMES?**

WHERE DID THE OLYMPIC GAMES BEGIN?

The Olympic Games began in Greece.



The Ancient Greeks held athletic competitions in **Olympia** in the Peloponnese. The first existing written records of these events date back to 776 BC.

What was special about these Games? They took place every four years, and were dedicated to **Zeus**, the king of the gods.

They were open only to **free men of Greek citizenship**, which meant that men from other countries, women and slaves were unable to take part. Married women were not allowed to watch the Games, although the spectators did include girls.

A few months before the competitions began, a **sacred truce** was proclaimed. Messengers travelled throughout the country announcing the truce which called for the cessation of wars and conflicts between states. In this way, athletes and spectators could travel to the competition in safety.

Games were also held in honour of the gods at sites other than **Olympia**: in **Nemea** for Zeus (as in Olympia), in **Delphi** for Apollo and in **Isthmia** for Poseidon. The Games held on these four different sites are known

collectively as the **Panhellenic Games**.

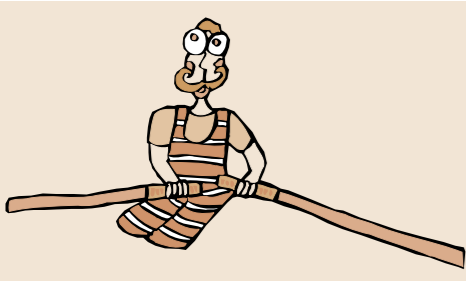
The ancient Olympic Games lasted for more than 1000 years! Over this long period, the programme evolved and the sports included in it varied considerably. After enjoying significant popularity, the Games gradually began to lose their prestige.

Their deathblow was dealt by the Roman emperor Theodosius I. A convert to Christianity, he would not tolerate pagan events within his empire, and abolished them in 393 AD.

Information about the ancient Games can be discovered by examining a training scene painted on a vase, the sculpture of an athlete, or a few verses composed to the glory of an athletic winner. Artists, potters, writers, historians and poets of the time have left behind invaluable testimonies, all of which provide us with ways to learn about the Ancient Games.



WHO FOUNDED THE MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES?



The modern Games were founded by the Baron Pierre de Coubertin, a Frenchman. To appreciate his actions, one has to understand the times in which he lived.

The 18th century saw the discovery of the **site of Olympia**, and the start of excavations in the 19th century created a great deal of interest in the ancient Olympic Games. During the 19th century, several attempts were made to revive the Games: in Grenoble (France), Much Wenlock (Great Britain) and Athens (Greece), for example. These, however, remained local events without any lasting influence in the wider world.

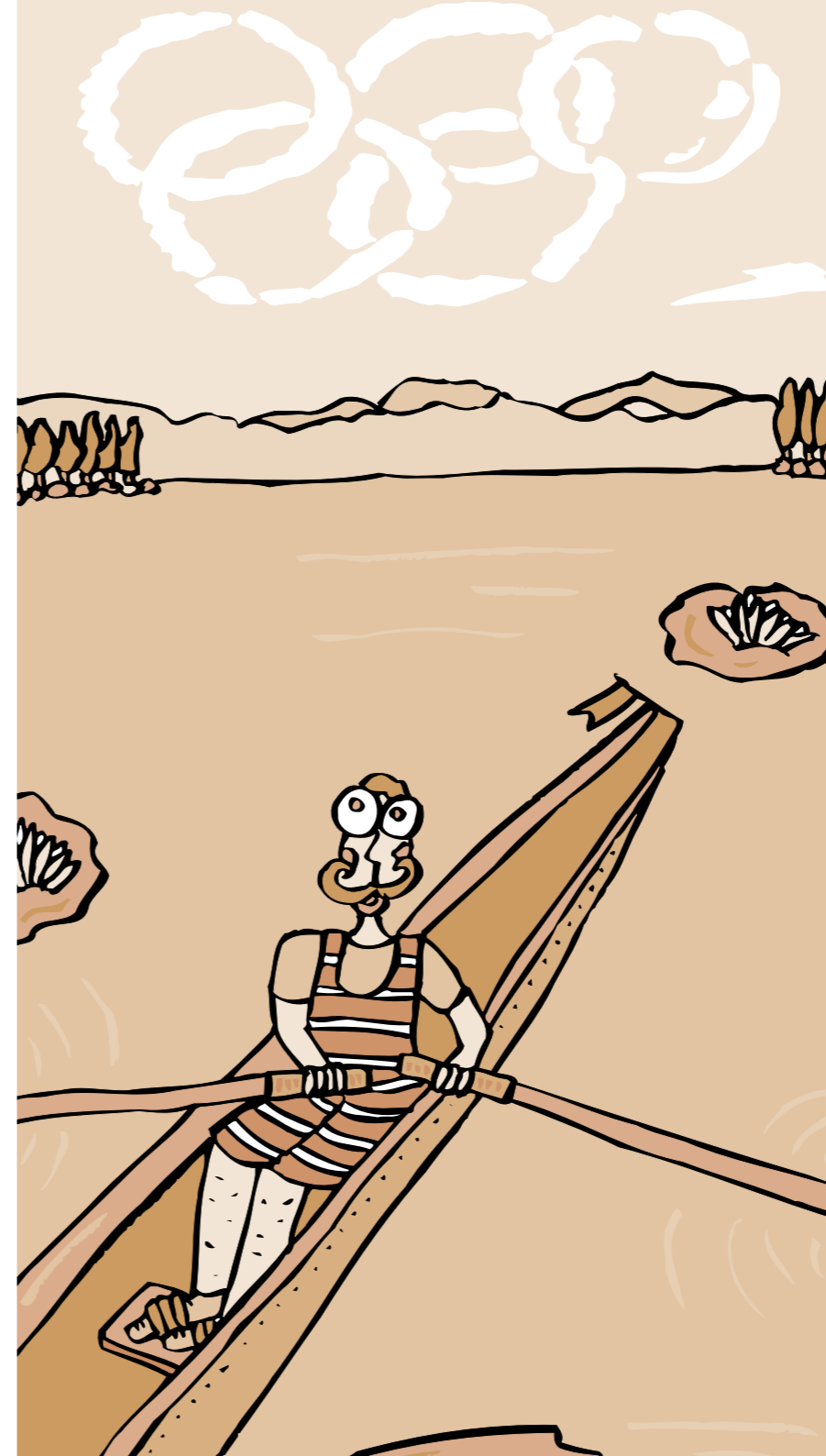
Pierre de Coubertin, born in 1863, was very interested in these Games of the past. He also took a keen interest in the **English education system**, which included sport in the school curriculum, something unheard of at the time in France.

Pierre de Coubertin, inspired by his first-hand research in English and American schools, wanted to make his contemporaries understand the benefits of sport for young people. Not everyone shared his views. The Baron realised he needed some particularly convincing arguments to change people's minds. Then this visionary had an extraordinary idea: to revive the Olympic Games.

Why did Coubertin succeed where so many others had failed? His genius was to immediately give the Games an **international and modern** dimension, and to see them as part of a wider strategy of **education through sport**.

Pierre de Coubertin was sincere in his convictions, had faith in his vision, and persevered despite several reversals of fortune. He achieved his goal with the creation of what would become known as the International Olympic Committee in Paris on **23 June 1894** and with the first celebration of the modern Olympic Games **in Athens in 1896**.

The Baron's interests were not limited to Olympism. Pierre de Coubertin was a historian, writer and educator, and liked to express his opinions on a wide range of subjects.



Pierre de Coubertin died in 1937. His body was buried in the Bois-de-Vaux cemetery in Lausanne (Switzerland), while his heart was placed in a marble stele in Olympia (Greece).

Pierre de Coubertin was the second president of the IOC, from 1896 to 1925.

WHAT ABOUT THE OLYMPIC GAMES SINCE 1896?



Ever since Athens in 1896 the Olympic Games have been a four-yearly meeting for the world's athletes.

Each time, the Games are held in a different city around the globe. The Olympic Games are composed of **the Games of the Olympiad** (the Summer Games) and **the Olympic Winter Games**. The four-yearly interval between Summer Games is called an **Olympiad**.

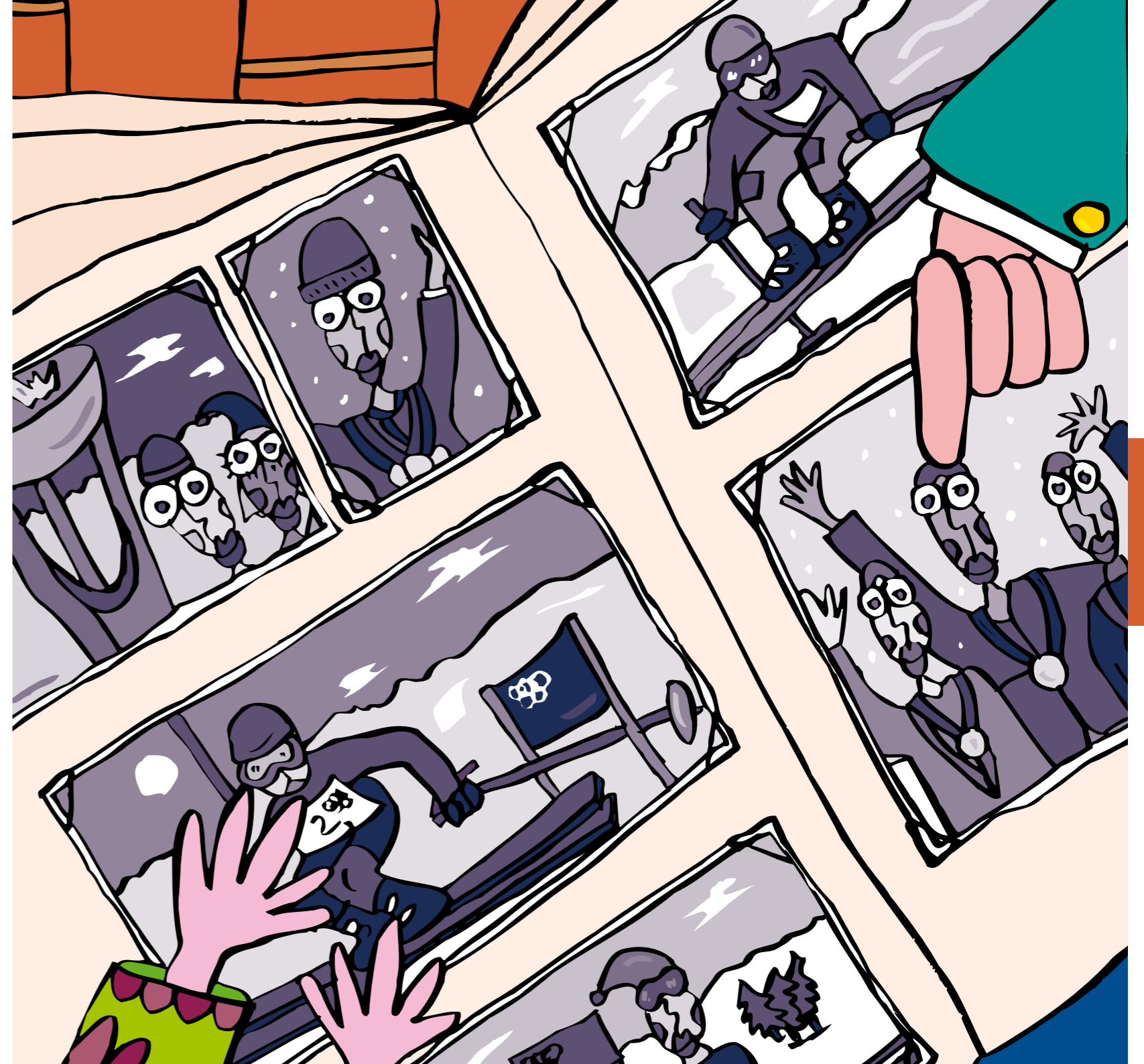
The first Winter Games were held in **Chamonix in 1924**. The growth of sports played on snow and ice justified the creation of these Games devoted exclusively to winter sports. Prior to 1924, figure skating competitions had been included in the programme of the Games of the Olympiad, in London in 1908 and Antwerp in 1920. The Antwerp Games also saw the inclusion of ice hockey.

The Winter Games initially took place during the same year as the Games of the Olympiad. Since 1992, the summer and winter Games have alternated **every two years**.

In just over a century of existence, the Olympic Games have evolved along with the society in which they take place. Current affairs help to shape the identity of the Games, at the same time that the Games leave their mark on the world around them.

The participation of **women** is one of the features of the modern Olympic Games. They first participated in the 1900 Games in Paris. Women gradually established footholds in the rest of the programme, and today they are present in all the Olympic sports.

Looking at photographs and films of past Olympic Games, it is clear that many changes have taken place! The Games' format, the sporting venues, the athletes' equipment and clothing – all now differ radically from the early days.



WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE FIVE OLYMPIC RINGS?

The five rings that make up the Olympic symbol represent the union of the five continents and the meeting of athletes from all over the world during the Games. They symbolise the universality of the Olympic Movement.



The rings are interlocking and arranged in a trapezoid shape.

The colours of the rings are:
blue / black / red / yellow / green.

Pierre de Coubertin first proposed this symbol at the 1914 Olympic congress in Paris.

The five rings on a white background form the **Olympic flag**, which was unveiled during the same congress. The flag flew for the first time in an Olympic stadium in 1920 during the Antwerp Games.

If the number of rings represents the continents, the colours (six of them, counting the white background) were chosen to ensure that **every country** would have **at least one of the colours in its national flag** included.

At the time of the Games, the rings are everywhere: they appear on the clothes, hats and bags (and even sometimes on the faces!) of Olympic participants and public alike. Through the rings, athletes and spectators are united under one and the same banner.



WHY IS THERE A TORCH RELAY?



The Olympic torch relay is an invention of the modern celebration of the Games. Although torch relays took place in Athens, there were none at the ancient Olympic Games. However, the way the flame is lit corresponds to the method used by the Ancient Greeks to light the flames that burned constantly on the altars in their temples.

The torch relay creates a link between the Ancient Olympic Games and the modern Olympic Games.

Several months before the opening of the Games, the Olympic flame is kindled in Olympia, in Greece. The flame is then carried by the Olympic torch in a relay to the city that is hosting the Games.

The route varies depending on the destination. The torch may travel across oceans, mountains and deserts, as well as through cities and villages.

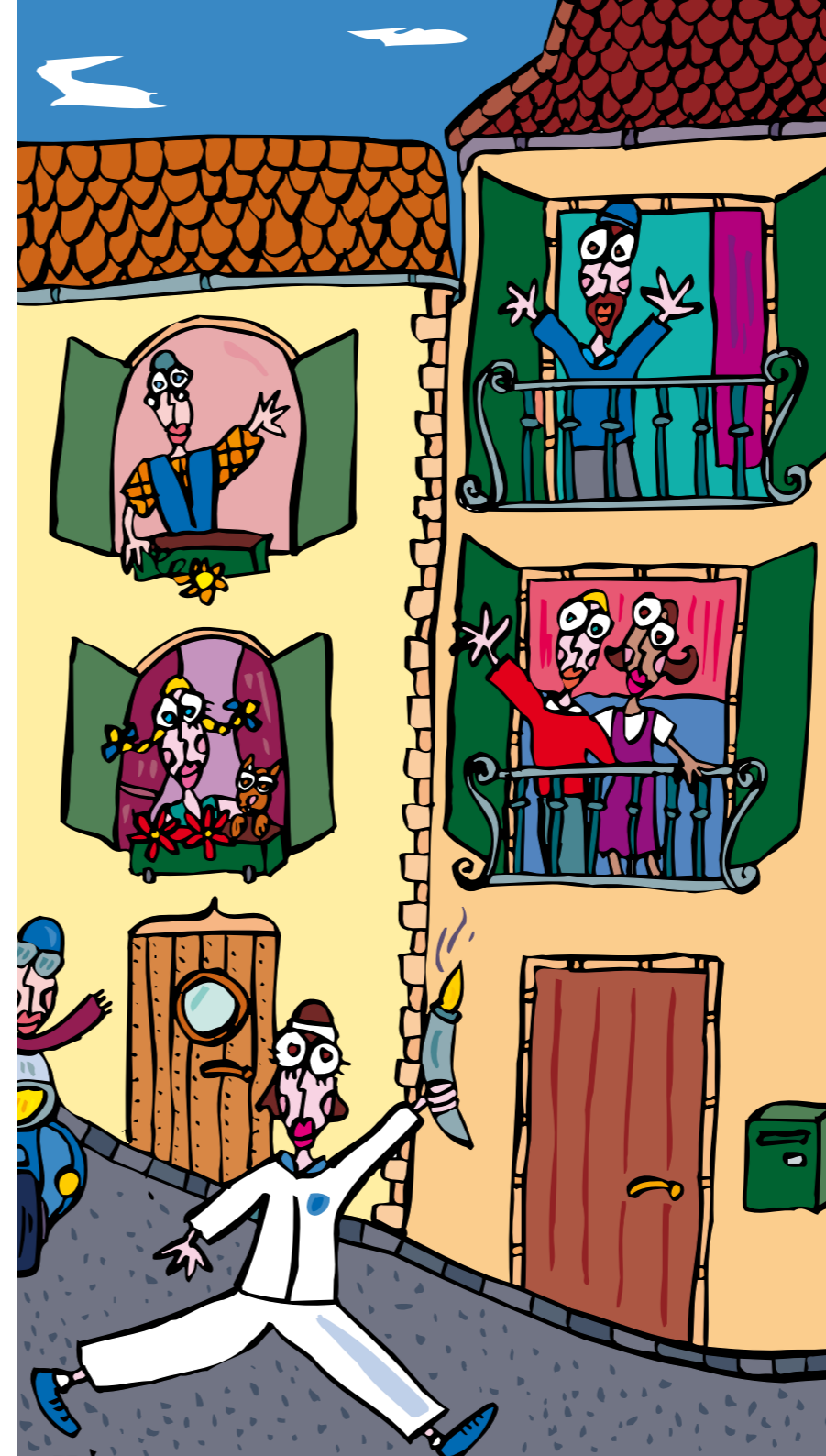
The lighting ceremony in Olympia features actresses in the role of ancient Greek priestesses. The heat of the sun is focused in a parabolic mirror, and this produces the Olympic flame. Once lit, the flame is given to the first relay runner holding the official Olympic torch for the edition of the Games being celebrated.

A variety of modes of transport may be used within the same relay. As well as runners on foot, the flame can also travel by plane, car or horse, to cite just a few of the most common examples.

The route of the Olympic torch relay is carefully chosen. In the country of the host city for the Games, the flame generally travels a route that maximises exposure to the inhabitants and their customs, as well as taking in important natural or historical sites.

On its travels, the Olympic flame is met with **great enthusiasm by the public**. The flame heralds the coming celebration of the Olympic Games and conveys a message of **peace and friendship**.

The entry of the flame into the Olympic stadium is one of the highlights of the opening ceremony, with the identity of the final torch bearer being kept secret until the last minute. This person has the honour of lighting the **cauldron** in which the Olympic flame will burn throughout the Games.



The tradition of the Olympic torch relay began with the **Games of the XI Olympiad in Berlin in 1936**. For the Olympic Winter Games, a torch relay was first organised in **Oslo in 1952**.

WHAT ARE THE OLYMPIC VALUES?



The Olympic motto consists on three Latin words:

CITIUS, ALTIUS, FORTIUS

which means

FASTER, HIGHER, STRONGER



Practised in Olympic spirit, sport is an amazing tool which helps to build a better world. The Olympic spirit can be expressed through three core values: **excellence**, **respect** and **friendship**. Anyone who wants to take part in the Olympic Games must bear these in mind.

Athletes seek **excellence** in terms of the goal they set themselves. Then they must push themselves to exceed these goals. The aim is not to come first so much as to explore your own capacities; it is in giving your utmost that you experience victory.

Athletes show **respect** to others and to themselves. This means accepting the rules and playing fair.

Athletes celebrate **friendship**. In practising sport, they meet others, welcome differences and show tolerance. These three values are inseparable: you cannot have one without the others. Putting these three values into practice is part of the quest for balance and harmony. That is the mark of a true champion, both on and off the field of play.

WHY ARE THERE OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES?

The beginning and end of the Olympic Games are marked by ceremonies.



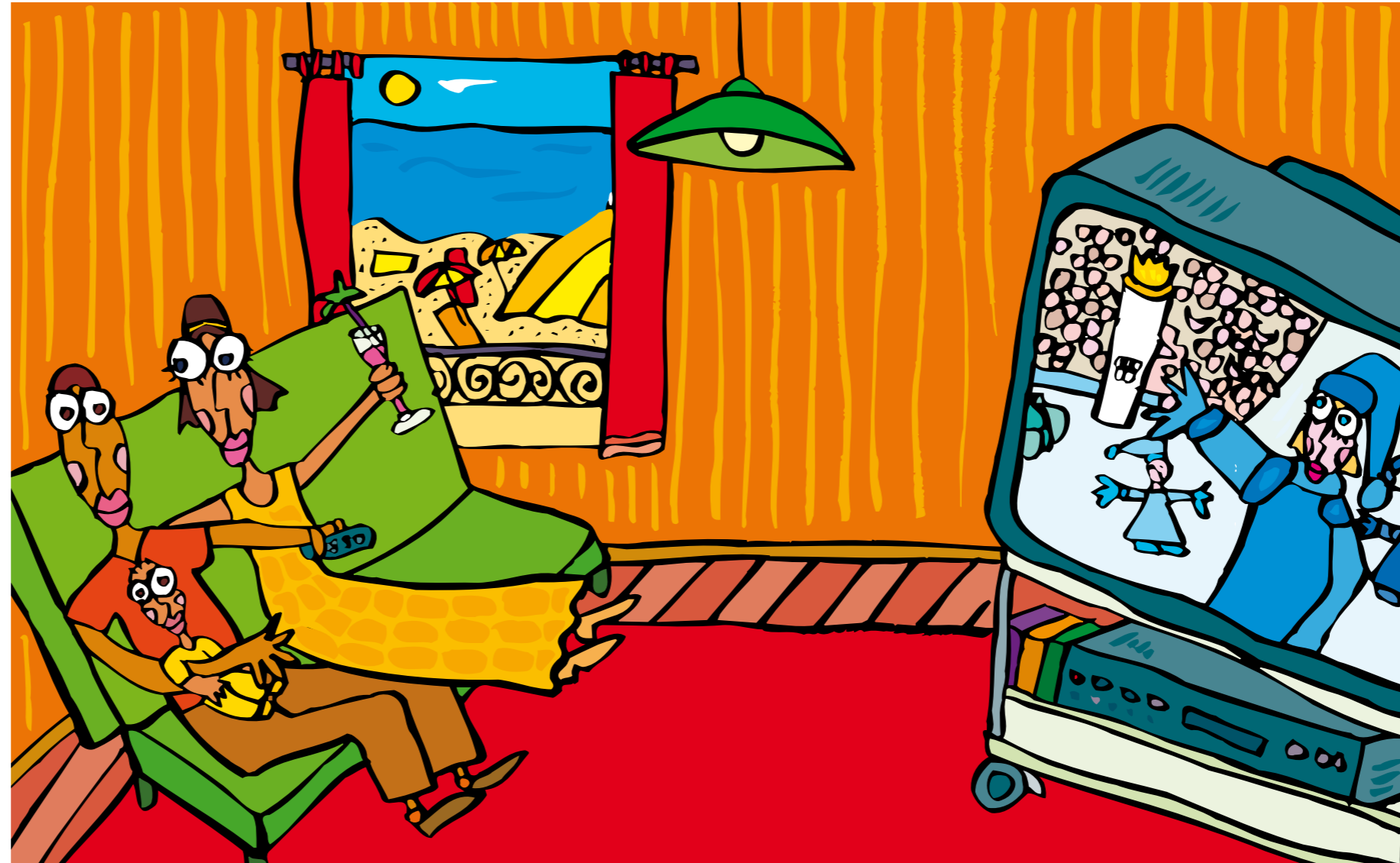
These events provide an unparalleled illustration of the Olympic values, and are one of the elements that make the Olympic Games stand apart from other sports events. As both a celebration of sport and culture and a showcase for universality and peace, the ceremonies make up a ritual that symbolises the unity of body and mind.

Today the opening ceremonies begin with the **official component**.

Pride of place is given to the protagonists of the Games, **the athletes!** They line up behind their country's flag and parade in front of the spectators. As a tribute to the origins of the Olympic Games, Greece traditionally leads the parade. The host country delegation is the last to enter the stadium.

After the **head of state** of the host country has declared the Games open, the **Olympic anthem** is played and the **Olympic flag** is brought in. The flag, which is often carried by athletes, is then hoisted in the stadium.

The arrival of the **flame** and the lighting of the cauldron are the highlights of the opening ceremony. A symbolic



release of **doves** represents the hope for peace during the Games.

Since the Games of the Olympiad in Antwerp in 1920, an athlete has sworn the **Olympic oath** on behalf of all the participants. Since 1972, a judge has also done the same for the officials. The text of the oath was modified starting with the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney to include a reference to competing without resorting to drugs.

The official ceremony is followed by an **artistic programme** featuring colourful costumes, dancing, singing and music. Sometimes the creativity and imagination of the artistic directors glows in the light of a magnificent fireworks display.

Whether seated in the stadium or in their favourite armchair in front of the television, spectators around the world join in the **party atmosphere!**

The end of the Olympic Games is marked by the **closing ceremony** on the last day of competition. Ever since the 1956 Games in Melbourne, the athletes parade together, rather than by delegation. The Olympic flag is handed over to the mayor of the host city of the next Olympic Games. Although the flame is extinguished, a promise is thus made to meet again in four years' time.

WHAT IS AN OLYMPIC SPORT?

Foot races, the discus throw, the javelin throw, the long jump, combat sports (such as wrestling and boxing) and equestrian competitions (chariot and horseback races) were on the programme of the ancient Olympic Games.



Today, the Olympic Games programme is made up of a core of a minimum of 25 sports, governed by International Federations. At each edition of the Games, other sports – also governed by an International Federation recognised by the IOC – can be added on condition that the total does not exceed 28 sports. They must all conform to the World Anti-Doping Code.

An Olympic sport can be split into two subcategories: **disciplines** and **events**.

A discipline is a branch of a sport that includes one or more events. An event is a competition in an Olympic sport or in one of its disciplines which results in a ranking and gives rise to an award of medals and diplomas.

Examples:

In the Summer Games, the sport of wrestling includes two disciplines: freestyle and Greco-Roman. For the 2008 Games in Beijing, the wrestling programme included 14 events for men (both disciplines) and four for women (freestyle only).

Although most of the ancient sports feature in some form in the modern Olympic Games, the programme has undergone some major changes in just over a century of existence.

In the Winter Games, snowboarding is not a sport, but a discipline of skiing. For Vancouver in 2010, snowboarding included three events for men and three for women: parallel giant slalom, snowboard cross and half pipe.

In Olympic history, many sports and events have disappeared like cricket, tug of war and underwater swimming. Others have been adopted, such as triathlon and taekwondo. Some sports have been reintroduced after having been dropped, such as tennis, archery, rugby, golf, curling and skeleton.

It is the **IOC** which decides whether a sport can be included in the programme of the Games. It sets the Olympic programme, and accepts or refuses new sports, disciplines and events.

However, it is the **International Federation** that governs a sport and is responsible for all the technical details: rules, equipment, playing grounds, refereeing, etc.

In Athens in 1896, there were nine sports and 43 events on the programme. In Beijing in 2008, there were 28 sports and 302 events. The difference in these figures gives a good indication of how much the Olympic programme has evolved.



The programme of the ancient Games at Delphi included music and singing competitions. Pierre de Coubertin, keen to involve the arts in the Olympic Games, created competitions for artists, writers, poets, architects and musicians. These events took place from 1912 to 1948. Today, art is included in a different way, particularly through the cultural programme organised during the Games, and also in the opening and closing ceremonies.

HOW DOES AN ATHLETE GET TO THE OLYMPIC GAMES?



In order to participate in the Olympic Games, athletes must comply with the Olympic Charter and follow the rules of the International Federation (IF) governing their sport.

The IFs organise qualification events, while the National Olympic Committee (NOC) is responsible for entering the athletes for the Games.

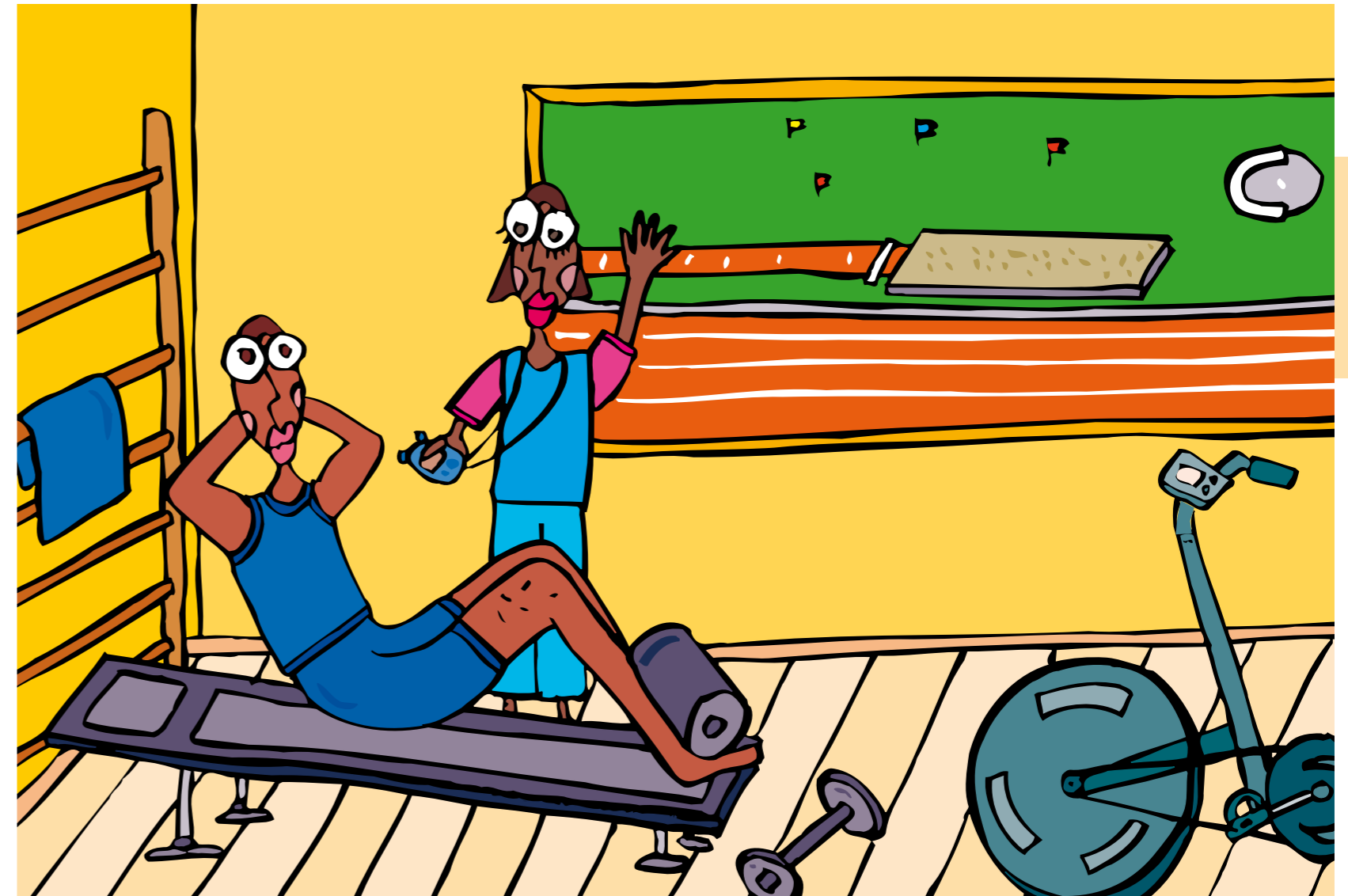
If an athlete has **dual nationality** he or she may compete for the country of his or her choice. However, if they have already represented one country at the Olympic Games or another major sports event, they may not compete for the other country until a certain period of time has elapsed.

There is no **age limit** for competing in the Games, except for one which may be imposed by individual IFs for health reasons.

By entering the Olympic Games, athletes make a commitment to respect the Olympic values. They agree to undergo **doping tests**.

Athletes wishing to be entered for the Olympic Games must be exceptional in their sport. In order to reach this level, they must submit to long hours of **training**, have a **competitive spirit** and feel a **desire to pit themselves against others**.

Being selected for the Olympic Games is the ultimate goal for the majority of athletes.



WHERE DO THE ATHLETES LIVE DURING THE GAMES?



The majority of the athletes live in the Olympic Village.

In the early days, athletes had to find their own accommodation and make their own catering arrangements. They were housed in hotels, schools, military barracks and even on boats!

As the modern Olympic Games grew, so did the number of participants, and it became urgent to find a more appropriate solution.

The first attempt to lodge athletes in the same location dates back to the **1924 Olympic Games in Paris**, when temporary huts were made available. However, it was not until the **1932 Games in Los Angeles** that what many regard as the first real Olympic Village was built.

The advantage of such villages is that athletes have access to everything they need: shops, post offices, cinemas, cultural centres, and of course restaurants. The catering requirements are enormous (1,044 tonnes of food for the 1998 Olympic Winter Games in Nagano) and the menus must be varied enough to satisfy the tastes of athletes from the five continents.

The Village is provided with a high degree of security, and only people with a special **accreditation** can get in. Security for the 1932 Olympic Village even included a small number of cowboys on horseback, who lassoed any intruders!

Originally, the Olympic villages were reserved for men. It was not until the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne that **women** were also able to stay in them.

After the Games, the Olympic Village often begins a second life. The apartments are generally sold on, or let for a modest rent.



HOW ARE THE WINNERS REWARDED?



Today, the winner's medal must be covered with at least six grams of pure gold.

The first eight competitors receive diplomas.

In the ancient Panhellenic Games, victors were rewarded with wreaths of olive, celery, laurel or pine. In the modern Olympic Games, the three best athletes in each event are honoured with medals of gold, silver or bronze.

Before the rules were defined, there were some variations in the prizes awarded to the winners. There were no gold medals at the 1896 Olympic Games in Athens. The winner received a silver medal and the runner-up a bronze medal. In 1900, the Games in Paris took place at the same time as the Universal Exposition. Winners were rewarded not with medals but rather with commemorative plaques or works of art! It was not until the 1908 Games in London that medals became standardised.

The **medals for the Games of the Olympiad** must meet the standards set by the IOC. From 1928 to 2000, the medals hardly changed at all: the obverse bore a

representation of Nike, the goddess of Victory. As of 2004, this image of Nike was altered, the goddess appearing as a winged figure with the ancient Athens stadium in the background.

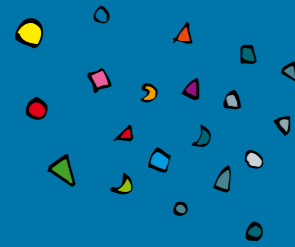
The **Winter Games medals** are not subject to the same constraints. Each Organising Committee is free to choose a different design. These medals tend to be more imaginative in their designs, incorporating a variety of materials such as crystal, granite and lacquer.

The **podium**, used for the medal presentation ceremony, made its first appearance at the 1932 Olympic Winter Games in **Lake Placid**.

The presentation ceremony is always a moving event. Although the time the athletes spend on the podium is short compared with the time it took for them to get there, the admiration of the public amplifies the victory of the heroes and heroines, and gives them perhaps their sweetest reward.



WHAT THREATENS THE OLYMPIC GAMES?



Although the modern Olympic Games had modest beginnings, today they have become a gigantic “machine”.

The infrastructure required to hold the competitions and to accommodate the athletes and the media is considerable, as are the security measures needed. These days, the Olympic Games affect more than just the stadium. They affect an entire geographical region.

The importance the Olympic Games have acquired on the international stage has made them an unmissable event, followed by the media of the entire world. For an athlete, the prospect of winning a medal in the media spotlight represents a springboard to fame and fortune. The pressure exerted by the athletes' entourage and sponsors, amplified by personal ambition, can drive some of them to use illegal means to reach

their ends. It is therefore **doping** which threatens the Olympic Games.

Banned substances taken in secret can enhance an athlete's physical abilities and improve their performance. At the same time, this practice renders the results meaningless, makes a mockery of the concept of the level playing field, betrays the trust of spectators and, most importantly, puts the athlete's health in danger.

In order to combat doping, a number of dissuasive measures have been taken, such as **drug tests** and the **expulsion of athletes** who test positive.

In the long-term, it is **information** about the risks of doping and the **education of young people** in the Olympic values which will be more effective in changing mentalities and reinforcing the spirit of the Games.



WHERE DOES THE MONEY TO STAGE THE GAMES COME FROM?



The first modern Olympic Games were partly financed by issuing a set of Olympic stamps. For the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, coins were struck for the same reason.

These examples provide an illustration of the various means devised to finance the Olympic Games. As the Games have grown over the course of the 20th century, other sources of revenue have been tapped. Today, the major source of revenue is the **rights paid by television channels** to broadcast the Games.

In the 1980s, the IOC introduced a marketing policy for creating **partnerships with multinational companies**. In buying the right to use the Olympic symbol, these companies provide financial support as well as expertise that proves invaluable during the Games (technology, equipment, and so on).

Innumerable Olympic-related items are sold as souvenirs. The creation of **mascots** provides an additional boost in this area. In addition to the sales revenues they generate, they also help to define the visual identity of the Games. Whether real or imaginary, animals or people, these characters serve as an important communication tool. They build a bridge between the Olympic host city and the general public.

The first official mascot was seen at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, but it was probably the mascot of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona that has enjoyed the greatest commercial and popular success. The little dog **Cobi**, designed by Javier Mariscal, appeared in a variety of shapes and materials. His versatility and adaptability to a wide range of situations goes some way towards explaining his extraordinary success.



WHAT ROLE DOES THE IOC PLAY IN ALL OF THIS?



Lausanne was declared the Olympic Capital in December 1993. In addition to the IOC, the city is home to a number of International Federations.

The IOC (International Olympic Committee), founded in 1894 in Paris by Pierre de Coubertin, now has over one hundred members representing the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) from all over the world.

Today the IOC is led by a **president**, elected for an initial eight-year term, with the possibility of being re-elected for a further term of four years.

One of the roles of the IOC is to **ensure the celebration of the Olympic Games**.

Nine years before the year the Olympic Games will take place, the IOC issues an invitation to any cities interested in presenting a bid to host the Games. Files from the cities endorsed by their National Olympic Committee are sent to the IOC, which then studies each application.

Around seven years before the Games, the IOC elects the city that will host them.

It is not the IOC that organises the Games, but an Olympic Games Organising Committee (OCOG) set up by the host city. The IOC supervises the organisation.

Apart from the Olympic Games, the IOC is involved in a variety of activities encouraging the practice of sport throughout the world, and promoting fair-play, non-violence and non-discrimination. The IOC is also involved in actions to promote peace.

The IOC has a special relationship with the city of **Lausanne**. This Swiss city has been home to the IOC headquarters since **1915**. After occupying a series of different buildings, the administration and president's office took up permanent residence in the **Château de Vidy** in 1968.



HOW DOES THE IOC KEEP ITS OLYMPIC MEMORIES ALIVE?



The idea of an Olympic Museum was first suggested by Pierre de Coubertin. It was **Juan Antonio Samaranch**, the 7th IOC president, who brought the project to fruition.

The Olympic Museum, on the shores of Lake Geneva, opened on 23 June 1993.

It was designed by architects Pedro Ramirez Vázquez (Mexico) and Jean-Pierre Cahen (Switzerland).

The Olympic Museum, also in Lausanne, just a few kilometres from the IOC headquarters, welcomes visitors from around the world.

Archives, photographs, films, documents and objects from the Games, the entire **Olympic heritage**, in fact, can be found within its walls.

A series of **exhibitions** give adults and children alike the opportunity to discover the history of the ancient and modern Games and the Olympic Movement, by exploring themes related to sport, art and culture.

An **Olympic Studies Centre** receives students and researchers and provides access to any information and documentation they may need.

The Museum and Studies Centre are more than just a repository; they are active in promoting Olympism

and disseminating the Olympic spirit and values to a wider audience. They provide a place to learn, discuss, study and share.

The Olympic Museum heads a network of other Olympic museums around the world. Is there one in your country?



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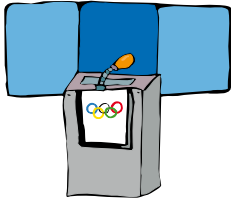
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